A STUDY ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF IT EMPLOYEES THROUGH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIAN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

The happiest workers are the productive workers are the psychological parlance motivates every organisation to work with employee centric attitude. The changing demographic pattern of employees in any part of the world coupled with environmental and working culture induces them to work for effective output by contributing augmented efficiency. The correlation between economic and social need progressiveness is always directly proportional to balance among employees need, the support of family, society, environment and the organisation they belong to. The growing work systems face the core problem of work life balance in today’s organisational scenario. The effect of work life balance both in positive and negative parlance leads to unprecedented changes among the employees in their physical, psychological and social aspects. In order to offer effective work life balance among employees organisations are designing various programmes which supports both physical and mental health of employees, in addition to that employees need both family and social support for work life balance, many of the organisations trying to offer the needy things for managing employees social and family issues to over come work life imbalances. The employees individual understanding themselves and managing skills of various circumstances have great influence on their work life balance and in this aspect the emotional aspect plays a pivotal role. This particular paper aims to describe the role of emotional intelligence on work life balance with special reference to IT Sector. In addition to that the paper also aims to address the reason for work life balance and imbalances and its impact, the role of emotional quotient on employees work life balance.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, work life balance, emotional quotient, psychological match up, emotional balance.
Introduction:

The work life balance is the magic practice as par as today’s organisational scenario is concerned. The organisations irrespective of its working boundaries and operational strength thrive to achieve the working excellence through constructive profit and growth. The working objective of any organisation can be achieved only by the support of employees. Employees are the turn arounder who brings success with in organisation and post it outside the organisation. The organisations live shows in the desired market can be made by customers and customers can be retained by organisation’s products and services. The desired products and services demanded by customers can be given by organisation only by the support of employees. The employees can deliver those aspects when they are balanced at work places. The work life balance of employees is the socio-psychological phenomenon can be reached only by the support of organisation, society, family and environmental factors. But the alignment of work life balance will be made by employees themselves by balancing their personal and emotional aspects. The application of emotional dramas by employees should be diplomatically practiced by employees themselves. The ways and means to employ emotional practices at work places at different circumstances being self directed by employees. The level of emotional balance leads to constructive work life balances. The emotional intelligence and its application will vary from employee to employee at different situations.

Emotional intelligence has gained valuable understanding among the employees and HR practitioners in recent years. Emotional Intelligence is a set of competencies, which direct and control one's feelings towards work and performance at work. These set of competencies are the ability of the individual to control and manage his or her moods and impulses on the job. Knowing one's emotions and feelings as they occur, and tuning oneself to the changed situation, requires the emotional competency, emotional maturity and emotional sensitivity that are demanded on the job. In a work situation, performance of the employees depends on working with group of people with different ideas, suggestions, and opinions. Effective use of emotional intelligence gives better team harmony. Managers, in particular, need high emotional intelligence, because they represent the organization to the customers, they interact with the highest number of people within and outside the organization and they set the tone for employee morale. Higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with better performance in the following areas: Participative Management, Putting People at Ease, Self-Awareness, Balance between Personal Life and Work, Straightforwardness and Composure, Building & Mending Relationships, Confronting Employees Problems and Change Management.

The work life balance and the application of emotional part towards the work life balance are profoundly a challenging task in processing industry especially in the information technology sector. It is the sector which has become the complementary sector for any priority sector and involves fullest strength of manpower resources to the maximum possible extent. The quality of outcome for the assignment undertaken by the employees in the sector can be divulged only through team based projects that involve employees from cross functional areas. The level of synergy among the employees should be at the highest level for the better augmented output in order to deliver the quality work for the satisfaction of organisation; in this aspect the individuals and group emotions play a significant role in this industry. Emotion at various work related activities, relationship, work balance are in variably undergo for changes in IT sector. The methodology of managing emotion at work places is the prominent factor for employees and success with reference to IT sector.

Review of Literature Related to Emotional Intelligence and its impact on Work Life Balance:

The recent organisational scenarios have started to give due weightage for employees’ emotional intelligence at work places and its application on their behavioural patterns. There are continuous studies and researches are being carried out related to employees’ emotional intelligence and its impact on their behaviour and balancing aspects. Information technology is the fast growing and demanding sector and which need more emotional balancing part from employees for the effective execution of jobs. The reviews on these areas are very limited due to recent inception of Information technology in India.

