

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Work Life Balance

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Abstract

In today's global and complex environment, finding a suitable balance between work and family life is a challenge that all workers face. Emotional intelligence is the skill of knowing, understanding one's own and other people's emotions and effectively managing emotions in different situations. If employees have better EI, they are likely able to balance their emotions for a better work life balance. This conceptual study aims to analyze the impact of emotional intelligence on work life balance for better satisfaction and job performance. People with high level of emotional intelligence can easily manage stress and negative emotions which helps them in balancing their personal and professional life. Emotional Intelligence also plays a significant role in the kind of work an employee produces and the relationship a person enjoys in the organization. So understanding the impact of emotional intelligence on work life balance is an important area of study for both the employers and the employees in the modern work environment.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence (EI), Physical and Psychological Wellbeing, Work life balance (WLB), and Job Performance.*

Introduction

Emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and action. The concept of emotional intelligence was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer in the early 1990's and made popular by American psychologist Dr Daniel Goleman in 1995 when he published his book "working with emotional intelligence" (Bantam books). He reveals those human competencies such as self-awareness, self-confidence, empathy and self control; commitment and integrity; the ability to communicate and influence, to initiate and accept change are more important in life than IQ of a person. According to Goleman (1998), the five components of emotional intelligence are self-awareness, self regulation, social skills, motivation and empathy. Self-awareness is associated with the ability to recognize one's internal state, resources, preference and intuitions, e.g., a supervisor is aware of which emotions he or she is experiencing. Self-regulation refers to the ability to manage one's internal states, resources and impulses e.g., a supervisor remains calm despite having to deal with violent situations. Motivation represents the emotional tendencies that assist in reaching goals, for example, a supervisor sets his or her motivation high and attains challenging goals while empathy refers to the ability of being aware of other's situations, e.g., a supervisor understands the feelings transmitted via verbal and non-verbal language. Social skills are associated with one's ability to encourage desirable feedback in others, e.g., a supervisor does not let his negative feelings restrain collaboration. Major advantage of emotional intelligence is that it allows people to better understand and manage emotions. It also helps in understanding

one's own conduct as well as relationship with others.

Work life balance (WLB) Work-Life balance is a crucial issue for every organisation for establishing and sustaining a productive work culture. During the 1960s and 1970s, employers considered work-life mainly an issue for working mothers who struggled with the demands of their jobs and raising children. During the 1980s, recognizing the value and needs of women contributions, pioneering organizations (IBM, Deloitte) began to change their internal workplace policies, procedures and benefits. The changes included maternity leave, employee assistance programs (EAPs), flexi-time, home-based work, and child-care referral. During the 1980s men also began voicing work-life concerns. Work life balance is the phenomenon of striking an ideal balance between the professional life of an individual and their personal life. (Clark, 2000). Clark (2001) defines work-life balance as satisfaction and good performance at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict. An individual is satisfied with his or her work role and family role when the individual is able to achieve a balance between the two. It consists of three components such as time balance (equal time for work and family), involvement balance (equal involvement in work and family) and satisfaction balance (equal satisfaction from work and family) (Greenhaus, 2003). Work life balance affects issues such as increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, increased staff morale, attracting and retaining a talented workforce, increased employee loyalty, improved customer service due to happy, healthy and dedicated employees, Imbalance of these affects the physical and psychological wellbeing of employees. Merely creating a work/life policy framework is not enough; fostering an organizational culture that supports the use of available policies is also of great importance. There are three Steps to ensure implementation of WLB ; The first step any organisation should take in becoming a work-life balance friendly company is to plan and implement a comprehensive work-life balance policy; this could include schemes such as flexible working hours, extended maternity leave, home working, job sharing, part-time working. The second step is to proactively ensure that employees are aware of the organisation's policy and that they understand how this could benefit them as an individual. The third step organisations must take to create an effective work-life balance for their workforce is to offer training and coaching to empower their employees to take Responsibility for themselves and their lives. Training allows the individual to evaluate their personal circumstances

EI plays a major role on WLB among employees' performance. One of the research found that employees with high EI have got a higher overall work life balance compared to employees with low EI. The study also indicated that a higher level of EI leads to better work life balance and Emotional intelligence is an effective way to integrate, enhance and provide better work and family life. Employees with high EI are in touch with their emotions and they can regulate them in a way that promotes well-being and the ability to perform in coping with environmental demand to promote balanced living (Waite & Gallagher, 2000). EI helps a person to build adaptive responses to work-related demands (Reuven Bar-On, 2005). If employees have better EI, they are likely able to balance their emotions for a better WLB. Agarwala, (2009) conducted a research and explored that When employees have a participatory and problem-solving approach to work life, they are more committed to their work place and home, attaining a balance of performance between both work and life . Psychological studies have shown that understanding and controlling emotions play significant role in gratifying one's life and work environment.

