Perceived importance of Emotional Intelligence among Millennials in the Tech Startup Sector Industry context – A study in Dublin

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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence has been receiving increasing attention from academic researchers over the years, and an exponential field of literature exists exploring this concept. Nonetheless, the subject started to attract prominence in the 1990s since its correlation with the study of psychology and business organisations.

The study of Emotional Intelligence in the science community has been extensively and widely discussed through many scopes, mainly with regards to the correlation between leadership and job performance. Even though many variants of research into emotional intelligence exist, the investigation of generations emotional intelligence has been found insufficient.

In order to build an understanding of the emotional intelligence of the Millennials, this dissertation examines the self-comprehension they present of their own emotions and analyse the components of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skills.

The research methodology undertaken was underpinned by a mono methods research design which entails exploratory strategy. Semi-structured interviews were the primary technique utilised as qualitative data collection technique in order to obtain detailed and revealing that would help to interpret the content.

The outcome of this study is the presentation of several contextual insights into the awareness of the development of this five-set of skills for this generation which are hoped to provide a point of reference for future research pertinent to academics and practitioners.

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List of Abbreviations

EI: Emotional Intelligence

IQ: Intelligence Quotient

SMEs: Small and medium-sized enterprises

IT: Internet Technology

Chapter 1: Overview

1.0 Introduction

Emotional intelligence has been a central research topic of the scientific community and a concept popularly used by the press sharing its usefulness for an individual's life. Since the end of the 1990s, EI has gained popularity due to Goleman (1998) book "The emotional intelligence: Why EQ is more important than IQ".

Individuals differ accurately in their ability to perceive, process and understand about emotional information accurately. Moreover, this ability to effectively use emotional information to enhance skills and solve problems is attributed to people who possess high EI.

For this reason, a considerable number of researchers focused their studies on the possible beneficial outcomes of interrelating a higher level of EI in different aspects such as business (Abraham, 1999), employee performance (Behbahani, 2011; Cote *et al.* 2014), leadership (Goleman, 2000) and education (Goleman, 1995).

Previous research on a similar topic of this study has investigated the levels of emotional intelligence levels in Millennials, in the Turkish context (Ordun and Akun, 2016). There are common beliefs and opinions, both favourable and unfavourable, about the Millennial generation and their emotional abilities that are spread around.

Millennials will account for 75% of the worldwide workforce between 2025 and 2030 (E.Y, 2015; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). This generation grew up during the internet boom and have an intrinsic relationship with technology, which is the most intense in comparison to previous generational groups.

Technology has a robust workforce in Ireland, composed of almost 60 thousand of professionals working in IT (Ireland's National Statistical 2016). A significant portion of these professionals is allocated in Dublin, as the capital of the country is considered one of the technological hubs in Europe. Among these workers, the Tech Startup sector is burgeoning with professionals that compose the Millennial

generation. The contribution of emotional abilities of this generation is less well researched and, much lesser, in the Tech industry environment. This study will explore the connections between EI and Millennials and attempt to understand how this generation perceive its own emotional intelligence.

1.1 Justification for this research

In Chapter 2 of this paper, a review of the literature related to emotional intelligence was carried out and explored its links in relation to Millennials in the Tech Startup industry context. Previous studies propose that individuals believed to be high in emotional intelligence are believed to have better opportunities in their professional life to become successful.

In the U.S., the main research topics involving this generational cohort are focusing on their relationship with social media (Nusair *et al.*, 2013) and comparisons between generation wine consumers (Wolf *et al.*, 2005). In Europe, the foremost research concentrated on cultural identity (Mihelcea *et al.,* 2013).

The research seeks to understand the role of emotional intelligence in the life of Millennials workers in the tech Startup environment in Dublin. Moreover, to provide insight into the levels of emotional intelligence in millennials, and what is the level of understanding of their own EI. While conducting the literature, it was found a myriad of studies on emotional intelligence and millennials, separately. However, their researcher found no evidence of studies conducted linking the emotional intelligence of millennials and specifically to the tech Startup sector.

The research is worthy because the millennial generation is the newest generation fully entered the workforce. Furthermore, the generational cohort scope allows the research to analyse the group over a timeframe and understand similarities between them.

It is for the reasons above mentioned that this research topic has been chosen and to explore how millennials perceive their own emotional intelligence in Dublin. It is hoped that through further investigation, the possibility may arise of improving certain aspects of emotional intelligence in these individuals and create more awareness of the importance of the awareness of emotional intelligence.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is to discern the importance attributed to Emotional Intelligence by the Millennial generation and understand how they experience the five pillars that this research was underpinned: Self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation and social skills.

This research was deemed worthy of study as no studies have examined the concept of Emotional Intelligence within the same theoretical framework on the Technology Startups.

Five research objectives have been set in order to structure this paper and provide a starting point for this study:

Objective 1: Investigate the perceived importance of Self-Awareness.
More specifically:

- Feedback importance awareness;
- Emotional and Physical awareness;
- Self-confidence assessment.

Objective 2: Investigate the perceived importance of Self-Regulation.
In particular:

- Self-control and Conscientiousness;
- Adaptation.

Objective 3: Investigate the perceived importance of Motivation.
Specifically:

- Initiative;
- Achievement drive and Persistence.

Objective 4: Investigate the perceived importance of Empathy.
Particularly:

- Sensibility;
- Developing others;
- Respectful listening.

Objective 5: Investigate the perceived importance of Social Skills.

More specifically:

- Conflict management;
- Communication;
- Team-work and Collaboration.

The researcher has chosen an exploratory study using an inductive qualitative approach to increase understanding of the above items mentioned objectives.

1.3 Research Questions

The research question was formed from studying the literature review from Chapter 2 and personal insights.

Therefore, the research question that this paper will try to establish is:

> *Does Emotional Intelligence has a recognised*
> *importance in the life of Millennials*
> *working in the Tech Startup industry in Dublin?*

1.4 Scope and Limitations

This dissertation is mainly focused on the understanding the perceived importance of Emotional Intelligence for the Millennials living in Dublin. Goleman's original model of EI (1995; 1998) contained 25 competencies. Due to time constraints and resources limitations, this study reduced to 13 core competencies to be analysed on millennials. Lastly, this research will not include any analysis on other generations cohorts or regions of Ireland.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

To achieve the objectives established for this study, this thesis is structured in six chapters. Following an outline of the contents of each chapter.

Chapter one gives a brief introduction of the Emotional Intelligence and the Millennial generation, and the justification for the selection of the research topic. Also, it sets the research objectives for the study and explains the hypothesis and research questions.

Chapter two examines the previous literature in the area of emotional intelligence. The definition of emotional intelligence is discussed as its components and the model in which the research is based. It then looks to the Millennials cohort and their relationship with technology and the Startup work environment.

Chapter three explains the methodology chosen for this research and how the semi-structured interview was designed. Besides, justification is given for the chosen methods.

Chapter four is the main chapter that presents the findings from the interviews. These data are analysed using the inductive approach. The same section discusses the results.

Chapter five concludes the entire research and gives recommendations for possible future research on the subject to be explored.

Chapter six presents a list of all references cited in this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, p. 61) highlight that reviewing the literature process provides the foundation on which research is built. Therefore, a useful literature review extend the understanding of relevant previous researches and trends that have emerged in the field of the subject being studied. Moreover, it gives the opportunity to explore topics that might have been overlooked by other researchers at that moment.

Following the above directions, this literature review chapter will explore the main theories of Emotional Intelligence. It will then look into the Millennials relationship with technology and the Startup sector.

2.1 Early studies on emotions

The word "Emotion" is a term that came into use in the English language in the sixteenth century as a translation from the French term "émotion" based on Latin "emovere". The current sense dates from the early nineteenth century and means "A strong feeling such as joy, anger, or sadness — instinctive or intuitive feeling as distinguished from reasoning or knowledge" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2002).

In historical and chronological terms, the study of emotions is one of the oldest and most recent discussions in psychology. Since the Classical period in Ancient Greece theorists as Aristotle try to understand up until which level we can control them, or they can control us. In his early studies, the Greek philosopher explored in detail some emotions, considering them essential facets of existence, a mixture of high cognitive life and a lower sensual life, but not something negative (Schmitter, 2006; Strongman, 1996).

Aristotle stressed that emotional experience is intrinsic to any life, and any record of the great life must be attributed to it. As the philosopher explored in his studies, the suitable passionate attitudes may be much increasingly urgent to the good life, since our ability to feel the interests appears to be inherent, while our capacity

to reason develops with maturity and can be substantially influenced by our emotional dispositions (Schmitter, 2006). Regardless, the excellent self-aware individual will not just reason well about what to do in specific circumstances yet will understand the suitable requirements and feeling in those circumstances.

Significantly 2000 years later, and written in the early days of modern science, the French philosopher and mathematician René Descartes proposes another consideration about the same discussion. The philosopher attempted to prove that sensory stimulation causes a bodily response that then causes an emotion. For Descartes, not only there is an apparent physical reason for every feeling, yet additionally, there is personal wellness in the way that a specific feeling is reliant on particular conditions (Irons, 1895).

An alternative idea to the above theorists was first introduced in the 19th century by the American psychologist William James, known by the James Lange Theory. Published in 1884, Jame's renowned article argued that the perception of bodily changes, as they occur, is the emotion. The author reasoned that scientific psychology should not treat feelings as some species of "eternal and sacred psychic entities, like the old immutable species in natural history" (James, 1890, p. 449).

Emotions were virtually absent from scientific psychology (Izard, 1991), having been completely forgotten and absorbed by other concepts (Lazarus, 1991) for a long time. They began to be intensely valued as fundamental determinants of human behaviour only in the 1960s. Ancient philosophers raised the first questions about emotions and the correlation to the body. Emotions have a complete influence on the body and matter for health (Goleman, 1995). The understanding of this matter was fundamental for oncoming researches.

Some contemporary scholars tended to neglect the concept and study of emotions, in part because of the range of phenomena covered by the word "emotion", which discouraged theorisation and carried a prejudgment by a part of the scientific community.

Salovey and Mayer (1990, p.186) defined emotions as coordinated responses "as adaptive and as something that can potentially lead to a transformation of personal and social interaction into the enriching experience". Nonetheless,

research on emotions is still a topic relentlessly discussed by theorists, and so is Emotional Intelligence.