Besides the five senses that receive external stimuli, human bodies respond internally by receiving and understanding information through emotions and feelings. Accessing internal reactions and combining them with intellect makes one more engaged and authentic. So, People are more confident to take decisions because they are not relying solely on judgment, intellectual ability or memory (Fuimano, 2004). At workplace, emotions like
anger and jealousy often push aside logic and rationality. Managers use fear, pride and other emotions to both treat and motivate their subordinates (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2004, p. 171). Myers and Tucker (2005) concluded that as a theoretical model emotional intelligence (EI) promotes both intrapersonal and interpersonal communication skills to understand the role of emotions in the workplace. Generally, people can solve technical problems far easier than human problems they face in home as well as professional life (Mayer and Caroches 2006, p. 8). Human resource managers have started assessing employee performance not only by the outputs delivered but also how effectively they deal with colleagues and staff. It may be common for managers to have ‘what’ but not ‘how’ skills (Wong and Snell, 2003). An organization can reap the benefits of having emotionally intelligent employees in two ways. The managers will have a workforce willing to work with passion and employees will have managers very receptive and open to their needs (Johnson and Indvik, 1999). Besides this, organizations require employees to be emotionally intelligent to serve customers in a better way and to create and maintain a lively work environment. Employers can also opt to reduce employees’ occupational stress by enhancing their EI; this suggests that emotional intelligence is an important construct to be studied in relation to performance. Research has substantiated the importance of emotional intelligence for every day life (Ciarochi and Scott, 2006), marital life (Brackett, Warner and Bosco, 2005; Fitness, 2006), language learning (Aki, 2006) and academic life (Farooq, 2004; Jaeger, 2003; Liff, 2003). Dulewicz, Higgs and Slaski (2003) found managers’ emotional intelligence correlated positively with quality of work life and morale. Brackett, Mayer and Warner (2004) concluded that low scores on EI were associated with poor quality peer relations. Suliman and Al-Shaikh (2007) revealed that employees with higher levels of EI were found to report higher levels of readiness to create and innovate. Carmeli (2003) indicated that emotionally Intelligent managers tend to develop high commitment towards their careers and high affective commitment for the organizations where they work. Employees with higher levels of EI tended to report lower levels of intraindividual conflict (Suliman and Al-Shaikh). So, employees’ emotional intelligence affects the behavior and attitude they usually hold within their organizations Being capable of participating effectively in a team environment is an important consideration for success in work life. Sue-Chan and Latham’s (2004) study indicated a high positive correlation between emotional intelligence and team playing behavior. Rapisarda (2002) indicated that EI competencies are positively correlated with team cohesiveness. According to Sardo (2004), a workforce in touch with the emotional world of others was more able to achieve organizational outcomes through high level workplace relationships. Welch (2003) proposed that teams high on EI are likely to have far more initiative in dealing with organizational challenges and are sensitive to change. Langhorin’s (2004) research showed that managers’ emotional intelligence was able to predict team satisfaction with a reasonable degree of accuracy. The impact of employees’ emotional intelligence can be observed even on their job stress, job satisfaction and the satisfaction of customers they serve. Oginska-Bulik (2005) indicated a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived stress in the workplace. Dulewicz et al. (2003) also found strong negative correlation of managers’ emotional intelligence with stress and distress at work. Research has implied that employees’ emotional intelligence can predict their job satisfaction (Carmeli, 2003; Sy, Tram and O’Hara, 2006). Kernbach and Schutte’s (2005) study revealed that higher emotional intelligence in service providers lead to greater customer satisfaction. Carmeli (2003) asserted that emotional intelligence was negatively related to withdrawal intentions from the organization.

About Information Technology in India:

Information technology and business process outsourcing are among the fastest growing sectors, having a cumulative growth rate of revenue \(^3\)33.6% between 1997–98 and 2002–03 and contributing to 25% of the country's total exports in 2007–08. The growth in the IT sector is attributed to increased specialisation, and an availability of a large pool of low cost, highly skilled, educated and fluent English-speaking workers, on the supply side, matched on the demand side by increased demand from foreign consumers interested in India's service exports, or those looking to outsource their operations. The share of the Indian IT industry in the country's GDP increased from \(^4\)4.8% in 2005–06 to 7% in 2008. In 2009, seven Indian firms were listed among the top 15 technology outsourcing companies in the world.

