Emotional Intelligence at Workplace:  
“It is not enough to lead others by virtue of POWER alone”

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ABSTRACT

The ability to express and control our own emotions is significant, but so is our ability to understand, interpret, and act in response to the emotions of others. Imagine a world where you couldn't recognize when a friend was feeling depressing or when a co-worker was annoyed. Psychologists refer to this ability as emotional intelligence, and some experts even propose that it can be more vital than IQ. Emotional intelligence simply means the ability to observe, control and assess emotions. Some researchers put forward that emotional intelligence can be learned and strengthened, while others declare it is an inherited characteristic. It’s an influential way to focus your energy in one direction with an incredible result. It is the single major interpreter of performance in the workplace and the strongest driver of leadership and personal fineness. Hence, only power is not sufficient to lead others in the desired direction, emotional intelligence can be used as an effective tool for organisational excellence.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Intelligence Quotient, Leadership, Organisational Excellence, Manager

1. INTRODUCTION

“In the fields I have studied, emotional intelligence is much more powerful than IQ in determining who emerges as a leader. IQ is a threshold competence. You need it, but it doesn't make you a star. Emotional Intelligence can.”

~Warren Bennis

Does intelligence alone explain our achievement at work or in life? Contrary to our belief that academic achievement matters very much in the success we have in working life, Chen, et al. (1998) has shown that close to 90 per cent of success in leadership positions is attributable to Emotional Intelligence (EI).

When asked to identify the necessary traits for leaders, most would propose answers that fall within a wide range of topics. Charisma, purpose, determination – these are just a few of the traits that are typically used to define a leader. However, many leaders have a single quality in common which is their level of emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is defined by the ability to understand and manage our emotions and those around us. This quality gives individuals a variety of skills, such as the
ability to manage relationships, navigate social networks, influence and inspire others. Every individual possesses different levels, but in order for individuals to become effective leaders, they’ll need a high level of emotional intelligence. In today’s workplace, it has become a highly important factor for success, influencing productivity, efficiency and team collaboration.

1.1. Significant of Study

Team leaders are held accountable for creating a positive work environment where all the team members work towards achieving the team goals, which ultimately lead to achieving organization’s goals. In the process, the negative fall-out effects of task, obsessive behaviours, power relationships and sometimes, non-availability of sufficient resources are required to be minimised. Failure to do so will result in frustration, anxiety, suspicion, and resentment and / or dissention among the team members. Emotional intelligence helps team leaders to maintain a positive and stable attitude and optimism in trying situations. Moreover, by improving their own internal motivation and persistence, they motivate their teams to high levels of sustained performance and achievement.

1.2. Objective

The main objective of the study is to understand Emotional Intelligence and are there any past studies which relate effective leaders and emotional intelligence.

1.3. Section Scheme

The study has been organized into five sections. The present section is introductory in nature tracing background of study. It highlights the need of the study. The second section covers the literature part and also highlight research objective and research hypothesis. Third section discusses research methodology used in the study while the forth section presents findings of the study which includes results and discussion part. And finally the last section summarizes the findings of the study and discusses its research implications.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section provides a review of the relevant literature. The literature addresses the framework.

When psychologists began research on intelligence, they focused on non-emotional aspects such as thinking, cognition, intellect, memory and problem solving (Intelligence Quotient). However, there were researchers who recognised early on that, emotional aspects such as feelings, moods, and non-cognition were equally important (Emotional Quotient). Emotional intelligence studies have been conducted in the areas of business, civic administration and education, where it has been widely accepted as an indispensable force. The purpose of this section is to review those current studies that have yielded significant findings and have application to this study. This research only focuses on EI and Leadership.
2.1. Brief History of Emotional Intelligence:

Table 1: History of EI (Adapted from Puri, A., 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Edward Thorndike describes the concept of &quot;social intelligence&quot; as the ability to get along with other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>David Wechsler suggests that affective components of intelligence may be essential to success in life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow describe how people can build emotional strength.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Howard Gardner publishes <em>The Shattered Mind</em>, which introduces the concept of multiple intelligences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1985 | Wayne Payne introduces the term emotional intelligence in his doctoral dissertation entitled "A study of emotion: developing emotional intelligence; self-integration; relating to fear, pain and desire (theory, structure of reality, problem-solving, contraction/expansion, tuning in/coming out/letting go)."
| 1987 | In an article published in *Mensa Magazine*, Keith Beasley uses the term "emotional quotient." It has been suggested that this is the first published use of the term, although Reuven Bar-On claims to have used the term in an unpublished version of his graduate thesis. |
| 1990 | Psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer publish their landmark article, "Emotional Intelligence," in the journal *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality* |