2.2 Brief Background of Emotional Intelligence

The historical root of Intelligence is traced back to the nineteenth century. The earliest study known on Emotional intelligence was conducted by Thorndike (1920). The American psychologist and researcher proposed a theory that there are three types of intelligence: social, mechanic and abstract. The author defended that social intelligence was a part of general intelligence, which was the ability to direct and understand people.

Many other researchers also contributed to the studies of intelligence in individuals. Gardner (1983) conceptualised the term of multiple intelligence as being composed by intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence that breaks down into modalities: logical, linguistic, spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence. The development of the model is also a critique of the correlation of intelligence with a single ability, commonly associated with tests designed to determine human intelligence.

Cattell (1987) studied intelligence in depth. The author defended that we have to deal with two broad or "general" ability factors, fluid and crystallised intelligence. Cattell (1987) proposes these two types of intelligence rather than a unique general intelligence. Overall, intelligence researchers have often studied people's specific intelligence within subareas, such as emotions.

Consequently, the study of the EI has become a significant debate as contrasting both sides of the intelligence: Emotional intelligence versus Intelligence Quotient (IQ). In more recent decades, many new theories of EI were proposed, and the concept started to get the attention not only in the academia but also in the business world.

The terminology EI as we know nowadays was first put forth by Salovey and Mayer (1990), in their article called "Emotional Intelligence". In this work, Salovey and Mayer (1990) formulated a model of which of EI that comprised four elements: appraisal and expression of emotion in the self, appraisal and

expression of emotion in others, regulation of emotions, and utilisation of emotions in adaptive ways.

Nevertheless, the author who piqued the interest of the business community with the concept of EI was Goleman's (1995) first book, which focused on the role of EI in schools and distinguished how other abilities might matter more than intelligence test results. Later, Goleman's subsequent books and articles have focused mainly on the application of EI in the field of leadership (1998; 2000).

2.2.1 Emotional Intelligence and the Millennial generation

Emotional intelligence (EI) is also known by the term Emotional Quotient (EQ) or Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EIQ). The concept comprises the ability to understand and monitor their own's emotion as well as others'. The term gained even more popularity in the early 1990s and, since then, multiple researchers have been exploring the implications of a developed emotional intelligence to professional and personal life.

One of the most recognised researchers of the subject, Daniel Goleman (1995) popularised the topic in his celebrated book that places emotions at the centre of aptitudes for living. In his first book, Goleman (1995) crafted five factors that emotionally intelligent individuals should aim for: self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Later, Goleman (1999) described these five competencies in-depth to personal and organisational success. Within this theoretical framework, this study pursued to answer the research questions and objectives.

Studies on EI over the many years have been acknowledging the importance of using our emotions intelligently. Druskat and Wolf (1999) study of team effectiveness shows the value of EI in a work circle where the appropriate assessment of oneself and other's emotions directly affects the success of the whole team. However, to achieve emotional intelligence in a group is fundamental to recognise and understand oneself first.

In today's workplace, it is likely to find three even four generations such as Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y, known as the Millennials (Gladwell *et*

al., 2010). Each generation has their expectations and behaviours. Within the Millennials, there are undoubtedly common beliefs and opinions about the newest group to enter the workforce and the way they pursue and understand life. This generation has been stereotyped as lazy and entitled from older counterparts, also as a group that has inexistent EI.

Examinations throughout different generational groups showed that there was not a significant difference in emotional intelligence between the different cohorts (Akduman, Hatipoglu and Yuksekbilgili, 2015). Nevertheless, researches focus on personality aspects (Ordun and Akun, 2016) on Millennials rather than getting a grip on the perceived importance of EI to this generation.

2.2.2 Definition of Emotional Intelligence

There are three main definitions of EI that were explored for the conduction of this study, within some variations between them. Each model represents a perspective and authors highlight specific features for its importance. For instance, some specialist may concentrate on self-control, whereas others may concentrate on empathy.

While there is an expanding number of researchers adding new remarks to this field, consequently, various meanings of EI have risen in this literature review. As the idea of EI is not a consensus, the objective of defining EI it is not to determine which one is right. Notwithstanding, to present an understanding of its similarities and the concept which this research was underpinned.

The author Bar-On has been involved in conceptualising and researching Emotional Intelligence since 1980 and is acknowledged as one of the leading theorists and practitioners in this field. He coined the term "EQ" ("Emotional Quotient") in 1985 to describe his approach to assessing emotional and social competence. Moreover, Bar-On (1997) created the first test of emotional intelligence.

"Emotional intelligence is an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (p. 14).

Bar-On's conceptual model describes a display of how interrelated emotional and social competencies are and determine how successful individuals are at understanding and communicating themselves, understanding others and collaborating with them (Bar-On, 2007, p.3). The definition comprises emotional and social competencies that include five key components, as described below. Each one of them related to competencies and skills:

(a) "The ability to recognize, understand and express emotions and feelings;

(b) the ability to understand how others feel and relate with them;

(c) the ability to manage and control emotions;

(d) the ability to manage change, adapt and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature; and

(e) the ability to generate positive affect and be self-motivated" (Bar-On 2007, p.3).

As per Bar-On (2007), to be emotionally and socially intelligent means to effectively understand and express oneself well, besides being able to cope with daily demands and pressures accomplished by the development of intrapersonal ability and interpersonal ability.

The intrapersonal ability is the ability to be self-aware, to understand your strengths and weaknesses, and to express your feelings and thoughts. While the interpersonal ability is the ability to be aware of others' emotions, feelings and needs, and to establish and maintain a relationship. In order to be emotionally and socially intelligent individuals have to combine these two abilities managing these emotions to work for them and not against.

One of the most significant researchers on EI, Salovey and Mayer (1990) rested in the belief that people who have developed skills linked to emotional intelligence would understand and process their own and others' emotions states being able to take advantage for solving problems and regulate behaviour. Further years later, the authors revised their previous definition and completed:

> *"Emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion, the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought, the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge, and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth"* *Salovey and Mayer (1997, p.10).*

Salovey's and Mayer's (1997) four main domains of Emotional Intelligence are in concordance with Goleman (1999).

> *"Emotional Intelligence refers to the capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationship"* *(p 317).*

As stated by Goleman (1995, 1998) the EI determines our potential for learning practical skills of life. The author based these skills on five elements: self-awareness (knowing your emotion), motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and social skill, explained below:

(a) <u>Self-awareness</u> means understanding one's strengths, weaknesses, drives, values and impact on others. The hallmark of this individual includes self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, self-deprecating sense of humour and openness to constructive criticism.

(b) <u>Self-regulation</u> characteristic is related to control or redirect impulses and moods. The hallmarks of this ability include trustworthiness, integrity and comfort with ambiguity and changes.

(c) <u>Motivation</u> means being driven towards the achievement for its own sake. The main features of this characteristic are: having a passion for the work itself and for new challenges and optimism in the face of failure

(d) <u>Empathy</u> means considering others' feelings, principally when making a decision. The characteristic of this component are: having expertise in attracting and retaining talent, the ability to develop others and being sensitivity to cross-cultural differences.

(e) <u>Social Skill</u> means the ability to manage relationships to move people in the desired direction. The main characteristics are: the success in leading change, persuasiveness, extensive networking, expertise in building and leading teams (Goleman, 1995; 1998; 2000).

In his work throughout the years, Goleman studies focus on performance at work and organisational leadership. From the definitions mentioned above of EI, it is possible to conclude that various forms of definitions of EI have arisen in the literature as researchers focused on the different aspects of EI. Despite that, Goleman's work is not unanimity in academia.

In respect to emotional intelligence, Locke (2005) claims that the concept is invalid for first, not being a form of intelligence and, second, it is defined so broadly and inclusively that it has no intelligible meaning. Furthermore, he affirms that because emotions are based on "subconsciously stored beliefs and values, they cannot be assumed to be valid assessments of reality" (Locke, 2005, p.8).

Additionally, the author affirms that emotional intelligence in itself is not another form or type of intelligence, but intelligence (the ability to grasp abstractions) applied to a particular life domain: emotions. He criticises the concept and suggests that should be re-labelled "If we want to talk about how well a person has mastered a certain domain, we already have a word for it: skill" (Locke, 2005, p.9).

2.2.3 Emotional Competence

The first competency model was created by the psychologist David McClelland (1973), that classified competencies in two clusters: traditional cognitive, which involves reading, writing and calculating skills; and personality variables, such as communication skills, patience, moderate goal setting, ego development. This

definition was later criticised by one of the authors' collaborators, Boyatzis (1982) who defines competencies as "underlying characteristics of the person that led to or caused effective or superior performance", such as a trait, skills or a body of knowledge that the individual uses.

Boyatzis (2008, 2009) also made an amend to his previous definition and completed that competency as a capability or ability, which is a set of different but related behaviours organised around an underlying construct called the "intent". The study conducted by McClelland (1973) inspired David Goleman studies about Emotional Intelligence and the five components of "Emotional Intelligence at Work", which has lead to studies that transcend the business field.

The term "emotional competence" is used by Goleman (1998) to refer to a capability based on Emotional Intelligence that may result in exceptional performance at work. For the author, there are two emotional competencies that are fundamental: personal competence, which involves how we read and manage ourselves, and social competence, which comprehend how we manage our relationships.

On top of that, is the emotional competence is a capability that is learned. In the workplace, for instance, these competencies must be adapted to each environment depending on its needs. Goleman (1998) gives an exemplification of a dialogue with a former manager of a Tech industry, which acknowledges that all the employees are very bright; however, the ones who made the difference on their results annually were the ones who could exert their emotional competencies in collaborate, motivate and work in harmony.

2.2.4 Emotional Intelligence versus Intelligence Quotient

"The importance attached to the number [IQ test] is not entirely inappropriate: after all, the score on an intelligence test does predict one's ability to handle school subjects, though it foretells little of success in later life". (Goleman, 1998, p.3)

In the literature, it seems to be an agreement that academic intelligence has little to do with emotional life, as people with high IQ can be found behaving with

uncontrollable impulses and people with low IQ might manage more effectively their professional and personal lives (Goleman, 1995). Moreover, as reported by Romanelli *et al.* (2006) research, evaluations of academic performance do not capture many intangible characteristics, behavioural variations, and traits that may be more successful for professional and life in general.

