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The role of emotional intelligence in increasing quality of work life in school principals

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Abstract

The main aim of this research was to study the emotional intelligence and its relation to quality of work life of school principals. The current study is a descriptive co relational research. The sample was consisted the 139 school principals of Khorramabad city that who were selected by randomized stratified method. In order to collect the required data regarding research variables, the quality of work life questionnaire and emotional intelligence inventory were used. The collected data were analyzed by using Pearson correlation coefficient and one sample *t*-, with SPSS software. On the basis of findings of the study, there was a positive correlation between quality of work life and emotional intelligence ($p < 0/000$) and its subscales namely, self awareness, self management, relation control and social awareness. Furthermore, results evident that the quality of work life of principals was high, but in case of emotional intelligence, principals were low in compare to mean of questionnaire. Increasing emotional intelligence is able to provide a better work environment for principals and for this cause, the performance of them grow to be enlarged.

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1. Introduction

Generally, emotions play a significant role in individual's lives because they are feelings which enliven life, allowing us to experience the joys and grief of our lives (Aghayar & Sharifi, 2008). Human beings has two minds, a thinking mind and a feeling one .These two minds, put together, form an individual's mental life. When the emotions are aroused, the balance between these two minds is disturbed, causing the emotional intelligence (mind) to overcome the thinking mind. Therefore, the focus has shifted towards the role of emotional intelligence in everyday life (Extremera & Fernandez, 2006). It is up to the leadership to direct the organizations to a positive direction since leadership can influence the emotions most of all. Emotional intelligence is a kind of readiness, skill and capability which deeply affects an individual's abilities so that he /she may be motivated, control his/her emotions and manage his/her relationship with others(Goleman, 1998). On the other hand, people with emotional intelligence are able to control their feelings as well as others', distinguish between the positive and negative consequences, utilize their

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affective data in order to lead their own thoughts and activities and provide themselves with more opportunities to think and be more creative and to aim their emotions and feelings at solving their own problems (Sobhaninejad & Yoozbashi, 2008). Many theorists have tried to explain the concept of emotional intelligence. Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2006) hold that the employees of organizations, in their attempt to raise productivity and performance, should have, in addition to technical and professional abilities, other characteristics which put together, are called emotional intelligence, since it is these features that prompt an individual, when faced with other individuals and other situations to be conscious, serene, respectful, considerate, supportive, attentive, responsive, elucidatory and receptive. He is believed that in order to overcome the incoming challenges, one should enhance the components of emotional intelligence including self awareness, self management, social awareness and relation control.

Self awareness means an awareness of emotions and accepting them, introspection, impartial attitude toward one's own internal states and knowing them, an awareness of one's weaknesses and strengths and includes emotional self awareness, self-evaluation and self –confidence. Self-management means self-control, management of emotions, the ability to retrieve oneself emotionally following an emotional shock, a sense of duty in one's job, flexibility with regard to changes, and an acceptance of new ideas and opinions, and includes self – control, transparency, flexibility, progress innovation, and optimism. Relation control means that an individual accordingly adjusts his or her relations with others and it includes providing inspiration, penetration, development and growth of others as well as creating change, management of conflict, and team work. Social awareness also signifies how individuals can organize their relationships and includes devotion service –centeredness and organizational awareness. Consequently, in organization, emotional intelligence is closely related to such occupational variables as performance, success, motivation, quality of work life, etc.

Quality of work life is the employees' reaction with regard to their job, particularly the individual results in job context and mental health which stress the personal results, occupational experience and how to improve one's job to meet individual needs (Salmani, 2003). In this regard, Greenberg and Baron (1997) believe that quality of work life is one of the elements contributing to an organization's progress providing the three factors of motivation and satisfaction, taking of responsibility and commitment to one's job, this is achieved through creating a more human and more democratic job atmosphere and the involvement of employees in decision – making in order to improve the organization's performance. Additionally, Newstrom and Davis (2002) hold that from the employee's point of view, quality of work life is satisfaction or lack of satisfaction of the job environment. Mirkamali (2003) defines quality of work life as giving the employees a chance to make a decision about the products or job services or the most effective job place, He states that quality of life will improve and positive feeling toward the job and its atmosphere will increase provided that the job is done within appropriate psychological conditions and balanced cooperation. Such positive feeling would not only meet personal needs and maintain personal and organizational goals but also increases physical as well as mental health, loyalty, organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Quality of work life has various elements taken in to consideration by some experts, In this regard, Casio(1998) believes that cooperation, occupational progress, solving of contradictions, organizational relations, health and hygiene, job security, good pay, job conceit, industrial safety and organizational identity are among the components of the employees ' quality of work life in organizational settings. So, considering what was mentioned above, this study seeks to determine the managers' emotional intelligence status and quality of work life and realize the extent to which these variables are related to each other. Considering the literature existing on the variables under study, the main goal of this study is to detect the relation between emotional intelligence and its components, namely self – awareness, self-management, relation control, and social awareness, and quality of work life of school principals of Khorramabad. Therefore, taking this goal in to consideration, the main question of this study would be as follows: Is there any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and its components with the quality of work life of the school principals of Khorramabad?

