



EFFECTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence is important for success in work and in life. Moreover, managing interpersonal skills and collective enterprise bridge leadership and emotional intelligence. It is against this background that the article examined the “Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership”. The methodology employed was the secondary source of data collection. The justification for the adoption of the secondary source was to help us to

Introduction

Emotional intelligence appears to have an overarching influence in work environment. It is significant for success in work and in life. It provides a foundation for emotional competence which alludes to the fact that personal and social skills that lead to superior performance in the world of work (Kondalker, 2009). It can assist leaders in solving complex problems, make better decisions, plan how to use their behaviour to the situation and manage crises. It is satisfying to state that a leader is also a crucial source of the organisation’s emotional tone. Moreover, managing interpersonal skills and collective enterprises bridge leadership and emotional intelligence (Yukl, 2010). In contrast to the above view, rigidity and poor relationships cause leadership failure (Coleman, 1998 as cited in Kondalker, 2009). Thus, leadership and

have a better focus and a better appreciation and understanding of emotional intelligence and leadership. Thus, emotional intelligence is a key to addressing organisational problems

KEYWORDS:

Emotional
Intelligence Leader
Leadership
Followers

and challenges and that it would enable leaders and followers alike to have a good interpersonal relationship.

emotional intelligence inherently related with each other. Individual emotional intelligence is a key factor of effective leadership (Kerr et al. 2005). Therefore, “it is becoming increasingly important for leaders to understand the emotions and emotionality within organizations that they lead” (James and Arroba, 2005, P.299).

The objective of the paper is to determine the effect of emotional intelligence on the behaviour of leaders, the behaviour of those who are led (followers), as well as its implications on organisations.

Methodology

The paper employs secondary source of data collection, that is, by review of related literature on the topic under consideration. The justification for the adoption of the secondary source of data collection is to help us to have a better focus and a better appreciation and understanding of the topic under consideration.

CONCEPTUALIZING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND LEADERSHIP

Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence was coined by Salovey and Mayer (1990 as cited in Kondalker, 2009). They described emotional intelligence as “a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action” (Salovey and Mayer, 1990 as cited in Kondalker, 2009).

Considering the work of Salovey and Mayer (1990), one can deduce that emotional intelligence entails the capacity of individuals to have awareness and understanding of people’s emotions and differentiate these emotions and use the information to influence our thoughts and actions.

However, emotional intelligence is all about having an insight into the positive and negative emotions of people. Arguably, considering those positive emotions and alter the negative emotions for the advantage of the organisation. The essence of it all is to achieve superior performance. Moreover, Armstrong (2012, P.96) sees emotional intelligence as “a combination of skills and abilities such as self-awareness, self-control, empathy and sensitivity to the feelings of others”.

The above definitions by Armstrong indicate that in order to have an understanding of emotions, one should have acquisition of skills and innate abilities. Thus, emotional intelligence is influenced by both environmental and

genetical factors. Secondly, one is to have knowledge and understanding of himself. Thirdly, one must understand the feelings of others. Fourthly, one must be able to be unemotional in understanding people's feelings. Fifthly, one must be able to understand other people's feelings.

Thus, emotional intelligence is a conscious and deliberate attempt to know and use information about one's emotion and those of others so as to influence thought and action positively.

The Branch Model of Emotional Intelligence

According to Mayer (2004), the four-branch model of emotional intelligence that defines emotional intelligence as involving the abilities to:

- Accurately perceive emotions in oneself and others
- The emotions to facilitate thinking
- Understand emotional meanings, and
- Manage emotions

The four branches are explained as follow:

- **Perceiving Emotion:** This alludes to non-verbal reception and expression of emotion. Facial expressions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear, were universally recognizable in human being. Emotional researchers evolutionary biologists, specialists in non-verbal behaviour and others, have made tremendous inroads into understanding how human beings recognised and express emotions. The capacity to accurately perceive emotions in the face or voice of others provides a crucial starting point for more advanced understanding of emotions.
- **Using Emotions to facilitate thought:** The second area appeared every bit as the first.

This, was the capacity of the emotion to enter into and guide the cognitive system and promote thinking. For example, cognitive scientists pointed out that emotions prioritize thinking. In other words, something we respond to emotionally, is something that grabs our attention. Having a good system of emotional input, therefore, should help direct thinking towards matters that are truly important.

