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A comparative Study of the Relation between Emotional Intelligence and Employee's Performance

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and management capabilities of 160 managers and employees at the departments of physical education in Shahr-e-Rey, Iran. To collect data, the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire by Cyberia-Shrink including 33 questions and the Steinmetz-Todd Capabilities Questionnaire with 9 questions were used. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence with its components (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills) and the employees’ capabilities. The findings of this research necessitate the attention to emotional intelligence as an important factor in developing the capabilities of the employees at organizations in general, and departments of physical education in particular.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, employees, managers, physical education;

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence is a new concept which has interested scholars, particularly in psychology and management. It has been recognized as a type of intelligence which includes a precise understanding of the emotions of the self and the emotional states of others. It evaluates the individual emotionally, which means that the individual will be aware of his/her own feelings, and how to control them. Goleman (1998) defines it as intelligent use of emotions in the way the individual enhances his/her behaviors and thoughts in order to achieve his/her goals. Cherniss (2000) believes emotional intelligence makes it possible for us to think more creatively and use our feelings and emotions to solve problems.

Emotional intelligence in work environment is a multi-dimensional constituent (Goleman, 1998). It includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. High levels of self-awareness along with emotional intelligence enable managers to display higher self-confidence and attract more respect from their subordinates. Through self-regulation, they can purposefully understand other people’s needs. Managers capable of being balanced, self-motivated, optimistic and highly-spirited play a positive role in motivating others. The ability to empathize with others as well as manage interpersonal relations is an effective tool to motivate subordinates. The managers’ emotional intelligence enables them to treat subordinates as individuals with unique needs and abilities. Empathetic managers utilize their social skills to help subordinates to develop their positive feelings and emotions in order to achieve their goals, which in turn, create enhanced performance on the part of employees.

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Today, the complexities of work environment have required organizations to employ skilled and competent managers with a high emotional intelligence. It is strongly believed that organizational development is realized when the organization employs knowledgeable, creative and motivated managers capable of problem solving and self-management. However, the question is whether emotional intelligence has a role in empowering them or not.

2. Purpose and Hypothesis

This study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (and its components) and capabilities of managers and employees at departments of physical education in Shahr-e-Rey, Iran (henceforth, DPESI). The following hypotheses were in order:

- There is a relationship between components of emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI.
- There is a relationship between self-awareness and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI.
- There is a relationship between self-regulation and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI.
- There is a relationship between motivation and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI.
- There is a relationship between empathy and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI.
- There is a relationship between social skills and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI.

3. Method

To carry out this correlational field study, which is descriptive in nature, two reliable and valid questionnaires were distributed among 160 managers and employees at DPESI.

3.1. Subjects

The statistical population of this study included 160 male and female managers and employees from various educational backgrounds and with different experience in management and sports.

3.2. Instruments

To collect data on emotional intelligence coefficient of the population, the Cyberia-Shrink Emotional Intelligence Quiz (2010) was used. The main format included 70 questions in two parts. The first 40-question part included items by which the subjects were tested on their reactions to various situations. Due to cultural differences, the second 30-question part was ignored. 7 questions from the remaining 40-question part were discarded through the validation process. The items covered the five emotional intelligence components, namely, self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The scores obtained ranged from 33 to 165.

The Steinmetz-Todd (1986) capabilities questionnaire used to collect data on the subjects’ capabilities included 9 items for which the testees were required to choose from among a strongly disagree-strongly agree scale. The scores obtained ranged from 9 to 45.

3.3. Procedure

The questionnaires were taken to all the departments of physical education in Shahr-e-Rey and given to the subjects. The importance of true and precise answers to the questions was discussed and they were assured that their answers will be kept unrevealed. For those who could not take the questionnaires in person they were e-mailed.
4. Analysis and Results

The findings (Table 4.1) showed that there was a relationship between emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI. Thus, the first hypothesis was verified.

Table 4.1. Relationship between components of emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI

| Variable          | Correlation Coefficient | Significance Level |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence Capability | 0.335                    | 0.000              |

Table 4.2 shows that there is a significant relationship between self-awareness as a component of emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI. As a result, the second hypothesis was also verified.

Table 4.2. Relationship between self-awareness and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI

| Variable       | Correlation Coefficient | Significance Level |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Self-Awareness Capability | 0.164                    | 0.039              |

Table 4.3 shows that there is a significant relationship between self-regulation as a component of emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI. As a result, the third hypothesis was also verified.

Table 4.3. Relationship between self-regulation and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI

| Variable       | Correlation Coefficient | Significance Level |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Self-Regulation Capability | 0.30                     | 0.000              |

Table 4.4 shows that there is a significant relationship between motivation as a component of emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI. As a result, the fourth hypothesis was also verified.

Table 4.4. Relationship between motivation and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI

| Variable       | Correlation Coefficient | Significance Level |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Motivation Capability | 0.289                    | 0.000              |

Table 4.5 shows that there is a significant relationship between empathy as a component of emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI. As a result, the fifth hypothesis was also verified.

Table 4.5. Relationship between empathy and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI

| Variable       | Correlation Coefficient | Significance Level |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Empathy Capability | 0.162                    | 0.040              |

Table 4.6 shows that there is a significant relationship between social skills as a component of emotional intelligence and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI. As a result, the sixth hypothesis was also verified.

Table 4.6. Relationship between social skills and capabilities of managers and employees at DPESI

| Variable       | Correlation Coefficient | Significance Level |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Social Skills Capability | 0.099                    | 0.214              |
5. Discussion

Over the past few years, emotional intelligence has been considered as a potential factor in understanding and predicting the individual’s performance in work places. The concept of emotional intelligence, as it is used in recent research agenda, is relatively new (Kierstead, 1999). While cognitive intelligence is important for managers, it is not enough for leadership purposes. Emotional intelligence is a potential factor for managers to establish more effective relationships with the subordinates. Cooper and Sawaf (1998) note that emotional intelligence may bring about different levels of career success. It also acts as a source of motivation, information, feedback, innovation and effectiveness. It can improve decision making, leadership, strategic and operational processes, appropriate and free communications, team work and healthy work relations.

The findings of the present study are in line with research findings by Parolini (2005), Tekleab et al. (2008), Barsade (2000), Moradi (2005), Fitzgerald (1993), and Gerits et al (2005). The findings showed that the relationship between self-regulation and capabilities of the subjects was the strongest and could be the best predictor for capabilities.

It can be observed that emotional intelligence as Goleman (1998) said is one of the most important factors for individual adaptation, success in relationships, and job performance. Having a high emotional intelligence, managers and employers at departments of physical education can avoid anger, doubt and many negative feelings and focus on their positive emotions such as self-confidence and conformity. Emotional intelligence plays a major role in helping managers and employers at DPESI to understand emotions and feelings of the self and others and how to react appropriately to these emotions. Since it has a determining role as a psychological factor in empowering employees at such departments, special planning must be done in this regard.

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