

The Impacts of Emotional Intelligence and Individual Performance on Work-life Balance

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Abstract

Work-life balance is a topic of great importance to both academic research and professional business practice. Nowadays, most businesses on a global scale are undergoing a significant paradigm shift in their work environments, which leads to the enhanced focus on empowering employees to possess multitasking skills and greater competencies in order to promote sustainable organisational growth. In organisations, emotional intelligence, individual performance and work-life balance will provide a significant contribution to an appropriate balance between work and personal life. Thus, the competitiveness of the world has encouraged employers to start building up a supportive and healthy work environment culture with the purpose of enabling their employees to have a balance between work and personal responsibilities to ensure that they will be more productive and happier. This dramatic change have encouraged researchers to further investigate the impact of emotional intelligence on individual performance and work-life balance.

Keyword: Emotional Intelligence, Individual Performance, Work-Life Balance, Ability Model, Social Exchange Theory

Introduction

In recent years, many employers have noted changes in the demand and labour supply work, where technologies have extensively been introduced into organisations and further caused a change in the knowledge and skills of talent. As reported by the Malaysian Insider, more than 60% of employees in Malaysia believed that they barely spend time with their families as a result of lengthy working hours, which might lead to dissatisfaction and the employees leaving the organisations to spend more time with their families whenever they can afford it (Bani Hasan & Teng, 2017). This statement support by Meenakshi et al (2013), many individuals are struggling to balance all of the conflicting work and life demands while preventing negative spill over from work to their personal lives. International Journal of Advance Research in Management and Social Sciences (2016) also agree that, all organisations must provide a positive work environment for their employees and this includes both financial and non- financial incentives in order to keep their employees in the long run and achieve

organisational goals. Other than that, report by Employee Intention (2015), 32% of employees voted improved workplace flexibility as a key reason for being attracted to a new job.

This ensuring a work-life balance is important to Malaysian employees and, clearly, employers will need to offer initiatives that allow for more flexibility in working hours and/or working from home. Other than that, emotional intelligence in balancing work and personal life is also important because it allows individuals to think and act rationally and maturely with a constantly positive perspective (Kumarasamy et al., 2015). Besides, from an emotions do not only shape the belief of individuals about job, company, or team values but they may also affect the individuals' behaviour at work. The impacts of emotional work can lead to negative effects on organisational success such as high turnover, poor organisational outcomes, substandard service to clients, and career dissatisfaction among employees (Kumar and Charkraborty, 2013)

Based on a study by Shylaja and Pradas (2017), work-family life significantly influences employee performance. Emotions do not only shape the belief of individuals about job, company, or team values but they may also affect the individuals' behaviour at work. Individuals are able to find the pace that enable them to combine professional with personal duties, activities, and ambitions. Apart from that, it is also interesting to note the scarcity of information on the effect of emotional intelligence and individual performance on work-life balance. In regard to this matter, organisations should be more attentive to employees' work-life balance through the effort of implementing a variety of work-life balance policies and practices. As such, organisations must provide a positive work environment for their employees and this includes both financial and non-financial incentives in order to keep their employees in the long run and achieve organisational goals.

Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to express, manage, recognise, understand, and use the aspect of emotion in oneself and others (Neseem et al., 2018). Prior studies have reported the influence of emotional intelligence on the dimensions of work-life balance as significantly weak, while the evaluation and expression of emotions in the self-use of emotions in facilitating the performance exhibited great influence (Rangreji, 2010). Muthu et al (2015) found that emotional intelligence, job engagement and organisational support were positively and significantly associated to work-life balance. To date, many within an organisation experience motions of crumbling trust, distance between managers and colleagues, jarring uncertainty, stifled creativity, as well as vanishing loyalty and commitment (Rangreji, 2010).

Employees with emotional intelligence might be capable of monitoring and handling their emotions. Besides, emotional intelligence enhances the performance of both individuals and organisations because it has a big impact on the types of jobs that employees perform and their relationships with the organisations (Rangreji, 2010). Hence, employees feel and express their emotions has an impact on their performance, thereby enabling the employees to solve problems either at work or family-related.

Individual performance (IP)

Individual performance is an important notion in organisational and work psychology. According to studies, performance improves with more time spent at work and individual performance is likewise crucial. Low performance and inability to meet goals might be perceived as not only unsatisfactory but also a personal failure (Sonnentag, 2003).

Performance is a crucial but not the sole need for professional advancement and labour market success in the future. According to Van Scott et al (2000), although the exceptions are likely, employees with high performance in organisations obtain a better chance at promotion with a better career opportunity than those with low performance. In the context of the present study, individual performance will give an impact on work-life balance and there are several indicators for measuring individual performance due to changes in organisational structures and procedures as well as the innovation of technology; hence, individual work requirement is rapidly changing nowadays.

