

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE A PREDICTOR FOR MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

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ABSTRACT

The 21st century is an era of stress. Most of the Individuals face stress in their organization and daily lives due to change forces like globalization, information technology revolution, and speed of life. The most important effects of these can be seen in the business world, and they can manifest themselves as changes that organizations make in their structures, strategies, activities, and technologies. The Emotional Intelligence is needed to analyze the role and importance of emotional intelligence at the workplace. Emotional intelligence increasingly relevant to organizational development and developing people, because the emotional quotient principles provides a new way to understand and assess people's behaviors, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills and potential. Emotional intelligence acts as a shield in perceiving the work environment to be less stressful. Hence, for the reason stated above, emotional intelligence as well as occupational stress of workers is measured. The relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational stress is also measured to identify their benefits. Thus, the present study has been conducted to identify the linkage between the two i.e. Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Stress. The study was conducted on the professional in a pharmaceutical firm.

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence, Occupational Stress, organization*

I. INTRODUCTION

A completely stress-free life is impossible, and stress becomes a characteristic of human existence. Individuals have used various methods to handle stress, including using their intelligence, especially their emotional intelligence (Sirin, 2007). Emotional intelligence (EI) is a social intelligence that enables people to recognize their own, and other peoples' emotions. Moreover, emotional intelligence enables people to differentiate those emotions, and to make appropriate choices for thinking and action (Cooper and Sawaf, 1997; Mayer and Salovey, 1993). It is an intelligence that may be learned, developed and improved (Perkins, 1994; Sternberg, 1996). Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions. Emotional Intelligence (EI) can influence one's career and create abilities and skills that improve one's worth at work. Top Management employees and leaders, in particular, need high Emotional Intelligence because they represent the organization to the various stakeholders and public, they also interact with the highest number of people and employees within and outside the company and they set the tone for employee morale. Leaders with empathy

are able to understand their employees' aspirations and needs and provide them with constructive and better feedback. Different jobs also call for different types and levels of emotional intelligence. For example, success in marketing and sales needs the ability to gauge a customer's mood and the interpersonal skill to decide when to be aggressive and push a product and when to listen to the customer.

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Emotional intelligence means understanding one's own feeling and able to handling those feeling without disturbing them self. In the same way understanding what others feel and handling relationship effectively. Motivate one to complete job creatively and perform their pear. Many independent human beings join together and work under one roof for attaining one pool of human resource of different kind. Every human resource is dependent on one other in terms of relationship as superior and subordinate. Every individual is unique in their talent, understanding, performance, attitude, competencies, and involvement and so on when this human resource work in an organization for attaining a common objective, they ought to face a plenty of challenges. They undergo challenges in competing each other, communication, cultural difference, adaptability and many. High competitive environment make changes in every days organization. Human resources for their endurance in organization are needed to update now and then. Frequent changes in technology, risk, time constrain, ethical values, unity in team work, completion of target with in time, innovation, risk bearing these competition attributes lead to stress. Emotionally intelligent human resource tackle these competitive attributes with spot, come over from stress. High emotional intelligence leads to mental fitness.

1.1 BASIC COMPONENTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

EI is distinct from but complimentary to academic intelligence, the purely cognitive capacity measured by IQ. Unlike IQ that does not significantly change over one's life time, emotional intelligence can be taught and learned. It requires commitment to develop one's competencies and skills through repeated application, practice, and feedback. EI has basic components such as:

1.1.1 Self-awareness

Self-awareness is the heart of emotional intelligence. It is the foundation on which most of the other elements of emotional intelligence are built, the necessary first step toward exploring and coming to understand yourself, and toward change. It is the ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions, and drives as well as their impact on others. Emotional self-awareness is also about knowing what motivates you, what brings you fulfillment, and what lifts your heart and fills you with energy and aliveness.

1.1.2 Interpersonal skills

Interpersonal effectiveness involves being empathetic (i.e., being aware of, understanding, and appreciating the feelings of others); being a constructive, cooperative, and contributing member of your social group; and, establishing and maintaining mutually satisfying relationships.

1.1.3 Adaptability

Adaptability is the capacity to cope with environmental demands by effectively and realistically sizing up and flexibly dealing with problematic situations. It is the ability to adjust your emotions, thoughts, and behavior to changing situations and conditions.

1.1.4 Stress Tolerance

Stress tolerance is the ability to withstand adverse events, stressful situations, and strong emotions without falling apart but by actively coping with stress.

1.1.5 General Mood and Motivation

Two factors that facilitate emotionally intelligent behavior are optimism and happiness. Optimism is the ability to look at the brighter side of life and to maintain a positive attitude even in the face of adversity.

