Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Work-Life Balance among faculty of Higher Education Institutes in Punjab

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Abstract

In today's modern world, every organization wants to reach at the top. To fulfill this objective, its expectations from employees have increased such as long working hours, work from home etc. These expectations of organization from its employees make their life stressful. It is the most significant environmental and social change. Due to this change, work and personal lives interfere with each other, which create the issue of work-life balance. There are numerous factors that affect the work-life balance, like job satisfaction, stress, work conflict, emotional intelligence, personality, etc. The current study sought to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance, as well as the gender differences in various aspects of work-life balance and emotional intelligence. The sample of the study consists of 79 faculty members from various higher educational institutions in Ferozepur, Punjab. The questionnaire method is used to collect primary data. The findings have been reported and discussed in the paper, and this study will help in understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Work-life balance, Faculty, Higher education institutes

Introduction

In today's competitive world, every organization struggles for increasing their market share and profitability. To fulfill this purpose, their expectations from employees have increased. They are expected to be more flexible, available and ready to balance the prospects of skill shortage (Panisoara & Serban, 2013), take fewer leaves from job, work for longer hours, bring their work to home and remain active on mobile phones all time (Khanna, 2017). All such expectations increase the disturbance in their personal lives, which raises the issue of work-life balance (WLB). Worklife balance can be termed as a satisfaction level of involvement between the multiple roles of an individual's life (Hudson, 2005). It can also be described as practices that aim to support their employees in maintaining a balance between the demands of a personal and work life (Maini et al., 2012). In short, work-life balance means to maintain the balance between different life domains (Abendroth & Den Dulk, 2011). According to Clutterbuck (2013), Work-life balance is a state where an individual has to manage the conflict between different demands on their time and energy in such a way that satisfies their needs for well-being and self-fulfillment. Work-life balance is crucial for both employees as well as for the organizations. In the words of Ong & Jeyaraj (2014), if employees are able to maintain harmony in their work and personal lives can become more creative, innovative and resourceful which will help them in facing competition. It can only be possible if an organization has effective work-life balance policies. Organizational work-life balance policies such as flexibility, supportive work environment, remote working, job sharing etc. results into job satisfaction, improves employee's morale (Zheng et al., 2015), increases organizational pride, lowers employee turnover, better return of investment on employee training and development (Mas-Machucaet al., 2016). Forsyth & Polzer-Debruyne (2007), state that if employees have access of family responsive policies then they are more committed to the organization and hence have lower intention to quit. Even Sands & Harper (2007), also state that work-life balance helps in increasing theproductivity of organizations.

There are various theories hypothesized to understand the concept of work-life balance (**Khateeb**, 2021). According to him, there are five main models to explain the relationship between work and life outside work. First is the **Segmentation model** (**Naithani**, 2010), which states that work and non-work are two distinct domains of life that are separable and do not influence each other. Second, is the **Spillover model** (**Pleck**, 1995), where work role affects the family role. Third is the Compensation model (**Staines**, 1980) which states that a worker seeks to compensate the deficit in one aspect of life (in this case, work or family) by compensating in the other aspect i.e. by expending more resources in the other aspect. Fourth is the **Conflict model** (**Greenhaus & Beutell**, 1985) which proposes that with high levels of demand in all spheres of life, some difficult choices have to be made and some conflicts can occur. The final is **Boundary model** (**Nippert- Eng**, 2008) which describes the work-life balance by classifying the workers as 'Segmentors' and 'Integrators'. These models describe the relationships of various factors with work-life balance either in a positive or negative way. So, it becomes crucial to understand the relationship of emotional intelligence with work-life balance.

Journal of Informatics Education and Research ISSN: 1526-4726 Vol 4 Issue 2 (2024)

Employers, employees, government, academic researchers, and the general public have all given the issue of work-life balance also emerges due to increasing strength of the women workforce, innovations in technology, cultural changes, diversity of family structure, etc. (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). There are numerous factors that significantly influence the work-life balance of employees such as stress (Burley, 1995), age, gender, marital status, priorities in life, citizenship, and child care arrangements, personality traits (Gunkel et al., 2007), emotional intelligence (Keene & Reynolds, 2005), work-life conflict (Momeni et al., 2016), global rivalry, the workplace environment and an ageing workforce (Gautam & Jain, 2018) etc. Emotions have an impact on all such factors because emotions are an inseparable part of genetic behavior, whether at home or work. Miao et al., (2018), states that emotional intelligence has an ability to influence social interactions and organizational performance.