- **Understanding Emotions:** Emotions convey information. Happiness usually indicates a desire to join with other people. Anger indicates a

desire to attack or harm others; fear indicates a desire to escape, and so forth. Each emotion conveys its own pattern of possible messages and actions associated with those messages.

- **Managing Emotions:** Finally, emotions often can be managed. A person needs to understand emotions to convey information. It, therefore, becomes possible to regulate and manage one's own and others emotions so as to promotes one's and others' personal and social goals.

Thus, emotional intelligence is a four-branch model that takes into consideration accuracy in perceiving one's and others' emotions, to make possible thinking, to understand emotion and to manage emotions.

Concept of Leadership

Leadership is “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it and the process to facilitate individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objective” (Cole and Kelly, 2011, P.69). The definition given by Cole and Kelly (2011) is a fair attempt to state that leadership as:

- A persuasive process involving the leader and follower(s).
- It involves creating atmosphere of understanding and agreeableness by the leader.
- Identification of needs and how to satisfy the needs.
- There must be a synergy between the leader and the followers in the realization of a common objective.

Leadership is, therefore, a phenomenon involving the persuasion of followers to achieve organization objectives.

Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Leaders

According to Nelson and Low (2011, P.17), “emotional intelligence skills are vital to human performance and healthy productive organisation”. Emotional intelligence consists of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and social skills (Phipps and Prieto, 2011). Considering these assertions, one can argue that since leaders require result in pursuance of organisational goals, emotional intelligence provides a framework for a meaningful interaction within an organisational setting as when dealing with people, a leader is expected to control his emotions, utilizes the positive emotions of people for the well-being of the organisation and

constantly change the negative emotions over time for the betterment of the organisation. As a result of that, there is the need to have a better understanding of feelings of others for the creation of good interpersonal relationships that would be of benefits for the long-term sustainable competitive advantage of organizations. This is because maintenance of relationships is the foundation of survival and growth of the organisation. This is because understanding of employees' feelings and the leader's feeling are vital to the successful resolution of problems and challenges. Consequently, emotional intelligence helps in understanding his own emotions and emotions of others and sees areas of challenges and turns those challenges to opportunities.

Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Followers

Emotional intelligence “involves recognizing and regulating emotions in ourselves and in others. It includes self-awareness, self-management in ourselves in others. It includes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relational management” (Schuler and Jackson, 2016, P.334).

From the above description of emotional intelligence, the following appears to be the effect of emotional intelligence on followers:

- Emotional intelligence creates aura of restraining negative emotions such as anger.
- Transforming the follower to have ability of controlling his emotions, thereby enabling him to have a good interpersonal relationship.
- It helps him to addressing areas of problems and challenges for the overall growth and development of the organization.
- It helps to manage and resolve conflicts that may arise from time to time.

Implications of Emotional Intelligence on Organisations

Arguably, the following are the implications of emotional intelligence on organisation:

- Emotional intelligence creates an atmosphere of peace and tranquility in organizations. The implication is that leaders should always try to understand the emotions for the common good of all.
- There seems to be a relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership and this suggests organizations should properly harness the

positive emotions and neutralize the negative ones with a view to bringing about a productive change.

- Emotional intelligence enhances organisational culture: Organisational member would further improve their shared beliefs and values through emotional intelligence. The implication of this is that organisational leaders should be able to understand and manage their own emotions and those of others so as to enhance that common identity and sense of belonging by all members of the organisation.
- Emotional intelligence enables the organisation to enhance its image of the organisation. This suggests that organisational leaders must encourage understanding and management of emotions of all organisational members, as this would go a long way in portraying the good image of the organization to outsiders.

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence is important for success in work and in life. It provides a foundation for emotional competence which refers to the fact that personal and social skills that lead to superior performance in the world of work. It is a crucial source of the organisation's tone. Moreso, managing interpersonal skills and collective enterprise bridge leadership and emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence, therefore, provides a framework for a meaningful interaction within an organisational setting as when dealing with people a leader is expected to control his emotions, use positive emotions of employees (followers) to move the organisation and change the negative emotions for the common good. Emotional intelligence also creates aura of restraining negative emotions of followers such as anger, thereby enabling them to have a good interpersonal relationship, among others. The implication of emotional intelligence on organisation is that it creates an atmosphere of peace and tranquility, it would bring about productive change, it enhances organisational culture and it results in maintaining favourable image of the organisation.

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