

Artículo de investigación

Role of emotionally intelligent workers for organizational effectiveness

Papel de trabajadores emocionalmente inteligentes para la efectividad organizacional
Papel dos trabalhadores emocionalmente inteligentes para a eficácia organizacional

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to describe how the understanding of emotional intelligence has evolved since last few decades and to see how emotional intelligence of an organizational member can improve organizational effectiveness by addressing the Cherniss model. This paper reviews the historic literature on emotional intelligence and relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational effectiveness. The findings indicate that as a field of study, emotional intelligence developed gradually. Its origin can be traced back to 1920s, till its official conceptualization in 1990. Although, it is a relatively new construct, but is a widely recognized management discipline now owing to its remarkable influence on organizational effectiveness. The current complex era of globalization has brought dynamic changes to the working of modern organizations. Businesses now greatly focus on achieving competitive advantage by dramatically improving the overall organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, organizational performance, organizational effectiveness, historical review.

Resumen

El propósito de este documento es describir cómo ha evolucionado la comprensión de la inteligencia emocional desde las últimas décadas y ver cómo la inteligencia emocional de un miembro de la organización puede mejorar la efectividad de la organización al abordar el modelo de Cherniss. Este artículo revisa la literatura histórica sobre la inteligencia emocional y la relación entre la inteligencia emocional y la efectividad organizacional. Los hallazgos indican que, como campo de estudio, la inteligencia emocional se desarrolló gradualmente. Su origen se remonta a la década de 1920, hasta su conceptualización oficial en 1990. Aunque es un constructo relativamente nuevo, pero es una disciplina de gestión ampliamente reconocida ahora debido a su notable influencia en la efectividad de la organización. La actual era compleja de la globalización ha traído cambios dinámicos al funcionamiento de las organizaciones modernas. Las empresas ahora se enfocan en gran medida en lograr una ventaja competitiva al mejorar dramáticamente la efectividad organizacional general.

Palabras claves: inteligencia emocional, desempeño organizacional, efectividad organizacional, revisión histórica.

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é descrever como a compreensão da inteligência emocional evoluiu desde as últimas décadas e ver como a inteligência emocional de um membro da organização pode melhorar a eficácia organizacional, abordando o modelo de Cherniss. Este artigo revisa a literatura histórica sobre inteligência emocional e relação entre inteligência emocional e eficácia organizacional. Os resultados indicam que, como campo de estudo, a inteligência emocional se desenvolveu gradualmente. Sua origem pode ser rastreada até 1920, até sua conceituação oficial em 1990. Embora seja um construto relativamente novo,

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mas é uma disciplina de gerenciamento amplamente reconhecida agora devido à sua notável influência na eficácia organizacional. A atual era complexa da globalização trouxe mudanças dinâmicas para o funcionamento das organizações modernas. As empresas agora se concentram muito em obter vantagem competitiva, melhorando drasticamente a eficácia organizacional geral.

Palavras-chave: Inteligência emocional, desempenho organizacional, efetividade organizacional, revisão histórica.

Introduction

The advent of globalization poses complex challenges for the organizations in terms of achieving and maintaining competitive advantage over other counter organizations. For this purpose, it is deemed important to fully understand the changing nature of work and make effective use of resources like evolving technology and human capital for quality, innovation and value creation. The organizations need to redesign their business models and redefine their goals strategically. Such structured organizational processes can lead to improved organizational performance and eventually overall organizational effectiveness (Sparrow and Cooper, 2014).

The decade of 1950s marked the era when sociologists accepted organizational effectiveness as a salient construct of organization theory (Sparrow and Cooper, 2014), however by late 1970s and early 1980s, the importance of employee contribution towards the success of an organization was acknowledged (Schuler and Jackson, 2014). Today psychologists and HR professionals alike are concerned to investigate employee's appropriate emotional, mental and attitudinal behaviors that can be labeled as "organizational behaviors" or competencies which can lead to effectiveness (Sparrow and Cooper, 2014). One of the main determinants of these competencies is emotional intelligence. For instance, a manager or leader with high levels of emotional intelligence will be able to learn and use conflict management among workers more effectively and readily than those with less emotional intelligence (Cherniss and Goleman, 2001). So, what exactly is emotional intelligence as defined by various eminent practitioners? What exactly is its relationship with organizational effectiveness?