The Information Technology (IT) sector in India is amongst the fastest growing in the country and the world. It is expected that by the year 2008, IT software and services industry will account for \(^5\)7 per cent of India’s GDP and 35
per cent of total exports. The Indian domestic IT market grew by 29% in the financial year 2007-08 to report revenues of Rs.288, 810 crore. The revenue of the information technology sector has grown from 1.2 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in FY 1998 to an estimated 5.5 per cent in FY 2008. The net value added by this sector, to the economy, is estimated to be 8.3 to 3.9 per cent for FY 2008. The Indian IT-BPO sector grew by 33 per cent in FY 2008 to reach US$ 64 billion in aggregate revenue (including hardware). Of this, the software and services segment accounted for US$ 52 billion, growing by 28 per cent over FY 2007. Software and services exports (including exports of IT services, BPO, engineering services and R&D and software products) reached US$ 40.4 billion, contributing nearly 63 per cent to the overall IT-BPO revenue aggregate. IT-BPO exports (including hardware exports) grew by 28 per cent from US$ 31.8 billion in FY 2007 to US$ 40.9 billion in FY 2008. Domestic IT market (including hardware) reached US$ 23.1 billion in FY 2008 as against US$ 16.2 billion in FY 2007, a growth of 43 per cent. Hardware remained the largest segment of the domestic market with a growth rate of 44 per cent in FY 2008. Software and services spending grew by over 41 per cent during the year. The Indian IT services market is estimated to remain the fastest growing in the Asia-Pacific region with a CAGR of 18.6 per cent. Source: NASSCOM: National Associations of IT and Services Companies-(2009)

**TABLE:1 India IT/ITES Industry Size (2007-12)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>CAGR 07-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic IT/ITES Market</td>
<td>90,014</td>
<td>1,10,177</td>
<td>1,33,100</td>
<td>1,58,053</td>
<td>1,82,991</td>
<td>2,09,698</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/ITES Exports Revenue</td>
<td>1,56,594</td>
<td>1,86,142</td>
<td>2,18,107</td>
<td>2,50,087</td>
<td>2,84,666</td>
<td>3,20,278</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India IT/ITES Industry Size</td>
<td>2,46,609</td>
<td>2,96,319</td>
<td>3,51,207</td>
<td>4,08,139</td>
<td>4,67,657</td>
<td>5,29,976</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** NASSCOM: National Associations of IT and Services Companies-(2009)

**Importance of Information Technology in Modern Commercial Scenario:**

It is an accepted fact that the most important scientific and technological development of contemporary history is Information Technology (IT). IT has pervaded all walks of modern life and society so profoundly that the modern society is colloquially known as Information Society. It has revolutionized the development process itself by influencing its manifold dimensions be it economic, social, political, cultural, environmental, ethical, behavioural, etc. The contribution of IT to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment generation, market diversification, operation of free markets, foreign exchange earnings, poverty reduction, environmental development, economic globalization and liberalization, women’s empowerment and gender equity are evidences to what extent it influences the economy. It fosters socio-cultural development and the concept of global village & borderless society by enhancing the promotion of social cohesion, harmony and integration, spread of education and knowledge through distance learning in cost effective manner. The degree of contribution of the IT to economies and societies vary according to their stage of development (developed, developing or underdeveloped), nature of political economy, availability of appropriate complementary infrastructure, etc.

**TABLE:2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call Services</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Engineers</td>
<td>54.69</td>
<td>45.31</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Managers</td>
<td>94.44</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67.13</td>
<td>32.87</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** NASSCOM: National Associations of IT and Services Companies-(2009)
Need of Emotional Intelligence in IT Sector:
In this circumstance it is a prime responsibility for IT professionals to find a reachable solution as work life balance through emotional intelligence is concerned. Technical skills – which are imperative for IT employees and those, are easy to learn, and it is easy to determine if someone has them. It isn't necessarily intelligence, either. Emotional intelligence does not and should not be thought of as a replacement or substitute for ability, knowledge or job skills as far as IT profession is concerned. Emotional intelligence - people skills - enhances the success of IT people; it does not guarantee it in the absence of suitable skills. Training in the skills and competencies of emotional intelligence will assist in developing one's self-awareness and emotional-awareness, leading to a change towards more adaptive attitudes and the augmentation of more positive perceptions of one's work-life balance among the professionals in IT industry.

