Emotional Intelligence as A Tool For Employee Selection - Bridging The Gap Between Theory And Practice

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ABSTRACT
Organisational effectiveness largely depends on the competences of employees which are guaged in selection process. It is just not the aptitude of employees that guarantees success but also the emotional competences of employees that have a huge bearing on individual and organisational success. This study theoretically reviewed the pertinence of emotional intelligence to psycho-social variables and the relationship of Emotional Intelligence to these psycho-social variables has been discussed leading to the proposal of adopting emotional intelligence as a tool for effective selection.

KEYWORDS
Emotional intelligence, Human Resource, EI as Recruitment and Selection Tool

INTRODUCTION
Emotional Intelligence (EI) is about how individuals manage both themselves and others. The success of an organisation is largely determined by its human capital. Organisations are challenged to attract human resources that fit across the various performance dimensions which eventually determines the ability of the organisation to sustain in the long run. Organisations are using various approaches to recruit and select the best fit candidates. Many recruitment and selection decisions rely on the aptitude of individuals and few psycho-social constructs, which mostly detriment the objective of selection process. A person selected through the conventional selection process mostly fits the aptitude dimension of the work but fails in emotional competence dimension and this affects organisations in the longer run. Good recruitment and selection system should strike a balance by selecting a ‘fit candidate’ in terms of aptitude and emotional dimensions. This paper discusses on the viability of using emotional intelligence as an effective recruitment tool in determining fit of individuals.

Based on evidences drawn from various researches, apart from aptitude, the competencies such as conflict management, impression management, organisational citizenship behaviours, job performance, leadership, teamwork and job satisfaction were selected as the major factors that determine the performance of individuals. The impact of emotional intelligence on the above dimensions were studied to arrive at a meaningful conclusion.

EI’s pertinence to the psycho-social variables:
1. Conflict Management
Contemporary organizations spread across all industries are challenged to find ways to cope with the rapid changes in the work environment. Conflict has become an integral part of the inner workings of organizations. This proliferation of change has resulted in increased conflict and anger in the workplace. Research shows that conflict should not be viewed as a weakness and that it could be useful and constructive and can enhance productivity if handled appropriately (Bar-On, 1997; Deutsch, 1973). Valentine (2001) suggests that, being able to manage conflict effectively is important than planning, communication, motivation, and decision-making. Sherman (2009) in her study involving finance managers revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management modes. Individuals high on managing emotions are likely to prefer the collaboration mode of conflict management while individuals low on managing emotions may feel inadequate to handle certain situations and may practice the avoidance conflict mode. Ellis (2010) established significant correlations between one’s level of EQ and ones’ preferred conflict management styles.
Those who were assessed with high EQ had two preferred styles in both personal and public relationships, compromising and collaborating; whereas those with power EQ had preferred styles of compromising, directing, and collaborating. Shih and Susanto (2010) found that EI was an antecedent of conflict management styles for integrating and compromising styles. It was also found that integrating style partially mediates the relationship between EI and job performance.

Proposition 1:
- Managing emotions being the key concept for managing conflicts in an organization, it is inferred that EI skills facilitate individuals in conflict resolution.

2. Impression Management
Impression management refers to the activity of controlling information in order to steer others’ opinions in the service of personal or social goals. Empirical studies have found EI as an important tool related to positive outcomes such as pro-social behaviour, parental warmth, and positive family and peer relations (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999; Rice, 1999; Salovey, Mayer, Caruso, & Lopes, 2003; Dulewicz, Higgs & Slaski, 2003). Lopes, Brackett, Nezlek, Schutz, Sellin and Salovey (2004) have found positive relationships between the ability to manage emotions and the quality of social interactions. The underlying assumption of all these studies is that EI is a powerful tool for people to enhance their intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships at work.

Proposition 2:
- EI skills facilitates interpersonal management skills and also in managing one’s own impression on others.

3. Organizational Citizenship Behaviours
Organizational Citizenship Behaviours (OCB) are defined as those extra work related behaviours which go above and beyond the routine duties prescribed by their job descriptions or measured in formal evaluations (Bateman and Organ, 1983). Research evidence shows that EI predicted the significant amount of variance in the positive forms of organizational behaviour like organizational citizenship behavior (Carmeli, 2003; Jain & Sinha, 2003; Sitter, 2004; Cote & Miners, 2006; Solan, 2008; Yaghoubi, Mashinchi and Hadi, 2011). EI and OCBs have been identified as significant predictors of successful individuals and organizations (Jain, 2009). It is accepted that important condition of organizational effectiveness is a willingness of employees to "go above and beyond" the formal specifications of their prescribed roles.

Proposition 3:
- Individuals high on EI have the ability to relate themselves with the organization and improve their closeness towards the firm thus developing a feeling of oneness and contributing to OCB in an effective manner.

