

Emotional intelligence-A tool for effective work life balance

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ABSTRACT - We are living in a fast paced technological era where everyone needs to concentrate on their own personal life and work life which is called as work life balance. Work life conflict is not a gender specific; both genders are having challenges in having a healthy work life balance. With recent changes in the working pattern, nowadays it is difficult to keep personal life separate from work life. To maintain a perfect balance between personal and work life it is equal important for a person to manage their own emotions. As emotions are an inherent part of our biological makeup and each morning they walk into the workplace with us and impact our conduct. Hence emotional intelligence comes into picture and it helps to improve individual and organisational performances. Organisational changes impose new roles and duties on their employees which have effect on their work life balance. To adapt to the new changes the employees need to have efficiency in emotional quotient (EQ)

Recent days researchers are interested in finding the impact of emotional intelligence on employees also analysing various facts on emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is now considered as one of the important organizational factor. To have a successful work life balance everyone should effectively use their emotional intelligence in work place.

“High trait emotional intelligent individuals employ better emotional responses in dealing with and managing stressful effects of emotional dissonance experienced at work”

-Mikolajczak, Menil, & Luminet, (2007)

This paper is an attempt to review various researches in the field of work life balance and to know how emotional intelligence plays an important role in balancing work and family life. High level of emotional intelligence increases self-awareness, emotional expression, creativity, tolerance level, trust and integrity, improve relations across organisation and thereby increase the performance of each employee and the organization as a whole which will have a positive impact on the work life balance. Organisations should provide various trainings for their employees in order to improve their emotional intelligence. Employees should realise their own potentials and skills to improve the emotional intelligence by attending various training and developmental programmes conducted by the organizations to have a healthy work life balance.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, work life balance; employees, emotional quotient

I. INTRODUCTION

Work plays a significant part in all our lives, especially to meet our day to day needs. The days are gone when men were only the bread winner of the family and women was engaged with the household duties. Nowadays both are equally competing with the increasing work pressures, globalisation, and technological advancement. Hence balancing the work and life is a great challenge and even became an issue for both sexes in today's unpredictable and fast-paced business world. Work-life balance involves juggling workplace stress with daily pressures of family, relationship with friends and others and self.

Usually employers expect more from their employees which leads to feel more pressure to achieve the end result or goals. Obviously this leads to work for long hours in office and spend lesser time in home which will surely impact mentally, physically as well social effects in employees. So it is better for everyone to analyse their priorities in professional and personal life to have a healthy work-life balance in which their emotions takes a vital role to adapt to the fast changing and challenging environment. Why because, the consequences of emotional states in the workplace both behavioural and attitudinal have considerable significance for individual, groups, and

society. At the point when employees feel a greater sense of control and ownership they have a tendency to have better relationships with management and are able to leave work issues at work and home issues at home.

Emotional intelligence is the measure of an individual's abilities to recognize and manage their emotions, and the emotions of other people, both individually and in groups. The term emotional intelligence was foremost used by psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey in the year 1990. From the past decades researchers are showing more interest for conducting studies in emotional intelligence. That is only because the importance for being emotionally intelligent is most nowadays in all the areas irrespective of the organizations. Balanced employees who have a high level of emotional intelligence level tend to feel more motivated and less stressed out at work which there by increases organization efficiency and decrease the number of conflicts among co-workers and management.

“The ability of the individuals to perceive, understand and manage their emotions would help to balance the work family life”

-Lenaghan, Buda, And Eisner (2007)

II. WORK LIFE BALANCE

According to the work foundation, for people the work life balance is a measure of control over when, where and how they work, also it is a feeling of achievement and excitement at the workplace and home. Few individuals find difficulty in maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life is known as work life conflict.

An individual's ability to maintain a balance between work and life is influenced by the below factors such as,

Nature of the work

Workplace and working conditions

Work overload

Flexibility and quantity of hours worked

Sick and holiday leave provisions

Availability of support structures within the workplace (e.g. Childcare facilities, breastfeeding facilities, medical room).

Government policies related to employment (e.g. Child care or parental leave)

In addition the characteristics of an individual also are a very important determinant of their ability to maintain a balance between work and life.

Effects of work- life imbalance

- Poor mental health;
- Using prescription drugs;

- Stress; and
- Dissatisfaction with personal relationships.

Risks associated with work life conflict in organisation

- Increased staff turnover;
- Increased employee absenteeism;
- Difficulty in attracting employees (for companies) especially skilled employees;
- Increased recruitment costs;
- Reduced morale amongst employees;
- Reduced workforce diversity.
- Reduced productivity and performance

III. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Daniel Goleman (1995, 1998) published books in the term emotional intelligence and working with emotional intelligence, who popularized the term emotional intelligence in the organizational set up. According to him emotional intelligence is the largest and powerful predictor of success in the workplace. Emotional intelligence is known as emotional quotient (EQ) and emotional intelligence quotient (EQ). It is the ability of a person to understand one's own emotions and those of others to differentiate between feelings and tag them appropriately to use emotional information to direct thinking and behaviour and manage and regulate emotions to adapt to environments and accomplish ones goal.

