



Spirituality, Emotional Intelligence and Work Stress-A Scrutiny

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ABSTRACT

Work stress is now a connected element of day to day work life. Nowadays cutthroat life and growing desires and work responsibilities, it is unlikely to separate job related stress. But similarly on other hand, stress beyond a point is destructive both psychologically and physiologically for a human being and organization as well, since the entire culture and work system gets affected when stress is perceptible in different types through it is quality of work, leader's activities, profit, students performance, consumer approval, brand image, employee retention and a lot of such signs. Several authors have acknowledged leadership as a function that involves inspiration, promptness, clear vision, unique aptitude, acceptance from group, responsibility, crisis solving attitude and various other traits that assist organization to shape its outlook. It is recognized by various other theories that it is the emotional set up and attitude of a person that directs his performance and achievement. It is fairly vital that if emotions are well understood, realized, acknowledged and cultured into, it will facilitate a person to be aware of emotions of self and others. Therefore, it will be in a situation to keep equilibrium, attain objectives without any disruption and also help others to grow. Based on the existing literature it is clear that due to work stress much of the imagination remains unutilized and the only remedy available is by preparing leaders on being emotionally intelligent. This paper examines the inter association between Spirituality, Emotional Intelligence and Work stress and also suggests that how by considering, accepting and adopting intrusion based on spirituality and emotional intelligence dimensions, work stress can be reduced. Statistical tools like correlation, regression used to infer the information. Structured questionnaire was used to determine spirituality, work stress and emotional intelligence. It is quite obvious after scrutiny that different dimensions of spirituality and emotional intelligence will aid leaders to discover primary causes of work stress. Thus it will assist in constructing organization effectiveness.

Keywords: Work stress, Emotional Intelligence, Leadership, Job Overload, Self Awareness, Empathy, and Spirituality

INTRODUCTION

The present business environment is surmounted by stiff competition, rising challenges, consistently increasing expectations of stakeholders, changing technology, diverse work pressure and struggle for sustenance. Understanding the role of emotional intelligence in developing a well planned and effective leadership model is important. The purpose of this paper is therefore to understand conceptually about emotional intelligence, its components and relevance in developing sound leadership.

The emotional intelligence among leader in health care education industry is a single essential variable in developing a healthy environment. Awareness of Emotional Intelligence will increase the capability of leaders to identify their own potential and students' strengths and areas for development in social, moral, ethical and cognitive dimensions. This will help in developing a positive and constructive work environment. Emotional Intelligence can be used as a trait by the leaders to improve engagement. A high Spiritual Quotient is increasingly being observed as a crucial pre-requisite for effective leadership. Leaders may most affectively relate to followers through empathy, to deeply

understand their belief, feelings, and points of view. A leader who is better at assessing the emotions of his team as well as is empathetic towards his students, gives a feeling of security and motivates the students positively to take a step ahead for success.

Review of Literature

As noted by King (1999)¹, interest in spirituality in organizations is burgeoning. Neal (1999)² survey on contemporary challenges, they propose, the management field will benefit greatly from incorporating a spiritual perspective into our theories as well as into our research and theory development process.

From spiritual aspect, leaders may most affectively relate to followers through empathy, to profoundly understand their thoughts, feelings, and points of view. Tischler, Biberman & McKeage (2002)³, found that empathy is a very good predictor of leadership emergence in self-managed teams.

Wolff, Pescosolido, and Druskat (2002)⁴ also found that empathy played an important role in leadership emergence. A person's disposition to be empathetic is a strong determinant of their supportive responses to people expressing distress.



Mohammad Fathi, Nasim Kazemeini, (2013)⁵ study, reflected a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and executive function were observed. Catholic Health Association (1994) in the study on leaders emotional intelligence and its impact on the performance of health care organizations health revealed that health organization administrators, who have had high emotional intelligence, have positive effects on organizational performance, which is consistent with their results.

Suresh, T. and Rajalaxmi (2005)⁶ found that there is no difference in emotional intelligence of male and female teachers working in rural and urban zones. Teachers working in government schools are found to be better in their emotional intelligence than teachers working in aided and private schools.

Individuals with high emotional intelligence can better see emotions and use them in thoughts, comprehend outcomes and oversee emotions superior to others. Taking care of emotional issues likely requires less cognitive exertion for high EI individual (Salovey, Mayer, Caruso, 2004)⁷.

Schutte (1998)⁸ proposed Emotional Intelligence as the ability or tendency to perceive, understand, regulate and harness emotions adaptively in self and in others.

Work stress may produce both overt psychological and physiologic disabilities. However it may also cause subtle manifestation of morbidity that can affect personal well-being and productivity (Quick, Murphy, Hurrell and Orman, 1992)⁹.

