

## Emotional Intelligence: Concept and Importance in Organizations

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### **Abstract**

Emotional intelligence is an important prerequisite to become a successful person and to excel in all the spheres of life, may be professional or relationship building. People who possess a high degree of emotional intelligence know themselves very well and are also able to sense the emotions of others. Emotions are an important part of being human and they affect our actions and motivations for behavior and practices. In the organization context emotional intelligence leads to job satisfaction, increases morale, enhances job performance and an overall physical and psychological well-being of the employee to a great extent. The present paper aims to understand the concept of emotional intelligence and its importance in the work setting.

**Key words:** emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, psychological well-being.

### **Introduction**

In recent years, emotional intelligence has gained popularity. It has been the subject of enormous amount of research in the past few years. Success in work, school, and interpersonal relationship has been related to EI (Donaldson& Stough, 2002)) Emotionally intelligent people perform better on cognitive task, are better able to deal with frustration arising from encountering a difficulty task (Schutte, Schuettpeiz & Malouff, 2000/2001). Also, such people have significant capabilities in interpersonal interactions, like inspiring others through their leadership, managing conflict and team work (Pettijohn& parker2002)

### **Emotional intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is a new approach to understanding intelligence. In recent years, it has gained popularity. Although it is a new term but its roots can be traced to early 1900's where Thorndike gave the concept of social intelligence and Weschler developed the concept of non-cognitive intelligence. In the later part of the century

Gardener gave the concept of multiple intelligence in which different types of intelligence of which intra and interpersonal intelligence are related to emotional intelligence. In 1990 Peter Salovey and John Mayer published an article “emotional intelligence” in which they considered emotional intelligence as a form of intelligence. This concept of emotional intelligence got popularized after the publication of Daniel Goleman’s book *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*.

Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) coined the term emotional intelligence and defined it as a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use that information to guide one’s thinking and actions. . According to Mayer and Cobb Emotional intelligence is “The ability to process emotional information particularly as it involves perception, assimilation understanding and management of emotions”. Goleman (1998) defined it as “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationship. Bar-On (1985) was the first one to invent the term Emotional Quotient, often interchangeably referred to as emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence describes abilities distinct from, but complementary to academic intelligence. Dr. Dilip Singh (2003) provided an Indian perspective of emotional intelligence as “the ability of an individual to appropriately and successfully respond to a vast variety of emotional inputs being elicited from inner self and immediate environment. Emotional intelligence constitutes three psychological dimensions such as emotional competency, emotional maturity and emotional sensitivity, which motivate an individual to recognize truthful, interpret honestly and handle tactfully the dynamics of human behavior.”

Thus, based on above definition Emotional intelligence can be understood as the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to regulate emotions so as to promote emotional well-being and intellectual growth.

### **Components of emotional intelligence**

Daniel Goleman in association with the Hay Group identified eighteen components of emotional intelligence that were grouped into four clusters. The four clusters are namely Self Awareness, Self-management, social awareness, and Relationship

management

### **1) Self-awareness**

It refers to the ability to recognize one's feeling and understanding one's own emotions and feeling. The cluster contains three competencies.

- a) Emotional awareness--It is important to identify and recognize one's own feelings and know how they affect one's performance. Self-awareness is key to realizing one's own strength and weakness.
- b) Accurate Self-Assessment- It refers to knowing one's strength and limits.It is important for people to be aware of their abilities and limitations, seek out feedback and learn from their mistakes, and know where they need to improve and when to work with others who have complementary strength.
- c) Self-confidence- It is a strong sense of one's self worth and capabilities. Self-confidence is a positive trait that plays a large role in personal and professional success.

Self-awareness is an essential feature of emotional intelligence. It helps an individual to know their own strengths and use them wisely.

### **2) Self-management**

It refers to managing one's internal states, impulses and resources. The self -management cluster contains six components

- a) Emotional Self -control- This involves keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check. It is the absence of distress and disruptive feelings.
- b) Transparency- It is about maintaining integrity and acting congruently with one's values. Transparent individuals are forthright about their own mistakes and confront others about their lapses.
- c) Adaptability-Flexibility in handling changes is known as adaptability. This is one of the important components. An individual needs to be open to new information and can let go of old assumptions and so adapt how they operate. This is very important for innovation and growth.
- d) Achievement-It is the drive in an individual, which strives to improve or meet standards of excellence. Optimism is a key ingredient of achievement because it can determine one's reaction to unfavorable events or circumstances. Those with high achievement are proactive and persistent, have an optimistic attitude towards setback, and operate from hope of success.