Research has shown that individuals with high emotional intelligence have superior mental health, better job performance, and exhibit greater leadership skills; however, no relationship could be established between ei and other characters. These findings could likely be attributed to an individual's general intelligence and specific personality traits.

Following are the four areas of capabilities or skillsets that can be defined as branches of emotional intelligence.

- The exact perception of emotion in self and others.
- Facilitate thinking using emotions.
- Ability to understand emotional meaning.
- Emotional management.

Importance of emotional intelligence in workplace

- Individuals with high emotional intelligence help to coordinate with others at workplace (understanding other people's emotions)
- Helps to achieve goals (co-operating with others, emotion management, maturity)

- Maintain satisfying personal relationships (managing and balancing emotions)
 - Live a balanced lifestyle
 - Consider and respond to others empathy and compassion
 - Resolve conflict more easily
- Able to mingle easily with others, can have a good relationship with others and healthy workplace



-Michael Plowright

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Effective Work Life Balance

In recent years the role and relationship between emotional intelligence and work life balance among the employees has become a matter of discussion at all levels in corporate sector.

Daniel Goleman introduced ‘the mixed model’ that explains the five constructs of emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, self-motivation.

• Self Awareness Vs work life balance:

The ability to know one’s emotions, to understand their strengths and weaknesses, drives, value and goals and recognize their impact on others. Understanding the needs and responsibilities at hand also able to manage and rectify the source of emotional disturbances which creates stress. The employee having self-awareness which is considered as one of the competencies of EI can able to listen to their own physical and psychological needs also have the courage to express their concerns without hampering the relationship or goodwill earned which can be the necessary aspect in balancing work-life needs.

“Being reminded that a sense of connection, self-awareness and community belonging are all predictors, which affirm our deepest human needs such as attachment and life satisfaction”

- (Putnam, 2000)

• Self-Regulation Vs Work Life Balance:

It is also called as self-discipline. The ability to monitor and manage our own behaviour is self-regulation. To have a healthy work life balance it is very important to be self-regulated in work as well life. The five elements which make up self-regulation are self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovation. Self-regulative employees will be careful about their work, able to manage multiple demands, organising themselves and have time managing skills which is more important in work-life balance.

• Empathy Vs Work Life Balance:

Empathy is the ability to understand, realise and share the feelings of others. Understanding others, developing others, having a service orientation, leveraging diversity, political awareness is the elements of empathy as per Goleman.

Employee with high level of emotional intelligence will be having listening and communication skills, interpersonal skills, practice of giving and receiving feedback on time, ability to create and develop opportunities by/through different kinds of people.

• Social skills Vs Work life balance:

It is otherwise called as relationship management. Building relationships, creating communities and connecting with others are one of the most effective ways to achieve in their work and life. Such as persuasion and influencing skill, conflict management skill, leadership skill, change management skill, team work skills are necessary elements in social skills which lead a person to be successful in having a healthy work-life balance.

