



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AT WORKPLACE

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Abstract

EI is a relatively new and developing area of behavioral inquiry (Gardner, 1983; Sternberg, 1985). EI's theoretical construct is a product of two areas of psychological research: the interface between emotions and thought (Bower, 1981; Isen, Shalcker, Clark & Karp, 1978) and the expansion of the definition of intelligence to include various classifications of intelligence (Gardner, 1983; Sternberg, 1985). This paper tries to provide a perspective on the impact of Emotional Intelligence at a workplace, an examination of both theoretical and empirical literature is provided. Finally, the impact of Emotional intelligence on leaders and overall on the performance of the employees is investigated.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Emotions, Workplace Emotions, Intelligence, Emotional Quotient.*

DEFINITION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a set of abilities that includes the abilities to perceive emotions in the self and in others, use emotions to facilitate performance, understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and regulate emotions in the self and in other (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). Goleman (317) defines this 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 relationships.” An emotionally intelligent person is described as one who “is able to recognize and use his or her own and others’ emotional states to solve problems and regulate behaviour” (Huy 325). Mayer and Cobb (2000) describe emotional intelligence as “the ability to process emotional information as it pertains to the perception, assimilation, expression, regulation, and management of emotion” (p.163). Some researchers argue that emotional intelligence can be conceptualized as, “biological, individual, procedural, social, ecological, declarative, and easy or hard to operationalize” (Zeidner, Matthews, Roberts, & MacCann, 2003, p. 90). Conceptualize means that EI is viewed as intelligence, can be measured, has a cognitive aspect, and has been viewed as a “social, practical, and personal intelligences that we have come to call the hot intelligences” (Mayer at al., 2004a, p. 197). Like other intelligences, Emotional intelligence can predict what people with Emotional intelligence will be like (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). Seminal research on emotional intelligence defined it as an ability which focuses on the perception and expression of emotion accurately and adaptively; along with the ability to understand emotional knowledge, use feelings to facilitate thought, and to regulate emotions, in not only oneself, but also others (Salovey et al., 2003). Emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as a source of human energy, information, connection and influence (Cooper and Sawaf 1998). Emotional Intelligence may be defined as the ability to perceive, understand, integrate and manage one's own and other people's feelings and emotions, and to act upon them in a reflective and rational manner (Chartered Management Institute 2004). When applied to the workplace, emotional intelligence involves the capacity to effectively perceive, express, understand and manage emotions in a professional and effective manner at work (Palmer and Stough 2001).

THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence was developed as an extension of Intelligence quotient and it gained attention in the 90's. Some authors have linked the origin of Emotional Intelligence to the field of social intelligence (Bar-On, 2000; Cantor & Zirkel, 1990; Goleman, 1995; Zirkel, 2000). The foundation of social intelligence is found in the work of Kelly (1955), Rogers (1961), and Rotter (1966, 1975) where we see the development of a model and approach that places emphasis on understanding the way individuals perceive opportunities in their environment.

The first formal mention of Emotional Intelligence appears in a German article by Leuner (1966) entitled “Emotional Intelligence and Emancipation.” The article hypothesized that low emotional intelligence led some

women to reject their social roles. The first time the term “emotional intelligence” is used in an English paper is in an unpublished doctoral dissertation by Payne (1986). It was not until 1990 that Emotional Intelligence was formally described (Salovey, et al, Brackett and Mayer, 2004). Next, Mayer, DiPaolo and Salovey (1990) demonstrated that EI could be tested and that individuals could integrate emotion and cognition and use them to process information about their environment. Early reference to Emotional Intelligence created little interest in either academia or society and it was not until the mid 1990s that we saw a significant growth in scientific journals and publications’ articles that covered the topic (Matthew, et al, Zeidner & Roberts, 2004).