2. Methodology:

2.1. Design

The current study is descriptive – correlative method .In this method, the principals' current emotional intelligence and quality of work life of them have been investigated. In descriptive research, the researcher does not interfere with the situation, condition and variables and does not tamper with or control them; but instead he simply studies, describes and examines what ever it is.

2.2. Sample

The statistical sample of this study is 130 principals of elementary schools (34 schools), guidance schools (39 schools) and high schools (57 schools) of Khorramabad who were selected using a cluster method of sampling. The cluster method of sampling is a technique in which individuals are divided based on their in-group characteristics into various groups and subjects are chosen appropriately from among them. In this study, the principals were rated based on their geographical locations and degrees.

2.3. Instruments

In order to estimate the statistical sample size, Chertsey and Morgan table was used. The following two questionnaires have been employed to collect the data needed to answer the question.

2.3.1. Questionnaire of quality of work life: this questionnaire was invented in 2008 by Khorshidi(2008) to compare the principal's quality of work life. Containing 28 statements, rated within a five-degree Likert range (very high, high, middle, little and very little), examine the principal's quality of work life and its dimensions namely job security, flexibility, cooperative system, and organizational culture. Content validity was used to determine the questionnaire validity. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated as 0/88 using Kronbach's alpha, this shows that the reliability of the questionnaire is acceptable.

2.3.2. Emotional intelligence questionnaire: this tool formed by Shering (1997) to assess emotional intelligence and the subscales relevant to it. It includes 33 questions, ranging from "always "to "never" base on the 5 levels of Likert. Though this questionnaire was wide frequently used in many researches (Haddadi, roshan & Asgharzadeh, 2007; Rezaeian, Akbari & moodi, 2006), the researcher had to use content validity method in order to determine the validity of this questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated as 0.84 which was acceptable.

2.4. Administration method

The questionnaires were carried out, after obtain the necessary permissions by the senior students of educational sciences, who had already been trained fully. Each questionnaire took 15 to 20 minutes to be conducted for each subject and it took 5 days to conduct the questionnaires. Numbers of 136questionnaires were filled in and returned from the total 140 questionnaires; numbers of 4 questionnaires were damaged and thus ignored to be studied. The final numbers of questionnaires were 130.

2.5. Statistics

In order to examine the hypothesis of study, the Person correlation of coefficient and *t- test* were used.

3. Findings

130 principals of Khorramabad were included in this study (68 men and 62 women), whose ages ranged from 31 to 55 with average age being 41; Average years of experience of the subjects were 5, which ranged from 1 to 15 years. The number of Subjects' levels of academic education in undergraduate, B.A. and M.A. was 14, 102 and 14, respectively. They held degrees in educational administration, humanities, and others, 13, 66, 51 respectively. Results obtained, which show that the principals' quality of work life, with the average of 85/92 was significantly higher than mean score (84) of questionnaire ($t=3/45, p<0/01$). But, the mean score of emotional intelligence of principals (84/184) was significantly lower than the questioner's scoring (99). To the purpose of enquiry analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to variables of emotional intelligence and components related to it and quality of work life of the principals.

Furthermore, the results of Pearson correlation test carried out to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, and its components with quality of work life of principals. As the results showed, there was a positive and significant relationship between the principals' emotional intelligence and quality of work life in 99 percent of confidence ($r=0/579, p<0/01$). In other words, the higher the principals' emotional intelligence, the higher score of quality of work life. The results also indicated that there was a significance relationship between the emotional intelligence dimensions, namely self- awareness ($r=0/442, p<0/01$), self- management ($r=0/403, p<0/01$), relation control ($r=0/505, P<0/01$) and social awareness ($r=0/552, p<0/01$) with quality of work life of principals. Therefore the hypothesis of our study, i.e. "there is a significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and its components and quality of work life of principals in Khorramabad" is confirmed.

4. Discussion and conclusion

As was pointed out, emotions play an important role in one's life. emotional intelligence is Capability that deeply affects an individual's abilities and thus prompts him/her to be self – motivated and control and adjust his/her relations with others (Goleman, 1998). As the results demonstrated, there was a significant, positive relationship between emotional intelligence, its components, namely self- awareness, self- management and relation control, and social awareness. Some studies suggest that emotional intelligence improves occupational Performance. Thus it can be stated that by controlling their occupational setting, the principals can improve their quality of work life, leading to more efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, Another study made it clear that emotional intelligence can reduce interpersonal problems and improve social relations through strengthening mental health, one's sympathy with others, social consistency, emotional betterment and satisfaction of life (Besharat, 2005).

Also, emotionally intelligent people are capable of controlling their own and others' emotions can, distinguish between its negative and positive results, use other's emotional data to their own benefit to guide their thoughts and activities, are more creative, thoughtful and use emotions to solve their own problems (Sobhaninejad & Yoozbashi, 2008). One study showed that emotional intelligence correlates with the principals' tendency towards organization change (Mirkamali, Sobhaninejad & Yoozbashi, 2007). Also the principals' emotional intelligence improves the employees' organizational behaviour (Modassir, 2008). Thus one can conclude that principals can create a better academic atmosphere in schools by strengthening their own self – awareness, controlling their emotions and relations with others and their motivations. In addition to a fresh organizational and occupational life, they can also achieve their personal goals, maintain job satisfaction and be more effective both personally and organizationally.

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