



A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON JOB STRESS AMONG EMPLOYEES IN INDIAN BANKING SECTOR: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MADHYA PRADESH

Management

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ABSTRACT

The academic aptitude of an individual worldwide was often given prime importance in education for several decades as high Intelligence Quotient (IQ), the measure of mental ability, has been equated with the great success in life. But since the 90's, the various researchers have identified that average graders often continue to outperform their more intelligent counterparts at the workplace. On the basis of the review of several studies, the individual differences in the intelligence test performance account for utmost 25% of the life success factors (Sternberg, Wagner, Williams, and Hovarth, 1995), as a result, the rest of the 75% of factors remains unexplained. From last two decades Emotional Quotient (EQ), the measure of Emotional Intelligence, has been identified as an important factor in the performance and success of individuals both in their personal and professional lives. This research paper aims to find out role of emotional intelligence in managing job stress among employees in banking sector.

KEYWORDS

Emotional Intelligence, Job stress

INTRODUCTION

The term 'Emotional Intelligence' was originally coined by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990 to delineate qualities like understanding one's own emotions, empathy for feelings of others, and managing one's emotions in a way that enhances living. Later, the concept was popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995) with the publication of his best-selling book titled *Emotional Intelligence*.

Emotional Intelligence is viewed as the ability to process emotional information and to regulate emotions (Mayer and Salovey, 1993). Some psychologists like Bar-On (cited in Grubb III and McDaniel, 2007) consider EI as a non-cognitive intelligence and define it as an array of emotional and social competencies and skills that affect one's ability to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressures. Emotional Intelligence can be considered as the ability to validly reason about emotions and to use emotions and emotional knowledge to augment our thoughts (Mayer, Roberts, and Barsade, 2008). EI is quite very relevant in today's dynamic working environment as measures of EI provide a new way to analyse individual's management styles, attitude, behaviour, and competence which aids in overall development of an organization and an individual. Although the historical roots of EI are deeply rooted in the field of psychology, the concept of EI has been extended to several fields such as education, health, human resources, assessment, transcultural psychology and sport psychology. Specifically, in human resources, EI is considered to be an important parameter in human resource planning, recruitment, selection, succession planning, management development, customer service, etc.

Since banking sector plays an instrumental role in the economic development of any developing country like ours, its management is very important. The management of a commercial bank in India is quite unique and challenging in comparison to any other economic activity. In order to sustain in the competitive environment, banks need to focus on the management of their human resources.

In the past few years hiring has started at an unusual rate due to the expansion of branches by existing banks and the new banking licenses that are expected to be issued to some corporates. This has presented a new challenge before the managers in commercial banks, especially at the branch level, in terms of the management of multigenerational workforce. This variety of talent and differing views has the potential for job stress and job performance at the workplace, but a multigenerational workforce if managed effectively can be a source of competitive advantage for banks. Therefore, to capitalize on the strengths of a multigenerational team, bank managers need to manage interpersonal job stress constructively at the workplace. This would keep their subordinates motivating, which in turn would result in developing a harmonious working environment.

Statement of the problem

The interpersonal job stress and job performance is a phenomenon that arises between interdependent parties as they experience negative emotional reactions (jealousy, anger, anxiety or frustration) to perceived disagreements and interference with the attainment of their

goals (Barki and Hartwick, 2001). Since as a bank branch manager one is required to supervise a team of employees at the branch, so the manager is likely to face interpersonal job stress and job performance with his or her subordinates over work related issues. How effectively a branch manager is able to handle these interpersonal job stresses and job performance will determine his efficiency as an employee. Rao (1992 and 2004) in their study on identifying key performance areas (KPA) of bank employees in India identified job stress and job performance resolution as an important area of managerial performance. Also, managers spent about 24% of their time on handling job stress and job performance, which makes it reasonable to consider *job stress and job performance* as an important factor determining managerial performance (cited in Singh, 2006). In recent years, Emotional Intelligence is assumed to be related to job stress and job performance at workplace. Those with higher levels of EI are more skilled at managing job stress and job performance (Bodtker and Jameson, 2001; Jones and Bodtker, 2001). The present study is conducted to investigate that to what extent the emotional intelligence of the employees is related to their *mode or style* of handling interpersonal job stress and job performance with their subordinates over work related issues.

