

Importance of Emotional Intelligence at Workplace

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Abstract:

Emotional intelligence is a set of abilities that includes the abilities to perceive emotions in the self and in others, use emotions to facilitate performance, understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and regulate emotions in the self and in others. The concept of emotional intelligence has had an unusually important impact on managerial practice. Several organizations have incorporated emotional intelligence into their employee development programs and some universities and business schools have added the training of emotional competencies to their curriculums.

As per Goleman, 1995, emotional intelligence (EI) takes more than intelligence quotient (IQ) to achieve success at workplace. That is to say, besides bosses and corporate leaders, employees also need high portion of emotional intelligence, because they present the organization to the public. Cherniss (2000) found that several scholars had suggested that there is a positive and direct relationship between the level of emotional intelligence (EI) and workplace performance. This paper focuses primarily on the importance of Emotional Intelligence at the workplace. The author explains the concept and meaning of emotional intelligence. The author studies the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance along with relationship between emotional intelligence and interpersonal relationship of an employee at the workplace. The author surveys the HR managers in IT organizations to understand importance of emotional intelligence at workplace.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance, importance, interpersonal relationship

INTRODUCTION

There has been an increasing interest in 'emotional intelligence' within the Indian organization system in recent years. This increase has been attributed to the popularization of the concept of emotional intelligence in the research area. The promotion of emotional development in corporate organizations assumes that the ability to regulate emotions is a positive trait, which is associated with positive workplace performance.

Dalip Singh, (2001) mentioned that application of emotional intelligence supports the managers and employees to recognize and understand emotions and using emotional intelligence to manage oneself and his/her relationship with others.

The application of emotional intelligence in the organization includes the areas like personnel selection, development of employees, teams and the organization. The organizations must coach their employees in developing their interpersonal skills and coach them to perform effectively on the job with other employees in the organization.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To explain the concept and meaning of emotional intelligence.
2. To study the relationship between emotional intelligence & job performance
3. To study the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and interpersonal relationship of an individual at workplace

4. To understand importance of emotional intelligence at workplace.

HYPOTHESES:

1. There is significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance.
2. There exists a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and Interpersonal relationship of employee at workplace.

CONCEPT AND MEANING OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

The concept of intelligence has evolved over the last 100 years. In the first half of the 20th century, there was a common belief that the adequate measure of IQ test. But looking into the findings of current researches, it is said that the IQ scores as the measure of intelligence need to be interpreted with caution. Academics as well as the practitioners have conveyed that the intelligence of human beings and its implications for the organization should be considered from the cognitive and emotional perspectives. They say that as compared to cognitive intelligence, it is the emotional intelligence that has greater relevance to organizational success.

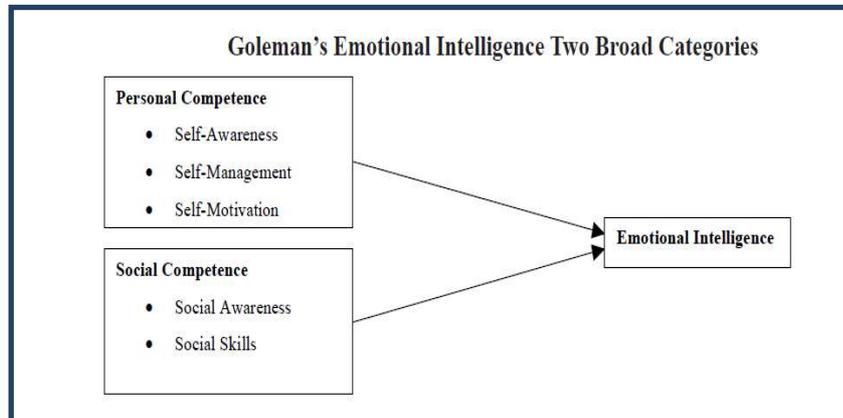
Emotional intelligence has been popularized by Goleman (1995, 1998), the concept is derived from social intelligence (Johnson and Indvik, 1999). Unlike abstract intelligence, which refers to the ability to understand and manipulate symbols, or concrete intelligence, social intelligence refers to the ability to understand and relate to people. According to the Goleman's emotional intelligence model he identifies four emotional intelligence domains and 19 associated competencies. These four domains are self-awareness, self-management, social competence and social management. EI also can define as an individual's ability to accurately perceive reality so as to understand and regulate their own emotional responses as well as adapt and respond to others (Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