Salovey and Mayer (1990)¹⁰ proposed a model that identified four different factors of emotional intelligence: the perception of emotion, the ability reason using emotions, the ability to understand emotion and the ability to manage emotions.

It is well understood that leaders in present context need to be multi-faceted and multi-skilled so as to bring manifold benefits to organization to do this it is important that they should be well trained in managing their emotions to identify and intervene at right time, to reduce stress level and contribute in the most effective way.

Role conflicts, role ambiguity, role overload and under load, is widely examined individual stressors Mc Grath (1976); Newton and Keenan, (1987). Cobb (1975)¹¹ has the opinion that, "The responsibility load creates severe stress among workers and leaders." If the individual leader cannot cope with the increased responsibilities it may lead to several physical and psychological disorders among them. Brook (1973) reported that qualitative changes in the job create adjustment problem among students. The interpersonal relationships within the department and between the departments create qualitative difficulties within the organization to a great extent.

Objectives of Study

- a) To determine the intensity of Emotional Intelligence among leaders in Health Care Sector.
- b) To find the dependence between overall Emotional Intelligence and stress experienced among leaders in Health Care Sector.
- c) To quantify the interrelationship between different dimensions of Work stress, Emotional Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence.

Research Design & Data Collection

A structured emotional intelligence scale had been used for collecting primary data with the dimensions of emotional intelligence mentioned above. Group size was 20, out of which 10 were post graduates and degree holders. Data was collected in two stages pre and post training sessions i.e. 7 days before and after training regularly for a period of 2 years. Means scores, standard deviation and co-efficient of variation are used for analysis. It was found that Empathy scored highest amongst all the dimensions and that after training, the software students were not distracted by illogical things and their input improved. Other dimensions also showed a tremendous improvement in the personalities after training. Thus there is a significant influence in shaping the personalities as per the requirement of their profession.

Exploratory type of research was used. Primary data was collected through the structured questionnaire, administered personally through mails.

Secondary data was collected through extensive literature review of books, journals related to the subject. In the present study Emotional intelligence is independent variable whereas stress is the dependent variable.

In order to measure interrelationship between Emotional Intelligence and level of stress among leaders, data was collected from twenty different Management Colleges offering different medical courses at graduation and post graduation level.

The leaders comprised of executives designated at top tier of the college like owner, department heads, deans etc. Total 300 questionnaires were distributed to different colleges, and were received which could be used for examining.

Since the purpose of study was to determine the interrelationship between the different factors of Spirituality, Emotional intelligence, Work stress experienced by leaders in Health Care Sector a well developed instrument which is reliable and valid to measure the proposed was needed.

Emotional Intelligence Scale developed and standardized by Anukool (2002)¹² is deployed for the present study. The reliability of the scale was determined by calculating



reliability coefficient on a sample of 200 subjects. The split half reliability coefficient was found to be 0.88.

The face and content validity of the scale was determined. The validity index was calculated which indicated high validity 0.94. There are 34 items in the questionnaire through which 10 factors were evaluated. The statements are designed to understand the differences in individual reactions to various situations. These are- Self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relation, integrity, self development, value orientation, commitment and altruistic behaviour.

A Likert format answer key was created with each statement rated on five point scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

Work stress Index developed by Srivastava and Singh (1981)¹³ was used to measure level of stress. The items relate to almost all relevant components of the job size which causes stress in some way or the other, such as, role over-load, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressure, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic, impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions and unprofitability.

Reliability of the Scale

The reliability index ascertained by Split Half method and Cronbach's alpha – coefficient for the scale as a whole were found to be .935 and .90 respectively. In general, in psychology researches, a good measure should have a Cronbach's Alpha of at least .60 and preferably closer to .90. The scale consists of 46 items, each to be rated on the five point scale. Out of 46 items 28 are 'True – Keyed' and last 18 are 'False'.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

From the study it is interpreted that 64% of leaders scored above average with respect to Emotional Intelligence. This is a positive factor and the reason is that being in educational industry leaders gain high maturity with respect to Emotional Intelligence factors like self awareness, empathy, and integrity, self motivation, managing relation, integrity, self development, value orientation and developing social skills. To a large extent it is because of the nature of service i.e. Health Care Sector that there is a large scope for innovation and creativity since the diversity of students, rising industry expectations, competency of students, role of technology and parallelly the crucial role that Health Care Sector plays guides to a large extent the behavior, mindset and emotional level of the leaders towards the students.