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A PRECURSOR FOR LIFE SUCCESS

From an academic and social perspective, the public relatively underappreciated Emotional Intelligence until Goleman’s 1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* (Matthews et al., 2004). The proposition that people differ in Emotional Intelligence has flourished because of a number of convergent dynamics, including cultural trends and developments (Matthews et al., 2004). First, society has developed an interest in self-development that has latched on to the Emotional Intelligence perspective that individuals can learn or improve upon various Emotional Intelligence constructs in different social frameworks (e.g. educational, organizational and relational).

In addition, many believe that personal and societal benefits will come from time and resources invested in improving Emotional Intelligence (Matthews et al., 2004). Also, Emotional Intelligence has gained a boost in popularity and use from the claim that it can play a role in society by contributing to real-life outcomes beyond the customary factors of intelligence and personality (Goleman, 1995; Saarni, 1999).

An additional factor identified by Matthews et al. (2004) that appears to contribute to the popularity of Emotional Intelligence exist in the growth of resentment or antagonism towards intellectual intelligence and the tests that measure it. This resentment, according to the authors, has led to a level of antipathy about people with high IQs in our culture, which has led to claims made by the proponents of Emotional Intelligence that the benefits of general intelligence (IQ) are overstated and Emotional Intelligence may be more important in attaining personal and professional success. The authors offer examples of high-IQ individuals being mocked and viewed negatively through the media. These perspectives are also supported by Goleman (1995) and Epstein (1998) who believe that many high-IQ adults are socially inept and are resented by modern society.

Other aspect proponents of Emotional Intelligence advance is the term itself. Emotional intelligence denotes a subtle interaction between two terms that for many represent polar opposites (Salovey, et al, 2001). In essence, Emotional Intelligence promotes the best aspects of two different psychological forces (Matthews et al., 2004). One could conclude that this balance (between intellect and emotions) is a reflection of current society’s cultural values of equity and objectivity.

By combining the perception of Emotional Intelligence’s equity and objectivity with the notion that Emotional Intelligence can be trained and improved upon in various social contexts, Emotional Intelligence theory and application moves from the halls of academia to the personal book collections of business and non-academic readers. This perception is supported by the popularity of Goleman’s (1995) book *Emotional Intelligence*, which focuses on issues of character and features of self-control (e.g. instant gratification, toleration, and regulation of impulses), which appear to have found a willing population seeking alternatives to the self-centered, ends-justifies-the-means 1990s.

COMPONENTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

According to the Genos Emotional Intelligence (previously named as Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Unit), there are five key emotional competencies which are applicable to the workplace situation: - i) Emotional Recognition and Expression ii) Understanding Others Emotions –iii) Emotions Direct Cognition iv) Emotional Management v) Emotional Control ,Mayer and Salovey (1997) ability model of emotional intelligence comprises of four conceptually related abilities arranged hierarchically from the more basic

psychologically complex, including: (1) The ability to perceive emotions; (2) The ability to utilize emotion to facilitate reasoning; (3) The capacity to understand the meaning of emotions and the information they convey; and (4) the ability to effectively regulate and manage emotion. This four-branch model is known as ability approach of emotional intelligence (Mayer & Cobb, 2000). This ability approach is defined as an intelligence that includes the use of feelings to perceive and abstractly understand other people (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Mayer and Cobb (2000) argue that, “the ability version emphasizes that emotional intelligence exists”. Burbach et al., (2003) prefer the ability model because, “...it is skill based. The ability model has an inherent link to leadership behaviors because it focuses on how emotions can facilitate thinking and adaptive behavior” (Current constructs of emotional intelligence section, para 6). Mood regulation is also a component of emotional intelligence that leaders demonstrate at times. Mood is an extension of emotional intelligence