Review of Literature

The study conducted by Rahim et al., (2002) explored the relationships of the five dimensions of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills of supervisors to subordinate's strategies of handling conflict: problem solving and bargaining. For this study, the responses were collected with questionnaires from 1,395 MBA students in seven countries (U.S., Greece, China, Bangladesh, Hong Kong and Macau, South Africa, and Portugal). The results in the U.S. and in the combined sample provided support for the model which suggests that self-awareness is positively associated with self-regulation, empathy, and social skills; self-regulation is positively associated with empathy and social skills; empathy and social skills are positively associated with motivation; which in turn, is positively associated with problem solving strategy and negatively associated with bargaining strategy.

Lenaghan, Buda, and Eisner (2007) in their empirical study investigated the impact of emotional intelligence in the work-family model. A total of 205 people participated in this study. This sample was drawn from a large university representing a large variety of jobs including unionized trade workers to executive managers. They found that EI acts as a protector variable of one's wellbeing in the face of work-family conflict.

Feizi, Shahbahrani, and Azhandeh (2011) examined the relationship between manager's emotional intelligence and their Job Stress and Job Performance strategies. This study comprised a population of 103 administrators in Iran university of Medical Sciences. The results revealed no correlation between emotional intelligence and control strategy. A positive correlation was found between EI and conflict resolution strategy while the correlation between EI and conflict avoidance strategy was negative. The findings suggest that manager's

EI can be considered as an important factor in recognizing conflicts and adopting strategies for Job Stress and Job Performance in organizations.

Objectives of the study

- The study is mainly focused on the emotional intelligence and its relation to the interpersonal job stress of the employees.
- To assess the level of emotional intelligence among the employees.

Hypotheses

H1: Emotional intelligence of the employees has significant relationship with avoiding style of job stress and job performance.

H2: Emotional intelligence of the employees has significant relationship with dominating style of job stress and job performance.

H3: Emotional intelligence of the employees has significant relationship with compromising style of job stress and job performance.

H4: Emotional intelligence of the employees has significant relationship with obliging style of job stress and job performance.

H5: Emotional intelligence of the employees has significant relationship with integrating style of job stress and job performance.

METHODOLOGY

This study is basically descriptive and analytical in nature as it describes the emotional intelligence and job stress of employees and also analyses the relationship between these variables. The study is completely based on primary data collection method through questionnaire as a major tool. The sample size is 261 adopting multi stage sampling technique.

INSTRUMENTATION

Emotional Intelligence of the employees

The Emotional Intelligence of respondent employees was assessed using a standardized test which gives total score of Emotional Quotient (EQ) and scores on its three psychological dimensions, namely, Emotional Sensitivity (ES), Emotional Maturity (EM), and Emotional Competency (EC). The mean score of EQ for employees was found to be 382.66 (SD = 20.30) and mean scores of its three dimensions, emotional sensitivity, emotional maturity, and emotional competency were 89.52 (SD = 6.46), 118.87 (SD = 9.87), and 174.27 (SD = 13.94) respectively as tabulated below in the Table 1. The respondents were found to have high total EQ scores as well as the scores on its individual dimensions i.e., ES, EM, and EC were high for all the employees as per the norms of the standardized test (refer Table .2) which indicates that the level of EI in the employees is high.

Table 1. Total EQ score and scores on EQ dimensions of the respondents

Dimensions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
EQ	261	325.00	435.00	382.66	20.30
ES	261	50.00	100.00	89.52	6.46
EM	261	90.00	140.00	118.87	9.87
EC	261	125.00	200.00	174.27	13.94

Table 2 The norms of the EQ test

EQ Dimensions	Level of dimensions		
	High	Moderate	Low
	Range of score	Range of score	Range of score
Emotional Sensitivity	86-100	66-85	25-65
Emotional Maturity	113-140	88-112	35-87
Emotional Competency	141-200	97-140	50-96
Total EQ	308-440	261-307	110-260

The job stress and job performance of employees were measured using an abridged and adapted version of the organizational job stress inventory developed by Rahim (1983). Mishra, Dhar, and Dhar (1999)

Table 3 Job stress and job performance scores of the employees

Styles	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Avoiding	261	2.98 (4)	0.88
Dominating	261	2.49 (5)	0.79
Compromising	261	3.06 (3)	0.85
Obliging	261	3.89 (2)	0.60
Integrating	261	4.28 (1)	0.50