Goleman (1998) introduced his emotional intelligence based on performance theory (that is merit based) including a separable set of abilities that integrate cognitive and affective skills. He identified five dimensions of emotional intelligence in his proposed framework (Table 2), comprising self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness (empathy) and social skills. Goleman's (1998) five dimensions model of emotional intelligence are described as below:

- 1) **Self-Awareness** is allied with the competency to be conscious of which emotions, moods, and impulses the individual is experiencing and why. This also comprises individual's consciousness of the results of his or her feelings on others.
- 2) **Self-Regulation** pertains to the competency to keep individual's own emotions and impulses in check, to remain calm in potentially volatile conditions, and to maintain composure notwithstanding individual's emotions.
- 3) **Motivation** refers to the ability to remain concentrated upon goals irrespective of obstacles, to operate from hope of prosperity rather than fear of inability to succeed, delaying satisfaction, and to accept change to achieve goals.
- 4) **Empathy** represents individual's competency to understand the feelings transmitted through verbal and nonverbal messages, to prepare emotional support to people when required, and to understand the linkages among others' emotions and behaviour.
- 5) **Social Skills** is allied with individual's competency to deal with difficulties without behaving those who work with him or her, to not permit own or others' negative feelings to restrain collaboration, and to handle affective conflict with tact and diplomacy. That is to say, his five dimensions of EI classified into two broad categories (Figure 1), which are personal competence and social competence in dealing with one's own self and others respectively (Goleman, 1995).

Figure 1



Source: Adopted from: Bar-On and Parker (2000) and Kunnanatt (2004)

LITERATURE REVIEW:

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB PERFORMANCE:

Various occupations call for different types of emotional intelligence. For instance, Success in sales requires the empathic competency to identify the mood of the customer and the interpersonal skill to make a decision when to present a product and when to keep quiet. And also, success in painting or professional tennis demands a more one form of self-discipline and motivation. Thus emotional intelligence affects just about everything you do at work. "Even when you work in a solitary setting, how well you work has a lot to do with how well you discipline and motivate yourself". (Goleman, as cited in Murray, 1998, pg. 3) In 1993, Spencer and Spencer managed an analysis at L'Oreal Company and discovered that sales agents who were elected dependent on their emotional competencies sold significantly more than agents who were selected using standard recruitment techniques.

The study exhibited that sales agents who were selected based on emotional ability sold an average of \$91,370 more than those in the control group annually. Continually, the research also showed that salespeople selected based upon emotional competence had 63% less turnovers in the first year than those selected in a typical way (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Traditionally, job performance has been conceptualized as the degree to which an individual executes his or her role with reference to certain specified standards set by the organization (Nayyar, 1994). Job performance is defined as the aggregated value of the discrete behavioural episodes to the organization that an individual performs over a standard interval of time (Motowidlo, Borman and Schmit, 1997). Job performance is divided into two dimensions: task performance and contextual performance (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997). Task performance refers to behaviors' that are directly linked with completion of the job and consists of execution of technical processes and maintenance and servicing of technical requirements (Motowidlo, Borman and Schmit, 1997). Contextual performance, on the other hand, refers to interpersonal behaviours or actions that benefit the organization. It includes activities such as helping and cooperating with others, following organizational rules and procedures, and volunteering to carry out task activities (Motowidlo, Borman and Schmit, 1997). Each of these enquiries has made contributions in raising awareness about what contributes to overall performance in the workplace.

The management of social behaviour involves the management of emotions (Hochschild, 1983), EI has the potential to be a strong predictor of performance. Linking EI with performance can provide organizations with a valid alternative for selecting and assessing employees. Many organizational researchers have recently called for more focus on the role of emotions at work.