2.2. Defining Emotional Intelligence (E.I.)

A brief account of definitions proposed by different authors on emotional intelligence is given below:

Table 2: Definition of EI (Adapted from Puri, A., 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Defines emotional intelligence as the ability to sense, understand and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as the source of human energy, information, trust, creativity and influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar-On</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Proposed that emotional intelligence reflects one’s ability to deal with daily environment challenges and helps predict one’s success in life, including professional and personal pursuits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayer &amp; Salovey</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Defined emotional intelligence as a set of abilities to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedman et al.</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Defined emotional intelligence as the way of recognizing, understanding and choosing how we think, feel and act. It shapes our interactions with others and our understanding of ourselves. It defines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
how and what we learn, it allows setting priorities, it determines the majority of our daily actions.

| Singh       | 2003     | Defines emotional intelligence as an ability of an individual to appropriately and successfully respond to a vast variety of emotional stimuli drawn from the inner self and immediate environment. |
| Mohan       | 2003     | Emotional intelligence is a positive combination of a deep insight into one’s emotional and cognitive capacities and a charming flair of communication, empathy and motivation, leading to personal optimism, inter-personal confluence and organizational excellence. |
| Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso | 2000 | The ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others. |

2.3. Meaning of Emotional Intelligence

As the ability to get things done through people is the vital task of the managers, emotional quotient is an important factor. If managers do not balance their intelligence quotient skills with emotional intelligence like understanding and empathy, employees might feel insecure and unappreciated. At times they can even feel underestimated, criticized and disrespected. These negative feelings can result in seething dissatisfaction leading to absenteeism, passivity, lack of productivity and attrition. As an employee with desired potential is scarce these days, only those who are adept in retaining employees can excel in their jobs.

Goleman (1998) opined that an emotionally intelligent person is likely to be skilled in two key areas namely ‘personal competence’ (how one manages the self) and ‘social competence’ (how one manages relationships). He explains that emotional intelligence is nothing but the ability to understand ones emotions and those of people around us. It enables us to modify our feelings and influence what happens in the world around us. Emotional intelligence is one’s subconscious ability to create positive outcomes in ones relationships with others and with one, by being in control of how one responds to the world around.

2.4. Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

Emotional intelligence is very important in leadership roles, as leaders need everyone to do their jobs as effectively as possible and this requires a high degree of interpersonal effectiveness. Studies show that high emotional quotient differentiates average from superior performers, which can be critical for leadership positions. A brief account of studies citing the role of emotional intelligence in leadership behaviour is mentioned below:

Cooper and Sawaf (1997) cited that 7% of leadership success is attributable to intellect; 93% of success comes from trust, integrity, authenticity, honesty, creativity, presence and resilience. Leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence positively apply social skills to influence others, create strong relationships with clients and employees, and are effective motivators by controlling their emotions and understanding their weaknesses (Feldman, 1999; Noyes, 2001; Chastukhina, 2002).
Result 1: The greater the level of EI, the more positively applies of controlling others.

Barling, Slater and Kelloway (2000) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. Their research findings showed that emotional intelligence is associated with three aspects of transformational leadership (namely, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration), and contingent reward. In contrast, active and passive management by expectation, and laissez-faire management were not associated with emotional intelligence.

Due to the social complexity of today’s organizations, Dearborn (2002) suggests managers with high emotional intelligence may be more capable of getting more output from less people and recognizing the nuances of dynamic situations while creating positive outcomes.

Result 2: Higher EI, more output at workplace

Result 3: Higher EI, more positive outcome at workplace

Elias, Arnold and Hussey (2003) claim effective leadership is a combination of traditional intelligence (intelligence quotient) and emotional intelligence. They compare intelligence quotient to the raw material of knowledge and emotional quotient to the ability to turn knowledge into action. Those leaders who possess a strong set of interpersonal skills and can distinguish what approach is best to use for any given situation are most likely to be successful in their positions (Dyer, 2001). Such skills needed for effective leadership include empathy, heightened awareness, insight, and the ability to give feedback (Bass, 1985).

Result 4: Leaders possessing EI, more likely to be successful

Webb (2004) examined the extent to which emotional intelligence is related to transformational leadership within mentoring relationships. One hundred and twelve faculty members responsible for mentoring doctoral students were assessed on the various dimensions of emotional intelligence. Transformational leadership ratings for each professor were provided by the doctoral student(s) who were advised by him or her. The results indicated that emotional intelligence can predict several aspects of transformational leadership, including charisma and inspirational motivation.