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AT WORKPLACE

Emotional intelligence has the ability to affect a wide array of work behaviours, including employee commitment, Performance, teamwork, development of talent, innovation, quality of service, and customer loyalty. According to Cooper (1997), research attests that people with high levels of emotional intelligence experience more career success, build stronger personal relationships, lead more effectively, and enjoy better health than those with low EQ. The logic behind the above statement can be explained as follows: Individuals who are emotionally intelligent succeed in communicating their ideas, goals, and intentions in interesting and assertive ways, thus making others feel that they are better suited to the occupational environment (Goleman, 1998). The components of Emotional Intelligence may be related to the social skills needed for teamwork, with high Emotional Intelligent individuals being adept at designing projects that involve infusing products with feelings and aesthetics (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Sjoberg, 2001). Emotional Intelligence can also be useful for group development as the success of the group lies in knowing each other's' strengths and weaknesses and leveraging strengths whenever possible (Bar-On, 1997). Emotional intelligence also claims to influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures, clearly an important set of behaviour to harness under stressful work conditions (Bar-On, 1997).

A recent theoretical model proposed by Jordan, Ashkanasy, and Hartel (2002) implicates Emotional Intelligence as a moderator variable that predicts employee emotional and behavioral responses to job insecurity. According to this model, employees low in Emotional Intelligence are hypothesised to be more susceptible than employees high in EI to negative emotions resulting from job insecurity. Therefore, they are more likely to behave defensively and negatively (e.g. hypervigilance, “copping out”, “buck passing”, avoidance), lowering affective commitment and increased job-related tension in response to their insecurity. These two emotional reactions then lead to negative coping (e.g. distancing, wishful thinking) and defensive decision making behaviors. By contrast, high EI employees are better able to deal emotionally with job insecurity and will be able to ameliorate the effect of job insecurity on their affective commitment. This frequently leads to increased work commitment and effort, positive coping behaviors (problem-focused), and reframing of perceptions of insecurity as an existing challenge. Unfortunately, no empirical data were provided in support of this theoretical model and its validity remains to be vindicated.

Emotional intelligence is hypothesized to influence the success with which employees interact with colleagues, the strategies they use to manage conflict and stress, and overall job performance (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005; Lopes, Coˆ te´, & Salovey, 2006a). Preliminary findings with the MSCEIT suggest that emotional intelligence positively contributes to several aspects of workplace performance.

Slaski and Cartwright found that managers high in emotional intelligence revealed less subjective stress and had better physical and psychological well-being. Similarly, Gardner and Stough revealed negative relationship between Emotional intelligence and occupational stress. In another study, Bar-On et al. indicated that police officers scored significantly higher on emotional intelligence were less vulnerable to experienced stress and better coped with it. In turn, Reilly in a study of hospital nurses, identified negative correlation between Emotional Intelligence and burnout syndrome. Similarly, Duran and Extremera in their study including professionals

employed in institutions for people with intellectual disabilities, revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout syndrome, and personal accomplishment in particular. The data clearly indicated that EI expressed in the ability to recognize, express, and control emotions may have impact on the perceived job stress and the consequences of experienced stress.

In an exploratory conceptual article, Abraham (1999) hypothesized that organizational members with high levels of emotional intelligence experience less emotional dissonance, ethical role conflict, and do not allow job insecurity to affect their organizational commitment. Emotional intelligence was theorized to have a positive effect on the organizational outcomes of work-group cohesion, the congruence between self-and supervisor appraisals of performance, employee performance, organizational citizenship, and organizational commitment. The most beneficial effects of emotional intelligence may occur in environments in which there is a high degree of job control (Abraham, 1999)

Emotional Intelligence has been linked to various positive outcomes such as leadership (Alon and Higgins, 2005; Prati et al., 2003), moderating workplace stress (Ashkanasy et al., 2003), positive work attitudes (Carmeli, 2003), team cohesiveness (Rapisarda, 2002), performance (Slaski and Cartwright, 2002; Wong and Law, 2002), and work outcomes (Akerjordet and Severinsson, 2008; Carmeli and Josman, 2006). Some believe it contributes to cultural adjustment in global assignments (Dolan and Cerdin, 2005) and some think that it should be incorporated in the training for international experiences (Ornstein and Nelson, 2006).