From a socio-analytic perspective (Hogan and Shelton, 1998), we think emotional intelligence can be considered an individual difference that will facilitate motivation to achieve, to get along with others, and to find meaning. Given the strong socially-based nature of emotional intelligence, it can also be conceptualized in terms of a social skill. Consequently, we contend that EI will have both direct and indirect effects on employees' performance. There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance. The result that EI has a predictive effect on work performance concurs with the findings of the previous researchers. (Goleman, 1995) Goleman's research shows that emotional well-being is the strongest predictor of academic achievement and success in life. His studies also indicate that emotional intelligence accounts for the major part of a person's success in life whereas IQ has a minor contribution to a person's career success. This is because emotional intelligence enables one to control impulses and manage distressing moods well. It helps one remain hopeful in times (Priti Suman Mishra and A K Das Mohapatra March, 2010) of setbacks and develops empathy and social skills. It is therefore important to seize every opportunity to promote emotional intelligence in training and the workplace to foster harmony, productivity, innovative behaviour, and team building.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP AT WORKPLACE:

EI came up from the work of social intelligence by Thorndike (1920) & Gardner's (1983) concept of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. In 1927, Typically, emotional intelligence involves the following: emotional empathy; recognition of one's own and others' moods; mood management or control over emotions; response with adaptive emotions and behaviors in various life situations, especially under stress; possession of good social skills and communication skills(courtesy, consideration, and respect); good self-motivation and goal management (Poskey, 2001). In essence, an employee with high emotional intelligence can manage his or her own impulses, communicates with others effectively, manages change well, solves problems, and uses humor to relieve tension.

Sy and Cote (2004) have given their view that organizations continue to employ the matrix organizational form as it enables companies to use human resources flexibly, produce innovative solutions to complex problems in unstable environments and increase information flow through the use of lateral communication channels. Despite its strengths, the matrix has inherent problems. They identified that there are four interpersonal challenges that impede matrix performance: misaligned goals increase competition among employees, roles and responsibilities are unclear, decision making is untimely and of possibly low quality and silo-focused employees do not co-operate. It was proposed that emotionally intelligent employees can function better in matrix. Solution were offered for both managers and employees to improve performance in matrix organizations by applying the four components of emotional intelligence, specifically managing, understanding, using and perceiving emotion to each interpersonal change.

IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The following outlines a set of five emotional intelligence competencies that have proven to contribute more to workplace achievement than technical skills, cognitive ability, and standard personality traits combined. Intuition & Empathy: Our awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns. This competency is important in the workplace for the following reasons.

- Understanding others: an intuitive sense of others' feelings and perspectives, and showing an active interest in their concerns and interests
 - Customer service orientation: the ability to anticipate, recognize, and meet customers' needs
 - People development: ability to sense what others need in order to grow, develop, and master their strengths
 - Leveraging diversity: cultivating opportunities through diverse people
- Political Acumen & Social Skills: Our adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others. This competency is important in the workplace for the following reasons.

- Influencing: using effective tactics and techniques for persuasion and desired results
- Communication: sending clear and convincing messages that are understood by others
- Leadership: inspiring and guiding groups of people
- Change catalyst: initiating and/or managing change in the workplace
- Conflict resolution: negotiating and resolving disagreements with people
- Building bonds: nurturing instrumental relationships for business success
- Collaboration and co-operation: working with coworkers and business partners toward shared goals
- Team capabilities: creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals
- Self Awareness: Knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions. This competency is important in the workplace for the following reasons.
 - Emotional awareness: recognizing one's emotions and their effects and impact on those around us
 - Accurate self-assessment: knowing one's strengths and limits
 - Self-confidence: sureness about one's self-worth and capabilities
- Self Regulation: Managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources. This competency is important in the workplace for the following reasons.
 - Self-control: managing disruptive emotions and impulses
 - Trustworthiness: maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
 - Conscientiousness: taking responsibility and being accountable for personal performance
 - Adaptability: flexibility in handling change
- Innovation: being comfortable with an openness to novel ideas, approaches, and new information
- Self Expectations & Motivation: Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals. This competency is important in the workplace for the following reasons.
 - Achievement drive: striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence we impose on ourselves
 - Commitment: aligning with the goals of the group or organization
 - Initiative: readiness to act on opportunities without having to be told
 - Optimism: persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology:

1. The research was conducted in Pune city.
2. 30 HR managers from IT organizations have been surveyed using simple random sampling to understand the importance of Emotional Intelligence.

Data Collection:

Besides secondary data, the primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire and the questions were close ended, keeping in view the context and objectives of the study.