So, one of the factors thought to influence work-life balance the most is emotional intelligence (EI). Various studies on work-life balance have revealed a greater impact of emotional intelligence. Employees with higher emotional intelligence will have higher work-life balance (Shylaja& Prasad, 2017). Goleman (1995) has popularized the concept ofemotional intelligence with the key message being if you are able to manage your emotions, then you are more likely to be successful in life. It can be defined as a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to differentiate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions (Mayer & Salovey, 1993). If an individual is emotionally intelligent, he/she is capable of achieving personal and professional goals and also improves his/her performance in the work place (Yadav, 2011).EI is an important factor for better performance and growth of an individual (Jorfi et al., 2010).However, there is a need to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance. So, it becomes essential to study the effect of emotional intelligence of employees.

Review of Literature

Various researchers have studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance. Employees withhigh EI are aware with their emotions and they can self-regulate to promote their well-being and balanced living (Waite& Gallagher, 2001). Carmeli (2003) asserts that people who have high level of EI can handle work domain and life domainin a better way. Lenaghan et al., (2007), find out that a person who has high EI can positively handle the conflicts arises from work and family domains. Rangreji (2010) has conducted a study on the employees of IT sector to establish the relationship between EI and WLB and confirms that both emotional intelligence and work-life balance together create organizational success and develop competitive advantage for IT organizations. If an employee has pleasant emotions atwork, it can improve his productivity and has a greater positive impact on job attitudes, which helps in balancing work and personal life (Schwartz et al., 2011). Another study conducted by Santosh & Jain (2015) shows that there is a significant influence of emotional intelligence on the work-life balance of working fathers. This study asserts that EI dimensions "Managing Emotions" and "Social Skills" have negative influence on the "Work Interference with Personal Life" of working fathers. The study concludes that the emotional intelligence of working fathers have a strong influence on their work-life balance. In the study of Affandi & Raza (2013), shows that emotional intelligence is a predicting element of quality of work life, which helps in balancing the work and non-work life. Furthermore, Brackett et al. (2004) also states that males with lower EI have poor relationships with others and find difficult to establish social interactions and as a result fails to maintain balance between two domains of life i.e. work and non-work life. But, Sajuyigbe et al. (2022) find out a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and work-life balance among academic staff members of threeuniversities in Nigeria. He also proves that there is no significant difference between EI and WLB by age, gender and marital status. Another researcher Saraswat & Choudhary (2017) proves that emotional intelligence doesn't create much impact on work-life balance. On the other hand, Devi et al. (2019) examined various aspects of emotional intelligence and work-life balance and concludes that there is no relationship between EI and WLB. According to them, EI doesn't have impact on WLB.

The discussion of literature leads us to propose that EI is an important element that impacts WLB of employees but all these studies are scattered. Some studies show positive relationship between EI and WLB, while some show negative relationship and some show no relationship. So, it is crucial to study the impact of EI on WLB in context of faculty of higher educational institutes.

Significance of the study

The education sector is considered as the most trending and developing sector in India. Rapid changes in the educational system like implementation of New Education Policies, digitalization, the impact of COVID-19, changes in learning methods etc. make the teaching profession more challenging. In this context, there are numerous factors that make the teaching profession more stressful, such as emotional exhaustion, anxiety, depression, lack of organizational support, working environment, work-life balance, family role conflict, etc. Work-life balance is considered the most influential factor that affects the performance of employees. Most of the researchers have given emphasis on working hours, work

Journal of Informatics Education and Research ISSN: 1526-4726

Vol 4 Issue 2 (2024)

load, job satisfaction, workplace issues including managing change, overlap of work and other dimensions of life, stress, burnout, ill-health, marital conflicts, productivity, etc., but one of the major factors that influences the work-life balance most is emotional intelligence. According to the reviewed literature, there are numerous studies on emotional intelligence and work-life balance, but some studies show a positive relationship among both variables while othersshow a negative or no relationship between these variables. There is also an inadequate study on the impact of EI on WLB among faculty in higher education institutes, where the challenge is greater and tough. So, it is insightful to see the relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance among faculty members of higher education institutes.

Objective of the study

- To find out the relationship of Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance among faculty of higher educational institutions.
- To find out the gender differences on the Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance of faculty of higher educational institutions.

Research Methodology

Hypothesis

- There is no relationship between emotional intelligence and the work-life balance among faculty of higher education institutes.
- There is no significant gender difference on the emotional intelligence and work–life balance of faculty of highereducation institutes.