This finding is supported by McClelland (1973) and Goleman (1995), as both authors disagree with the requirement of intelligence and aptitude tests (IQ) that are used to select student and employees. They defend that neither can predict real-life competency outcomes

A study revealed that the IQ contributes for about 20% to the factor that determines life success and the vast majority, 80% is determined by a non-IQ factor, for instance (Gardner, 1994). Moreover, the IQ assessments take the second position to emotional intelligence in determining outstanding performance in companies, for instance (Goleman, 1995; 1998).

Gardner's important book "Frames of Mind" (1983) also refuted the IQ view and broadened the concept of intelligence. It proposed that its more than results from academic tests but rather an understanding of the human brain. In agreement, Sternberg (1999) findings show that IQ tests only measure is an achievement on logical-abstract thinking skills that students learn in school.

2.3 Mixed Model Theory components

2.3.1 Self-awareness

Everyone reacts to emotions differently, and this trait refers to the ability to recognise your emotions at each time. Emotional Intelligent individuals manage to regulate themselves effectively to contribute to their well-being and to others around, being conscious that experiencing temporarily discomfort is a part of the process to achieve significant objectives (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

 Individuals who are self-aware of their emotions are able to make others understand the priorities in specific scenarios (Abraham, 1999). Additionally, self-knowledge people are comfortable with their limitations and present less discomfort talking about it (Goleman, 2000). This trait main capabilities are the

ability to realistically self-evaluate oneself and, due to that, improve self-confidence.

2.3.2 Self-regulation

Researchers define that self-regulation is a process of "maintaining and modulating the occurrence, intensity, or duration of the internal feeling state" (Eisenberg *et al.*, 1997, p.295). The authors also defend that perform self-regulation on themselves are expected to have a beneficial reaction towards stressful events. The ability of self-management is directly related to self-awareness, as the conscientiousness provides you with the tools to improve.

This idea proposed by Eisenberg *et al.* (1997) is in agreement with Goleman (2000) who state that this is the component that expresses that individuals are in control of their feelings and impulses, and they find ways to manage them and address them in useful ways.

2.3.2 Motivation

The third component of the model is related to the desire for achievement. Furthermore, enthusiasm for challenges that do not restrain to financial compensations or positions (Goleman, 2004). Positive moods may also motivate some individuals and, therefore, enhance their confidence in succeeding a task. Likewise, concern over an activity to be performed might also be a motivation for higher performance (Abraham, 1999).

2.3.3 Empathy

In relation to others, empathy is the foundation of emotional evaluation through measuring emotions in others and comprehending others feelings (Abraham, 1999; Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Likewise, Eisengberg *et al.* (1994) affirms that

is a secondary response to the other person experience. This ability has its basis in emotional awareness (Ioannidou and Konstantikaki, 2008; Goleman, 2004)

Empathy means to recognise others' feelings, the causes of these feelings, and to be able to participate in the emotional experience of an individual without becoming part of it (Ioannidou and Konstantikaki, 2008). According to Goleman (1998, p.96), "the more open we are to our own emotions, the more skilled we will be in reading feelings".

2.3.4 Social Skill

Social Skill is a trait that can be easily misunderstood. This component of EI goes beyond the ability to make friends. Socially skilled people, in general, have an adeptness for discovering shared views with individuals of various types, which means that they have a vast network in place (Goleman, 2004). Furthermore, Abraham (1999) describes that this component of increases and improves group collaboration. In addition, Prati *et al.* (2003) studies claim that an increased level of self-aware benefit social facilitation as an emotionally intelligent individual is aware of its action and the impact that they may cause.

2.4 The Millennial Cohort

The definition of a generation is "all of the people born and living at about the same time, regarded collectively" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2002), usually considered to be a period of 25 to 30 years. Social scientists defend that there are four generations in society: Baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y, also known as the millennial generation and the Generation Z (Schroth, 2019; Meredith and Schewe, 1994).

"Generation" refers more to the experiential essence, born in an identifiable timeframe yet characterized more by their shared experience (Cutler, 2015). The generations cohorts enable entities the opportunity to measure public attitudes on key issues and documenting differences in those attitudes across variances such as gender, culture, politics, and other factors. In fact, it is through these

techniques that the understanding of how different experiences such as world events, technological, economic interact with people's life and perspective.

In order to proceed to further discussions, it is necessary to define the years that the Millennials were born. There is a slight variance in the literature about the cutoff point between Millennials and the next generation, known as Z. As the generational cutoff point is not an exact science, for this study, it is chosen to follow the time frame of people born between 1980 and 2000 (Aydogmus, 2016; DeVaney, 2015; Cutler, 2015; Gong *et al.* 2018), ages 19 to 39 in 2019.

Millennials gained their name as its oldest members came of age at the beginning of the new millennium. The most emblematic events in the millennials' witnessed: globalism, the attacks on September 11, 2001 and the internet establishment, where they are globally connected through the Internet and social media (National Endowment for Financial Education, 2015; Ordun and Akun, 2016).

The literature on millennials portrays them as confident, self-expressive, liberal, open to change, connected, multi-task and parallel processes (Krishen and Berazan, 2016; Prensky, 2011; Pew Research, 2010). Millennials were raised in a supportive and protective environment where their natural mindset led them to value and initiate innovation (Gong et. al, 2018).

Millennials facility with digital equipment and social media enabled them to use these tools as their first choice to solve problems. Therefore, their habit of text messaging over emails and other interactions foster non-traditional collaboration at the workplace and their personal lives.

This group is distinct from previous generations as Millennials will involve 50% of the global workforce by 2020 (PwC, 2011) and 75% of the worldwide workforce between 2025 and 2030, being the first generation to become adults in the digital age (E.Y, 2015; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). The group has aspiration and desire to continue learning as they want and still find a adaptable way to deal with work, getting regular feedback and encouragement.

Millennials consisted of 83.1 million people in the United States in 2015, more than one-quarter of the nation's population. In the United States, for instance, millennials are more diverse than the generations as the Baby Boomers, with 44.2% being part of a minority race or ethnic group (U.S Bureau of Labor

Statistics, 2015). Therefore, it seems evident the necessity to understand the emotional abilities in this generation in the face of the proximity of this group becoming the majority in the workforce.

2.4.1 Millennials: Digital and Technological Natives

Known as the first "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001), the "always on-line generation", and the ones who always expect to have information instantly available in just one click, the Millennials grew up in the Internet Age. In contrary to other generations as the Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) who experienced the expansion of television and the beginning of the world connected through a device, Millennials live in a technological environment in which the rapid evolution of how people communicate and interact is still in mutation.

This generation access and interact with information and learning differently from their antecedents. Educators assume that learners are the same, and they have always been. Therefore, they tend to use the same methods that worked for years. However, as Prensky (2001) affirms, it is highly unlikely that the Digital Natives will go backwards in their way of experiencing learning and multitasking. If instructors make their education not worth paying attention, Millennials want to learn but not only through text-books anymore. Data from 2001 mention that an average college graduate has spent less than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games and 20,000 hours watching TV (Prensky, 2001).

It is not surprising that many social media networks founders are all millennials as, for example, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat. Burstein (2013, p.54) claims that "the power for the young to influence and create new technology has grown tremendously in the last decade". Constant connectivity, on-demand entertainment and communication are just a few innovations that are intrinsic to the millennial's habits.

Continuously more, millennials opt to new the internet – including social media – as their primary source for national and international news over conventional media, such as television, newspaper, radio. Only 24% of millennials affirms they

get most of their news from a newspaper, while 59% relies on the Internet for news (Pew Research, 2010).

Even though the source of information has changed, millennials constitute in a global scale "the most educated, most informed, and most interconnected generation in history, making them highly desirable employees and business partners for the IC[intelligence community]" (Weinbaum, p. 2, 2016).

2.4.2 The relationship of Millennials within the workplace

Millennials are challenging changing the shape of workplaces as this talent pool is desired and coveted by the companies in all sectors. The millennial generation is heavily influenced by the Internet in the way they work, think, and behave. Email, smartphones, and other technological innovations have proliferated over the past 20 to 30 years and they can be seen as an extension of their human bodies.

According to demographic researchers, Millennials behave differently from older generations in significant ways. In 2013, Gewald *et al.* (2017) conducted an international study involving 402 students in their final year of undergraduate study just before entering the workplace. Their findings show that these groups share a common set of values regardless of nationality, including motivational drivers.

The competition for the talent is fierce given the necessity for a talented workforce in the technological environment today, managers have to be prepared to adapt and offer this new generation working conditions that are attractive (Gewald *et al.,* 2017).

On the other hand, companies have started to expect from their employees the 24/7 connectedness that arises from the technology use. The trend of IT consumerization explains this process of blending private and business life when it comes to the use of technology. Private owned laptops, tablets and other devices are used now for business tasks. (Gewald *et al.*, 2017; Weiß and Leimeister, 2012).

Researchers expect and believe that this mix has a positive influence on employees' work performance as creates more flexibility and mobility (Köffer *et al.*, 2015). Nevertheless, the use of private owned devices at work might also create additional stress for the employee and employer as when responding work-related messages when not at work due to the blurred boundaries between private and professional (Derks *et al.*, 2015; Anlauf *et al.*, 2015; and Niehaves *et al.*, 2012).

As baby boomers exit the workforce, millennials are entering the workforce daily. This generational shift is changing the standard of long-standing recruiting, hiring and practices for companies and is forcing reevaluations of enterprise information technology (IT) investments and career paths.

Innovation roles are becoming especially important for this generation, thus, they are equally ready for challenges of this nature in their roles (Gong, Ramkissoon, Greenwood and Hoyte, 2018). Also, the generational change has coincided with a trend of the moving away from traditional organisational careers as they aim for career paths that provide flexibility and mobility across career boundaries, such as job rotation opportunities (Lyons, Schweitzer and Ng., 2015).

Global research conducted by Delloite in 2018 surveyed 10,455 millennials across 36 countries with 202 Irish millennials participating. In one of their findings, millennials reported the top priorities when considering an employer. Financial rewards and benefits are seen as the most crucial factor when choosing an employer (74%). However, 64% are strived by flexibility, and 57% who look for positive organisational culture.