According to Mayer and Cobb (2000), emotional intelligence has become a catch phrase for anything that involved motivation, emotion, or good character. Goleman (1995) provides the link between emotional intelligence and character education. Goleman (1995) states that attending to students' emotional competencies will result in a "caring community where students feel respected, cared about, and bonded to classmates" (p. 280). This finding lends much support and credibility to achieving a positive school climate through leaders with high EI. Mayer and Cobb (2000) state, "In the academic literature, emotional intelligence was a focused set of abilities; and emotional intelligence and character education were equated as much as possible" (p. 170). The same holds true with adults working in a public school system. When administrators are hired, a key component to the hiring process is to question and do extensive background checks on an applicant's character. Character, which is synonymous with EI, is what schools use to gauge the expected success of the leader when hired. Leaders increase the perceptions of positive school climate through the relationships they create (Johnson & Stevens, 2006). King (1999) found that practicing school administrators better perceived and reacted to emotions of staff and showed overall higher emotional intelligence than non-practicing administrators. Salovey and Mayer (1990) described possible character outcomes of emotional intelligence as including optimism and motivation. Goleman equates these character outcomes with the intelligence itself. This subtle shift has led emotional intelligence to become a catchphrase for anything that involved motivation, emotion, or good character (Mayer & Cobb, 2000, p.170). Constantine and Gainor (2001) state that emotional intelligence is viewed as a somewhat enduring trait-like characteristic. The trait like characteristic can best be described as intangible character-like qualities of individuals who lead using emotions to guide them. Emotional intelligence involves a set of mental abilities in which individuals employ higher-level processes regarding their attention to feelings, clarity of feelings, discriminability of feelings, and mood-regulating strategies (Mayer & Salovey, 1993).

When multiple criteria are used and the studies are done with various cultures of leaders, the results indicate a high relationship of Emotional Intelligence to leadership. However, this study wants to correlate multiple variables as relating Emotional Intelligence to school climate. Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999) also like the ability model of emotional intelligence because it has been empirically validated. Using this ability model and correlating it to the RSLEQ may determine if Emotional Intelligence is linked to school climate.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND LEADERS

Emotional Intelligence is also an important factor in organisational leadership. George (2000) used the Salovey, Mayer, and Caruso four branch model of Emotional Intelligence as a heuristic framework for outlining the



importance of Emotional Intelligence in effective leadership. George asserts that by accurately identifying how followers feel, leaders better appraise and influence followers' emotions so they are supportive of leaders' goals and objectives, thus insuring a shared vision.

Organisational leaders who are high on emotional intelligence with a supportive organisational climate and right HR policy in place may have an influence on group and individual Emotional intelligence and organisational commitment (Cherniss, 2001).

Leaders who can read the emotions and perceptions of people tend to be happier and more satisfied with their jobs (Goleman, 1998a; Tucker et al., 2000; Zeidner et al., 2004). Emotionally intelligent leaders make a difference in the lives of their staff, who tend to be happier employees.

Leaders who have the mental abilities to solve problems using awareness and regulation of emotions are said to have high Emotional Intelligence and be better leaders. Researches in the business sector and military organizations have proven this by testing their hypothesis (Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2003; Dulewicz, et al., 2005; Maulding, 2002).

The theory that high Emotional Intelligence of school leaders will correlate to a positive school climate as perceived by teachers is based upon the work of Mayer et al. (2004b), where there is support for relationships to leadership and organizational behavior.