Research on the association between emotional intelligence and organizational effectiveness is limited. The majority of the conducted studies on the like have focused on establishing an empirical association between emotional intelligence and key organizational outcomes (Masa'deh, 2016; Dawar and Singh, 2014;

Alawneh, 2013; Coetzer, 2013; Konkin, 2013; Jha and Singh, 2012; Davoodabadi & Shahsavari, 2013; Bakhshandeh et al, 2015). This paper may add to the body of knowledge by integrating the available historical literature on emotional intelligence encompassing its different definitions and models. Furthermore, this paper is interested in demonstrating and recognizing the potential implications of emotional intelligence on effectiveness of an organization, which has not been extensively studied yet.

Recently there has been a trend towards conducting research regarding emotional intelligence that has contributed to an overall improvement in its conceptualization, since several definitions of emotional intelligence exist to date. This highlights a vast avenue for conducting study on the construct for developing deeper understanding of the practical applications of emotional intelligence in organizational settings (Masa'deh, 2016; Peres et al, 2018; Mendes & Silva, 2018).

Methodology

This is an analytical-logical research and content analysis method is used to obtain data. Content analysis is a special case in observational research and historical documentary research, and in terms of nature, there is little research through which the qualitative content of the sources examined is converted into quantitative data through statistical manipulations.

Results and discussion

Emotional intelligence is a multi-disciplinary field as the literature of emotional intelligence has its roots in different fields of social psychology, personality, neuropsychology and social psychology (Salovey & Caruso, 2004). The evolution of emotional intelligence as a concept can be drawn back to Robert Thorndike's (1920) discovery of social intelligence, followed by Wescheler (1958)'s general intelligence and Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligence. Thorndike's explains the

concept of social intelligence as the capability to know and manage people. Gardiner further elaborated this concept by defining two dimensions of the behavior of an emotionally aware individual: intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence, which became the foundations of emotional intelligence (Gardiner, 1983). Many years later, the term 'emotional quotient' was coined by Bar-On in 1988, which is referred to as the social and emotional abilities of an individual which help him deal with the challenges of everyday life.

Dr. Peter Salovey and Dr. John Mayer (1990) introduced the term emotional intelligence in academic articles and categorized it as a part of social intelligence, distinguishing it from common intelligence. Later, Daniel Goleman, a psychologist at Harvard, in 1990 came forward with a book on "EI: Why it can matter more than IQ" acknowledging the work of Salovey and Mayer (1990) and declared that "the essence of emotional intelligence is the integration of emotional and cognitive centers of the brain". The main idea encompassing emotional intelligence is the assessment of one's own feelings, determining how these feelings affect emotions and how these feelings further direct one's behavior in a certain direction.

Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2000) identified the term 'emotional intelligence' as made up of two sub components, "emotions" and "intelligence". Generally speaking, Emotions are the signals or feelings which suggest ones meanings about different relationships and Intelligence is a person's ability to reason about or with something. In connection to this, emotional intelligence can be safely recognized as an important tool in our everyday matters and dealings with people and it is the ability of showing right behavior at the right time in any specific situation.

Emotions

Emotions and their relation with emotional intelligence evolved as early as the times of Darwin and has been endorsed by other researchers like Roberts et al., 2001 and Mayer, 2000 as well. Charles Darwin has comprehensively stated that "emotional expression plays a major role in cognitive behavior, which remains an important axiom of EI (emotional intelligence) to the present day" (Bar-On 2001, p. 83). According to Darwin, emotions ensure survival by energizing the needed behavior and signaling vital information.

Emotions are a complicated psychological phenomenon and have emerged as an independent field widely researched presently (Salovey et al. 2000). Now, views about emotions have been divided into two groups by the modern times researchers, the traditional views of emotions and the views after a paradigm shift that occurred from 1940. The Traditional views of emotions stated that "reason is always superior to emotion" (An idea by the ancient Greek Stoic reported in Meyer et al. 2004a, p. 198) because emotions and reason move in direct conflict with each other and emotions hamper the rational decision-making process. A paradigm shift occurred from 1940, when researchers started viewing emotions as adaptive and functional.

Intelligence

The history of studies on Intelligence can be traced back to many researchers. As stated by Leeper (1948), "Emotions arouse, sustain, and direct activity." Another pioneer was Wechsler (1958), who defined general intelligence as "The aggregate of global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his (or her) environment." John Holt (1964) is that intelligence is not only about the situational knowledge one has but is predictive of an individual's behavior in that particular situation. John Holt (1964) believed that the more the intelligence of a person the better will be his performance in that situation.