Another exciting result of the investigation is that 40% of Irish Millennials are open to engaging in temporary work as an option to have more flexibility. These results suggest that while there is still a desire for some form of stability, millennials are looking beyond traditional careers and are open to alternative models. It is suggested that in order to compete for the millennial workforce, organisations should review their traditional structure (Delloite, 2018; Lyon *et al.*, 2017 and Köffer *et al.*, 2015). In agreement, research conducted by PwC (2018) estimates that the number of US workers in full-time permanent employment will drop to 9% of the workforce in 2030, an all-time low.

A report produced on attracting, engaging and retaining millennials talents highlight the main characteristics to engage this workforce are the work conditions that encourage their creativity and hobbies; an attractive work experience; communication with transparency; and flexibility on their work hours and location (KMPG, 2017).

2.5 Technology Companies in Dublin

The advancement of technology has brought countless benefits to man, the main thing is to make work tasks simple and, therefore, more productive. The evolution of technology reveals, at each moment of its history, a profound interaction between the incentives and opportunities that favour technological innovations and the sociocultural conditions of the human group in which they occur. The birth of technology can not be dissociated from the very emergence of man on the planet. The advancement in technology has been exceptionally fast in the 20th and 21st century.

Innovation and agility have turned out to be basic essential elements for any organisation or industry. Moreover, the changing in technology is not a debate for the future of work, it is already happening, and it is dynamic and moving fast. The technology sector has exponentially grown and represents a considerable portion of developed and industrialized nations.

Ireland's National Statistical office disclosed in their Census 2016 that there were 2,006,641 people at work in Ireland in April of that fiscal year. The sector that showed the most significant increase was the IT, rising by 21,262 to 59,376, a growth of almost 56% in five years. By the end of 2019, studies estimate that 60% of enterprises in the world will run the majority of their IT operations through cloud infrastructure or another platform service (Rayome, 2018).

A depth of understanding into the changing technology landscape it is vital for companies to survive. New technologies are arising and affecting every level of the business and its people as the four technology improvements: Automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Everything (IoE), cloud platforms, blockchain, and many more.

For instance, researchers point out that companies are opting to use the innovation and savviness of Startups instead of taking unnecessary risk in buying complex technologies in areas of artificial intelligence and cloud platforms (Deloitte, 2019).

Tech companies are likely to continue investing in and nurturing smaller companies as Startups as they add niche capabilities and innovative ideas. Established companies also pay close attention to new business ventures and have been acquired for their portfolio as a strategy to mitigate competition. The multinational Google acquired during the years the mapping service Waze and video-sharing website Youtube. In June of 2019, the company acquire Looker, a "unified platform for business intelligence, data applications and embedded analytics" (Alphabet, 2019).

2.5.1 Tech Startups and the Millennial workforce in Dublin

The new millennium brought the diffusion of companies who took ownership of a new business vision. Technology Entrepreneurship or Tech Startups is a venture that offers many young entrepreneurs a chance to chase their dreams. The concept of a Startup is "an organization formed to search for a repeatable and scalable business model" (Blank, 2010). Most Startup business models are initially wrong, therefore, they must be agile and opportunistic, having to adapt themselves quickly and often to find the correct business model that will let them succeed in the competitive market. Yet, Startups are not a smaller version of large companies. The main difference that distinguishes a Startup from a establish company is that companies execute a business model, while Startups are looking for one to lead them to success (Blank, 2013).

The Silicon Valley, in the United States, is home and has consolidated the giants Apple, Facebook and Google, becoming a cradle of Startups and diffuser pole of the creative economy. The essence of a Startup is its ability to scale the business and grow rapidly and its adaptability. To survive in today's market, it is imperative for companies to learn how to make adjustments to their mindsets to encourage employees to learn new skills and accept the flexibility that is pursued by the

workforce. Understanding those needs from the employees' point of view is a characteristic many Startups has, which also contributes to their success in the fast-paced environment of the tech industry.

Entrepreneurs strategies for this type of venture must be different from established large firms being, however, at the same time it needs to be functional, innovative and surprising. The success in established markets is attributed to the power of being able to continue creating and being invisible in the market, which creates their competitive advantage to other competitors (Katila, Chen and Piezunka, 2012). Stayton and Mangematin (2016) pointed that time is a critical barrier for Startups to grow, expand and succeed in the market, also to create a competitive advantage internationally as the second stage of its development.

In Ireland, the country became the top address in Europe to attract Startup businesses as they have not only a low corporate tax, but also a government venture fund who invest in fast-growing companies (Blau, 2014). The incentives over the past years made the tech scene in Dublin become stronger each year. Dublin's docklands or Silicon Docks is the area where well-establish high-tech companies have their headquarters, also where a considerable portion of Startups are based.

The Irish county leapt from 33rd to ninth in the annual list of most competitive cities in the world for business activity and human capital (A.T. Kearney, 2019). The city performance is driven by the results in innovation and in the economy. Researchers suggest that "there are dynamic tensions between temporal, financial, and human resources in the technology Startup process" (Stayton and Mangematin, 2016, p.353) as there are many processes between product launch and its commercialisation in the market.

2.5.2 Millennials and Emotional Intelligence in a tech-enabled world

Millennials are the newest generation of employees to enter the labour force being digital natives. This generation plays a part in an environment that is rapidly changing and force them to adapt continuously. In literature and companies

reports, there is a misconception that automation and thinking machines are replacing human jobs.

Indeed, tech trends are reshaping the society and the workplace as well as the workforce. However, research findings show that that automation will alter the perceived value of some job roles. By substituting tasks that can be automated, employers will prioritise retain workers with EI and other skills (PwC, 2018).

A survey performed with 10,029 members of the general population-based in China, Germany, India, the UK and the U.S. showed that 73% of people believe that technology can never replace the human mind and 37% showed concern in respect of about automation being a threat to their jobs (PwC, 2018). There is a shift in how things will be organised. Despite the fact that automation might result in the liquidation of sectors and roles, people also believe that Artificial Intelligence will potentialize human abilities and traits, allowing them to focus on high-level strategy, thinking, creativity and decision making.

Emotional intelligence is a factor surrounding all sectors and influences job satisfaction. High levels of EI make atmospheres in which data sharing, trust and learning prosper increases opposed to a low level of EI, which boosts anxiety (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, 2002). Moreover, studies confirm that the job satisfaction of Millennials is to a large extent influenced by their EI (Aydogmus, 2016).

On a survey conducted yearly, millennials give their opinions on economic, social and political trends in Ireland. The majority of millennials expect to be both financially and emotionally worse than their parents (Delloite, 2018). The main issues that concern these millennials account for terrorism 38%; the environment 27%; crime 27%, healthcare 27% (Deloitte, 2018).

One thing that really defines the millennial generation is the internet boom and growing up with a new age of technology. The internet and social media agility in exchanging information and facilitating process led other generations to a misunderstanding that technology advancements stunted the emotional intelligence of the generation. However, it can be observed from the literature reviewed that Millennials are trying to build careers where they can not only professionally improve but also personally.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

According to Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill (2009, p.5), research can be explained as a process carried out in a systematic way which, at the end of this process, increases knowledge. Additionally, this process is also pursued with a clear purpose of answering one or multiple questions.

Similarly, Quinlan (2011, p.4) also highlight the importance of the research process to follow several steps in sequence. Firstly, from the point of carrying out an idea, subsequently, define one/multiple research question, then a development of a theoretical framework and, most importantly, select the methodology to reach the elucidation of the research questions.

This section explains the methodology followed in this study that has the primary purpose of understanding the perceived of Emotional Intelligence among Millennials in the Tech Startup sector.

Moreover, it describes the theories that were taken into consideration in terms of the research philosophy, research approach, research design and the methods used by the researcher in answering the research question as well as ethical considerations that support this investigation. Moreover, it briefly clarifies why they were chosen over alternative approaches.

3.1 Proposed methodology and its structure

In order to answer the research questions, the research methodology in this dissertation was derived from the "Research Onion" structure developed by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, p.108) that can be seen in the below figure.
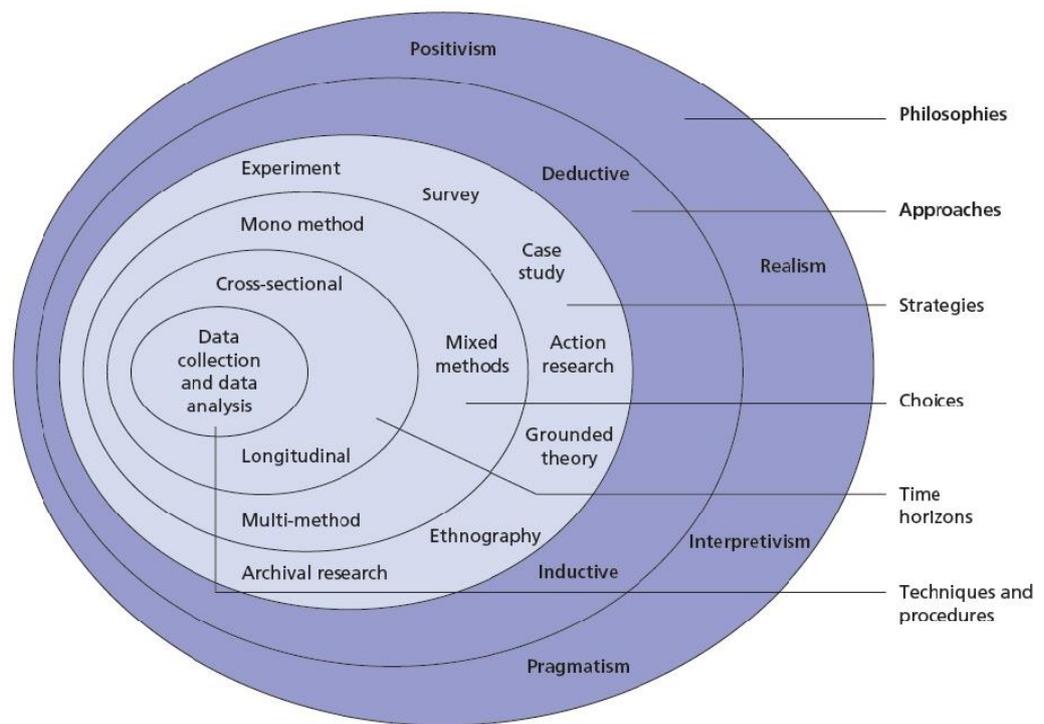
Figure 1: Research Onion

(Saunder, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 152)

Saunders *et al.* (2009) model suggest a meticulous structure in order to answer the research questions. The "onion" has different layers which served as a guideline throughout the research process: philosophy, approach, choice, strategy, time horizon and techniques and procedures.