Respondents

The empirical research technique has been used for conducting the research. Data have been collected from 100 respondents who are married and within the age group of 25–45 years. The sample includes Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors from various colleges in Ferozepur, Punjab. A total of 79 married faculties fulfilled the questionnaires completely and have been analyzed. Out of which 60% are female and 40% are male respondents. Average age of the respondents is 31.5 years.

Tools to measure Emotional Intelligence and Work-life balance

A survey was conducted to measure the emotional intelligence and work-life balance of faculty members by adopting standardized questionnaire.

i. Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQUe –Short Form) by Petrides (2009)

This scale is used for measuring the emotional intelligence level of the faculty. The short form version has been used which comprising 30 items developed on seven point likert scale and designed to assess four dimensions: Well-being, Sociability, Emotionality and Self-control.

ii. Work-life balance questionnaire developed by Fisher Macaullay(2003) consisted of 15 statements, designed to assess three dimensions of work-life balance: Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW), and Work/Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE). The statements of this questionnaire are also ranked on a 5- point Likert scale.

Results and Discussion

The relationship of EI and WLB has been shown below:

Table 1. Indicating the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of the variables.

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|--------------|-------|-------|----|----------|----------|
| Variables | Mean | SD | Ν | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| Well being | 28.11 | 4.038 | 79 | -0.095 | -0.797 |
| Sociability | 25.30 | 5.199 | 79 | 0.153 | 0.266 |
| Emotionality | 34.72 | 5.320 | 79 | -0.283 | -0.473 |
| Self-control | 24.39 | 6.172 | 79 | -0.440 | 0.151 |
| WIPL | 22.63 | 6.278 | 79 | -0.417 | -0.440 |
| PLIW | 12.85 | 4.498 | 79 | 0.302 | -1.007 |
| WPLE | 14.00 | 3.313 | 79 | -0.588 | -0.059 |

Source: Author's calculations based on primary data

The descriptive statistics of the study, including mean (M), standard deviation (SD), skewness and kurtosis of the variable has been measured and shown in table 1.

Journal of Informatics Education and Research ISSN: 1526-4726

Vol 4 Issue 2 (2024)

From the above table, the value for Well-being (M= 28.11, SD= 4.038, Skewness= -0.095, Kurtosis= -0.797) for Sociablity (M= 25.30, SD= 5.199, Skewness= 0.153, kurtosis= 0.266), for Emotionality (M= 34.72, SD= 5.320, Skewness= -0.283,

Kurtosis= -0.473), for Self-control (M= 24.39, SD= 6.172, Skewness= -0.440, Kurtosis= 0.151), for WIPL (M= 22.63, SD= 6.278, Skewness= -0.417 Kurtosis= -0.440), for PLIW (M= 12.85, SD= 4.498, Skewness= 0.302, Kurtosis= -1.007), for WPLE (M= 14.00, SD= 3.313, Skewness= -0.588, Kurtosis= -0.059) are lying within the range of (-1 to +1) which confirms the normality of the data in each item and hence it is amenable for applying t-test and finding the correlation between the variables.

Table 2. A summary table of Pearson, r correlation showing the relationship between dimensions of Work-Life Balance and Emotional Intelligence.

| | WIPL | PLIW | WPLE |
|--------------|---------|--------|-------|
| Well-being | -0.490 | -0.552 | 0.242 |
| Sociability | -0.402 | -0.364 | 0.476 |
| Emotionality | -0.492 | -0.527 | 0.368 |
| Self-control | -0.501 | -0.506 | 0.514 |
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Source: Author's calculations based on primary data

The results in table 2 above reveal the relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance which is discussed as follows:

The first dimension of emotional intelligence is **Well-being**, which has been found to be negatively correlated with the Personal Life Interference with work (PLIW) i.e., r = -0.552, the dimension of work life balance. It is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This finding suggests that if a person is successful and self-confident in his/her life and more likely to look on the bright side of life, he/she can control the interference of personal life into work life. In the words of Gokcen et al., 2014, well-being is one's self-esteem or self-confidence which is accompanied with cheerfulness and focuses on the positive aspects of life and if a person has such qualities, then he/she can control the interference of personal life into their working life. When interference of personal life like family demands and responsibilities increases, it willlead to interfere into work life (Duxbury, 2004) and this study indicates that if an individual is high on well-being, can control his/her personal factors to interfere in work life. Therefore, there is a negative relationship between well-being and PLIW. Similarly, well-being has a negative correlation with another dimension of work life balance i.e. work interference with personal life (WIPL) i.e. r= -0.490, which is also statistically significant at the 0.01 level. It demonstrates that if a person is optimistic or cheerful, it can help in reducing the interference of work life into personal life. Working factors like working culture, working environment, role overload, peer pressure etc., make it difficult to fulfill family demands and responsibilities but if an individual scores high on well-being, can help in reducing the interference of work life into personal life. Therefore, there is a negative relationship between well-being and PLIW.