The above table (Table.3) indicates that, employees viewed integrating style as the most preferred style for handling interpersonal job stress and job performance s, which was followed in descending order by obliging, compromising, avoiding, and dominating. The mean values for integrating (4.28) and obliging (3.89) fall into the mostly applied response category. The mean values for compromising (3.06) and avoiding (2.98) fitted well into the _sometimes applied response category. The least preferred style was dominating, as reflected from its lower mean value of 2.49. This value is a bit above the occasionally applied response category. It can be inferred that the employees argue and also allow argument regarding an issue with a view to encourage involvement of the other party concerned, but only occasionally forced the matter.

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence on Job Stress and Job Performance

The degree and direction of relationship between EI of employees and their job stress and job performance was determined by calculating Pearson coefficient of correlation and the same has been shown below in the Table 4. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence of employees and their integrating style of managing interpersonal job stress and job performance s ($r = 0.17, p < 0.01$), but a significant negative correlation was found between emotional intelligence and dominating style of interpersonal job stress and job performance of the employees ($r = -0.18, p < 0.01$). Hence, hypothesis (H2) that EI is associated with dominating style is accepted as well as the hypothesis (H5) that EI is related to integrating style is accepted. There was no significant correlation observed between EI and other styles of job stress and job performance i.e., avoiding, compromising, and obliging style. Hence, none of the hypotheses (H1, H3 and H4) that EI is related to avoiding, compromising, and obliging style of job stress and job performance are supported.

A significant positive relationship was observed for both emotional sensitivity ($r = 0.16, p < 0.01$) and emotional competency ($r = 0.12, p < 0.05$) of employees with their integrating style of job stress and job performance but emotional competency was found to have significant negative relationship with dominating style of managing interpersonal job stress and job performance s ($r = -0.20, p < 0.01$). The inter correlations among the five styles of handling interpersonal job stress and job performances were found to be low, which indicates that they are measuring distinct behavioral styles.

Table 4 Correlation Coefficients between Emotional Intelligence and Job stress and job performance

	EI	ES	EM	EC	AV	DO	CO	OB	IN
EI	1								
ES	0.41**	1							
Sig.	0.00								
EM	0.64**	0.03	1						
Sig.	0.00	0.60							
EC	0.82**	0.10	0.20**	1					
Sig.	0.00	0.09	0.00						
AV	-0.09	-0.05	-0.12	-0.02	1				
Sig.	0.15	0.45	0.05	0.73					
DO	-0.18**	-0.09	-0.03	-0.20**	0.09	1			
Sig.	0.00	0.17	0.68	0.00	0.14				
CO	-0.08	0.00	-0.01	-0.12	0.14*	0.14*	1		
Sig.	0.17	0.92	0.84	0.06	0.02	0.02			
OB	0.03	0.04	0.03	-0.00	0.05	0.05	0.31**	1	
Sig.	0.68	0.56	0.62	0.98	0.45	0.46	0.00		
IN	0.17**	0.16**	0.07	0.12*	-0.03	-0.10	0.12	0.36**	1
Sig.	0.00	0.00	0.28	0.04	0.57	0.09	0.05	0.00	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

EI = Emotional Intelligence; **ES** = Emotional Sensitivity; **EM** = Emotional

Maturity; **EC** = Emotional Competency; **AV** = Avoiding; **DO** = Dominating; **CO**=Compromising; **OB**=Obliging; **IN**=Integrating.

CONCLUSION

The present research was conducted with an objective to provide empirical evidence for the relationship, if any, between the emotional intelligence of employees and their interpersonal job stress and job performance. The findings of the study ascertain the slight relationship of branch manager's EI with only two of their different styles of managing job stress and job performance. This implies that there may be some intervening factors like personality, which might have affected the relationship between the two. Nevertheless, emotional intelligence has an impact on various facets of human endeavor, which includes both professional and personal lives. Job stress and job performance in the workplace is inevitable so managing job stress and job performances effectively at workplace is essential, which poses a big challenge before employees in the form of managing a multigenerational workforce. Higher emotional intelligence could help employees in empathizing well with their subordinates, understanding their expectations, and capitalizing on their strengths for increase in organizational performance

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