3.2 Research philosophy

As per Sanders et at. (2009, p.107) the research philosophy term relates to "the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge". The main objective is to develop new knowledge from the findings, regardless of the subject being studied. Furthermore, the authors defend that there is no better research philosophy than the other, nonetheless, they are only better at explaining different subjects. The research philosophy holds the pillars about how the researcher understands the world and their beliefs about what is essential.

Hence, Saunders *et al.* (2009, p. 119) describe three different positions concerning research philosophies: epistemology, ontology and axiology. Ontology concerns the researcher's view of the nature of reality, therefore, raising questions about the way the world operates. Mason (2018, p.6) states that this approach involves asking what the researcher sees as the essence of things in the social world in the sense that everything is questionable.

Contrarily, axiology relates to the researcher's view of the role of values in research. In this philosophy, at all stages of the research, the researcher shows axiological skill by "being able to articulate their values as basis for making judgements about what research they are conducting and how they go about doing it" (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p.116).

The position which was adopted in this dissertation is **epistemological** where the researcher's view regarding what constitutes adequate knowledge (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p.119). Moreover, as Mason (2018, p. 7) defines, epistemology knowledge "should therefore concern the principles and rules by which you decide whether and how social phenomena can be known, and how knowledge can be validated and demonstrated". For this work, the researcher believes that the epistemological is the most appropriate choice since the researcher is concerned about the impact of Emotional Intelligence among Millennials and their evaluation will be taking into consideration for the development of understanding about the subject.

Additionally, the epistemology of this study follows an **interpretivism** philosophy which highlights the need to comprehend "differences between humans in our role as social actors" (Saunders *et al.* 2009, p.116). Quinlan (2011, p.99) also complements that interpretivism defends that all knowledge is a matter of interpretation. Other philosophies were considered as the positivism, which involves working with an observable social reality that will lead to the production of credible data similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998, p. 32). Nonetheless, this position would not allow the researcher to understand the subject and their point of view in the same way.

3.3 Research Approach

Before conducting this research both quantitative and qualitative methods were considered. According to Van Maanen (1979, p.520), qualitative research covers an "array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world". Similarly, Cooper and Schindler (2014, p.144) emphasise that this research method aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of a situation.

There is a distinction between qualitative and quantitative, the latter attempts to measure something with limited researcher involvement and large sample size. Henceforth, qualitative methods tend to be better suited to the interpretivism as the data represents feelings, thoughts, ideas, understandings (Quinlan, 2011 p.105) and its findings are open to interpretation. It was the researcher's belief that this study was better suited to **quantitative** research.

According to Sanders *et al.* (2009, p.124), research approaches can follow two fundamental theories: deduction and induction. In short, deductive approach is where you develop a theory which will guide how and what data will be collected and, then, analysed to see if its supports the theory or not (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005, p. 150).

The researcher believe that the **inductive** approach is the more indicated for this study as data will be collected and then a theory developed as a result of that data (Maylor and Balckmon, 2005; Saunders *et. al*, 2009). Also, this is an advantage for this study as it is relying on a conceptual framework.

This approach is suited to this study as the researcher can get a close understanding of the research context. In addition, Goleman's work (1995, 1998) is based on inductive research into emotional intelligence competencies. This approach is less concerned with the need to generalise than the deduction, where large samples are required in order to generalise conclusion (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p.127).

3.4 Research Strategy

For the research purpose, the three different methods in the literature are: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. This project will be based on an **exploratory** study as Saunders *et al.* (2012, p.171) stated that the emphasis of this method is a useful resource to "ask open questions to discover what is happening and gain insights". Another advantage of this type of research also facilitates the conduction of in-depth interviews.

Saunders *et al.* (2009) state that a strategy is a plan to achieve a goal, therefore, in order to answer research questions, it is critical to define a plan of how these questions are going to be presented. There are eight different research strategies: experiment; survey; archival research; case study; ethnography; action research; grounded theory and narrative enquiry.

Among the options that were analysed to conduct this research, the grounded theory was quoted as an option as considered one of the best examples of the inductive approach. By the same token, this method is hugely respected to predict and explain behaviour (Goulding, 2002, cited in Saunders, 2009, p. 149). However, this strategy starts without a formation of an initial framework and theory is only developed afterwards data collection (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p.149), which does not fit for the proposed research strategy.

Likewise, ethnography strategy was examined as a path as proposes to describe and explain the social world. Nevertheless, this strategy needs to be taken place over an extended time period to achieve the best results. Due to time limitation, this model was rejected.

Taking into consideration the research questions of this study, the researcher has decided to take **survey** principles for this investigation by using interviews for data collection. The survey approach allows the researcher to collect quantitative data which can be analysed using description and this method enables more control over the research process (Saunders *et al.* 2009, p. 144).

3.5 Research Choice

As stated by Saunders *et al.* (2009) there are two different methodological approaches for research: Mono and Multiple. The researcher has selected a **mono method research** for this study, using a single data collection technique with a qualitative data procedure (Saunders *et al.* 2009). The researcher acknowledges also that exploratory studies relies more on qualitative techniques (Cooper and Schindler, 2014).
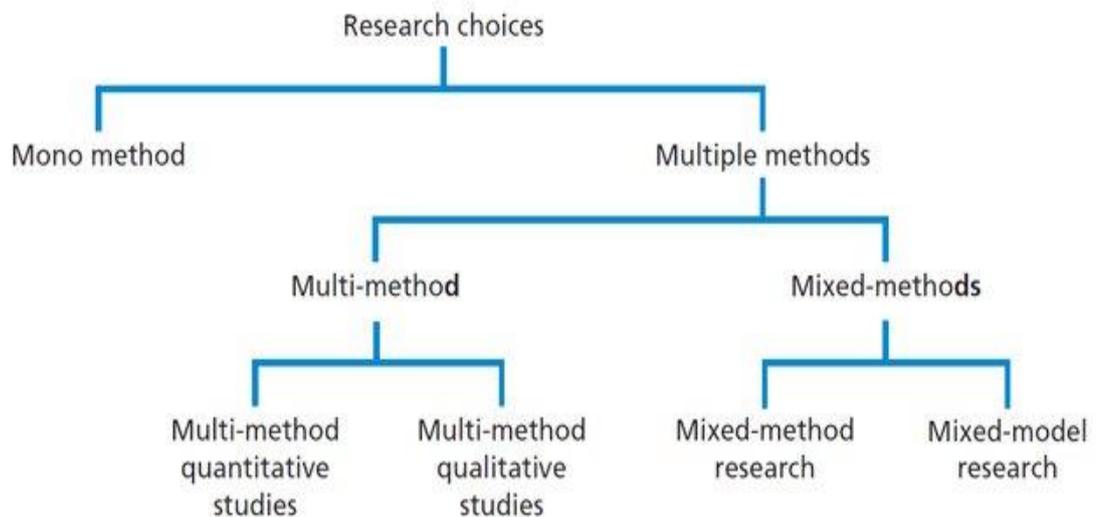
Figure 2: Research Choices
(Saunder, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 152)

Other researchers also have engaged in a similar research approach to examine Emotional Intelligence opting for qualitative data collection. Romanelli *et al.* (2006) conducted a qualitative method to perform the analysis of the varying degrees of Emotional Intelligence within the health professions. Equally important, Pau *et al.* (2004) investigated how dental school undergraduates with differing levels of EI cope with stress. Both relied on in-depth interview assessments.

3.6 Time Horizon

The time horizon for this study is **cross-sectional**. The cross-sectional studies provide the analysis and understanding of phenomena at a particular time providing a snapshot of the research subject (Collis and Hussey, 2005, p. 77). Another equally valuable way to conduct research is through a longitudinal study. Throughout the longitudinal studies, the researcher is able to conduct an investigation over a longer period of time (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 155). Due to time constraints and limited resources during this research process, the longitudinal study would not be possible to be pursued.

3.7 Data Collection

The credibility is a fundamental criterion for any research, therefore, variables such as **reliability** and **validity** were taken into consideration throughout every step of this investigation in order to effectively conduct a valuable study. The issue of reliability refers to which if the data collection techniques or the analysis will produce accurate and consistent results (Cooper and Schindler, 2014, p.260). Reliability concern the credibility of the findings (Collis and Hussey, p. 64, 2009).

As per Saunders *et al.* (2009, p.156), threats to reliability include the participant or subject bias and the participant or subject error. Moreover, validity corresponds to the "extent to which a test will measure what we actually want to know" (Cooper and Schindler, 2014, p.257). Therefore, protocols and procedures that establish the authenticity of the findings were put in place in order to ensure this matter.

3.8 Secondary Data Collection

The identification of helpful secondary data it was fundamental to guide the research questions of this study and address to its objectives. The use of existing literature on a topic gives the researcher the ability to develop its own arguments and also to interpret what other scholars have written to complement its own

investigation (Bryman and Bell, 2003, p. 95). There are a plethora of researchers about Emotional Intelligence and its relation to leadership, organisations and other scopes. Therefore, the secondary data material is an invaluable source to distinguish between studies that have been done and explore further possibilities.