On the other hand, well-being has a positive but weak correlation with another dimension of work-life balance i.e. work and personal life enhancement (**WPLE**), i.e., r=0.242, significant at the 0.05 level. This study indicates that if a person is in the state of well-being, it couldn't help much in enhancing his/her work and personal life especially in context of faculty of higher education institutes. Here, enhancement means getting support from work on personal life and vice-versa but according to this study, well-being doesn't have much effect on WPLE. Therefore, there is a weak correlation between well-being and WPLE.

Sociability, another variable of emotional intelligence, is also found negatively correlated with work interference with personal life (WIPL), i.e., r = -0.402, and personal life interference with work (PLIW), i.e., r = -0.364, p = 0.01 level. This correlation demonstrates that if the faculty of an institution scores high on sociability, it will help in reducing the interference of work life into personal life, or vice versa, because sociability is related with the ability to notice, accept, and understand the opinions or emotional expressions of others, the ability to influence other people's feelings, and assertiveness in being honest and frank, as well as the willingness to stand up for what is right (**Gokcen et al., 2014**). It means that if a person has a good social relations, can nurture his/her relationship with others, receive support from others or create a better environment for work and hence can easily control the interference of work and personal life into each other. Therefore, sociability has a negative relationship with WIPL and PLIW. However, sociability has a positive relationship with work and personal life enhancement (WPLE) i.e., r = 0.476, which is significant at the 0.01 level. It means that if a person is able to recognize, acknowledge, and understand the viewpoints or emotional expressions of others and has the ability to influence other people's feelings, it will enhance the support of both their work and personal lives for each other. Therefore, sociability has a positive relationship with WPLE.

Journal of Informatics Education and Research ISSN: 1526-4726

Vol 4 Issue 2 (2024)

The third dimension of emotional intelligence is **Emotionality**, which also has a negative relationship with both work interference with personal life (WIPL) i.e., r = -0.492, and personal life interference with work (PLIW) i.e., r = 0.527 and statistically significant at the 0.01 level. From this result, it can be inferred that if an individual scores high on emotionality, there will be less interference from work life into personal life and vice versa. **Gokcen et al., 2014** consider emotionality as competence to accurately perceive self and others' feelings, ability to communicate one's feelings to others, ability to empathize other people's feelings, and ability to have fulfilling personal relationships. It means that if a person can understand his own emotions and utilizes in a right manner make a person emotionality has a negative relationship with WIPL and PLIW. On the other hand, emotionality has a positive correlation with work and personal life enhancement (WPLE) i.e., r = 0.368 significant at the 0.01 level, which means that if a person has a high value of emotionality, it will help in understanding the support and enhancement provided by work on personal life and vice versa. This result proves that emotionality contribute in the enhancement of work and personal life. Therefore, emotionality has a positive relationship with WPLE.

The fourth dimension of emotional intelligence is, **Self-control**, which is also negatively correlated with work interference with personal life (WIPL) i.e., r = -0.501 and personal life interference with work life (PLIW) i.e., r = -0.506, significant at the 0.01 level. This correlation indicates that if an individual score high on self-control, it will help in reducing the interference of work and personal life into each other. **Gokcen et al., 2014** define self-control as a deep-rooted and internalized ability to control one's emotions in ways that equip one to withstand pressure, manage stress, and refrain from impulsiveness and if an individual has such kind of abilities, he/she can easily control the interference of work and personal life enhancement (WPLE), i.e., r = 0.514significant at the 0.01 level. It means that if a person is able to manage stress or emotions, then work and personal life will complement each other to create an optimal work-life balance.

Previous researches have shown that those who are emotionally intelligent can successfully balance their personal and professional lives. **Shylaja & Prasad (2017)** identifies that work family life plays a significant role in the performance of employee and become the reason of employee turnover and also found that EI contributes in balancing persons work life equation. Even, in the study of **Kumar & Jyothirmai (2018)**, states that EI and WLB together help in creating organizational success and develop competitive advantage for the organization. **Subbalakshmi (2019)** discovered that the majority of respondents, regardless of gender or marital status, agreed that the concepts of EI and work-life balance are positively perceived. Female employees are more likely than male employees to believe that their work and job role interfered with their personal lives. However, in this study a significant correlation is found between the emotional intelligence and work-life balance as shown in Table 2. This study finds that emotional intelligence has an effect on work-life balance. As a result of this, the null hypothesis, "There is no correlation between emotional intelligence and work-life balance" is rejected.