Objectives of the study

1. To develop a conceptual linkage between work-life balance and emotional intelligence.
2. To find out the procedures and Facilities of Work life balance of employees.
3. To able to discriminate Emotions and exhibit controlled behaviour as suitable in different situations for work-life balance.

Literature Review

Suliman & sheikh (2007) examined the role of emotional intelligence in affecting work outcomes. The results revealed significant differences between employees' perceptions of emotional intelligence, conflict and readiness to create and innovate. Employees with higher levels of EI tended to report lower levels of conflict and higher levels of readiness to create and innovate.

Susanto & Shih (2010) investigated the relationships among emotional intelligence (EI), conflict management styles (CMSs) and job performance at selected local governments in Indonesia. The findings indicate that EI was an antecedent of conflict management styles for integrating and compromising styles. EI was positively and significantly associated with job Performance, integrating style, and compromising style. Most of the conflict is inevitable and is commonly present while one is doing his or her job. When conflict appears, EI can facilitate people to select the appropriate conflict management styles in term of integrating style that can enhance the job performance. This study also confirms that integrating style partially mediates the relationship between EI and job performance.

Jordan and Troth (2004) stated that “the ability to be aware of and manage emotions is also thought to facilitate functional than dysfunctional, conflict resolution and consequently contribute to better team performance”.

Posthuma (2012) the result showed broad range of positive and negative emotions, such as anger, enthusiasm, excitement, guilt, and remorse, are significantly related to various aspects of conflict management. The studies highlight the importance of understanding specific emotions in conflict situations, but also the need to understand how and when the regulation of emotions can facilitate effective conflict management.

Rupashree and Shivganesh (2010), in their study, stated that supervisor support and work-family culture are positively related to job satisfaction and affective commitment. No significant association was found between Work-Life Benefits and Policies (WLBP) and job outcome measures. Job characteristics and supervisor support were positively related to work-to-family enrichment. Work-to-family enrichment mediated the relationships between job characteristics and job outcomes and between supervisor support and affective commitment.

Thompson, et al (1999) posit that organizations that do not foster a more balanced work-family life for employees contribute to stress and tensions in employees' personal lives, which affect their ability to concentrate and be committed to the job.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) work (family) conflict occurs when experiences at work interfere with family life like problems with a difficult boss, co-workers and or subordinates, sudden trips on official engagements as well as working for long hours into the night. Other sources of conflict would include career transitions and inadequate pay to meet family needs. Family (work) conflict occurs when experiences in the family domain interfere with work life, such as problems of coping with the demands of a large family, including responsibility for

young children, dependents, interpersonal problems within the family unit, inability to meet social and cultural traditions.

Research Methodology

This paper is purely conceptual and an effort has been made to develop a conceptual linkage between work-life balance and emotional intelligence. For this paper secondary data is collected from books and journals.

Conclusion

By conducting this study, it was identified that Emotional intelligence has a significant effect on persons work life equation and contributes significantly towards maintaining a proper balance in professional and personal life. The study concludes that people with high level of emotional intelligence can easily manage stress and negative emotions which helps them in balancing their personal and professional life. High levels of EI are crucial for achieving work-life balance, since it helps us to use emotions effectively and regulate behaviour in both family and work roles. If one realizes the power of EI in regulating emotions and avoiding conflicting behaviour. No matter from which roles these emotions come, emotions are part of our life, and the better we monitor, discriminate among, and use information about our emotions to guide our thinking and actions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990), the greater the balance of life and work we will enjoy.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

While conducting the research, the first limitation was that it was restricted to discussing only two factors in order to conduct the research. Using the variables in link with new mediating variables can make the research more interesting. Since paper is conceptual, so there is a need for empirical research. WFC (work- family conflict) has serious repercussions on the Employees and therefore on organizations too. So recruiting employees with good EI would be a first step towards reducing this conflict and ensuring work-life balance. Organizations should come up with effective and efficient work life balance policies and programs and foster an organizational culture that supports the use of available policies. This will help reduce the work- life conflict for employees. Conducting workshops on work life balance and providing awareness on how to become emotionally intelligent in the work place to have a happy and satisfied workforce.

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