As per Saunders *et al.* (2009), this source means that has been already collected for research and it is composed by raw data or published material from organisations which can be helpful for an investigation (i.e., minute of meetings, census of population, company reports, etc.). Saunders *et al.* (2009) divide the secondary data into three main groups: documentary, multiple source and survey.
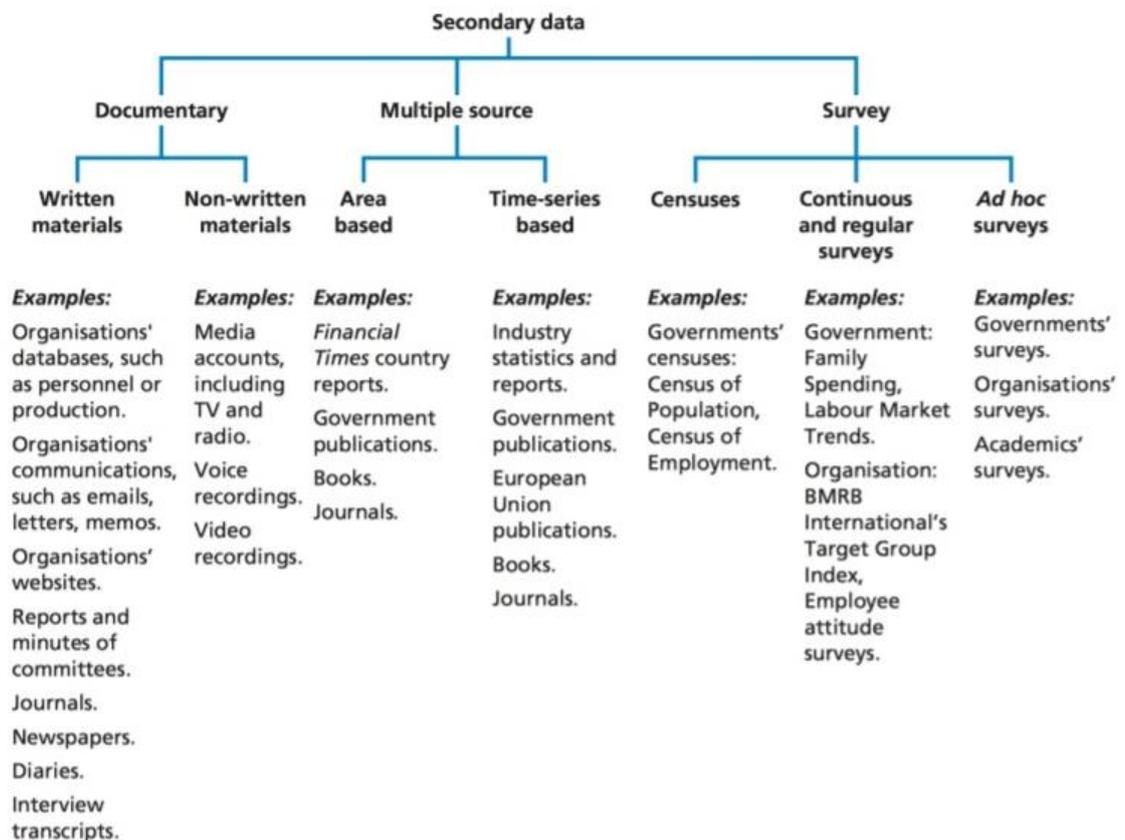

Figure 3: Types of secondary data
(Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 259)

The researcher relied on all three types of sources to gather information for this study as data compiled in books, journals, industry reports and government

census. Also, the electronic academic database of National College of Ireland served as one of the main sources to access secondary data.

3.9 Qualitative Primary Data Collection: Semi Structure Interview

In the literature that are many research strategies in order to collect the primary data. Among the methods analysed to pursue the objective of this research, and taking into consideration the research limitations, the most appropriate method chosen was the semi-structured interview. According to Bryman and Bell (2003, p. 213), this term covers a context where the interview proposes several questions, however, the interviewer still has some freedom to ask further questions to what is seen noteworthy.

As described by Saunders *et al.* (2009) the approach towards the questioning is utter important as addressing the appropriate interview themes to be successful. During the questioning, there are three types of questions that can be made: open questions, probing questions, and specific and closed. The researcher opted to make use of mainly **open questions**. This type of questions allows the interviewee to answer in detail, develop their thoughts and elucidate responses for more complex topics.

Similarly to any other method, interviews have potential pros and cons and both scenarios were carefully analysed. In terms of advantages, interviews offer the benefit of exploration of meaning and richness of information, which can lead to creditably qualitative information about individuals. Moreover, this method also provides the interactivity and allows the researcher to check the individuals understanding of a question. Therefore, clarification can be made, and misunderstandings can be avoided (Cameron and Price, 2009, p.367).

The time required to conduct interviews is one of the biggest challenges to be administred. Not only the time spent interviewing is time-consuming, but also the preparation process and dealing with unforeseen situations as reschedules and cancellations (Cameron and Price, 2009, p.369).

Another point evaluated was the recording decision. Some respondents may feel anxious about being recorded. Nonetheless, the equipment may also not work

properly and interviews take a long time to transcribe and analyse (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2009, p. 196). The reflection over the use of the method led to the conviction that more detailed answers information would be found and this would benefit the findings of this research.

3.9.1 Population

Bryman and Bell (2003,p. 93) define a sample as the segment of the population that is selected for investigation. For this research, a **non-probability** sample design was chosen since the probability of each member of the population was unknown (Saunders *et al.* , 2009, p. 213).

The selection of the population took place according to convenience technique, known as **convenience sampling**. This choice of method is due to its convenient accessibility and rapidness of data collection (Cameron and Price, 2009, p. 228; Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p.241). Thus, according to Lewis (2003, p.108), the qualitative research sample does not have to be "large as these are not the concern of the qualitative research".

The researcher chose this sample based on the following criteria:

- The individuals must work within the Tech Startup organisation.
- The individuals must have been born between 1980 and 2000.
-

Employee	Year of birth	Date	Experience
A	1988	22nd July	+2 years
B	1981	24th July	+1 year
C	1991	29th July	+1 year
D	1985	29th July	+1 year
E	1998	30th July	+2 years
F	1984	31st July	+1 year

Figure 4: Participants profile

The interviews were conducted an agreed place by both parties. Consent was obtained from all parties taking part in the interview process, both written and oral before the interviews took place. Each party signed a consent form and agreed at the start of each recorded interview.

3.9.2 Analysis Qualitative Data

As discussed by Saunders *et al.* (2011, p.480), the process of analysing qualitative data is based on examination and understanding the meaning of your material in order o develop theory from there.

There are five different inductively approaches towards analysing qualitative data comprising of grounded theory method, template analysis, thematic analysis, narrative analysis and discourse analysis.

For the purpose of this research, a template analysis was used as stated by Cassell and Symon (2004, p. 256) this method assists the researcher to thematically organise and analyse textual data. This template analysis allows the researcher to produce a list of codes representing identified themes. As this research was conducted, themes were defined a priori; however, as Cassel and Symon (2004, p.256) point, these can be modified and added accordingly to its necessities. The template analysis helped the researcher to search for the pattern through different data that has been collected, identifying patterns and compare perspectives of the participants (Sanders *et al.* 2009, p.506)

The interviews were audio recorder and subsequently transcribed by the researcher to take out the relevant findings. Additionally, the researcher listened to the audios to make the indication of participants tones and hesitations which provide more interpretation to their findings (Corti *et al.*, 2014, p.63). All recordings will be destroyed after the award has in work for this dissertation.

3.10 Ethical

An item critical to conduct any research is that should follow ethical behaviour. Cooper and Schindler (2014, p.28) define ethics as norms and behaviours which guide our choices. In addition to that, Cameron and Price (2009, p. 117) have broken down ethical principles in business research into 4 main areas.

- Legal obligations
- Professional obligations
- Cultural obligations
- Personal obligations

These rules are pillars which this research was underpinned. Researchers are legally obliged to follow rules which rule the society they are in. In agreement with the General Data Protection Regulation (2016) recital nº33, the individuals who had their data collected should be to give their consent on scientific research when in keeping with recognised ethical standards are respected.

Moreover, as part of the professional obligation is to ensure the credibility to the research (Cameron and Price, 2009, p.118). When conducting the interview, both ethical issues were factors that the researcher was concerned. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants were protected at all times.

Cultural obligations and personal obligations correspond, respectively, to informal rules in which people tend to behave and choices regarding individuals behaviours, values and beliefs. As any research involving humans, this study utterly aimed to respect all participants and looked for voluntary participation with no coercion.

Participants on this research were secured by an informed consent with specific permission required for audio recording with a right to withdraw at any time (Cooper and Schindler, 2014, p.30).

3.11 Limitations to the research

This research sought to adopt a qualitative approach to gather data in relation to the mixed model theory proposed by Goleman (1995). To pursue that, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with six Millennials workers in Startup companies.

However, this study has potential limitations that may have caused some restrictions to the findings. The primary limitation is the size of the sample population, which is quite low. Individuals who agreed to participate in the research may not be reflective of the majority of millennials workers in Startups, therefore, results cannot be generalised.

The researcher also acknowledges that time constraints (Cooper and Schindler, 2014, p.228). The interview process should have taken place earlier in the process whereby more participants would have been able to take part. Also, meeting participants for interviews was challenging due to their disponibility.

Another limitation of the study was that the emotional intelligence questions were administered in relation to their own experiences. Therefore bias responses may be given by the participants.

A further study could account for a larger sample and analyse the impact on the findings.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methodology used by the researcher. The purpose of this chapter is to present the results from the primary data research gathered for this study. The interviews were conducted at an individual face to face level and then an analysis took place whereby the focus is to understand more of the individual self-perception of emotional intelligence and its competences highlighted for this study.

Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills were the Emotional Intelligence components chosen for studying. The results will be broken down into these five categories, followed by respective competencies that are being investigated. Moreover, the researcher analysed the findings and provides a discussion of these respective findings using template analysis.

4.1 Millennials understanding of Emotional Intelligence

The literature on emotional intelligence has shown that individuals described as emotionally intelligent are able to develop themselves in five main pillars, however, that does not implicate that individuals will master all components but have an understanding of them (Goleman, 1995, 1998). There are a few research papers in relation to Millennials and its link with EI, nevertheless there is also not much clarity from the existing literature about the understanding of the importance of being emotionally intelligent by this generation. Hence, this research addresses this generation and the finding of this research will go into the existing pool that would further questionings for future research.

All participants of this study were asked at the beginning of the interviews if they were aware of the concept of Emotional Intelligence. Afterwards, the definition of the Goleman (1999) reviewed in Chapter 2 was given. The main objective was to examine if the Millennials on the study have ever come across to the theme and, mainly if they consider this significant for their working life.

Most of the participants showed consciousness of the existence of the topic and also what they understand by the term. For Participant D, EI means how an individual adapts to situations and how they can someone. He completes that is also how you can read the characteristics coming off the person whom an individual is dealing with.

"So that's what emotional intelligence would just be your capability to read the kind of feelings behind whatever decisions you make the question someone asked you" (Participant D).

Other participants also emphasized how their own EI has been growing over the years and for participant G, an individual learn and develop its own EI from mistakes.

4.1.1 – Objective **1 Research findings**

"Investigate the perceived importance of Self-Awareness".