Intelligence quotient (IQ) or cognitive intelligence (CI) deals with an individual's cognitive abilities for problem solving, for retention of memory and for quick & accurate numeric calculations. Also, it is important in regulation of information flow involving everyday activities. Kaplan & Sadock (1991) defined Cognitive intelligence as "the capacity to understand, learn, recall, think rationally, solve problems, and apply what one has learned" (Kaplan & Sadock, 1991, p. 2). Lemann (1999) was of the view that having a high IQ is a valued characteristic of the highly successful people. Mayer & Salovey (1993) state that intrapersonal intelligence can detect and symbolize complex and complicated sets of emotions, resultantly helping one to understand and respond to various real life facets and situations.

Another view regarding intelligence was given by Bar-On (1997) and Mayer (et al. 2000), who defined intelligence as a precise constellation of the skills, competencies and abilities of a person in handling unknown situations in an effective

manner. Hence, emotional intelligence concerns an individual's behavior in difficult and unpredicted situations. Taking into account the existing literature on emotional and cognitive intelligence, it seems difficult to separate the two phenomena. However, they seem to overlap each other and emotional intelligence can be finally recognized as the non-intellectual part of the cognitive intelligence.

Definitions of Emotional Intelligence

The available literature on emotional intelligence supports the notion that it is a valid construct, although no exact scientific definition of it exists (Palmer et al., 2005). Various researchers have put forward various definitions of emotional intelligence, some of which are as follows:

1. "Emotional intelligence is the capacity with which a person recognizes his/her feelings and the feelings of the others which increases self motivation and helps in management of emotions related to different relations" (Goleman 1998, p. 375).
2. "Emotional intelligence is the ability of a person to recognize what emotions mean and how they are related to different aspects of life. It is how a person uses reasoning to solve problems aptly. Emotional intelligence helps a person in perceiving emotions, in assimilating feelings related to emotions, in understanding what these emotions mean, and how to manage them" (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey 1999, p. 267).
3. "Emotional intelligence is the set of skills that involve processing information about emotions" (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2000).
4. "Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and regulate the meanings of emotions and emotional patterns in ourselves and in others" (Mayer, 2000).
5. "Emotional intelligence addresses the emotional, personal, social and survival dimensions of intelligence, which are often more important for daily functioning than the more cognitive aspects of intelligence" (Bar-On, 2000).
6. "Emotional Intelligence is a transactional build up which reflects the association between an individual's skills and abilities, and the various environmental factors to which the individual is exposed" (Matthews et al. 2002, p. 531).
7. "Emotional intelligence involves the ability of an individual regarding understanding his own emotions and those of the other individuals related to him, and then adapt to them emotionally in relation with the various environmental factors" (Mayer et al. 2002, p. 104).
8. "Emotional intelligence is a conceptual set of various abilities which deals with an individual's own emotions and how he perceives and expresses them. It is the ability of a person while directing his emotions towards a specific direction, that how he reasons according to them and control the emotions of the other within the same environment" (Palmer 2003a, p. 184).
9. "Emotional intelligence is the ability of dealing with issues related to emotions (but not limited to); the ability of perceiving them, utilizing them, and managing them as well" (Palmer & Stough, 2001).
10. Emotional intelligence is the "subset 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 actions" (Salovey and Mayer, 2007. p. 5).

Models of Emotional Intelligence

Although this construct remained a popular topic of debate among researchers, emotional intelligence as a field of study is still in a developing phase. To date, three widely accepted models of emotional intelligence have evolved in literature. These are Goleman's competency model (1995), Salovey and Mayer's ability model (2000) and Bar-On's (2000) trait or mixed model. Generally speaking, these three models complement each other with the aim to understand and measure the components involved directly with the awareness and management of emotions of self and others.

Competency Model

According to Goleman's (1995) competency model, there were five domains with twenty-five competencies that people are born with, namely: self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, empathy, motivation and social skills. Later, these were reduced to four major domains with twenty competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness (Empathy), and social skills (Relationship Management).