1.2 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AT WORK PLACE

Emotional intelligence allows us to think more creatively and use our emotions to solve problems. Daniel Goleman believes that emotional intelligence appears to be an important set of psychological abilities that relates to life success. It is empathy and communication skills as well as social and leadership skills that will be central to your success in life and personal relationships. The ability to manage feelings and handle stress is another aspect of emotional intelligence that has been found to be important for success. Emotional intelligence has as much to do with knowing when and how to express emotion as it do with controlling it. Empathy is a particularly important aspect of emotional intelligence. Emotions are more successful in work as well as in social lives. Emotional Intelligence is now being considered to be important in organizational factors such as: organizational change and management performance.

A manager is a person who has to manage the mood of their organizations. The most gifted corporate leaders accomplish that by using a mysterious blend of psychological abilities known as emotional intelligence. They're self-aware and empathetic. They can read and regulate their own emotions while intuitively grasping how others feel and gauging their organization's emotional state. Different jobs also call for different types of emotional intelligence.

1.3 STRESSES AT WORKPLACE

Stress is recognized worldwide as a major challenge to workers health and the healthiness of organizations. Stress can be brought about by pressures at home and at work. Stress can be a real problem to the organization as well as to the workers. Robbins and DeCenzo (2007) have divided the stress factors in organizations into two important personal and organizational categories and also In the case of personal factors there is evidence that showed that Employees" characteristics influence their sensitivity against stress. Good management and healthy work environment are the best forms of

stress prevention. If the employee's are already stressed, their managers should be aware of it and also know how to help. Employers cannot usually protect workers from stress arising outside of work, but they can protect them from stress that arises through work. Work related stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope.

The workplace had become a high stress environment in many organizations cutting across industries. Employees were experiencing high level of stress due to various factors such as high workload, tight deadlines, high targets, type of work, lack of job satisfaction, long working hours, pressure to perform, etc. Interpersonal conflicts at the workplace, such as boss-subordinate relationships and relationships with peers, were also a source of stress. Stress at the workplace was linked to absenteeism, higher attrition, and decreased productivity. Stress led to fatigue, irritability, poor communication, and quality problems/errors. High stress levels also affected the morale and motivation of the employees.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Friedman & Di Matteo (1982) in their study stated that treatment and medicine alone cannot fully account for patient outcome. Research showed that physicians who were better at recognizing emotions of patients were more successful than their less sensitive colleagues at treating them.

Goleman (1998) In his study there was 58 top managers in United Kingdom it was found that a open trusting relationship is the foundation of success in on the job coaching Instead of engaging in fault finding the managers spent only 5 % of their time in confronting poor performance . Rest of the time was devoted to understand the employees with empathy.

Mayer et al (2002) concluded in their study that the intelligence theory propagates the idea that an individual having intelligence has the capability to carry out abstract reasoning. Emotion research accentuates that various emotions show different signals and meanings about relationships and states that some emotions' depictions is the same across the world.

Carmeli (2003) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and work-family conflict in ninety-eight senior managers. The study states that employees high in emotional intelligence are more able to balance work-family conflict as they recognize and manage feelings of conflict as they occur.

Darolia and Darolia (2005) conducted a research on the role of emotional intelligence in coping with stress and emotional control behavior. The research found that emotionally intelligent people, who are able to understand and recognize their emotions, manage themselves to kept under control in stressful situation.

Nina O (2005) confirmed an essential, but not very strong, the role of emotional intelligence in perceiving occupational stress and preventing employees of human services from negative health outcomes. The ability to effectively deal with emotions and emotional information in work place assists employees in coping with occupational stress. Therefore, It should be developed in stress managing trainings. The highly stressed intense but confused participants in particular because they have average emotional intelligence, but don't appear to use it, presumable because they lack confidence in their emotional ability.

Sing and Sing (2008) conducted a study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress among medical professionals in their organizational lives. The study reveals significantly negative relationship of emotional intelligence with stress for both the genders of medical professionals.

Ismail et al (2009) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence, occupational stress and job performance. The study revealed the relationship between occupational stress and emotional intelligence significantly correlated with job performance.

Rahim S H (2008) found that EI competencies have the profound impact on stress the psychological problems of employees and seeks to the solutions in the light EI competencies have a positive and strong impact on stress.

Singh S.K. (2008) found that no significant difference in the level of EI and perceived role of stress between genders, but significantly negative relationships of EI with organizational role of stress for both gender and medical professionals as a whole.

Ismail (2010) ability based model of emotional intelligence explains that the level of emotional intelligence will increase individuals' competencies and this can increase their ability to decrease stress situations and increase positive individual attitudes and behaviors.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in a Pharmaceutical firm in Baddi Region. There were approximately 40 respondents which was the total research population. Data for the study was collected by administering a standard questionnaire. All the necessary information regarding the study and the ways to respond to the questionnaire were shared with the respondents. The respondents were assured of confidentiality of their responses and were told that their responses would be used for the research purpose only. Objectives of the study were:

- To study and examine the level of Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Stress of the employees.
- To identify the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Occupation Stress.

There were 40 questions in the questionnaire designed for the present research work. The questionnaires measured Emotional Intelligence and Occupation Stress.

