

A STUDY OF HOW EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE REDUCES OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Education is illumination. It plays extremely significant role in the lives of individuals by empowering them with various abilities, skills, competencies, and thus paving way for enhancing the quality of life. These days' schools face a tremendous pressure to have their students score proficient on state test. The needs of students, staff and parents in schools today vary from those of the same group even a few years ago. In addition, school face problems related to drugs, gang policy and personal issues. Because of all such changes which are occurred in the educational sector, the workplace had become a high stressed environment. In order to cope with such type of problems, teachers and principals need to possess some competencies such as Emotional Intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence is a type of intelligence that has been heavily studied in social sciences, psychology and business sector, but not in educational arena.

The present study is based on the assumption that application of emotional intelligence can increase teacher effectiveness and reduce occupational stress among teachers. Three hundred secondary school teachers were selected as a sample for the study.

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) was used to measure the emotional intelligence of teachers, Teacher Effectiveness Scale (TES) was used to measure the effectiveness among teachers and Occupational Stress Index (OSI) was used to measure the stress among teachers.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Teacher Effectiveness, Occupational Stress and Study of Teacher Stress In Relation To Emotional Intelligence of Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the ability to meet life's situation, it is a character building process, enhancing one's personality and making him/her rational, capable, responsive and intelligent. In the lives of the individuals, most of the problems, especially, occupational in nature are the result of misinterpretation of the involved sentiments, feelings and emotions of the concerned individuals, groups, society and nations. A teacher has to face innumerable challenges and play different roles in his/her institution.

He/she not only plan lessons but also organize activities, maintain necessary records, make purchases, administer time-table, oral and aural teaching aids, adopt new techniques of communication and motivate the students by words and deeds. Thus, teacher is expected to

possess a multifaceted personality. Under these circumstances, it is but natural that teachers will remain under stress which is sure to affect their effectiveness while teaching.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence refers to an ability to recognise the meanings of emotions and their relationships to reason and problem solving on the basis of them. The concept of this is popularised after publication of Daniel Goleman's book on Emotional Intelligence: "why It Can Matter Than I.Q.?" he introduced the importance of emotional quotient in workplace, noting that intelligence quotient is a less powerful predictor of outstanding leadership than emotional quotient.

Mayer and Salovey and their colleagues defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

Researchers have found that our emotional awareness and ability to handle feelings rather than our I.Q will determine our success and happiness in all walks of life. An employee with high emotional intelligence is able to respond appropriately to workplace stress and to emotional behavior of his co-workers. These abilities greatly enhance job satisfaction [Dong: 2006], lead to high job performance, long term mental health, better outcomes in work groups and leadership qualities [Lopes, Cote and Salovey, 2006], and organizational success [Mount, 2006], protect people from stress and lead to better adaptation, moderates depression, hopelessness and suicidal ideation.

Thus, it was concluded that the study of emotional intelligence was quite important as it enabled human beings to respond appropriately to a variety of situations. It provided a critical edge in work, family, social and even spiritual settings, brings awareness over inner world into focus. It acted as a preventive measure against bad behavior, anxiety, frustration, boredom, depression--collectively taken as stress.

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

They are-

- Self awareness is being aware of oneself
- Empathy is feeling and understanding the other person
- Self motivation is being motivated internally
- Emotional stability is to stay composed in all situations
- Managing relations is to handle relationship with others
- Integrity is awareness of one's weakness, strengths and beliefs
- Value orientation is to maintain ethical standards
- Commitment is to keep promises

Teacher Effectiveness

A number of factors have been identified in assessing the effectiveness of a teacher. These include verbal ability, content knowledge, continued professional development, teaching

experience and teacher certification. An effective teacher must treat all students equally, understand the dynamics of the classroom, have a commitment to teaching and above all, enjoy it. A teacher should be motivational, able to adapt to changing circumstances and able to relate their subject to everyday life. An effective teacher should be able to display fairness and respect, enthusiasm, enjoyment of social interaction and a caring attitude. In addition, they should have organizational and managerial skills.

Approaches to present this concept are also very different. Some researchers focused on teacher characteristics [Anderson: 1991; Strong, Tucker and Ward: 2003; Anand: 1983] whereas, other researchers are more concerned with the teaching processes or the teaching outcomes [Flander and Simon: 1969]. The activities of improving teacher effectiveness i.e. professional development and teacher evaluation help teachers to develop not only knowledge, skills and attitudes but also critical minds, self-reflection and self-management skills of emotional intelligence [Cheung and Cheng: 1996].