Result 5: EI can predict charisma and inspirational motivation in leadership

Srivastva and Bharamanaikar (2004) examined the relationship of emotional intelligence with leadership excellence, success and job satisfaction. The results showed that emotional intelligence significantly correlates with transformational leadership and success. An emotionally intelligent person is more successful in all spheres than a person who possesses less emotional intelligence skills.

Result 6: Emotionally intelligent person, more successful at workplace

Punia (2005) conducted a study on 250 executives in the National Capital Region-Delhi, and found that leaders with higher emotional intelligence see changes as opportunities
for betterment, and they cherish not stability but ongoing development of individual workers and of the organisation itself.

Result 7: emotionally intelligent leaders make development of subordinate

Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005) established a link between emotional intelligence and workplace measures of leadership effectiveness, using an objective measure of performance and a 360° assessment tool. The research results showed that executives higher on emotional intelligence are more likely to achieve organizational outcomes and be considered as effective leaders by their subordinates and direct manager.

Result 8: Emotionally intelligent leader contribute more to organisational outcome and have a positive response from subordinate

Rego, Sousa, Cunha, Correia, and Saur (2007) examined the relationship between leaders’ emotional intelligence and creativity of their teams. A sample of 138 top and middle managers from 66 organizations operating in the European Union was analyzed. Emotional intelligence was assessed by a self-report scale consisting of six dimensions: understanding one’s emotions, self-control against criticism, self-encouragement (use of emotions), emotional self-control (regulation of emotions), empathy and emotional contagion, understanding other people’s emotions. The results revealed that emotionally intelligent leaders behave in ways that stimulate the creativity of their teams.

Result 9: Emotionally intelligent leaders stimulate the creativity under their team

2.4. Research Objective

The main objective of the study is to understand Emotional Intelligence. The other objectives of the study are as under:

1. To gain an understanding about emotional intelligence and leadership.
2. To find out the nature of impact of Emotional Intelligence on leadership
3. To highlight some of the major past studies.
4. To form a theoretical background for further empirical research in EI

2.5. Research Hypothesis

For any investigator conducting a study, the research question and hypothesis is a key preliminary step. The research question (sometimes called the problem statement) presents the idea that is to be examined in the study and is the foundation of the research study. Hypotheses can be considered intelligent hunches, guesses, or predictions that help researchers seek a solution or answer a research question. Hypotheses are a vehicle for testing the validity of the theoretical framework assumptions and provide a bridge between theory and the real world.

Two major research questions examined in the study are: to know whether EI has any effect on others and to ascertain if there is any effect then would it leads to organisational excellence.
The Null-hypotheses to be tested in the study are as follows:

\[ H_{10} = \text{Is there any relationship between leadership and EI} \]
\[ H_{20} = \text{Does EI leads to success} \]
\[ H_{30} = \text{Does EI leads to organisational excellence} \]

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section deals with the methodological steps adopted in the present study. The research procedures which we had followed have been described under the following headlines.

Secondary sources of information have been used in this study. Previous studies have been reviewed in order to develop a conceptual framework underlying Emotional Intelligence at workplace. Articles published in leading journals, economic dailies, business magazines, newspapers, books, committee reports worldwide including India, empirical studies published in the professional and academic journals and websites have been consulted for developing the theoretical framework for the study. The aim of this article encompasses a description of the Emotional Intelligence construct from a theoretical perspective. The author’s theoretical perspectives on EI have been selected from an outstanding literature based on personal choices.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the result and discussion aspect of this present study. This study only highlights a brief theoretical view of EI. The result is based on the some selected past studies and is summaries in the following table 1.

4.1. Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Table 3: Result Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result 1:</td>
<td>The greater the level of EI, the more positively applies of controlling others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 2:</td>
<td>Higher EI, more output.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 3:</td>
<td>Higher EI, more positive outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 4:</td>
<td>Leaders possessing EI, more likely to be successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 5:</td>
<td>EI can predict charisma and inspirational motivation in leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 6:</td>
<td>Emotionally intelligent person, more successful in every sphere of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 7:</td>
<td>Emotionally intelligent leaders make development of subordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 8:</td>
<td>Emotionally intelligent leader contribute more to organisational outcome and have a positive response from subordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 9:</td>
<td>Emotionally intelligent leaders stimulate the creativity under their team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result is able to answer our research question. And all the null-hypotheses are accepted on the basis of selected past studies which are mention in this research paper, that is
Table 4: Summarize Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H_10</th>
<th>Is there any relationship between leadership and EI</th>
<th>Accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H_20</td>
<td>Does EI leads to success</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H_30</td>
<td>Does EI leads to organisational excellence</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And we can now say that yes, EI is important at workplace and can lead to organisational excellence.