The domains of Self-Awareness and Self-Management fit within the category of personal

competence, and Social Awareness and Relationship Management fit within the category of social competence. Self-awareness and self-regulation provide an individual with the ability to “mobilize a culturally appropriate interpretation of emotional stimuli and to enact a situationally appropriate behavioral response”. Social skills involve the ability of an individual “to label and recognize others’ emotions, needs, and concerns and the ability to help others manage their emotions so as to achieve desirable responses” (Goleman, 1995; Goleman, 1998; Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Bar-On Trait Model

Bar-On model is an extension of the ability model of Salovey & Mayer (2000) and explained emotional intelligence from the perspective of five personality factors: intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, and general mood, which could be improved by training and gradual therapy which can help people successfully address the external challenges and pressures (Bar-On, 2000).

Intrapersonal capacity is an individual’s capacity of identifying, comprehending and coherently expressing self emotions and thoughts. Interpersonal skills refer to understanding, recognizing and accepting others’ emotions to mutually satisfy social relationships. Adaptability aspect is using and correctly adapting to self and other emotions according to variety of situations and for problem solving. The fourth pillar is dealing with and managing strong stress-causing emotions and finally, motivation for exhibiting positive energy in moods (Bar-On, 2000).

This model categorizes emotional intelligence as one of the fifteen traits dedicated to enhance an individual’s emotional self-confidence: adaptability, assertiveness, emotional expression, emotional management (of others), emotional perception, emotional regulation, impulsiveness, relationships, self-esteem, self-motivation, social awareness, stress management, trait empathy, trait happiness, trait optimism (Bar-On, 2000).

Ability Model

As believers of mixed models define emotions related to personality factors, Ability models define emotions as directly related to abilities that are a part of our everyday activities. The founders of this theory Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (2000) describe emotional intelligence

as an amalgamation of four components or branches namely: emotional management, emotional facilitation of thought, emotional understanding, and emotional perception.

Emotional perception, the most basic component, is the ability to gain familiarity with self and others’ emotions. When perception has been made, then emotions are consciously or unconsciously used for facilitation of thought and for solving problems logically. The ability to understand the meaning and relation of emotions is the third branch of emotional understanding. The last and most complex component i.e., emotional management is an individual’s ability to be aware of and to adapt self and others’ emotions (Mayer et al., 2001). This hierarchy of branches has been proved by research on alexithymia, which pertains to symptoms showing difficulty in recognizing one’s own emotions. The research on alexithymics also shows that such individuals find it difficult to recognize others’ emotions (Parker, Taylor & Bagby, 2001).

Organizational Effectiveness

Also known as organizational success or organizational worth, this functional concept is an important construct of organizational research with a rich history. The Traditional view regarding organizational effectiveness was goal-based; goals of productivity, profit, and organizational expansion (Thorndike, 1949). Other variables that could be considered as criteria for effectiveness include organizational commitment, personnel turnover and absenteeism and satisfactions. Bass defined criteria as one in which members value their organization and they collectively value the society (Bass, 1952). One distinguishing feature of these correlates is that they directly or indirectly are related to the organizational objectives. Hence, Organizational effectiveness can be defined as “the extent to which an organization as a social system, given certain resources and means, fulfills its objectives without in-capacitating its means and resources and without placing undue strain upon its members” (Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum, 1957).

By the late 1950s, the goal-based model became less popular than the systems model in which sociologists viewed organizational effectiveness as a generalized conceptualization that encompasses the criteria of organizational productivity, organizational internal flexibility and external adaptability and absence of intra-

organizational strains or conflicts (Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum, 1957). Katz and Kahn (1966) further argued that the key issue was the alignment of these two views of an organization so that they lead to growth, survival and environmental control. Later, Friedlander and Pickle (1968) stated that organizational effectiveness could be viewed as overlapping profitability, employee satisfaction and societal value, while Mahoney and Weitzel (1969) highlighted that productivity, reliability and utilization of the organization's business model should be the focus for effectiveness. Blake and Mouton (1964) took effectiveness as the simultaneous achievement of high levels of organizational production and people-oriented system. Gibson et al. (1973) seemed concerned with the alignment of structure and process in terms of productivity, efficiency, adaptability and long-term survival for organization effectiveness.

In today's dynamic environment, the construct of organizational effectiveness is a complex one, which needs to satisfy an ongoing process of divergent and adaptive definitions of effective organizational performance over time (Sparrow et al., 2014). The contemporary view regarding organizational effectiveness is concerned with talent management models (Sparrow et al., 2014) comprising of essentially emotionally intelligent workers that directly contribute to better organizational performance and success, hence organizational effectiveness.

Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Effectiveness

Research shows that emotional intelligence is critical for overall success at the workplace (Mayer et al., 2000; Mayer and Salvoy 1997). This is predicted from the axiom postulated by Goleman (1995) in which he highlighted emotional intelligence as more important than intelligence quotient in the estimation of an individual's success. This notion by Goleman (1995) formed the basis for a number of research work conducted on the construct, published in recognized magazines and journals establishing emotional intelligence as a key determinant of organizational effectiveness (Goleman and Cherniss, 2001). This promises to reap benefits for the economy and society as a whole.

Emotional intelligence is considered to be one of the most important traits/ ability in both the leader and the workers for a smooth relationship among them and for superior organizational performance and effectiveness. Not only a leader

needs to be well aware of and know how to manage his own and others emotions but all the organizational members must monitor and manage their own emotions and emotional responses in times of uncertainty or change. Emotional intelligence is contingent for many employee and organizational outcomes like *employee recruitment & retention, talent management & development, teamwork, organizational commitment, worker morale & organizational health, Innovation, worker productivity and worker efficiency* (Goleman and Cherniss, 2001).

When reviewing the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational outcomes, Goleman (2001) put forward that the impact of emotional intelligence starts from the hiring process for not only employees, in which it must be utilized as one of the prime criteria with other technical skills related to job, but also for selection of candidates on higher authoritative positions. Simultaneously, the hiring manager must also be emotionally intelligent for making the right hiring decision. This is followed by a healthy workable relationship between the manager and the employee and emotional intelligence of both affects the quality of this relationship. Goleman (2001) further believed that due importance need to be given to the worker's emotional intelligence when it comes to training & development and promotion & succession, and for those with high potential, emotional intelligence should be a major focus for further enrichment (Goleman and Cherniss, 2001).

Cary Cherniss Model of Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Effectiveness

The above three models demonstrate the existence and process of emotional intelligence and research works on this variable predict its valuation to organizational effectiveness. The Cary Cherniss model is used as a starting point for those individuals and groups aiming to boost emotional intelligence. This model highlights three inter-related factors in organizations that affect relationships (Goleman, 1995) and harness emotional intelligence in individuals and work groups. This includes both formally arranged and naturally occurring relationships which affect emotional intelligence and are affected by it. An organization's HR policies and trainings for emotional intelligence will ultimately affect emotional intelligence through the relationships among groups and individuals in that organization (Goleman and Cherniss, 2001).

The three factors affecting relationships, according to Cary Cherniss model (2001), are leadership, organizational culture or climate and HR functions (as shown in Fig. 1). This implies that organizational leadership affects organizational effectiveness in the presence of a favorable organizational climate. The various HR functions comprising of recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance management strongly impact emotional intelligence of leaders (Ruth Jacobs). Consequently, leadership affects the effectiveness of HR functions that help the members of an organization nurture their emotional intelligence. Leaders who themselves lack or possess less emotional intelligence will prove ineffective in creating a conducive work climate which encourages or supports learning the same. This encouragement leads to organizational effectiveness (Williams, 1994;

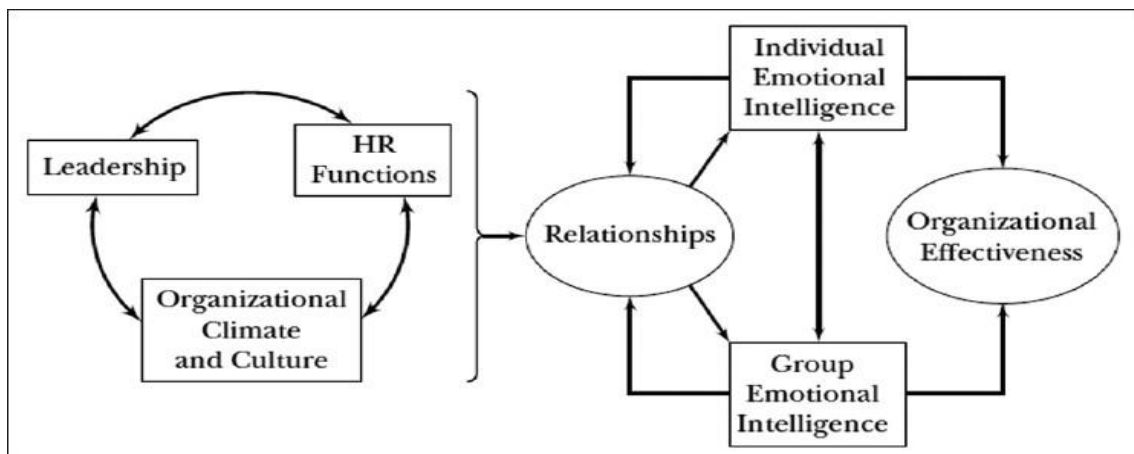
McClelland, 1998). Hence, the link between leader's emotional intelligence and organizational health or climate is important.