In order to establish this, correlation was applied based on objective it can be hypothesized that there exists no significant relationship between Work stress and Emotional intelligence dimensions. In order to test the hypothesis correlation was established. Work stress of leaders is significantly related with emotional intelligence

($r=0.256$). The correlation proves that with increased scores of Emotional Intelligence, occupational stress decreases.

It is evident from the table that there exists positive correlation between different dimensions of emotional intelligence and different dimensions of stress. This hints that in order to manage stress well it is important for leaders to be emotionally intelligent since until we are aware about emotion of self and others managing stress will be difficult. It is clear from the table that with increased level of emotional intelligence stress can be easily managed. This research reveals that the various EI factors Self-Awareness, Empathy, Self-Motivation, Emotional Stability, Managing relation, Integrity, Self-Development, Value Orientation, Commitment, Altruistic Behavior are having positive co-relation with Work stress factors. Hence the hypothesis, there is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence abilities and Work stress factors is rejected.

Coefficient of Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Work stress was 0.356. To establish the dependence between overall emotional intelligence and stress experienced among leaders in Health Care Sector, regression analysis was conducted with stress as dependent variable and dimensions of emotional intelligence as independent variable. It is clear from F-test was statistically significant $F=18.171$ & $P<.01$ which indicates that model is statistically significant. The R-square was .856 it means approximately 75% of variance in Work stress is explained by emotional intelligence dimensions which are the predictor variables, 10 coefficients also it is clear that almost all the dimensions of emotional intelligence are significantly related to Work stress.

The dimensions like emotional stability, value orientation, self motivation, awareness, empathy are significantly related to Work stress. Thus from the variance and coefficient it is quite clear that if emotional intelligence as a determinant is practiced to train leaders it will help leadership to get a better competitive advantage. Thus, it can be understood that if emotional intelligence and its dimensions are well realized and understood it will definitely help leadership to groom and bring organization advantage.

Regression value was .811 R square was .767 Adjusted R square was .731 and std error of estimate was 4.537. Coefficients: The adjusted R squared value was 0.242. This indicates that 24.2% of the variance in Stress at work was explained by spiritual quotient (*Hypothesis 4 Accepted*). The relationship was: Stress at work = $-2.147 - 0.45$ Spiritual Quotient $-\epsilon$ and Stress at work = $-1.56 - 0.57$ Emotional Quotient -0.099 Spiritual Quotient $-\epsilon$

Findings

According to the multiple regressions, it indicates that emotional quotient is influenced and explained more rather than spiritual quotient for predicting the stress at



work. From the analysis it is inferred that all the dimensions of Work stress were significantly related with each other. Thus, stress is a highly related function and an effect in one dimension affects other dimension as well as so for leaders it is quite important to be self aware about their emotions, adopt self control, value oriented and be empathetic in order to eliminate and minimize the stress that can affect their competence, leadership and thus overall organization performance. Stress reflects as an independent factor which cannot be treated or improvised. It needs a collaborative approach to bring the uncertainty or undesired outcome in a balance rather than such situation that can cause imbalance in any way.

It was found that all the dimensions of emotional intelligence were positively correlated with dimensions of Work stress which shows that emotional intelligence is an intrusion which in various ways, can assist leaders and organization to cultivate stress free work atmosphere, value the group well, and generate a positive amiable work setting and a good leadership model. Dimensions of emotional intelligence describe 75% of variance described in the model. Thus it is a strong analyst of Work stress and had a significant relation with the work stress. Roughly every dimension except few had a significant relation with stress as a dependent variable which explains the statement that emotional intelligence as interference can be extremely useful while managing work stress with leaders. It is on the organization as well on the leaders to realize and be aware of which dimension needs instant notice and progress so that a better work atmosphere and work culture can be formed. Thus, from the findings and the conceptual literature it is quite vital that every organization should recognize the significance of spirituality, emotional intelligence and its various profit that it can bring in tumbling stress and making leaders highly successful. It will also help organization to advance the work culture, develop affinity between leaders and group. Thus creating a commendable work culture, offer wider opportunities for learning and make everyone provoked to be emotionally balanced, avoid disturbance, grievance management and above all being self supervisor in terms of spirituality and emotion management that will benefit everybody.

CONCLUSION

Thus, Spirituality and Emotional intelligence is extensively associated to Work stress. Since stress cannot be evaded due to various causes in organization perspective and can only be abridged or restricted by a person, spirituality and emotional intelligence facilitate in helping leaders to be conscious of own emotions and developing this system in

reducing stress of self and taking enhanced decision. Spirituality and Emotional intelligence facilitate leaders to improve work culture, employee engagement, improved leader member exchange.

Thus fortify traits that are crucial to build up leader's task.

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