Work-life Balance (WLB)

Work-life balance has existed since the 1930s even before World War II. Based on the evidence in the W.K. Kellogg Company, reduced working hours, particularly using four six-hour shifts instead of the typical three eight-hour daily shifts) was found to boost employee productivity and morale (Loockwood, 2003). Additionally, according to Lewis et al (2007), as women's participation in the workplace grew significantly, research on working mothers and two-earner families began emerging in the 1960s. Nonetheless, the academic notion of work-life balance dates back to the 1960s when Rapoport and Rapoport (1965) investigated the agrarian society's work-family interrelationships (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1965).

The notion of "work-life balance" was initially used in the 1970s to describe the equilibrium between the professional and personal lives of individuals (Swathi & Mohapatra, 2015). According to Bird (2006), between the 1960s and the 1970s, employers viewed work-life concerns as impacting only women who strived to fulfil their job demands while raising children. However, in the 1980s, companies have increasingly begun offering child care programmes and employee assistance programmes (EAP) (Swathi & Mohapatra, 2015).

As work-life balance continues, Bird (2006) stated that the 1990s had witnessed the growing belief that work-life balance is a problem that affects everyone, including men, women, parents, non-parents, couples, and even singles. Besides, in the 1990s, the nature of work and the struggle among employees to balance work and personal responsibilities remained a central issue of work-life balance (Lambert, 1990). According to Rangreji (2010), over the past two decades, the issues work-family and work-life balance have gained substantial attention from employees, employers, academics, the media, and even politicians. Thus, according to Struges and Guest (2004), the work-life balance concept has piqued the interest of academics and practitioners alike, and it has also become a primary concern in human resource development.

As stated by Torrington et al (2008), these issues are continuing to fuel debates and discussions on work-life balance. Due to the dramatic change was observed in both labour market and demographic profiles of employees thus work-life study still continue until current day. The global competitiveness has encouraged employers to start building a healthy and supportive

working environment with the aim of enabling their employees to balance personal and work responsibilities so as to ensure that they are happier and more productive.

Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

This paper use ability model and social exchange theory in developing research framework. This study adopted the Ability Model to explain emotional intelligence and work-life balance. The notion “emotional intelligence” was first coined in 1990 by Peter Salovey and John Mayer Salovey & Mayer (1990), which has since continued to be studied in terms of the significance of its constructs. Generally, their authentic theory of emotional intelligence combines essential concepts from intelligence and emotion research. Mayer and Salovey’s (1997) emotional intelligence model highlights the cognitive elements of emotional intelligence, and emotional intelligence was further conceptualised in terms of its potential towards intellectual and emotional growth (Schutte et al., 1998). According to Weinberger (2002), the ability model offers an emotional intelligence concept that is more focused and constrained. Besides, the exclusive focus of this model is on cognitive attitudes and it considers emotional intelligence as a separate type of intelligence (Salleh, 2009).

Follow by Social Exchange Theory (SET), which highlights the understanding of social behaviour in the reciprocal action of two parties by employing a cost-analysis benefits to identify the risks and benefits to understand individual performance in the present study. This theory is one of the major theories used to explain communications and relationships between people, especially in the workplace. According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), this theory is also used by various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and social psychology. The SET asserts that people always do their best in maximising their rewards and minimising costs. Giving the analogy in economic principle, people conduct cost-benefit analysis (CBA) in their interpersonal relationships to know whether they will get back from what they have invested in the relationships (Jogulu & Wood, 2008). Wikhamn and Hall (2012) emphasised that the costs involved do not only refer to financial aspects but also socio-emotional aspects such as care, respect, and loyalty. The social exchange theory can also be related to the work context. In general, when it comes to a discussion on relationships, researchers imply the relationship between two partners that are interacting together, perhaps institutions or individuals. For instance, Yew (2011) added the concept of perceived organisational support (POS), which denotes the degree to which organisations value the efforts of their employees and takes care of their well-being.