These research findings outline the understanding of self-awareness, a fundamental principle to emotional intelligence according to the literature reviewed. This competence leads individuals to be able to operate within the norms established for each role. Emotionally intelligent individuals are aware of the way they behave, and of labels that are placed upon them (Averill, 1980). In this manner, self-awareness involves learning to monitor ourselves and understanding the reason behind them, as well as how they are being presented to others.

4.1.1.1 – Feedback importance awareness

The interviewees were asked about the value attributed to feedback in work. Obtaining the other's perspective is one of the self-awareness components. Analysing the interviews, all the participants stated that this practice is highly cultivated in the Startups they work for.

Participant A believes in the necessity and worthiness of feedback as a mechanism that facilitates the understanding of mutual expectations, also this practice sheds light where improvements can be made. This argument goes along with participant C, who highlights that feedback is more than prosecuting someone for a mistake but a useful manner to change things.

This statement bears close proximity to existing secondary literature emphasising that "individuals who are self-aware understand the role they must portray, a role that is assigned by the community in which they interact" (Prati *et al.,* 2003, p.24).

Performance is one of the most emotionally charged activities in business life (Thompson and Dalton, 1970, p. 150). In the business model of Startups it can be observed throughout the interviews that the feedback implemented by them is less bureaucratic than SMEs and multinationals.

Conversely, participant B beliefs that not all feedback is essential, more specifically when the timing is off or it is too critical. Moreover, there is the necessity of "be sensitive about when to offer feedback and what feedback to offer" (Participant B).

Likewise, according to Thompson and Dalton (1970, p.150), a professional performance may be affected depending on the assessment of his performance as an impact on its self-esteem. A similar pattern of results was obtained by Graziano and Waschull (1995), where it shows that individuals that have their self-awareness more developed are able to use the available feedback, however, this could affect individuals negatively.

Notwithstanding, the findings of another study conducted on physicians incorporating feedback routine as a tool for professional practise demonstrate that it can be effective for preventing disruptive behaviours and improved the professional's emotional intelligence (Hammerly *et al.* , 2014).

4.1.1.2 – Emotional and physical awareness

An exploration of the consciousness of the reasons that might cause emotional and physical reactions were investigated in Millennials. The participants were questioned about the awareness of which situations or behaviours provoke a

strong emotional reaction on them. Likewise, it was inquired if the interviewees understood the physical effects that accompany and its relation to their emotions.

The understanding of the reasons behind these causes as well as the response to these reactions is a part of the awareness. Every participant had a different response to this questioning. The first reaction of all the interviewees was hesitation accompanied to a brief moment of reflection.

Participant A and C have similar answers. Both are triggered in the face of unexpected urgent assignment tasks that were not their responsibility. Likewise, they also refer to more stress linked to their previous workplace than in the Startup sector such as acid reflux, grinding teeth and back pain.

Findings on studies of EI showed the effect on reducing emotional symptoms like, for instance stress (Mikolajczak *et al.*, 2009) and a more developed EI can impact on the experimentation of this.

Participant D admits that does not work satisfactorily during the night and having to deal with it makes him feel frustrated. As a part of a team where the participant has to interact with many people continuously, the interviewee has its own system to deal with this stress being more reclusive whenever is off work.

Interviewee B express that has faced many physical reactions as a result of emotional tension. "I've had extreme stress problems in my other work that resulted in breathing problems. I still work under a lot of stress, less than before, but I suffer from paranoia because I believe I don't take care of my health. I feel a lot of body aches are related to how I deal with work".

Questioned if the participant understands its emotions, participant F and E responded negatively.

Lea *et al.* (2019) reached similar findings as Mikolajczak *et al.* (2009), and the research showed that people with higher levels of emotional intelligence related to less physical discomfort such as on dental procedure and these individuals relate to faster recovery from acute stress.

4.1.1.3 – Self-confidence assessment

The confidence about one's self-worth is another component of self-awareness as present on Goleman (2000) researches. As the author presented, self-aware individuals are able to speak accurately and frankly about how their emotions have an impact on their work. Goleman (2000) results show that individuals are comfortable talking about their weaknesses and strengths have a higher level of emotional intelligence than who interpret the message that they need to improve as a sign of failure.

Participants A and B admitted not being able to clearly see their strengths and limitations. As per B, the interviewee was more aware of its faults and enumerated them as "a little lack of empathy, impatience, making decisions without looking at the whole ends up affecting my work environment".

An emotionally intelligent individual aware of its own strengths and weaknesses may use their confidence in their capabilities and, therefore, persist in the face of obstacles more straightforwardly (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2000).

Participant F highlight that is "systematic in a very pedantic way. I'm reliable as well. So, people can rely on me doing something" which, according to the interviewee became a flaw as it can find the work-life balance sometimes.

Overall, participants are aware of their weaknesses. Participant G admitted that his most significant weakness in the past was his roller coaster of emotions. However, this awareness is making the participant trying to control its impulses.

4.2 – Objective 2 Research findings

"Investigate the perceived importance of Self-Regulation".

This section addresses the comprehension of self-regulation on individuals. This competence leads individuals to control, redirect moods and think before acting (Goleman, 2000).

4.1.2.1 – Self-control and Conscientiousness

In this section, the question proposed aimed to assess how participants manage disruptive emotions and impulses, and responsibility. These research findings demonstrated parallels to the findings of Goleman (2000) that individuals with a more developed self-regulation skill control of their feelings and impulses better.

Participant D and F showed a better understanding of their emotions and moods, as long as actions taken in order to prevent conflict or other incidents. Participant D affirms to remove himself of the situation and then to come back to it, after "I'll just go into a back room and just punch pillows, screaming to a pillow".

Akduman *et al.* (2014) research on generational differences in the workplace recognised that there is a sizeable difference in the skill of self-control on Millennials. Their studies also revealed that self-regulation appears to increase with age.

Participant C admitted recognising not understanding himself mood at a present situation which will only be understood days after. Interviewees A, B and E expressed less conscientiousness of what affects their emotional state.

The findings of Behbahani (2011) study showed that the relationship between self-regulation and the effective management of its capabilities is an indication of individuals with higher emotional intelligence. A similar consideration was reached by Goleman (1998) whom concluded that the self-control is a vital aspect for success in relations as well as job performance.

4.1.2.2 – Adaptation

The Startup environment is continually changing as their business model implicates adaptation of the product to reach a competitive level. One of the hallmarks of self-regulation competence is comfortable with change.

All of the participants of this study showed openness to adaptation. "I have no problem dealing with constant changes in work. I prefer to have a certain constancy in the change. When I am doing the same thing over and over, I get distracted very easily" (Participant A).

On Spencer and Spencer (1993) studies this competence is present on superior performers that they analysed. According to Goleman (1998), this characteristic allows individuals "displaying on-the-job creativity and applying new ideas to achieve results".

At the workplace, Participant A affirms to prefer more dynamic activities to keep absorbing and learning. The interviewee also pointed out that when he is performing an activity, he is hardly focused only on that. This result ties well with previous studies reviewed in Chapter 2 in the literature reviewed that Prensky (2001) draw attention that the millennial generation experience multitasking.

Also, participant C stressed the adaptability is a competence that needs to be handled daily in a Startup environment. "Startups are fun, they're exciting because everything's constantly on fire. And you have to constantly put things out. I like that" (Participant C).

Overall these findings are in accordance with Salovey and Mayer (1990), "when people approach life tasks with emotional intelligence, they should be at an advantage for solving problems adaptively".

4.3 – Objective **3 Research findings**

"Investigate the perceived importance of Motivation".

The last of the three personal competences is motivation, which is defined by McClelland (1975, p.81) as "an effectively toned associative network arranged in a hierarchy of strength and importance within the individual".

4.1.3.1 – Initiative

Individuals who have a fully developed self-motivation are able to seize the opportunities and pursue goals with their own impulse. In order to assess this competency, participants were asked about their capacity to initiate things independently.

Participant C stated that he does not have the same technical background as others on his workplace, however, this awareness makes him self-study at home in order to bring more ideas for ongoing processes.

Likewise, Participant A emphasizes that one of the significant advantages of the Startup environment is the possibility to try new things as the founders are open to ideas, which is reiterated by interviewees B and D.

Although not dealing specifically with EI and leadership in this research, the researcher notes that initiative is a competence directly linked to this skill. Initiative means detecting what others need in order to perform or develop that activity. Pessoa (2009) finds on his study how emotion and motivation are intimately linked and impact an individual executive function.

In addition, Goleman (2000, p.1) states on his studies focused on leadership that this competence is "a passion for the work itself and for new challenges". Although, Participant F made an observation that does not try to put many different inputs as does not want to be perceived as "nosy". Which is contested by Participant B who states that Millennials who work in Startups need to think "outside the box".

4.1.3.1 – Achievement drive and persistence

The findings on achievement drive revealed many different perspectives. Participant C showed a self-motivation towards learning which is fuelled by the unknown. What motivates him is tireless energy to improve.

Interviewee A views that the Startup workplace has smaller teams in comparison with more prominent companies. Therefore, it creates the opportunity for accomplishment of different tasks. "I have the daily workload that I have to solve, but I see that if I have completed a task, I will look for the next one. I know what I need to finish, and I see the team behaving like that way too" (Participant A).

Interviewee D and F do not set goals in their daily tasks and performing the job is what they believe is their achievement. On the other side, participant G shows an understanding from its own past, and also believes that his "failures really drive you".

Bandura addresses in his article that successful accomplishments become a source of motivation for individuals (Bandura, 1982). Participant B asserts that "you are the one who makes things happen on a Startup".

Research shows that EI explains achievement in high school (Márquez, Martín and Brackett, 2006). Even though not being the exact same topic, this assertion can be correlated with the findings of this research that show that self-motivation achievement drive is more present in some individuals than others.

As presented in McClelland *et al.* (1953), persistence is an effort to attain successful completion and avoid failure. As mentioned by most of the interviewees, all Startups do not have a long-term objective as its "difficult setting goals on a Startup because you never really know where you're going to be in a few months time".

Nonetheless, professionals face daily goals as mentioned by Participant A, "I spend the day solving logical problems and how to automate certain operations. We reach these goals daily because we work with continuous delivery of solutions".

4.4 – Objective **4 Research findings**

"Investigate the perceived importance of Empathy".