4.2. Discussion

With the opening up of the Indian economy through liberalization, privatization, globalization and natural thrust towards information technology the tasks of Indian business executives has become more demanding. The challenges get multiplied when Indian executives have to work in diversified work cultures. The emotional intelligence intervention is partly a response to the problems that business executives face today. There is a need to develop the highest standard of leadership skills, the challenges of high team turnover, ever increasing demands of customers for high quality goods and services, rapidly changing business environment, economic demands or escalating costs. The companies need people who have both technical knowledge and social and emotional abilities which will enable them to delight the customers. Emotional intelligence can contribute to developing those skills and abilities that are linked with this aspiration (Orme and Langhorn, 2003)

Alon and Higgins (2005) opined that with the current rise of globalization, both emotional and cultural intelligence has become important for cross-cultural leaders to excel. Global leaders can make the best use of emotional intelligence and maximize success when they understand and work within diverse foreign environments. This multiple intelligence framework helps to clarify adaptations to implement in leadership development programs of multinational firms.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The research in this field becomes all the more desired in case of Managers as they go through the emotional turmoil besides the pressures of the competitive environment where they are often confronted with situations and problems which cannot be resolved by intelligence alone, for which emotions are equally required. Also they are responsible for achieving results by relying more on people. Their ability to lead quickly and flexibly system-wide organizational change, while inspiring and energizing their followers cannot be discounted for. Enhancing emotional intelligence skills of business executives will help them to regulate their emotions and motivate themselves more effectively, allowing them to manage their own emotional turmoil effectively and demonstrate compassion and empathy for their employees. Also this will help management devise programs to cultivate a high degree of emotional intelligence for effective management and development of human resources and achieving managerial excellence. Since emotional intelligence is expected to play a major role in moderating behavioural issues and related outcomes so it will be desirable to study emotional intelligence among managers working in different sectors. We
all know that behaviour outcomes and emotions are related but how far performance suffers and stress levels rise because of the lack of emotional skills is a question that still bothers our mind. There is a little evidence to support the claim that emotional intelligence predicts better performance and moderates executive’s job stress especially in the Indian setup.

5.1. Implication

The ability to manage feelings and handle stress is another aspect of emotional intelligence that has been found to be important for success. A study of store managers in a retail chain found that the ability to handle stress predicted net profits, sales per square foot, sales per employee, and per dollar of inventory investment (Lusch & Serpkenci, 1990). Emotional intelligence has as much to do with knowing when and how to express emotion as it do with controlling it. For instance, consider an experiment that was done at Yale University by Sigdal Barsade (1998). He had a group of volunteers play the role of managers who come together in a group to allocate bonuses to their subordinates. A trained actor was planted among them. The actor always spoke first. In some groups the actor projected cheerful enthusiasm, in others relaxed warmth, in others depressed sluggishness, and in still others hostile irritability. The results indicated that the actor was able to infect the group with his emotion, and good feelings led to improved cooperation, fairness, and overall group performance.

In fact, objective measures indicated that the cheerful groups were better able to distribute the money fairly and in a way that helped the organization. Similar findings come from the field. Bachman (1988) found that the most effective leaders in the US Navy were warmer, more outgoing, emotionally expressive, dramatic, and sociable. One more example. Empathy is a particularly important aspect of emotional intelligence, and researchers have known for years that it contributes to occupational success. Rosenthal and his colleagues at Harvard discovered over two decades ago that people who were best at identifying others emotions were more successful in their work as well as in their social lives (Rosenthal, 1977). More recently, a survey of retail sales buyers found that apparel sales reps were valued primarily for their empathy. The buyers reported that they wanted reps who could listen well and really understand what they wanted and what their concerns were (Pilling & Eroglu, 1994).

5.2. Future research

Besides the limitations of time and cost, there are certain limitations of the current research, which future studies in this area should seek to overcome. No empirical work. Only theoretically explain everything. Research objective and hypotheses are not fully explain only theoretical explanation is not enough. Models of EI are included. And hence the study cannot be generalized. More rigorous and further research must be done.

REFERENCES


