

ENHANCING ETHICS AT WORKPLACE THROUGH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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ABSTRACT

E motional Intelligence (EI) is now becoming popular in both personal and professional lives of individuals and organizations. With the increasing workload at workplace the small groups of aptitudes and abilities support employees in adapting higher quality work through values and ethical standards. Organizations should conduct an ethical work environment for better performance and increase satisfaction. This paper examines the correlation between emotional intelligence and ethics at workplace. The result recommends that a meaningful relationship exists between emotional intelligence and ethics at workplace and attributes of EI such as self-awareness, commitment and balancing of emotions have a portending relation with ethics at workplace in business organizations.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, ethics, ethics at workplace, EI, emotional regulation, self-awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence can be described as a set of social skills and abilities, which are different from rational intelligence (Mayer, Di Paolo and Salovey (1990)). The people who are more in control of their personal emotions, and express it have probably evolved in emotional intelligence. It also has been observed that the one's with high emotional intelligence are least willing to have a negative interaction with close friend whilst are more willing to have positive associations with others.

Salovey and Mayer's work was greatly admired by Daniel Goleman. In the 1990's, which ultimately led to his book, *Emotional Intelligence*. He argued that business success was guaranteed by emotional intelligence rather than cognitive intelligence. He outlined 4 characteristics associated with emotionally intelligent people; firstly they are best in knowing their feelings i.e. they possess self-awareness. Secondly, they are best at handling their emotions and are good at self-management. Thirdly, they are sympathetic to the emotions of other employees that is social awareness. Lastly, they are best at controlling other employees' emotions that is social skills.

"Emotional intelligence" has gained significant matter of attention in scientific field and public platforms. Since the best seller by the same name has been published in 1995 (Goleman). Over the last few years there has been an enormous interest in this new field, researchers have studied EI for most of the twentieth century and tracked down its roots which are associated to the nineteenth century.

A lot of people misunderstand emotional intelligence as the opposite of intelligence, that it is your heart over your head. It basically is the exclusive intersection of both. Since long, teachers, HR managers and professional training heads, recruiting heads know what distinguishes an average performer from star. It isn't essentially intelligence, it was something different, which was difficult to describe, it was called people skill. Nowadays this care-worn, soft phrase "people skills" is replaced with a term which has rocketed to popular fame - emotional intelligence. \People skill, or commonly known as EI increase your chances of success. However, success is not guaranteed when suitable skills are not possessed.

Past few years have experienced a momentous and continuous expand in interest of the area of Emotional Intelligence (EI).It is observed that emotional intelligence helps accomplish corporate goals with greater efficiency and profits, by creating a positive organizational environment for services that give rise to empathy and open access to communication resources, moreover customer consciousness increase rapidly and as result employee becomes more committed to work (Bardzil and Slaski, 2003). Also augmented level of emotional intelligence can aid in diminishing the probability of troublesome behavior that may hold back a positive environment of service, and produce behaviors exhibiting high stress levels, low self-esteem, and poor mental health (Slaski and Cartwright, 2002).

It is observed that emotionally intelligent organizations create consonance out of dissonance, by facilitating creations and innovations that unleashes human potential. It is also believed that empowered teams are more powerful than those at the top in the hierarchical structure. The job descriptions of an emotionally intelligent organization, includes pliability, accountability, customer-oriented, learning and growth, and team dedication. Collaborative and collective contribution is what encourages team learning. Today the new management mantra is "What do you need to be the best you can be", through this the ethical environment of the organization is enhanced which in turn helps trigger development and personal competencies of the employees are enhanced.

Emotional Intelligence is all about attaining your goals through managing your feelings and emotions, and balancing motives diligently and ethically (Higgs and Dulewicz, 1999). Human problems can be categorized into three aspects: material, social and metaphysical. Organizations are continuously making efforts to increase employee motivation through processes. Processes like enriching the job MBO, TQM, autonomous work team and participative management are least effective if emotional intelligence if EI is absent. The reason behind this is that the above mentioned approaches only take into consideration the material and social aspects of human resource however the emotional component is ignored. Hence, companies' attempts in enhancing the emotional aspects can help us to decipher the rising concern from both dimensions.

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Ethics at Workplace

With the passage of time, businesses do realize that the only solution for lasting proficiency and sustainability is ethical behavior. Businessmen are fertilizing their companies with ethical conduct in all departments worldwide. Today, the organizations face defying situations with highly abstruse possible solutions. Therefore, in this situation, it is suggested that ethical conduct (underlining culture) is integral for the prevention of misbehavior that causes embarrassment and usually heavy consequences (Chonko, Wotruba and Loe, 2003; Winstead and Patterson, 1998). In this case in point, EI will help individuals keep in mind their values and ethical standards.

The ethical behavior of 180 hospital employees in U.S was observed to investigate the impact of EI on ethical behavior in a study by Deshpande (2009). The result showed that the EI of participants had a meaningful effect on their ethical behavior in the organization. The individuals with high emotional intelligence were less likely to practice problematic behavior and retain from negative behaviors. Also, people with high emotional intelligence perform better as it enables them to balance their emotions so as to handle difficult situations effectively. Hence it can be expected that people in organization with high EI will make rather more ethical decisions and so building ethical environment. These skills can be inspected when employees are being selected and further polished through training and experience. With this perception this paper will focus on the interrelationship between emotional intelligence and building ethical environment. Following are few of the emotional competencies which help in conducting ethical behavior in an organization:

Self-awareness

Self-awareness is a person's alternately, it can be defined as the realization of oneself as an individual entity (Crisp & Turner, 2010). In the beginning of the century, many training programs concentrated on developing social and emotional competence of the workers in the organizations. These are the reflections of what is today referred to as emotional intelligence. The emotional intelligence comprises five parts and self-awareness is one among them Goleman (1995).