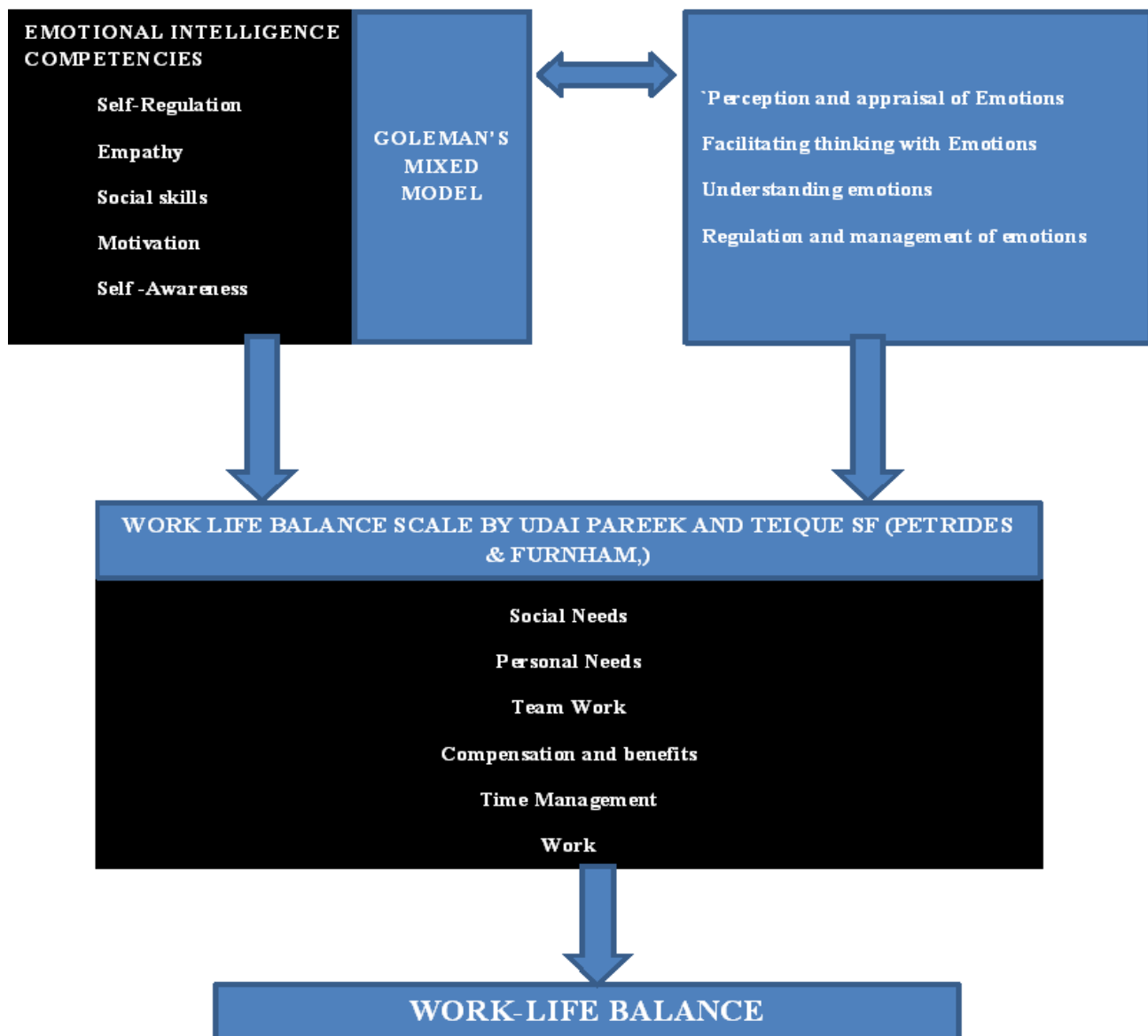
Thus employees with a good social skill can easily mingle with the team, share ideas/plans and can be a good team player. As they will be good in change management skills they can easily adapt to the fast changing climate in the organisation and meet the barriers with lesser stress.

• Motivation Vs Work Life Balance:

Self-motivation means motivated to do or achieve something with own interest and enthusiasm, without having a pressure from anyone. Self-motivated employees consistently work towards their goal and motivate the team to achieve the goal. As they are self-motivated they learn and acquire knowledge, keep the enthusiasm in work and stay positive which will leads happiness and healthy work environment.

Using emotional intelligence to drive job satisfaction and healthy work-life balance in employees

The below conceptual frame work tries to connect emotional intelligence and work life.



This framework is a collaboration or connection between the work life balance model by Udai Pareek and Teique sf (Petrides & Furnham,) 2001, (University of London, UK) and Goleman's (1995) 'The mixed model' of emotional competencies. Work-life balance model of Udai Pareek consists of six components: social needs, personal needs, time management, team work, compensation & benefits and work. As per Goleman, competencies of emotional intelligence are self –awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and motivation leads to the well maintained. As a result we can see the role of the 5 constructs of emotional intelligence in every individual and its impact on the job performance and satisfaction which gives an outcome of healthy work life balance.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Both employers and employees are equally responsible for having a healthy work life balance. Employers should concentrate on framing policies, procedures or schemes to attract employees as well retain them. The human resource

department should take care of the wellness of each and every employee in the organisation and recommend the managers for improving the quality of work life. As training on emotions intelligence will improve employee capability and even will develop management & leadership skills among employees. Organizations should conduct regular training programs and workshops on stress management and annual get to gather with family members can rejuvenate them and will help to balance their life. Performance of an organisation is in the employee's hand. A properly trained employee with Emotional intelligence will start to manage his work and life and will concentrate on the organisation's growth and will become a treasure for that organization.

"The organizations must coach their employees in developing their interpersonal skills and coach them to perform effectively on the job with other employees in the organization"

-Reuven Bar-on et al(2007)

V. CONCLUSION

In every organisation, both the employer and employee should accept the fact that emotions are integral part of lives and showing controlled emotions in personal and professional life can only increase the quality of life. To avoid conflict between work and life we should have proper regulations of our emotions. Scarifying the personal life for professional life creates work life imbalance. Implementation of work life balances and practices will improve the performance of the progressive organization. To build sustainable and enriching organisations, they should focus on developing, formulating and implementing better work life balance.

Emotional intelligence is playing an important role in the work life balance of employees by making it in better way. Employees can have better idea about their needs and priorities in life since Emotional intelligence improving the skills of self-awareness among employees. Emotional intelligence and work life balance is connected with each other. Emotional intelligence in work life balance will help the employees by improving their personal performance and directing them towards constructive activities. As a result high level of emotional intelligence helps to reduce the stress, grievances, dispute among the employees which will result in the work life balance also enhancing the productivity to achieve the organisational goals.

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