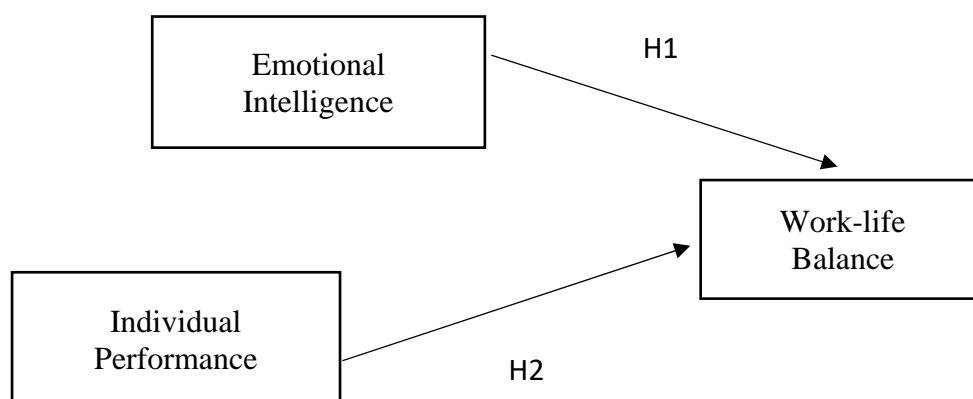


Figure 1: Theoretical framework

Based on previous research on work-life balance, many areas of discussions have been addressed; however, the outcome of the discussions was saturated by the importance of work-life balance and simultaneously discussing ways to improve work-life balance in organisations including the community. Additionally, work-family balance also gives rise to certain challenges such that this issue has brought about personal performance and emotional intelligence that may influence work-life imbalance in organisations. Work-life balance is more than just dividing time between work and non-work activities; thus, according to Kumarasamy et al (2015) it is important to achieve work-life balance by minimising work and non-work conflicts through a balance between multiple roles and tasks. Thus, quality research on the issues related to work-life balance has been met owing to the growing awareness of the impacts of today's challenging work environment. Hence, this study purposed new work-life balance model in figure 1.

Emotional Intelligence and work-life balance



Figure 2: Relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance

Emotional intelligence is one of the factors believed to influence work-life balance. It refers to the capability of perceiving emotions, assessing and producing emotions, comprehending emotions and emotional knowledge, and controlling emotions so that emotional and intellectual growth can be fostered (Mayer & Sakovey, 1997). Based on a study by Muthu et al (2015), emotional intelligence, job engagement, and organisational support had positive and significant relationships with work-life balance. Hence, a noteworthy remark is that emotional intelligence may significantly influence how work-life balance can be maintained. Employees with emotional intelligence might be capable of monitoring and handling their emotions. Besides, emotional intelligence enhances the performance of both individuals and organisations because it has a big impact on the types of jobs that employees perform and their relationships with the organisations (Rangreji, 2010). Hence, how employees feel and express their emotions has an impact on their performance, thereby enabling the employees to solve problems either at work or family-related.

H1: Emotional Intelligence is positively related to work-life balance

Individual performance and work-life balance

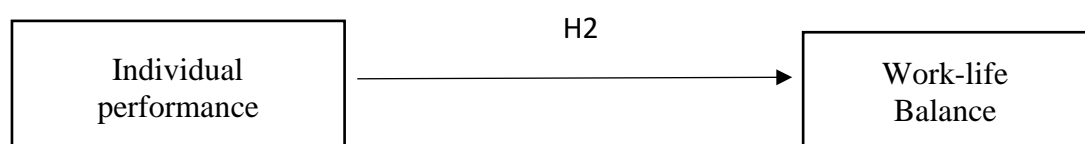


Figure 3: Relationship between individual performance and work-life balance

Individual performance is an important notion in organisational and work psychology. According to studies, performance improves with more time spent at work and individual

performance is likewise crucial. Low performance and inability to meet goals might be perceived as not only unsatisfactory but also a personal failure (Sonntag, 2003). Performance is a crucial but not the sole need for professional advancement and labour market success in the future. According to Van Scott et al. (2000), although the exceptions are likely, employees with high performance in organisations obtain a better chance at promotion with a better career opportunity than those with low performance. In the context of the present study, individual performance will give an impact on work-life balance and there are several indicators for measuring individual performance due to changes in organisational structures and procedures as well as the innovation of technology; hence, individual work requirement is rapidly changing nowadays.

H2: Individual performance is positively related to work-life balance

Discussion

This study was conducted to highlight the relationship between emotional intelligence, individual performance and work-life balance. Therefore, this study represented two hypotheses to examine the relationship between variables. This study stated that, employees with emotional intelligence might be capable of monitoring and handling their emotions in workplace and emotional intelligence may significantly influence how work-life balance can be maintained. Besides, individual performance also significantly impacts on work life balance. Individual performance is an important notion in organisational and work psychology. A good individual performance will lead individual to perform their jobs in a productive manner. Therefore, work-life balance plays important role in determine the job performance of employees by enhancing their job and personal satisfaction.

Conclusion

Several studies have examined emotional intelligence and individual performance on work-life balance. However, these studies offer more inclusive model of the influence of emotional intelligence and individual performance on work-life balance. The employee becomes an important asset in the organization in this current business situation, thus by understanding the emotional intelligence can lead to better work-life balance. Emotions are an essential part of our biological makeup that show person behaviour when entering the organization and individual performance is an ongoing process that involves measurement, evaluation, and planning, but it's also a vital step to achieving company goal. Employees and organisations both benefit from a solid work-life balance practice, which reduces the employees' stress levels and make them feel happier in the workplace and at home. Besides, work-life balance can enhance employees' quality of life and organisational effectiveness (Bataineh, 2019). As such, most employees are likely to pull away from their work when they feel dissatisfied and incapable of balancing between work and family domains. Based on a study by Shylaja and Pradas (2017), work-family life significantly influences employee performance and reduces employee turnover. Hence, the present study is conducted to examine the influence of emotional intelligence and individual performance on employees' work-life balance in Malaysian industries.

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