- e) Initiative-It is the readiness to act on opportunities. It involves taking anticipatory action to avoid problems before they are visible to anyone else.
- f) Conscientious- It includes being careful, self-disciplined, and scrupulous in attending to responsibilities. It also involves persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setback.

### 3) Social Awareness

It refers to how people handle relationship and awareness of others' feelings, needs, concerns. This contains three competencies

- A) Empathy- It refers to sensing others' feelings and perspective, and taking active interest in their concerns. Empathetic individual sense others' emotions through facial expressions and non-verbal cues.
- B) Organizational awareness- It involves reading a group's emotional currents and power relationship. it is vital to the behind-the -scenes networking and coalition that allows individuals to wield influence, no matter what their professional role.
- C) Service Orientation- It is about anticipating, recognizing and meeting customers' needs.

### 4) Relationship management

It is concerned with the skill or adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others. It includes social skills. This contains six competencies

- a) Developing others- This component involves sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities. it is a talent of not just of excellent coaches and mentors, but also outstanding leaders.
- b) Inspirational leadership-This component is about inspiring and guiding individuals and groups. It involves a range of skills to inspire others, in order to achieve common goals.
- c) Change Catalyst- Managing change is known as change catalyst. Employees must be able to recognize the need for change, remove barrier, challenge the status quo, and enlist others in purist of new initiatives.
- d) Influencing-It means wielding effective tactics for persuasion. The influence can be in the form of persuasion strategies, impression management, dramatic arguments or actions, and appeals to reason. Employees must sense others reactions and alter their own responses such that it diverts interaction in the best direction.

- e) Conflict management- It involves negotiating and resolving disagreements. listening and empathizing are crucial to this skill. Difficult situations are to be dealt with diplomacy, encouraging debate and open discussion, and thus coordinate a symbiotic situation.
  - f) Team and collaboration- It is about working with others towards shared goals. It involves creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals, teamwork itself depends on the collective emotional intelligence of its members.
- Emotional intelligence is an essential component for success in every field. The aim here is to understand how this component becomes an essential agent in enhancing the functioning within the organizations.

### **Role of emotional intelligence in organizations**

Emotional intelligence is an emerging field in psychology. It has started gaining importance in organizations and have become a topic of research. Emotionally intelligent employees are more productive and better in interpersonal relationship. Thus, these days organizations are looking for employees with higher emotional intelligence along with technical capability and intelligence. The success of an organization is attributed to the emotionally intelligent managers and leaders. Their behavior influences motivation, morale, job satisfaction, team work and overall wellbeing of the employees. Emotional intelligence principles help in evaluating employee behavior, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills and potentials. It also has great relevance in areas like job profiling, planning, recruitment and selections.

### **Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction involves emotional, intellectual and behavioral variables. It has direct link with the productivity and efficiency of organization. It reflects the enthusiasm and gratification of an individual with his or her work. Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction are two concepts of high interest in the modern world environment. Studies indicates that emotional intelligence has a considerable positive influence on job satisfaction (Rahman & Haleem 2018)A A study reveals that there is a very high positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.(Elias&