The Cherniss model provides multiple practical implications to organizations. Firstly, attempts to improve emotional intelligence of organizational members can be facilitated through formal training programs aimed at forging sustainable interpersonal and intergroup relationships among them by fostering organizational values and aspirations (Cherniss and Goleman, 2001).

Secondly, improvising interventions on all three factors of model is important otherwise training programs designed to ignite the emotional intelligence of members will be of limited value. A training focused on HR functions will not bear fruit if organizational culture and leadership does not support them (Cherniss and Goleman, 2001).

Fig. 1: A Model of Emotional intelligence and Organizational effectiveness

Adapted from source (Goleman and Cherniss, 2001)



Finally, together these factors can construct and translate individual emotional intelligence into group EI through an emotion-behavior cycle. This cycle can ignite a self-reinforcing vicious or virtuous spiral of negative and positive emotions related to any social situation that might have occurred (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). With the passage of time, this can create a shared set of norms and beliefs in organizations. Emotionally intelligent responses can lead to positive cycle of interactions in a group and builds trust and cohesion (Wolff, 1998). However, it is distinguishing to note that this interaction facilitates awareness and regulation of emotions at three distinct levels, i.e., at individual, group and intergroup levels. This ability of any group to develop a system of collective beliefs that manages the emotional responses in a way to

generate positive group behaviors is what we call "group emotional intelligence". So, this implies that group emotional intelligence is not simply the aggregate or total sum of the individual emotional intelligence of the members of a group, rather it comprises of the norms and beliefs that create awareness and promote regulation of emotions within the domain of a group (Druskat and Wolff, 1996). Hence, it can be inevitably argued that a group with high levels of emotional intelligence fosters cooperation, commitment and creativity that generates group identity, group satisfaction and group efficacy that is empirically proven to lead to overall group effectiveness and eventually, effectiveness of the organization constituting these groups (Cherniss and Goleman, 2001; Druskat and Wolff, 1996).

Conclusion

Today's managers face complex challenges of coping with the rapid business environmental changes for efficient management of organizational resources and capabilities by involving technology, creativity, innovation and sustainability in addition to making accurate strategic decisions regarding new products, markets and alliances for improved market share and customer loyalty. Keeping the staff motivated & committed, promoting team-work for attaining mutual goals and managing & developing talent implications in a diverse workforce are few more challenging needs to be satisfied by both public and private organizations to ensure overall effectiveness. Whatever the need or the challenge, emotional intelligence of both the leader and the employee plays a significant role in fulfilling them, as said by Cooper (2014), "there is a golden thread that connects people and their performance to organizational effectiveness". Hence, it is the contributions of an individual and group in the form of well-being and behaviors that can build up "an emotionally intelligent workplace".

Although emotional intelligence has been studied as a construct for many decades now, it is still in the process of getting a unified definition agreed upon by all scholars by understanding it in clear terms covering all aspects of the essentially similar and overlapping conceptualization has relatively recently developed. Even after all this progress, controversies regarding the exact nature of emotional intelligence still exist and scholars present various concept-related definitions, varying views regarding its measurement and impact on employee and organizational success, instead of presenting it in a specific scientific foundation. This paper attempts to integrate available and existing literature to advance the consistent clarification of this concept, however further in-depth work is needed to understand and refine knowledge about emotional intelligence measuring instruments and comparison of various cognitive & emotional competencies.

One major advancement in literature could be made by testing the Cherniss model of emotional intelligence and organizational effectiveness empirically for further validity by investigating either the influence of various leadership styles, or different HR functions involved in an organization, or the influence of culture to see their impact on the relationship contributing to individual & group emotional intelligence. Similarly, relationship between individual &

group emotional intelligence towards organizational effectiveness could be investigated. Hence, a deeper investigation into the antecedents and determinants of emotional intelligence as a predictor of organizational effectiveness requires attention. Also, a meta-analysis of these constructs exploring the national/ cultural differences can be highly recommended as the new century unfolds.

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