The EI measure comprised of 20 questions (Hunsaker, 2005) which are to be answered on a 5 point Likert scale from 0-4 with 4 being the highest. The questionnaire provided an indication of the individual's emotional intelligence. If one received a total score of 100 or more it was considered that one has high emotional intelligence. A score from 50 to 100 meant that he/she has a good platform from which to develop one's emotional intelligence. A score below 50 indicated that one happens to be probably below average in emotional intelligence.

The questionnaire comprised of various situations which an individual encounters in everyday working life. The responses try to find out how an individual would react to these situations. The responses and the total score thereafter helps to find out the level of emotional intelligence possessed by the individual.

The occupational stress measure consists of 20 questions to be rated on a 5 point likert Scale denoted as Never (0), occasionally (1), Somewhat Often (2), frequently (3) and Almost always (4). The questions were based on instances which can trigger stress amongst the respondents at work. Many of the respondents could relate to the questions. Once the questions were rated, the respondents were grouped into the different criteria i.e. If one scored between 0 to 25, the individual seems to be probably coping adequately with the stress of his/her job. If one scored between 26 to 40, the individual seems to be suffering from job stress and should be wise to take

Preventive action. If one scored between 41 to 55, one needs to take preventative action to avoid job burnout. If one scored between 56 to 80, it means that an individual is burning out and must develop a comprehensive job stress management plan.

IV ANALYSIS & INTERPRETSTION

4.1 Overall MEAN score of Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Stress

Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean
EI	40	67.0500
OS	40	44.0250
Valid N (listwise)	40	

The table shows the overall mean of emotional intelligence and stress. The mean value of Emotional intelligence is 67.05% and the occupational stress is 44.025%. It shows that there is a high level of emotional intelligence at the workplace which helps in reducing occupational stress. Same stated above is also supported by the review of literature.

4.2 (a) Frequency score of respondents with reference to Emotional Intelligence

Score	100 or more	50 to 100	Less than 50
No. of respondents	0	40	0

From the table above it is evident that all the respondents fall in the category of 50 to 100 score of emotional intelligence, hence it could be concluded that all respondents has a good platform from which to develop one’s emotional intelligence. That means they fall in above average category, moreover it’s beneficial for the organization.

(a) Frequency score of respondents with reference to Occupational Stress

Score	56 - 80	41-55	26-40	0-25
No. of respondents	2	28	10	0

From the table above it is evident that all none of respondents fall in the category of 0-25 score of occupational stress, 10 respondents fall in the slab of 26-40 , 28 respondents fall under 41-55 and 2 respondents fall in 56-80 category. Hence it could be concluded that the organization needs to take preventive action so in case to avoid job burnout as majority i.e. 28 out of 40 respondents are falling in the category of between 41 to 55. Whereas 10 fall in the category of the score between 26 to 40, the individual seems to be suffering from job stress and should be wise to take Preventive action. If one scored between 41 to 55, one needs to take preventative action to avoid job burnout. And only 2 respondents fall between 56 to 80, it means that an individual is burning out and must develop a comprehensive job stress management plan.

4.3 Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Occupational stress.

Correlations

	Emotional Intelligence	Occupational Stress
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EI	Pearson Correlation	1	.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.983
	N	40	40
OS	Pearson Correlation	.004	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.983	
	N	40	40

Table shows the Correlation between the two factors Emotional intelligence and Occupational Stress. N refers to the total number of respondents. The first column and the first row indicate factors. The inter-correlation between the two is (.983) which is also significant at .004 probability level. It shows that people who are highly emotionally intelligent are having less probability of becoming stressed. A Pearson correlation revealed that emotional intelligence is significantly correlated with occupational stress ($r = .983, p < .01$). Thus the correlation coefficient suggests factors Emotional intelligence and Occupational Stress establishes a strong positive linear relationship. The value of r is always between +1 and -1. For the interpretation of correlation values we referred (-1) indicates a perfect downhill (negative) linear relationship, (-0.70) indicates a strong downhill (negative) linear relationship, (-0.50 to -0.30) indicates a moderate downhill (negative) relationship, (0) No linear relationship, (+0.3 to +0.50) indicates a moderate uphill (positive) linear relationship, (+0.70) indicates a strong uphill (positive) linear relationship, Exactly +1 A perfect uphill (positive) linear relationship.

V. CONCLUSION

From the present study it can be concluded that emotionally intelligent people will also have stress in work place. It is also clear that the business organizations were task focused. Even training and development programs are held on productivity basis. Work pressure is the main reason for the stress of employees. Therefore in order to cope with the stress, the organizations must also aim on reducing stress of their employees by organizing various activities for occupational stress. The present investigation was conducted to identify the linkage between emotional intelligence in managing occupational stress at workplace. After analyzing the results it could be predicted for further research that there is a perfect correlation between the two, hence for identifying the impact of one another on each a study could be conducted.

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