George 2012) .This is because the employees with higher emotional intelligence are able to develop strategies to overcome the possible consequences which may arise out of stress whereas those with less emotional intelligence would be unable to overcome the stress situation.. Another study findings indicate positive, moderate but significant relationship between EI and job satisfaction, The results reveals that the employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more satisfied with their jobs (Shukla et al 2016). According to another study all the dimensions of emotional intelligence significantly predict job satisfaction, with self-assessment as the most powerful predictor whereas optimism as the weakest predictor (Khan et .al 2017) A study was examined to study the influence of (EI) and gender on job performance and job satisfaction with Nigeria police. The result indicates that high emotional intelligent officers performed well, then the other police officers who are low and were not satisfied. (Afolabi et.al 2010). Higher emotional intelligence enables professionals and workers to adjust better to various situations eliciting more productive behavior and work efficiency. This finding holds true for frontline workers dealing with customers directly. Research revealed that frontline workers with high emotional intelligence are more adaptable to stress situations and show the ability to react in a more mature and restrained manner as compared to employee with low emotional intelligence (Sony et al 2016). Teaching professionals with high EI are better equipped in evaluating and managing their own and student's emotions, resulting in positive and nurturing student-teacher relationship, thus resulting in greater job satisfaction level (Blamable et al.2015, Samanvitha &Jawahar,2012) .Thus, emotional intelligence has link between job satisfaction and work productivity , enhanced performance, and overall life satisfaction of the employee.

### **Emotional intelligence and leader/ managers**

It is the leadership qualities that help the leaders and managers to manage the employees. The leaders /managers must use different skills in different situations and act differently with different employees/followers. It is important that they understand the need of the situation, the followers or both and behave accordingly. When employees trust their managers/leaders they perform better, are more satisfied with their jobs, are more committed to the organizations, are less likely to

quit and are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behavior (Dirks& Ferrin,2002). Numerous research reveals that EI is a predictor of leadership potential and effectiveness. Leaders who are proficient in expressing their own emotions, are better in evoking emotions in others and convey a message of authenticity to subordinates (Sy stephane& Richard 2005). It creates a positive and healthy environment and fosters better psychological well-being of the group members. Ruestow et. al (2008) examined the effect of leader's level of emotional intelligence on follower's job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The findings show significant relationship between leaders' level of emotional intelligence and his or her follower's level of job satisfaction.

### **Emotional intelligence and conflict management styles**

Conflict in organizations can hinder the effectiveness of an organizations, thus conflict management and negotiations are another organizational phenomenon, which must be carefully dealt with. Conflict can be either constructive or destructive to the functioning of a group or unit. Inadequate or excessive levels of conflict can affect an organizations performance. Studies reveal that conflict management styles are dictated by the EI quotient of the leader/managers/ supervisors. A superior conflict management style of leader helps in building long lasting relationships and enhance group and organizational performance. Thus, in order to be successful at any level in an organization, conflict management skills are necessary (Brewer et al 2002). Emotionally intelligent individuals are better at handling conflict, they redirect their attention and actions to conflict resolution (Abraham,1999). These individuals have better ability to monitor and control one's emotional state that helps to facilitate communication in conflict situations. When one is overwhelmed by flood of emotions in a conflict situation, one's ability to think and reason effectively diminishes. (Jones&Bodtker,2001)

Research indicate that integrating style of handling conflict is associated with EI. This is the best approach to handle conflict, and emotional intelligence skills are necessary in handling conflict effectively in the work place. (Henderson,2006). Emotionally intelligent employee is good at negotiation and resolving disagreements, listening and empathizing.

**Emotional intelligence and team work**

Team work means working with others towards a shared common goal. The success of group or team depends upon the collective emotional intelligence of its members. Emotional intelligence is capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions and to handle interpersonal relations judiciously and empathetically. In team work it helps to build trust among team members, create a atmosphere of empathy for colleagues, promote problem-solving, encourage positivity which creates cohesiveness in a group and increase productivity.

Research on the personal characteristics of team members has revealed that teams whose members are bright, conscientious, extraverted and emotionally stable perform better than teams whose members do not possess such characteristics (Barrick et.al 1998; Devine & Philips 2001). Many teams don't succeed because of distrust by management. In a study team with supportive management, 84 % made satisfactory progress, whereas only 49% of team made satisfactory progress where top management was not enthusiastic (Moran et al 1996). The managers must be trained in the generic skills.

**Conclusion**

Earlier intelligence was regarded as a desirable character quality and it was claimed that it is the single most effective predictor of individual performance in all walks of life. However, these days emotional intelligence has gained much importance on many areas of human endeavors, including personal relationship, educations and work place. The principles of EI must be applied in the organization settings. Training in the organizations must focus on development of soft skills and inculcating some principles of emotional intelligence, so that the employees are able to understand themselves, be aware of their own behavior and emotions and also understand others' emotions

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