Research using student scores on standardized tests confirms the common perception that some teachers are more effective than others and also reveals that being taught by an effective teacher has important consequences for student achievement. Effective teachers cannot reliably be identified based on where they went to school, whether they're licensed, or (after the first few years) how long they've taught. The best way to assess teachers' effectiveness is to look at their on-the-job performance, including what they do in the classroom and how much progress their students make on achievement tests. This has led to more policies that require evaluating teachers' on-the-job performance, based in part on evidence about their students' learning.

For a better understanding of teacher effectiveness, we need to combine information from tests with other measures, such as classroom observations and input from supervisors and peers. Looking at many aspects of a teacher's contribution gives us the best chance to understand it fully.

Occupational Stress

Stress, in general, and occupational stress in particular, is a fact of modern life that seems to have been on the increase. Hans Selye first introduced the concept of stress into the life science in 1936. He defined stress as "The force, pressure, or strain exerted upon a material object or person which resist these forces and attempt to maintain its original state."

In educational sector, stress is increasing day by day because teaching today's young people is not only arduous work, but can be dangerously stressful. Anxiety due to school reform efforts, minimal administrative support, poor working circumstances, lack of involvement in school decision making, and lack of resources have been identified as factors that can cause stress among educators (Hammond & Onikama, 1997). Antoniou and Polychroni [2006] reported that increased occupational stress among teachers had weakened the efficiency of the teachers.

Singla (2006) during her study "A study of the occupational stress among employees from different careers of Chandigarh" found that doctors and teachers are highly stressed as compared to the employees from other professions. Both the teachers and the doctors face a significant amount of workload. It also revealed that females are more stressed as compared to male. Female teachers experienced significantly higher level of occupational stress, specifically with regard to interaction with students and colleagues, workload, students'

progress and emotional exhaustion. A certain amount of stress in education is predictable, even constructive.

The challenges of educating children will physically cause adrenaline levels associated with stress to increase. According to Botwinik (2007), it is easy for an educator to become overstressed.

Occupational stress is a growing problem worldwide, which results in substantial loss both to employees and organizations [Cotton and Hart: 2003]. Occupational stress has been defined as a situation where occupation related factors interact with the employees in a manner that disrupts or enhances his/her physiological conditions forcing them to deviate from normal functioning.

On the basis of these findings, it can be concluded that for reducing occupational stress and increasing teacher effectiveness, development of emotional intelligence among teachers is must. A teacher who has full control over his/her emotions i.e. one who is emotionally stable can inspire emotional intelligence in his pupils. The most prominent hurdles in the way of achievements among pupils are emotional imbalances i.e. anxiety, frustrations, tensions etc. Thus, emotional intelligence of a teacher contributes to the effectiveness of a teacher.

Study of Teacher Stress In Relation To Emotional Intelligence of Teachers

Psychological support in schools should therefore not only be aimed at learners, but the well-being of the teachers should also be attended to. The existence of high levels of occupational stress in the teaching profession, and the associated economic and health consequences, suggest there is a need to develop suitable interventions to promote the well-being of teachers as well as to reduce the occurrence and consequences of stress.

An innovative evidence-based approach is required to address the problem of occupational stress in teachers, given the unique stressors these individuals face on a daily basis. This study implemented and evaluated an EI training program for primary school teachers designed to reduce occupational stress and increase psychological- and physical well-being.

The training program, based on cognitive-behavioral and psycho-educational strategies, aimed to teach teachers how to better deal with emotions and reduce their levels of occupational stress.

Research suggests that stress and emotion are related constructs that do not occur independently from one another. The experience of stress is the manifestation of negative emotions triggered by danger, threats or challenges (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003).

The important role that emotions play in the occupational stress process is only just being recognized. As emotions are difficult to measure in the workplace, they have generally been ignored in organizational research. However, the emergence of EI has lead to a new focus on the role of emotions in the workplace.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature showed much study on the relationship communication effectiveness and job satisfaction with emotional intelligence.

Research done till date in the field of education administration show a keen interest in knowing all about effective communication and job satisfaction. The resulting knowledge gain on human nature could lead to important elucidations and assumptions about effective

skills to improve communications and job satisfaction among managers and employees. As an example, if a person is able to identify the communication signals of another, this could improve the quality of communication between them.

Also, managers and their employees could be taught to identify various communication indicators others express. If the level of emotional intelligence is identified within each employee by the education administration executive, he/he could aid them more profitably.

