An Integrated Framework for Developing Emotional Intelligence among MBA Students

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ABSTRACT

Though traditionally the intelligence quotient (IQ) had been used as a predictor of academic success, recent studies have highlighted that students with higher emotional quotient (EQ) are more successful both academically and professionally. Given that the contemporary work systems involve huge emotional labour and customer intimacy, employers have now started preferring students with high emotional quotient; as the job market is already full of academically competent candidates. The current study is divided into two parts, the first part reviews and analyzes important researchers; in order to identify an integrative framework of the most important emotional intelligence competencies among students. The second part attests this framework with the help of statistical analysis of a sample of college students. The results of the study provide a list of factors that can be adopted as a part of the academic curriculum for the development of emotional intelligence among MBA students.

Keywords: Emotional Quotient (EQ), Intelligence Quotient (IQ), MBA Students

1. INTRODUCTION

Intelligence has always held prime importance in the profile of an individual. The education system, at large devises various mechanisms that can evaluate the intelligence of students. Most of these have been restricted to examinations, tests and other modules that test the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) of the students. Professional institutions for their part have started to recognize the importance of assessing and developing other competencies in students that would help them do well academically and professionally. Such requirement has arisen from the demands of the recruiters who expected the students to be able to interact with clients, regulate emotions and manage their emotions well at the workplace. Such intelligence had been recognized by previous researchers as, “Emotional Intelligence”.

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The pioneers of the subject of Emotional Intelligence were Mayer & Salovey (1997), who described emotional intelligence as, “the ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand emotions, and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth”.

In (1998), Freedman et al. (1998) explained Emotional Intelligence in the context of, “recognizing, understanding and choosing how we think, feel and act. It shapes our interaction with others and our understanding of ourselves”. Bar-On, R. (2002) defined emotional intelligence as, “the ability to deal with daily environment challenges and helps predict one’s success in life, including professional and personal pursuits”. Emotional Intelligence competency is also defined as an “ability to recognize, understand, and use emotional information about oneself or others that leads to or causes effective or superior performance”. It was in the year (1990) that Daniel Goleman explained the concept of Emotional Intelligence through his bestselling book on the advantages of using emotional intelligence at work. It was with this that a buzz was created and management practitioners started to accept the role of emotional intelligence in one’s organizational success. Various researchers have emphasized on the role of EI in one’s professional success. Farh et al. (2012) examined a sample of professionals from various organizations and industries indicated support for the beneficial effect of EI, above and beyond the influence of personality, cognitive ability, emotional labor job demands, job complexity, and demographic control variables.

As many organizations set to train their employees on EI competencies, there is an increasing awareness among the academicians to train aspiring MBA professionals in these skills, as emotional competencies seem to play a major role in the selection decision of recruiters. Apart from this, literature shows the various benefits of developing emotional intelligence among students, as it is seen that students with higher EI are seen to perform better academically. In other benefits, it is seen that higher EI has also been linked to better communication (Jaeger (2003), Grades (Walker’s, 2006), learning strategies (Fernandez. R, et al., 2012) and self esteem (Feng Kong (2012) etc.

The current study provides a framework that integrates the various thoughts and researchers on emotional intelligence. It tries to ingratiate a framework of emotional intelligence, based on the research of known Western and Indian researchers; Daniel Goleman and Dalip Singh. The study suggests that factors of this framework can be used by academicians, to help in the development of Emotional Intelligence competencies among the Management students.

2. FROM INTELLIGENCE TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Thorndike (1920) explained that amongst other intelligence that human possess, there is one type of intelligence that related to the ability to,” understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, and to act wisely in human relations”. Wechsler in 1940 defined it as, “the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment”, (Wechsler, 1958). Peter Salovey and John Mayer first used the term Emotional Intelligence as they researched on the aspects of social intelligence. They argued that emotional intelligence was also a form of a social intelligence. Goleman further popularized the term Emotional Intelligence, as he researched on the link between Emotional Intelligence and Workplace Success.

Several researchers have drawn attention to the confusion about what all or not, does EI represent. The meaning of EI becomes clear, however, when its constituent components are defined precisely. In recent literature, we see that the structure of EI is being refined as new discoveries about emotions are made. Côté & Hideg (2011) proposed a new dimension of EI, the ability to influence others via emotional displays. Another research opportunity is seen in the modification of modifying existing branches/abilities. Amidst the models of emotional intelligence that have developed
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