Contribution:

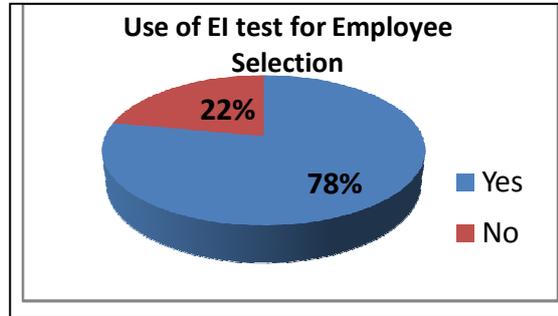
It will add value towards understanding the importance of emotional intelligence at workplace.

Data Analysis and Findings:

Table 1: Use of EI Test for Employee Selection

	Yes	No
Do you conduct EI test for employee Selection	78%	22%

Graph 1: Use of EI Test for Employee Selection

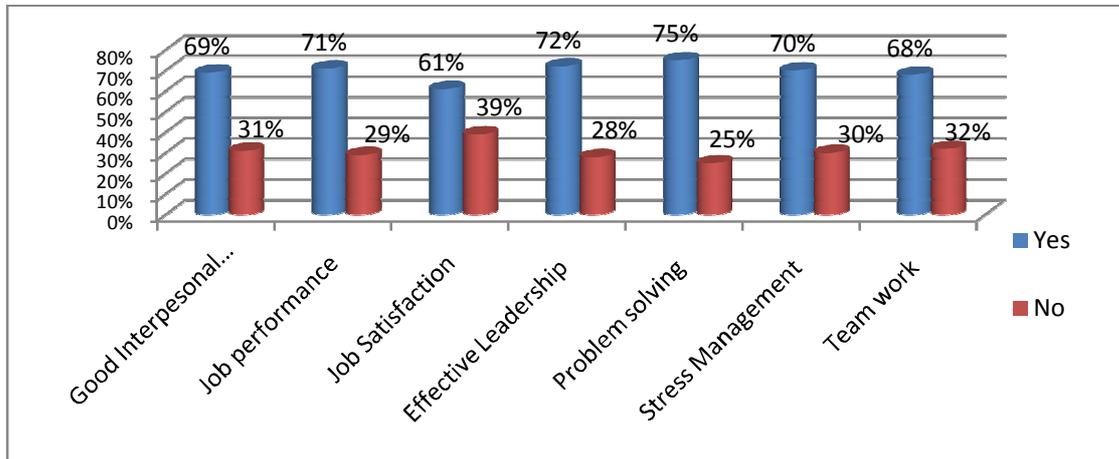


78% of the HR managers mention that they use EI test for employee selection.

Table 1: Importance of Emotional Intelligence at workplace

Importance of Emotional Intelligence at workplace	Yes	No
Good Interpersonal Relationship	69%	31%
Job performance	71%	29%
Job Satisfaction	61%	39%
Effective Leadership	72%	28%
Problem solving	75%	25%
Stress Management	70%	30%
Team work	68%	32%

Table 1: Importance of Emotional Intelligence at workplace



TESTING OF HYPOTHESES:

H1: There is significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance.

Emotional intelligence and job performance are two variables taken for the chi square test. The Chi square statistics is as below:

Critical Value	3.8414
Calculated chi square test stats	8.07

The hypothesis was tested with the chi-square test of uniformity. The Calculated chi square test statistics is much more than Critical Value of χ^2 . Hence, the hypothesis was accepted at 5% level of significance and it is proved that there is significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance.

H2: There exists a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and interpersonal relationship of employee at workplace.

Emotional Intelligence and interpersonal relationship of employee at workplace are the two variables taken for the Chi square test. The Chi square statistics is as below:

Critical Value	3.8414
Calculated chi square test stats	7.58

The hypothesis was tested with the chi-square test of uniformity. The Calculated chi square test statistics is much more than Critical Value of χ^2 . Hence, the Hypothesis was accepted at 5% level of significance and hence there exists a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and interpersonal relationship of employee at workplace.

CONCLUSION:

As emotional intelligence is the awareness regarding one’s own emotions and about others and being able to balance oneself in tricky situations involving emotional turmoil. Employees with high level of EI can become the real assets of an organization. EI calls for emotional balance and maturity in understanding self and others, and applying it for enhancing interpersonal relationships. Emotional Intelligence test has become one of the important tools for employee selection and it helps employees in job performance, maintaining good interpersonal relationship, effective leadership problem solving, stress management and team work. There is significant relationship between job performance and emotional intelligence and there exists a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and interpersonal relationship of employee at workplace.

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