Leaders with a high level of Emotional Intelligence experience more success on the job, have better relationships with colleagues, and lead more effectively (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). There is considerable difficulty in objectively determining how leaders perceive themselves and their emotional intelligence (Zeidner, Roberts, & Matthews, 2002). Triangulation can help alleviate the difficulty of perceptions by gathering data from the leader, follower, and having multiple methods to review the data to more objectively draw conclusions. From a leadership perspective, Zeidner et al. (2003) view integration of Emotional Intelligence as intelligence when there is a "positive" temperament and Emotional Intelligence self-awareness is used as emotional regulation (p.90). Research has indicated that the higher one's emotional intelligence, the more able they are to lead. When leaders are aware of their own emotions, there is a positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and leadership ability (Mayer et al., 2004a).

Emotional intelligence, Leaders and Employee turnover: Emotional Intelligence has been a concept that has been very important to modern and postmodern leaders because the use of traditional intelligence alone by a leader does not make the leader successful (Alston, 2009; Maulding, 2002; Yukl, 2006). The use of Emotional Intelligence by a leader, as measured by emotional quotient (EQ) is the additional skill a successful leader needed to manage the emotional side of subordinates (Alston, 2009; Maulding, 2002). Even though leaders of educational institutions continue to focus on intelligence quotient, researchers are beginning to argue that Emotional Intelligence and other interpersonal competencies may be more critical for success in life than intelligence quotient (Alston, 2009; Maulding, 2002). If leaders have deemed Emotional Intelligence critical enough for success, leaders can learn by acknowledging that the brain has a rational element that controls thoughts and deciphers best actions and the brain has a primitive element that controls emotions (Maulding, 2002). The emotional center of the brain also controls moods and contains working memory (Goleman, 1995) that has limited retention.

If leaders flood the emotional part of the brain with intrusive thoughts, the leaders can reduce working memory, thus the leaders reduce productivity (Goleman, 1995). Individuals who have learned to acknowledge and reduce the overflow of emotions will be able to clear the emotional brain and focus working memory on activities for improving productivity (Maulding, 2002). Leaders in high technology industries like IT need to foster innovation, cope with rapid change, and manage large amounts of data (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001).



The dynamics of this industry create various stimuli, some of which IT leaders must ignore to focus and solve important problems (Biello). Based on Biello's research, IT leaders can solve these problems faster when they involve the emotional part of the brain or the "amygdala" (Biello). Emotional intelligence might help IT leaders to enhance activities in the emotional part of the brain and improve productivity (Mauldling, 2002). IT leaders might use results from this study to further understanding about the relationship between IT subordinates' perception of Emotional Intelligence in their supervisors and employee turnover intentions in the IT workplace.

Emotional Intelligence in IT leaders and IT subordinates played an important role in employee turnover intentions in the IT workplace (Gasiorowska, 2007; Gordon, 2007; Stephens, 2007; Yukl, 2006). Leaders who have used Emotional Intelligence could have influenced organizational effectiveness in the workplace by aiding leaders in perceiving, regulating, and expressing their emotions in themselves and understanding the emotions of others (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001) and merging emotions into their understanding and thought process (Yukl, 2006). Goleman and Boyatzis (2008) have reported that employees who have used Emotional Intelligence on the job have outperformed their peers, developed stronger relationships with superiors and subordinates and earned quicker promotions. In an effort to provide understanding of the factors that have contributed to innovation and creativity in IT firms, Raineri (2005) has conducted a phenomenological study by analyzing interview data from IT CEO entrepreneurs. Raineri (2005) has revealed that the usual factors like fear, sacrifice, risk taking, and perseverance have emerged among entrepreneurs, but entrepreneurs have derived genuine meaning from individual need fulfillment related to Maslow's Hierarchy of needs like self-actualization, motivation, security, and belonging, and Emotional Intelligence factors like monitoring emotions in self and others as have been described by Goleman (1995).

Scholars of emotional intelligence (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001; Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990) have posited that leaders can use emotional intelligence to enhance social and communication skills to motivate subordinates, influence effectiveness in the workplace and increase employee retention. Emotional intelligence in information technology leaders and information technology subordinates played an important role in employee turnover intentions in the IT workplace (Gasiorowska, 2007; Gordon, 2007; Stephens, 2007; Yukl, 2006).