After establishing the relationship between EI and WLB, t-test has been used for analyzing the gender differences among the male and female faculty of higher education institutes. In prior studies, various researchers have been reported that a female respondent faces the issue of WLB most but in current scenario, male respondents are also facing the issue of WLB. So, to check the gender difference among the faculty of higher education institutes, t-test has been used and the results are reported in below Table 3.

| | Gender | Ν | Mean | Std. Deviation | t-test |
|--------------|--------|----|-------|----------------|--------|
| Well-Being | Male | 32 | 28.47 | 4.273 | 0.642 |
| - | Female | 47 | 27.87 | 3.899 | |
| Sociability | Male | 32 | 26.16 | 5.640 | 1.206 |
| | Female | 47 | 24.72 | 4.853 | |
| Emotionality | Male | 32 | 34.50 | 4.472 | -0.304 |
| | Female | 47 | 34.87 | 5.870 | |
| Self-Control | Male | 32 | 24.94 | 6.026 | 0.645 |
| | Female | 47 | 24.02 | 6.306 | |
| WIPL | Male | 32 | 23.38 | 5.499 | 0.865 |
| | Female | 47 | 22.13 | 6.768 | |
| PLIW | Male | 32 | 13.50 | 4.204 | 0.248 |
| | Female | 47 | 12.40 | 4.680 | |
| WPLE | Male | 32 | 13.97 | 3.095 | 0.478 |
| | Female | 47 | 14.02 | 3.486 | |

Table 3.Independent t-test results comparing males and females on emotional intelligence

Source: Author's calculations based on primary data

Journal of Informatics Education and Research ISSN: 1526-4726

Vol 4 Issue 2 (2024)

The results in table 3 above reveal that there is no significant gender difference on the emotional intelligence and worklife balance of faculty of higher education institutes as all the values are not significant. Earlier, in the study of **Duxbury et al.**, (1994), it has been reported that women are expected to report more interference from family to work than men, while men are expected to report more interference from work to family than women because men are supposed to be bread earner and women are assumed to be fully responsible for household activities. The whole statement is based on the gender-role expectations theory. But, this study shows that there is no impact of gender in the issue of emotional intelligence and work-life balance. Both men and women are facing same situation while balancing their work – life and personal life. In this context the Null hypothesis "There is no significant gender difference on the emotional intelligence and work–life balance of faculty of higher educational institutions" is accepted.

Conclusions

On the basis of this study, it can be concluded that emotional intelligence plays an important role for employees because it helps in reducing the interference of work and personal life with each other. This study confirms that the issue of work life balance in higher education institutes can be reduced if they focus on the emotional intelligence level of their faculty. Being optimistic, cheerful, sociable, having well control on emotions or has an ability of managing stress, helps the faculty in controlling the interference of personal life into work life especially in the area of Ferozepur. So, in the nutshell, the results from this study indicates that if an organization have emotionally intelligent employees, it tends to reduce the issue of work life balance and also there is no gender difference exists among the faculty of higher education institutes. Both male and female faculty faces the issue of work life balance.

Limitations of the study

- The study is limited to only the District of Punjab, i.e., Ferozepur. Therefore, the results may not be representative for the country as a whole.
- A sample of just 79 teachers does not form a representative sample, so the result cannot be interpreted on the basis of generalization.
- Further, the use of the TEIque-SF instrument limited the incorporation of other Trait EI variables such as selfmotivation and adaptability. Using the full TEIque full instruments with 153 questions might have been more effective in measuring the software engineers' perceptions of their Trait EI, but that would have made the survey too long.

Implications of the study

This study has important implications for organizations when designing their human resource policies and practices.

- While framing the work life balance policies, higher education institutes should consider emotional intelligence as an important area.
- There must be a session of counseling for the faculty to make them emotionally intelligent.
- Trainings should be provided to the faculty for making them emotionally intelligent.
- While hiring the candidates, preference should be given to emotionally intelligent people.
- Flexible working environment should be created for reducing the issue of work-life balance.

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Journal of Informatics Education and Research ISSN: 1526-4726 Vol 4 Issue 2 (2024)

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Vol 4 Issue 2 (2024)

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