Chapter 1

Reviewing Emotional Intelligence With Leadership Theory: A Study of the Role of Emotional Intelligence on Transformational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

Leadership theories hold a pertinent place in the effective management of people. In the Contemporary scenario, business leaders and managers have a huge onus on themselves of driving a workforce thriving with diverse Human Resource Management challenges. Interest in the role Emotional Intelligence in the workplace has increased in recent years, with greater emphasis on the benefits of understanding and utilizing emotions for managing people at work. In the contemporary scenario, the role of emotional intelligence competencies as predictors of leadership is being researched in order to leverage this information for increased leader effectiveness and performance. The present study identifies the congruence between various aspects of emotional intelligence and essential leadership competencies. It also identifies the role of Emotional intelligence in the effectiveness of Transformational Leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership as a concept emerges from past theories representing various unique roles that individuals play for developing themselves and others. The hallmark various accomplishments lie in the credibility of the leadership that prevails at a certain time. As a notion, the vision of the leaders is instrumental in acting as a driving force for performance of individuals and the organization. In the last few decades, interpersonal skills have become an important component for effective leadership (Palacios et al. 2014). DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-4056-4.ch001
In earlier years, leaders were considered to plan, organize & control the overall running of the organization, but in today’s business environment, which is dominated by service oriented industries, leaders are expected to motivate & inspire their subordinates, foster positive attitude at work-place and create a sense of contribution & importance within employees (Ronald et al.2008). In order to perform these contemporary leadership roles, the construct emotional intelligence has gained popularity by researchers (Maddock & Fulton,1998).

Emotional Intelligence has been explained as an ability that helps individuals manage their emotions and deal effectively with their environment. The first model of emotional intelligence was developed by Peter Salovey and John Meyer in 1990 that classified EI into four areas which include Emotional perception and Emotional assimilation, Emotional understanding and Emotion management. Bar-On’s model explained Emotional Intelligence in terms of, “intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general moods”. Goleman (1998) formulated a model of EI with personal” and “social competencies such as self-awareness, self regulation, and motivation, empathy and social skills”. Goleman’s model was revised with the help of statistical analyses, by Richard Boyatzis with the final competencies of self-awareness, self Management, Social Awareness and Relationship Management.

Evolution of Emotional Intelligence

The early Twentieth century was an era marked by research on aspects of human intelligence. Researchers such as Thorndike suggested that human beings possess different types of intelligence. Among these, Thorndike proposed that one significant form was, “social intelligence” or, “the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, and to act wisely in human relations”. In 1958 David Wechsler highlighted the role of affective, personal, and social factors in an individual, that contribute to his success. He defined this form as the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment”.

As the concept of intelligence found meaning in many researches, Howard Gardner elaborated the importance and role of a form of intelligence that could be adjacently understood with one’s intelligence quotient. (Gardner, 1983)

In 1990, Peter Salovey and John Mayer emphasized that the concept of intelligence can be related and understood in terms of emotional intelligence and it has its foundational basis in the concept of social intelligence. Boyatzis and Sala (2004) defined emotional intelligence as an “ability to recognize, understand and use emotional information about oneself or others that leads to or causes effective or superior performance” more precisely it was defined as “the intelligent use of one’s emotions”. 

On reviewing previous models, in the year 1998, Goleman devised a framework of emotional intelligence (EI) that focused on aspects of Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management, that would help an individual to achieve organizational success. Goleman defined emotional competence as, “a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work” (Goleman, 1998)

The research on emotional intelligence has now gained significant focus from researchers and industry practitioners as the nature of contemporary work involves huge amounts of emotional labor. In the Harvard Business Review landmark article ‘What Makes a Leader?’. Goleman (1998) states that the five components of Emotional Intelligence at Work are: Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation (or Management), Motivation, Empathy (Social Awareness), and Social Skills (Relationship Management). Goleman suggests that these abilities have a significant role in determining workplace success.
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