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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ATTITUDE TO WORK OF NON-ACADEMIC STAFF OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence has become popular in the field of work and this makes it more imperative for a staff be it academic or non-academic to have the knowledge and perhaps have the skills of emotional intelligence before he or she can discharge his or her duty effectively. This singular reason inspired the researcher to investigate how level of emotional intelligence can influence attitude of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State to work. Descriptive survey was adopted for this study. All the Non-academic staff of the tertiary institutions in Kwara State constituted population for the study. Stratified was used to select three tertiary institutions in the state and in each of the institution 50 non-academic staff were randomly selected and the total number of 150 non-academic staff were selected as respondents in this study. Two instruments were used to obtain data from the respondents; the first was questionnaire titled emotional intelligence scale and the second instrument was attitude to work scale. These instruments were adapted from Rohana, Kamaruzaman and Zanarial (2009). The instruments were tested for the reliability and the reliability score of 0.88 and 0.75 were obtained for the two instruments respectively. Chi-square statistical analysis was used to test two

hypotheses postulated for the study at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that level of emotional intelligence significantly influence the attitude to work of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State i.e. staff with high level of emotional intelligence have positive attitude to work. Also, the study revealed that working experience significantly influence level of emotional intelligence of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Based on these findings, the researcher therefore recommended that seminar and workshops should be constantly organized for non-academic staff of tertiary institutions to increase their level of emotional intelligence which will in turn develop their attitude to work and improve the productivity.

Keywords

Emotional Intelligence; Attitude to work; Working Experience

1. Introduction

Emotional Intelligence is now a popular concept in the world of work simply because its role in enhancing good interpersonal relationship cannot be overemphasized. Emotional intelligence is the ability to use emotions adaptively (Mayer et al., 2000). In today's competitive business environments, organizations are facing multifaceted challenges not only enhancing the productivity but also coping with the pressure of setting efficient and effective human resources practices in the form of hiring, training and retaining skillful employ's (Afzaal et al., 2013). To support this effective human resources policies are becoming mandatory for the success of an organization and to overcome these challenges, management of these organizations are finding new avenues of implementing effective and dynamic human resources policies. In this regard, new dimensions of organization behavior such as understanding the emotional intelligence of the employees, integration of work design characteristics, employee commitment and employee satisfaction have gained rapid prominence on the strategic roadmap of the organization ((Afzaal, et al., 2013).

Bar-on (2000) viewed emotional intelligence as a non-cognitive intelligence which defined as an array of emotion, personal and social abilities and skills that influence an individual's ability to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressures. Emotional intelligence can be described as having four branches: the ability to accurately perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion into thought, understanding emotion, and regulate emotions

in the self and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Perceiving emotion is the ability to identify emotion in the self and others. Facilitating emotion is the ability to use information that explains felt emotions in order to prioritize and direct thinking. Understanding emotion is the ability to understand relationship among emotions and how emotions transition from one state to another. Regulating, or managing emotion is the ability to regulate emotion in oneself and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

These four branches of are arranged in order from more basic psychological processes to more complex psychological process (Mary & Sharon, 2013). For example, the lowest level branches involve the relatively simple task of recognizing and expressing emotion. On the contrary, the highest level branch involves the conscious regulation of emotions to enhance emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Goleman (1998) assessed the link between emotional intelligence and leadership. Goldman focused on the personal capabilities of the leaders that appeared to drive outstanding performance within organizations. Personal capabilities were clustered in three categories: technical skills, such as accounting and engineering; cognitive skills like analytical reasoning; and competencies demonstrating emotional intelligence such as the ability to work with others and effectiveness in leading changes. The result showed that emotional intelligence proved to be twice as important as technical skills and cognitive abilities for leadership jobs at all levels of an organization. Goldman (1998) then listed five components of emotional intelligence that an effective worker exhibits: Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Research conducted on emotions in the workplace suggested that emotions may drive productivity gains, innovations, and accomplishments of individuals, teams and organization (Cooper, 1997). Individuals with high emotional intelligence are said to be more effective in working place, leading, managing others and fostering positive attitudes amongst employees (George, 2000).

Badwell (2003) examined relationship between emotional intelligence and personality and job performance and found several of the emotional intelligence subscales have a significant relationship with job performance after controlling personality feature anxiety. Eskandarpour and Amiri (2012) also studied the relationship between various dimensions of emotional intelligence and effectiveness of forty-four university managers and noticed a significant difference between different dimensions of emotional intelligence and their effectiveness.

In another study conducted by Goldman (1998), it was affirmed that high emotional awareness has been considered as an important trait for workplace setting. Dong and Howard (2006) found that emotionally intelligent behavior positively affects job satisfaction. In the educational setting, Indoo and Ajeya (2012) found that among faculty members in India a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational stress. Jelondar and Good are (2012) studied the teachers' emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in Iran and confirmed the strong correlation that existed between two variables. Wright and Crapanzano (2000) linked the emotional intelligence with workplace setting. Sy, Tramm and O'Hare (2006) asserted that individuals with high emotional intelligence demonstrated higher measures of job satisfaction.

2. Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study because it afforded a researcher an opportunity to administer questionnaire on the selected samples to examine their level of emotional intelligence and the performance at work. The entire non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State constituted population for this study while the target population was the non-academic staff of the selected tertiary institutions. To select the institutions that participated in this study, the researcher first of all stratified the tertiary institutions in Kwara State into three senatorial districts (Kwara central, Kwara North and Kwara South). In each district, one tertiary institution was randomly selected using simple random sampling technique. The following schools were selected (Kwara Central, Kwara state college of education, Ilorin; Kwara North, Kwara State College of Education Technical, Lafiagi; Kwara South, Offa Polytechnic, Offa). To select the respondents, Systematic sampling technique was used to select Fifty (50) non-academic staff in each school and the total numbers of One hundred and Fifty non-academic staff were selected across the three selected schools.

Two instruments were used to obtain data from the respondents, the first was questionnaire adapted from Rohana et al., (2009) in the study titled "Emotional Intelligence of Malaysian Academia towards Work Performance". The instrument contains 35 items and all the items were retained and used but the researcher reduced the rating from 7 to 4 likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree and Disagree. Also, demographic data of the respondents were introduced to measure the working experience of the non-academic staff.

The second instrument is attitude to work scale also adapted from Rohana, Kamaruzaman and Zanarial. The instrument was used to measure non-academic staff performance at work. The instrument contains 11 items but was increased to 25 items by the researcher. These instruments were used to obtain data from respondents on the level of emotional intelligence and the work performance of the non-academic staff. The instruments were tested for the reliability and the reliability score of 0.88 and 0.75 were obtained for the two instruments respectively.

2.1 Hypotheses

H01: Level of emotional intelligence cannot significantly influence the attitude to work of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State

H02: Working experience cannot significantly influence the level of emotional intelligence of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State

2.2 Findings

Table 1: Summary of χ^2 result showing the influence of level of emotional intelligence on attitude to work

		Attitude to Work		Total	Sig	
		Low	High			
Level of Emotional Intelligence	Low	Count	75	27	102	0.000
		Expected	62.6	39.4	102.0	
	High	Count	17	31	48	
		Expected	29.4	18.6	48.0	
Total	Count	92	58	150		
	Expected	92.0	58.0	150.0		
	Count					

$\chi^2 = 19.99$
P=0.000

Table 1 revealed that level of emotional intelligence significantly influenced attitude to work $\chi^2 (1) = 19.99, P=0.000$. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that the level of emotional intelligence cannot significantly influence the attitude to work of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State is hereby rejected.

Table 2: Summary of χ^2 result showing the influence of working experience on the level of emotional intelligence

			EXPERIENCE			Total	Sig.
			0-10YEARS	11-20YEARS	21 AND ABOVE		
LEVELOF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	Low	Count	40	38	18	96	
		Expected	35.8	35.8	24.3	96.0	
	High	Count	16	18	20	54	
		Expected	20.2	20.2	13.7	54.0	
	Total	Count	56	56	38	150	
		Expected	56.0	56.0	38.0	150.0	
		Count					

$\chi^2=6.26$
P=0.04

Table 2 revealed that working experience significantly influenced the level of emotional intelligence $\chi^2 (2) =6.26, P=0.04$. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that working experience cannot significantly influence the level of emotional intelligence of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State is hereby rejected. Hence, working experience significantly influence level of emotional intelligence of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Table 2 also shows that the increase in the year of working experience leads to the increase in emotional intelligence.

3. Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that level of emotional intelligence influence the staff attitude to work positively. The finding of the study was in consonant with the finding of Rohana et al., (2009) which stated that emotional intelligence as a factor which has a potential to contribute to more positive to work of the staff. Also, the finding of this study supported the position of Bar-on et al., (2000) who viewed emotional intelligence as the ability to use emotional intelligence as a non-cognitive intelligence which is defined as an array of emotion, personal and social abilities and skills that influence an individual's ability to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressure.

Furthermore, the finding of the study revealed that working experience of the staff significantly influenced the emotional intelligence. The finding of this study supported the finding of George (2000) who posited that individuals with high emotional intelligence are said to be more effective at leading and managing others and fostering positive attitudes amongst employees.

Similarly, the finding of the study revealed that working experience of the staff significantly influenced the level of emotional intelligence, that is staff who have been working for 21 years and above are more emotional intelligent than those ones that have working for less than 20 years. The researcher found out that experience on the job increase the level of emotional intelligence of these staff. The finding of the study supports the study of Carmeli (2003) who stated that the workers who have stayed on job for many years are more emotional intelligence than the workers who are just joining. He stated further that day to day activities on the job increase their level of emotional intelligence.

3.1 Recommendation/Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

Seminar and workshop should be organized for staff of tertiary institutions on emotional intelligence so as improve the level of their emotional intelligence which will in turn improve their level of productivity at work and attitude to work.

During the recruitment of new staff, prospective workers should be tested on emotional intelligence scale to know their level of emotional intelligence before given the job. This will help the management to know their emotional intelligence level at point of entry so as to determine whether they need training in this area.

The importance of emotional intelligence cannot be overemphasized in the world of work because it improves the staff productivity and this concept needs to be given priority when the employer of lab our is trying to employ people to work for them.

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