Work-Life Balance:
The role of work has changed throughout the world due to economic conditions and social demands. Originally, work was a matter of necessity and survival. Throughout the years, the role of “work” has evolved and the composition of the workforce has changed. Today, work still is a necessity but it should be a source of personal satisfaction as well. Work-life balance is a broad concept including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) on one hand and "life" (pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development) on the other. Related, though broader, terms include "lifestyle balance" and "life balance".

Work Life Balance in IT Companies
IT Industry is the sun rising sector where the long working hours and work overload is typical of the IT industry, according to many human resources managers. Though most IT firms have a five-day week, the workload is going up. After the 2001-02 slumps, companies that downsized did not always hire more people after business picked up. This means that being called to work on weekends and 14-hour working days have become synonymous with the companies. There are also long intervals between projects when many IT professionals are sent to training sessions to keep them occupied. They react to such breaks negatively; many feel they are not competent enough or that their potential is not adequately used.

Work-life Balance through Competencies of Emotional Intelligence among IT Employees
People with Emotional Intelligence can generally in IT industry control the feelings that emerge in difficult situations and respond appropriately at various work pressures and commitment towards hard work, instead of being overwhelmed by emotion and also emotional work life balance. The following are the competencies of emotional intelligence to achieve a work life balance for software employees in India.

- **Self-Awareness**: The success and accomplishments in the workplace rely on ability to be aware of ourselves and our impact on our environment.
- **Self-Management**: This critical competency addresses how IT professionals manage their internal processes. Everyone gets emotionally triggered, especially in the workplace.
- **Social Intelligence**: This competency describes the exclusively human capacity to use very large brains to effectively navigate and negotiate complex social relationships and environments and that is more vital in IT industry
- **Relationship Management**: is a widely-implemented strategy for managing a company’s interactions with customers, clients and sales prospects. It involves using technology to organize, automate, and synchronize business processes.
- **Listening**: is a communication technique that requires the listener to understand, interpret, and evaluate what hears. The ability to listen actively can improve personal relationships through reducing conflicts, strengthening cooperation, and fostering understanding.
- **Assertiveness**: Assertiveness is the ability to formulate and communicate one's own thoughts, opinions and wishes in a clear, direct and non-aggressive way.
- **Conflict Management** - involves implementing strategies to limit the negative aspects of conflict and to increase the positive aspects of conflict at a level equal to or higher than where the conflict is taking place.

**Emotional Intelligence and its impact on work life balance of IT employees:**

The riddle of work life balance by balancing both social and professional life always being disturbed the aspects of “human emotions”. The emotion is the inherent character should or must be expressed through various psychomotor system of body at different conditions based on the situation demands. Especially IT profession which resides were service demanding industry with enormous technological savvy reveal the imbalance in work life pattern. Many of the professional in IT sector at different level of their work station unable to cope up work life balance and emotionally disturbed at various situations which were physical, mental and psychological damages in the industry.

**Figure: 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Low</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Constructive Workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>Self Balancing Workforce</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Work Life Balance Emotional Intelligence**

Source: Self Explanatory model by Author

The above diagram shows the correlation between emotional intelligence and its impact on work life balance of employees with reference to IT sector. The employees who possess the required emotional balance at work place and able to cope up with effective work life balance will be constructive workforce. The employees with imbalanced work life and high emotional intelligence can be channelised for the effective work life balance. The employees with high balancing skill and low emotional intelligence can be tuned as self balancing workforce and employees with low emotional intelligence and work life balance will be impoverished workforce. It is the responsibility of the facilitator to handle the employees with the following characters through tailor made strategical hr practices.

**Conclusion:**

The degree to which work and personal life activities are prioritized so that neither is neglected. High ratings on these behaviors were associated with the emotional intelligence measures of social responsibility, impulse control, and empathy. It gives the impression that the employees in IT sector are balanced is connected with your feelings of being able to contribute to a group, controlling your impulses, and understanding the emotions of others. Employees those who are in IT field, if they have Emotional Intelligence, they can control in their impulses and anger, withstand adverse events and stressful situations, happy with life, and a cooperative member of the group. These employees are more likely to be seen as participative, self-aware, composed, and balanced.

**References:**


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