Various perspectives of human behaviours such as communication and job satisfaction can be illustrated by this study of emotional intelligence. Certain occupational areas are implementing the measures of emotional intelligence measures to foresee employees' performance.

Yet, in specific professions such as the teaching profession, specific emotional skills are exceptionally significant to job satisfaction. Other occupations exist where specific skills may be attractive but not imperative. A brain surgeon or mechanical engineers, for example, do not need the same emotional intelligence participation with others than the emotional intelligence the managers and employees in education administrations require to possess so as to surpass in job satisfaction. The formal appraisal of these skills would appear important for professions in which emotional abilities are clearly essential. Thus recognizing the fact that, different jobs do call for different levels of social and emotional involvement and activity, is of dire importance.

Administrators in several jobs sense an increasing need to have recurrent interchanges that is both emotionally positive and supportive with employees and teachers, Even in educational administrations, one generally tends to interact emotionally with others, teachers not only need to assess the reactions of others and attempt to influence other's emotions and motives but they also need to talk with others face to face and exhibit optimistic behaviours.

Numerous communal establishments, such as corporations and organizations, are commencing explorations with EI, even though it is a fairly innovative concept and it continues to advance in the research arena. It is supposed that, by recognizing the manager and employee's level of emotional intelligence, a difference in corporations and organizations could be achieved companies attempt to develop the quality of the executives and co workers' lives which is said to affect their output level, which, in turn, amplifies profits (Brophy,1996).

However, it should be stressed here that, emotional intelligence should be recognized as early as in the educational setting when these prospective social contributors are not yet key administrators or workers in the educational management.

After completing the research illustrated above, several apparent gaps were found to exist in the area of the proposed research topic: relationship between emotional intelligence, communication effectiveness, job satisfaction, and motivation in educational administrations of Iran. As well, there are gaps in the literature due to a lack of investigation into a potential relationship between emotional intelligence, communication effectiveness, job satisfaction, and motivation in educational administrations of Iran.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study has been entitled as "Study of how emotional intelligence reduces occupational stress among teachers."

The present study is limited to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify teachers with high emotional intelligence and low emotional intelligence.
2. To study the teacher effectiveness and occupational stress in relation to emotional intelligence of teachers.
3. To study the teacher effectiveness and occupational stress in relation to sex of the teachers.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypothesis was proposed to achieve the set objectives:

- There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the scores of teacher effectiveness.
- There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the scores of occupational stress.
- There is no significant difference in teacher effectiveness and occupational stress between teachers with high emotional intelligence and teachers with low emotional intelligence.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Ten co-educational secondary schools were selected from two strata viz. government and private schools. In total, twenty schools will randomly select from Delhi. Out of these selected schools, ten teachers from each were taken as the subject for the present study. In total, the study restricted to approximately 200 teachers.

Design of the Study

Design will split into two parts:

2x2 factorial design was employed on the scores of teacher effectiveness and occupational stress which was studied as dependent variables.

Emotional intelligence and sex of the teacher was studied as independent variable and was used for the purpose of classification viz. male and female teachers with high emotional intelligence and low emotional intelligence.

Tools of the Study

The following tools were used for conducting the present study:

1. Emotional Intelligence Scale [EIS]
2. Teacher Effectiveness Scale [TES]
3. Occupational stress index [OSI]

Statistical Techniques Employed

The following statistical technique was employed to test the hypotheses of the study:

1. Descriptive statistics was employed to understand the nature of the data.

2. Analysis of variance was employed on the scores of teacher effectiveness and occupational stress.

Procedure

Twenty schools were selected from South Delhi and 10 teachers were selected from each school, keeping in view the requirement of the study. Afterwards, teachers were categorized into two groups' viz., teachers with high emotional intelligence and teachers with low emotional intelligence by the scores on Emotional Intelligence Scale.

In the second stage, Teacher Effectiveness Scale [TES] and Occupational Stress Index [OSI] was administered to the selected teachers of both the groups, viz., teachers with high emotional intelligence and teachers with low emotional intelligence. The collected data was scored and statistical treatment was given.