According to Yukl (2006), Emotional Intelligence was perceived as a help to leaders in managing their time, making better decisions and solving complex problems. Cherniss and Goleman, (2001) posited that Emotional Intelligence also helped leaders in supplementing their gut feeling while making important decisions. Emotional Intelligence is likely a determinant in learning and in leadership (Salisbury, 2007) and a positive relationship existed between Emotional Intelligence and learning styles among adults (Johnson, 2008). Organizational leaders have turned to Emotional Intelligence to reduce burnout and employee turnover in nursing (Smith et al., 2008), engineering (Gilmore, 2008) and in service industries such as the airlines and retail (Scott & Davis, 2007).

Yukl (2006) has surmised that project management has played a major role in IT and that efficient project leaders were in high demand. Gasiorowska (2007) has determined that Emotional Intelligence components have played a major part in the performance of project leaders. Transformational leadership in project management increased satisfaction in team members and fostered meaningful working relationships (Westlund, 2007) and IT organizations appeared to need transformational leaders with Emotional Intelligence to motivate employees (Boerner, Eisenbeiss & Griesser, 2007) and foster employee commitment to the organization (Boerner et al.).

EMPIRICAL STUDIES ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In a health insurance company, analysts and clerical employees from the finance department with higher MSCEIT scores had higher company rank and received greater merit pay increases than employees with lower MSCEIT scores. Employees with higher emotional intelligence also received better peer and / or supervisor ratings of interpersonal facilitation, stress tolerance, and leadership potential than those with lower emotional intelligence (Lopes et al., 2006b). Similarly, among middle and high school teachers, MSCEIT scores were associated positively with job satisfaction and negatively with burnout. These associations were mediated by teacher reports

of experiencing positive emotions in school and their perceived support from their school principal (Brackett, Palomera, Mojsa, Reyes, & Salovey, 2010a).

In a study of case studies of groups in an executive education setting in order to illuminate the impact of emotional intelligence on the heterogeneity-group performance relationship. The results showed that as group emotional intelligence improves, the resulting increases in group performance are larger among more heterogeneous groups. Michael P. Lillis(2013)

Emotional intelligence has been associated with the extent to which managers conduct themselves in ways that are supportive of the goals of the organization, according to the ratings of their supervisors (Co^{te} & Miners, 2006). MSCEIT scores for 38 manufacturing supervisors' managerial performance correlated positively with managerial performance ratings by nearly 1,300 employees (Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, & Boyle, 2006). MSCEIT scores of senior executives predicted leadership effectiveness as rated by managers (Rosete & Ciarrochi, 2005). With few exceptions, most of the associations in the above studies remained statistically significant after controlling for age, gender, education, verbal ability, and personality traits. (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005; Co^{te}, Lopes, Salovey, & Miners, 2010; O'Boyle et al., 2010).

Shutte et al. (2001) conducted seven studies examining the link between emotional intelligence and interpersonal relations, and investigating empathy and self-monitoring of one's own emotional intelligence. Their results showed "higher scores for emotional intelligence as related to empathic perspective taking, but were not related to empathic fantasy, empathic concern, and personal distress, because these three types of empathy are less emotionally adaptive than empathic perspective taking" (Shutte et al., 2001, p. 531).

CONCLUSION

Daniel Goleman introduced a new kind of ability, emotional intelligence (EI), the capacity for understanding one's own and others' emotions. The multiple intelligences construct, and emotional intelligence in particular, have received a great deal attention recently, particularly with respect to organisational effectiveness, employees performance and leadership success. There is some evidence that the characteristics of Emotional Intelligence (e.g., self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) may be a better predictor of positive organisational impact and success and it is a manipulative tool in the hands of leaders in Organisations than the traditional "intelligence quotient," or IQ.

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