The third component of Emotional Intelligence involves the capacity to understand other individual's emotional reactions. According to Goleman (1996) it is only possible to be achieved once an individual is self-aware since someone cannot understand others until it has an awareness of themselves.

4.1.4.1– Sensibility

The awareness of others is the ability to sense and understand others' feelings. The results demonstrated that, in general, it is more complicated than it seems for the participants to show their sensibility. As mentioned in the topic 4.1.3, participant B admitted a lack of empathy in its working life. Also, participant A shed light on cultural differences.

For participant A, in his native country it would be easier to end up approaching someone in work which does not seem to do well. He adds that "here in Ireland, I think people are more reserved [than the country of origin]. I don't see people addressing personal issues, or even work issues" (Participant A).

According to Goleman (2000, p.8) empathy means "thoughtfully considering employees' feelings—along with other factors—in the process of making intelligent decisions".

Participant C would not know how to react, and participant G believes that the work atmosphere created in the Startup he works allow people to be close and comfortable enough to talk about issues inside and outside the workplace.

4.1.4.2 – Developing others

It is critical to correctly interpret the results of this finding as this competence is hugely linked to leadership studies. All the respondents attested positive in relation to sensing the necessities of others' needs and willingness to help their peers. Participant A and F stressed that are empathic to help others who struggle, however, would not insist in case of refusal.

Participant B revealed not always being able to see that people are overwhelmed with work. He affirms however that if sees someone "struggling or they come to me, I will always try to be helpful".

Boyatzis and Sala (2004) assert that empathy can be observed by watching individuals showing interest in others. For instance, if someone is demonstrating empathy, "the person would be undertaking these acts with the intent of trying to understand another person" (Boyatzis and Sala, 2004).

During the interview, participant E showed multiple times that are willing to help others as mentoring or offering assistance to others performing their tasks. Participant D points out that he is inserted in an environment where everyone is very motivated to work. Also, that he would be "willing to stress myself out to help someone out more than I would be willing to take on someone's help to de-stress myself" (Participant D).

4.1.4.3 – Respectful Listening

Listening is another fundamental part of social functioning and empathy. Ioannidou and Konstantikaki (2008) concluded in their study that individuals are not listening to others but waiting for their opportunity to speak. Their investigation occurred in the learning environment and their findings show that listening creates a feeling of acceptance to the students.

A similar conclusion was reached by Goleman (2000) when analysed this competency from 188 companies local and global companies. The author findings reveal that the best performance was correlated to a higher emotional intelligence capability.

"I'm more listener, I absorb a lot of what other people say. I am that person who pays attention to the environment and I try not to expose myself so much" (Participant A).

Participant C identifies himself being a speaker, however, being "ignorant" on professional particularities which is seen as a benefit as he is willing to change through questioning and listening to others with more experience. "I'm aware of how ignorant I am in a lot of the professional stuff that I do, which is good, because it means that I can say that I don't understand" (Participant C).

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), empathic skills enables individuals "to accurately gauge the affective responses in others and to choose socially adaptive behaviours in response" (p. 195).

4.5 – Objective 5 Research findings

"Investigate the perceived importance of Social Skills".

The findings of the last objective aim to comprehend how individuals manage their relationships and networks. Studies on EI showed that individuals with higher EI were more likely to adopt reflection and appraisal on interpersonal relationships (Pau *et al.* , 2004).

4.1.5.1 – Conflict management

An essential concept in emotional intelligence requires people to be able to manage their relationships, as well as resolving disagreements. The studies of Goleman (2000) about empathy take in consideration leadership. One of the competencies identified by the author and that has its importance stressed by following a study by Goleman, Boyatzis and Rhees (2000) is to be able to resolve or prevent disagreements from happening or growing.

Contrary to the findings of Goleman, Boyatzis and Rhees (2000), the researcher did not find the same initiative on the participants. Participant B and E have senior positions in the Startups, therefore, are more forward to interfere with solving conflicts. However, participants A, C, D and F would not take part in the dispute.

Participant F explains the reason for not interfering and the exception for its consideration "If there is nobody else I would kind of think about (interfering), I would think of it as kind of obligation to do to mediate".

As many types of research focused on negotiating and resolving disagreements as competence in leadership, the results taken into consideration are the point of view of all Millennials on tech Startups.

Participant A showed awareness that any dispute should be avoided or dealt with professionalism but reiterate that "if I have nothing to do with the matter, I try not to get involved" (Participant A).

4.1.5.2 – Communication

Good communication is valuable for any type of relationship. Participants A, C and G rather deal with any misunderstanding personally. Others have shown that (Participant B, D and F) prefer to deal through written communication to prevent any misinterpretation. According to interviewee F, on written communication you have the chance to review every piece of information as, for instance, chat logs, the memory of conversation and try to understand the root causing the misunderstanding.

From the results, it is possible to observe that all the participants have different ways of communicating. Lopes *et al.* (2004) studies displayed positive relationships between the ability to manage emotions and the quality of social interaction where individuals with higher scores on the managing emotions on the EI test were positively related to the quality of interactions with friends.

It is worth noticing for discussing that each generation has its own characteristics and, therefore, written communication from a spoken tactic. Therefore, the way might not underrate the action of sorting out problems in order to keep a social well-fare.

4.1.5.3 – Team-work and Collaboration

The participants were questioned about their preference to work alone or in teams. The investigation aimed to determine how the candidate understand collaboration. Most of the participants before elaborating a complete answer said that "it depends".

Participant A is more inclined to work by himself if he is able to solve the problem without assistance. Nevertheless, tasks in the Startup tend to be dependent on each other in relation to technology software solving a problem. It seems that due to technicalities to understand a process these professionals rather do it themselves. Yet, not always they are able to perform on their own.

"Here everyone just tries to take one whole task to try to understand all the logic behind a tool. But it has several components and details, so it's important to work in groups. When I have the possibility to work alone, I would rather" (Participant A).

Interviewee F prefers to work in groups than by himself as this approach help him out to learn more about the work being performed, even if it's a subject already well know it could bring more insights and a new perspective.

Overall these findings are in accordance with findings reported by Goleman (2000, p.9), as socially skilled people does not mean they socialise continually, but "it means they work according to the assumption that nothing important gets done alone".

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion of the research

The aim of this dissertation was to investigate the importance of Emotional Intelligence in the lives of Millennials working in the Tech Startup sector in Dublin and obtain an understanding of their relationship with the five domains that are identified in the EI — self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. To achieve these objectives, a literature review was carried out to understand the main definitions existing of emotional intelligence, its components and competences.

The review also revealed the main characteristics of Millennials and defined the timeframe for an individual to be considered belonging to this generation. The review gave an overall perspective on the importance of Emotional Intelligence for individuals in general and, for lack of studies of EI on Millennials, it allowed furthering the understanding of the generation.

For the formulation of a conclusion of the understanding of EI and the self-perceived importance for the participants, the behaviour that was manifested answering the questions was considered in order to develop the conclusions.

One of the most applied constructs which emotional intelligence has been associated with are task performance (Cote and Miners, 2006), leadership (Burke *et al.,* 2006, Goleman 2000, Goleman 2004) and academic success (Romanelli *et al.,* 2006). As the prior studies to this one identified, EI is a strong predictor of individuals aware of themselves and others.

It is possible to conclude that the individual ability to understand its own-self and others enhance oneself's development and personal relationships. Interestingly, our findings held as true that individuals with a better understanding of emotional intelligence capabilities develop well in the Startup sector in Dublin.

5.1.2 Personal Competence

The first three components of emotional intelligence are self-management skills: Self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation. It can be seen from the findings that the three components are linked and dialogue with each other in terms of discussion that have arisen.

The competences highlighted in order to understand Millennials behaviours and reactions were feedback importance, emotional and physical awareness, self-confidence assessment; control and conscientiousness, adaptation; and initiative, drive and persistence. The research findings explored the general idea over the participants understanding of each component. Each generation grew up being influenced by different values, however, common misconceptions over the Millennials abilities to deal with situations is seen as biased. The results show that overall, the participants have a clear idea of their limitations and characteristics that consider and try to change.

5.1.3 Social Competence

Social competence is made of empathy and social skills. These two components were broken down into the following competencies: sensibility, developing others, respectful listening; conflict management, communication; teamwork and collaboration, respectively.

Many individuals struggle in their lives because of their inability to recognise and administrate their emotions and feelings, as well as of others. As mentioned in the topic 5.2, personal competence is highly essential when working in teams, which is directly linked to social competence. Individuals who have a high level of self-awareness are seemed to be more able to develop their social competence. Therefore, individuals with higher levels of self-awareness are more inclined to work in groups than avoid it.

This can be correlated with our findings as the majority of the participants presented a high level of understanding of the need of working in teams, even though some rather perform tasks individually. More than that, it is a powerful

ability to understand other people's mood and behaviours in order to address them correctly.

All the competences have a close relation and the successful integration in between them is important for to become socially competent. The respondents of the study showed am overall understanding of its importance on their responses. Evidences of this results are showed in Chapter 4 where the participants showed ability to social interact and also to improve their own social interaction.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Recommendations for future academic research

Although there has been a myriad of studies that have examined emotional intelligence in many contexts, this study has focused on the most recent generation fully active in the workforce. In addition, the results can be useful to understand Millennials relationship with Startup work life and the professional expectations of this generation.

Unfortunately, the findings contained within this study are from too small of a sample to draw any definitive conclusions. Therefore, the researcher believes it to be an interesting subject and worthy of future research with a more significant number of participants.

In further studies, the research topic can be investigated in other geographies in Ireland rather than only Dublin or in different well-known tech hubs in Europe. Also, it would be interesting to investigate the relationship between personality characteristics of Millennials with the mediator role of emotional intelligence. Lastly, a mixed methods research design would provide more understanding of this complex topic.

5.4.2 Recommendation for industry practitioners

The research discovered a vast literature exploring Emotional Intelligence in professionals working in large established companies and SMEs (Schwartz,

2000). With this in mind, it can be seen that the need for Emotional Intelligence is attracting the attention of these companies.

The recommendation for industries is non-tangible elements from the generation. Startups should start monitoring the Millennials generation and what they are looking for in the workplace, as this cohort is seemed to care more about their flexibility and experiences beside the monetary rewards. Also, the Millennials are willing to go above and beyond for business who respect their individualities.

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