Delimitation of the study

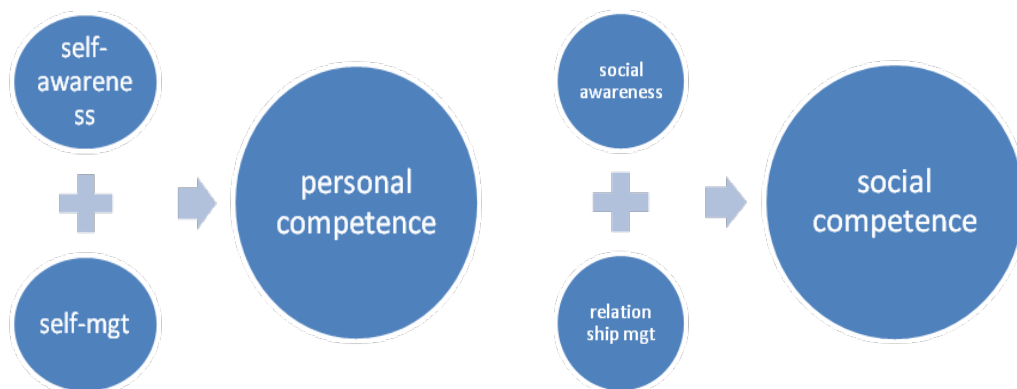
The study is delimited to:

- Only south Delhi schools (20 only) and
- Only 10 teachers in each school.
- Three variables only

Analysis and Interpretation

The data obtained was analyzed. Research of EI and job performance shows mixed results: a positive relation has been found in some of the studies, in others there was no relation or an inconsistent one. This led researchers Cote and Miners (2006) to offer a compensatory model between EI and IQ, that posits that the association between EI and job performance became more positive as cognitive intelligence decreases, an idea first proposed in the context of academic performance (Petrides, Frederickson, & Furnham, 2004). The results of the former study supported the compensatory model: employees with low IQ get higher task performance and organizational citizenship behaviour directed at the organization, the higher their EI.

Your emotional intelligence is a product of Personal Competence and Social Competence. These qualities divide into four unique skills:



CONCLUSION

Goleman (1995) indicates that EI increases with age and maturity. Therefore, a difference was expected based on tenure in the institution. Explanations for this may have been that high EI tends to reduce turnover (Abraham, 1999; Goleman, 1998; McClelland, 1999; Spencer & Spencer, 1993) or that those who choose not to change careers after a short time already possess high levels. Also, Ashkanasy (2003) found while completing his research that those with higher EI were more likely to participate in the voluntary activities involving EI training. This may have impacted who chose to participate in this study and who chose to refrain.

The main assumption of the research has been proved according to the relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational stress and shows that by increasing the emotional intelligence we can reduce the occupational stress of employees and improve their work. As individuals, the employees of different schools have also experienced the effect of emotional intelligence and in this research, we saw that the effects of emotional intelligence can have a role in occupation and has a meaningful impact upon the employees' occupational stress.

So we can say that having some educational terms to increase emotional intelligence by Principals of schools, the evaluation of employees will determine the basic abilities that an individual needs to stand against stress and to create different motives with different methods in employees to recognize emotional intelligence. Moreover, the results show that there is a meaningful relationship between cognition and expressing emotions and occupational stress. We suggest some meetings to increase self-awareness in individual and teach skills of making and preserve a relationship to increase the emotional intelligence.

Furthermore, we recommend some problem solving meetings to use the decision making situations and making sensitive conditions to control emotions and correct decision making in the organization.

RECOMMENDATION

Intelligence, which is available in plenty, should follow considerations of local needs, goals, interests, and mandates; staff skills work load, and receptiveness, pre-existing instructional efforts and activities. At the entry point of teacher education courses itself, the level of emotional competence in students can be assessed so as to plan programmes for them to improve in these skills. Scientific research indicates that the formation of emotional skills is much easier in the formative years from birth to the late teens.

Looking at existing structures, school is the major activity in that age group. But that should not stop anyone acquiring these skills at a later stage too. More and more children are being bombarded by the messages of mass culture, Internet, television, and other outlets unfiltered by teachers and parents (Elias 2006). So it becomes very important that parents and teachers acquaint themselves with the skills of emotional competencies to handle the children at various age groups, carefully. The study has implications for future policy recommendations for teacher preparation institutions. Qualitative and quantitative analyses on the emotional intelligence ability development of teachers at all levels can be made.

Along with this, a longitudinal evidence of greater student outcomes within the classroom on social, emotional, and academic measures will reveal its relationship with the emotional skills of teachers. Innovative programmes of emotional intelligence can be practiced within

teacher education programme to provide teachers with additional skills to meet the challenges of an increasingly diverse student population.

To close, research based on teachers into the classroom and analyzing their effectiveness through the gains of their students in social, emotional and academic learning, will provide a fertile field for future investigation.

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