4. Job Performance
Job performance is the way employees perform their work. Laff (2008) wrote that organizations are including EI as a required competence for enhancing performance. Organizations want to create stars making emotional intelligence central to creating the star performers in an organization, since emotional intelligence research shows that the level of emotional intelligence assists in defining star performers and low level performers in organizations (Druskat & Wolff, 2001). A multitude of studies suggest that EI is a strong predictor of job performance. In a study that examined workers in a cigarette factory in China, EI was found to predict employee performance (Law, Wong, & Song, 2004). Individuals with a high level of emotional intelligence are able to direct positive emotions to uphold the energy needed for high performance over long periods of time and to redirect negative emotions into productive behaviours. Richards and Pryce (2006) showed emotional intelligence had a significant effect on job control and work performance. Researches indicated that EI was associated with productivity, job performance and organisational performance. (Ashakanasy & Daus, 2005; Gantt & Agazarian, 2004; Higgs, 2004, Cote, 2006; Barbuto & Burbach, 2006; Leban & Zulauf, 2004). Langhorn (2004) found a correlation between EI and profit performance in business organizations.
Young and Dulewicz (2007) in their study among officers of British Royal Navy confirmed that IQ, MQ, and EQ are all positively rated to job performance and finds that EQ makes the greatest contribution to officers' leadership and job performance, and that EQ contributes more than IQ or MQ regardless of leadership style.

**Proposition 4:**
- High emotional intelligence does have a strong relationship to job performance. On other words, emotionally intelligent people make better productive workers.

5. Leadership
Leadership is a process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task (Chemers, 1997). The application of emotional intelligence to the workplace should leverage the benefits of emotional intelligence in all forms of leadership since leadership is relationship between leader and follower (Burns, 1979). Diggins (2004) advocated emotional intelligence to facilitate leader success and therefore, organizational success. Hayashi and Ewert (2006) found a moderate positive correlation between EI and transformational leadership in outdoor leaders. Woods (2010) identified a positive correlation between transformational leadership, transactional leadership and emotional intelligence skills. Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005) found that at the executive level, EI correlated with leader effectiveness better than personality or IQ. Anand and UdayaSuriyan (2010) identified that emotional intelligence has a significant relationship with the leadership practices of executives. Leaders need flexibility for high performing teams and organizations. EI may help people achieve flexibility personally and in their relationships. Gantt and Agazarian (2004) stated, "For managers and leaders, focusing on organizational emotional intelligence or team emotional intelligence provide new perspectives for leadership and for assessing and influencing their organizations."

**Proposition 5:**
- More successful managers and those occupying higher positions in the organisations possessing higher levels of EQ are able to influence their group with their leadership behaviour and thus prove to be better role models.

6. Team Work
Teamwork is often a crucial part of a business, as it is often necessary for colleagues to work well together, trying their best in any circumstance. Hughes et al. (2005) stated, “The need for emotional intelligence increases with higher levels of responsibility, such as management or parenthood, and becomes even more important with groups, such as work teams.” Jordan and Troth (2004) found that team performance and conflict resolution, which can enhance workplace socialization, might improve if those within the teams exhibited high EI skills. Clarke (2010) identified that team members with differing EI capabilities contributed towards team effectiveness. Rapisarda (2002) identified that EI competencies of influence, empathy, and achievement orientation were positively related to team cohesiveness. Koman and Wolf (2008) found that team leader emotional intelligence is significantly related to the presence of emotionally competent group norms on the teams they lead, and that emotionally competent group norms are related to team performance.

**Proposition 6:**
- Higher the EI, higher the level of team work and team cohesion.

7. JOB SATISFACTION
Job satisfaction is the emotional reaction a worker has towards his/her job after a comparison of the outputs he/she expects or desires with real outputs. In a research that was accomplished in 8 ceramic companies in Spain, results showed that organizational learning capacity is a moderator variable that affects the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. A positive relationship was identified between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of senior managers. (Carmeli, 2003, p. 792). A second study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, job performance and emotional labour. Wong & Law (2002) in their research reflected that job
satisfaction and job performance were related to emotional intelligence. Psilopanagioti et al (2012) in their study among healthcare professionals, identified that emotionally intelligent physicians seem to be more satisfied with their job and this positive relation is moderated and partially mediated by surface acting component of EI. Significant positive correlation was identified between emotional quotient and dimensions of job satisfaction such as public mood, interpersonal relations, intrapersonal relations, and agreeableness (Najafi and Mousavi, 2012). Ford (2010) in a study of frontline staff at a large healthcare organization found that the correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction was partially supported in that there was a statistical significance between emotional intelligence and People on your Present Job (JDIPP).

Proposition 7:
➢ A positive relationship exists between EI and JS. Thus emotional intelligence at work has a great influence on the level of job satisfaction and in turn on work performance.

Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice
From the various researches it is evident that EI has a significant role in influencing the success of an organisation through channelizing the individual behaviour in the productive direction. The need for the hour is to evolve a precise tool that will measure the EI in the context of organisation which in turn could complement the existing selection tools to hire good prospects.

CONCLUSION
Success requires more than IQ (Intelligence Quotient), which has tended to be the traditional measure of intelligence, ignoring essential behavioural and other character elements. Emotional intelligence is important for successful performance in a number of jobs. Considering the propositions of psychosocial variables, in the study which includes Conflict Management, Impression Management, Organization Citizenship Behaviour, Job Performance, Leadership, team work, Job Satisfaction, it has been proven time and again that EQ is positively correlated with all the above said factors which are essential for an individual’s survivability and sustainability in the organisation and hence leads to the collective success of the organisation. If this is the case, "Why can’t emotional intelligence be used as an effective tool for selection?"

REFERENCES


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