Having a morality-based approach to business ethics is imperative. It helps us know how moralists behave which is essential for the survival of businesses. A study by Hartman (1998) revealed that self-aware people hold good personality and believe that their morals are not lead by the wrong-doers.

Commitment

A survey of business professionals by Peterson (2004) showed corporate citizenship and organizational commitment had a meaningful relationship. Strong connection was found among the employees who knew about the significance of social responsibility of businesses.

A longitudinal research by Callaghan, Wood, and Svensson (2004) studied the relationship between commitment and business ethics of the top 500 Australian companies. The results indicated that business ethics has been evolving with continuity being positive in most cases. The idea of business ethics has become an integral part of the corporate culture in top Australian companies due to the interrelation between business ethics and commitment.

It was suggested in a study by Lin and Wei (2006) that the employees' understanding of the three dimensions of ethical practices (justice, employment history and caring practices) will have higher association with organizational commitment which also helps in determining their level of commitment.

Resilience

The term is defined as the capability to recover speedily from setbacks or difficulties. In such undesirable situations a resilient is expected to be emotionally competent.

A study by Murphy and Moriarty (1976) shows that children who were exposed to stressors (which they could handle) demonstrate better recovery skills when they face stressors in future. Today organizational behavior is specifically focusing the value of positivity. A research by Luthans (2007) indicated that as resilience is a positive personality trait, it is used as an important tool to predict the positive behaviors.

Optimism

Optimism is a powerful survival strategy and hence considered as one of the most powerful attributes of emotional intelligence. Optimism was also considered to be part of factors that Wechsler thought aid intelligent behavior. He considered the type of these factors to be motivational rather than an essential part of the intelligence itself (Wechsler, 1943).

A study by Luthans (2007) indicated that optimism is a positive personality trait which helps predict the positive behaviors like courageous principled action in organizations and so promoting ethical conduct in organizations.

A survey of successful managers conducted by Deshpande (1996) revealed that majority of the participants' perceived successful managers as ethical. Ethical behavior and optimism of the managers had a positive linkage while on the other hand decrease in optimism build negative impact on ethical behavior.

Compassion

Compassion is considered to be a kind and sympathetic feeling which builds the desire to help others with courtesy. Compassion and virtues determine the organizational behavior of individuals that is strengthened by principles of organizational ethics.

A study by Neff (2003) showed that compassionate people exhibit positive affiliation with the psychological well-being (feelings), such as ethics, self-acceptance, peace of mind, socialness, dignity.

Emotional regulation

Managing one's emotions, compulsions and resources is known as emotional regulation. When talking about emotional intelligence, balancing emotions is said to be one of its defining features (Mayer and Salovey, 1993; Saarni, 1990).an association between the ability to control desires and intellectual potential was explored by psychologists that can make us believe that emotional regulation is positively linked with emotional and intellectual growth.

CONCLUSION

This study outlines an examination of the relationship among the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the ethics exhibited by executives at workplace. In the current study different aspects of EI were recognized and studied as independent variables that help enhance ethical conduct in organizations. It was explored through the study that in order to enhance ethical values at a workplace organizations have to make attempts to enhance emotional intelligence level of employees in the organization, that is relating to their level of self-awareness, optimism, being compassionate, building interpersonal connectivity, displaying personal integrity and emotional regulation.

One of the major section of this study outlined the issue pertaining to the relationship between emotional intelligence and morals and virtues, and that is emotional intelligence morally neutral, or does it have any effect on ethical dimension of the organization. In the literature available ethics and morality are treated as an orthogonal that is right angled, independent dimension, in a domain beyond the concerns at hand. Howard Gardner (1999) stated, "no intelligence is moral or immoral in itself". Goleman (1995, 1998) indicated that few elements of emotional intelligence may tend to support behaviors which are pro social. For instance, self-awareness must be used to behave in accordance with one's sense of purpose, meaning and ethics.

Empathy is an essential component to enhance selflessness and sympathy. These tendencies may go help to encourage and foster ethical attitude in organizations. Also the study outlines that emotional intelligence could be used in a turnaround manner to restrict the ethical concerns in the organizations by some group of employees. Also abilities such as empathy and social skills including persuasion could be used by the deceitful types who might use Emotional Intelligence to make people astray or manipulate them. They may dwell upon social skills to climb the organizational ladder by lowering others in the organization. Through these findings mentioned above we can wrap up those prerequisites for the success of any business enterprise essentially includes emotional intelligence as one of its basic ingredient.

Extensive exposure and training can develop the ability of becoming emotionally intelligent. Recent research on "mindfulness" training – a strategy to self-regulate emotions – observed that with the help of appropriate training, the brain centers that regulate and produce the positive and negative emotions can be altered. These types of training not only aid employees in keeping their worries and concerns away but also maintain their emotional calm in period of crisis (Davidson et.al 2003). Only the emotionally intelligent people will focus on getting extra work done and will have determination to take out time to indulge in activities that seem excessive.

An emotionally intelligent workforce could be a product of effective leadership in the organization which could pave way for ethical behavior at workplace. Their duty is to boost their self-esteem and generate an atmosphere of understanding, tolerance and reliability. Employees need encouragement for enhancing their interpersonal skills which leads to self-awareness (Singh, 2010). It is important to encourage employees which enhances their self-awareness as well as others in the organization. These are the intense needs that face all organizations today, both public sector and private sector organizations face these intense needs. A noticeable role is played by EI in nearly all areas of deficiency. For instance, the ability of employees to deal with planned and unplanned situation and understand the effects of emotions on their selves helps them to handle the situation adequately. Regardless boundaries, the result of this paper can be employed to all employees worldwide to help them improve their emotional intelligence so that their work performance at the job gets better.

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