A study of the relationship between EQ and personality among lecturers at a research university

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Abstract

The main objective of this research is to determine the relationship of EQ and personality traits of lecturers who are promoted as administrators of a research university in Malaysia, particularly at the National University of Malaysia. The relationship between EQ and each of the personality traits of psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism and lie are determined. Using a sample of 120 lecturers, data were collected using Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised Short-Version (EPQR-S) (1985), and Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale. The finding by using the Pearson correlation method indicates that personality trait such as Extraversion (r=.271, p<.05), and Lie (r=.239, p<.05) are positively correlated with overall emotional intelligence among lecturers’ administrators. While personality trait Neuroticism (r = -.348, p<.05) indicates that there is a negative relationship with overall emotional intelligence. The result suggests that there is relationship between personality traits and the overall emotional intelligence.

Keywords: Personality, EQ, lectures’administrators, research university.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, EQ is relevance in an organization due to various challenges in this complexity of the environment, this phenomena encourages researchers in this related field. As a respond to this issue this research has been done and thus this paper is focusing on the relationship between EQ and personality.

1.1. Emotional intelligence (EQ)

The concept of emotional intelligence was primarily developed by Salovey and Mayer (1990), but it gained popularity by the studies of Goleman (1995, 1998). Salovey and Mayer (1990) define emotional intelligence as “the ability of individual to understand his own and others’ emotions and feelings, to distinguish between them and to use this knowledge in his decision making process and actions”. According to Rapisarda (2002), Salovey and Mayer’s (1990) emotional intelligence, which is rooted from social intelligence, could be applied to emotional problems in social situations; therefore it enables to improve the social intelligence Jordan et al. (2002) different from other popular emotional intelligence approaches, proposed by Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2000), focuses on
the emotional aspect of perception. In other words it focuses on the relation of intelligence both with emotion and cognition.

Goleman (1998), who popularized the term emotional intelligence, builds emotional intelligence upon the factors of motivation and empathy. He also emphasized that emotional intelligence is an important factor in determining personal success as a student, teacher, parent and manager. For Jordan et al. (2002) these factors clearly go beyond Mayer and Salovey’s definition of emotional intelligence. Goleman and his colleagues (2006) defined emotional intelligence efficiency in four factors; “self-awareness”, “self-management”, “social awareness” and “social skills”. Self-awareness is defined as “to know what we feel, to be able to evaluate our skills in a realistic way and to have self-confidence”, self-management is defined as “to manage our feelings in a way that it would ease our job and to conserve our positive mood for completing our object”, social-awareness is defined as “behave empathic towards other people, to be able to accept their point of views and to adapt to these various kinds of people”, lastly social skills is defined as “to be able to regulation the feelings in relationships and to understand the network correctly, to interact properly” (2006, 2002). According to Geher (2001) emotional intelligence is another type of intelligence, is conceptualized as the individual’s awareness of his or her own feelings and his interpretation of others’ feelings correctly and is assessed as another type of social intelligence.

Emotional Intelligent showed significant correlations with several indicators of quality social interaction (Lopes, 2003). EQ played an important factor in the success of interpersonal interaction in a work context (Mayer, 2003). Since EQ considers interpersonal interactions and adaptations of many individual differences, EQ aptitude will become essential (Frye et al., 2006). Abraham (1999) found that EQ encouraged a state of flow, where peak performance is achieved and human potential stretched. Focusing on the development of this competence within an organization can thus be hugely advantageous. Abraham (1999) states that emotional intelligence is to be directly related to and powerful predictor of organizational commitment. To date, many organizations and companies placed a very important criterion for selection of their employee. One the tools used is assessment on EQ.

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between EQ and personality trait. Using correlational analysis

1.2. Personality

Personality is the particular combination of emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral response patterns of an individual. Different personality theorists present their own definitions of the word based on their theoretical positions. Psychologists such as Freud and Erickson have attempted to come up with personality theories. According to Saville and Holdsworth (1999) personality refers to a person’s typical or preferred way of behaving, thinking and feeling. According to Allport (1961) personality is a dynamic organization traits that determine how a person adjust himself uniquely to those environment. A standard definition of personality is the characteristics that make up a person's overall attitude. In general, personality is the way you are judged and remembered. Having an ideal personality is revered by those in society. Characteristics of personality include mood, attitude, dominance, sensitivity, aggression and other various traits that describe your actions or emotions. These characteristics change from time to time depending on your personality. If your personality is perceived as negative, ask others around you what makes them perceive it that way.

1.3. Relationship between personality and emotional intelligence

A study by Bibinaz (2011) examined the relationship between personality dimensions and emotional intelligent of 443 students (237 female, 206 males). The finding showed that that EI could positively and negatively predicted by extraversion and neuroticism, respectively. The finding supported the earlier research done by Matchimanon (2011). He did a study on 304 employees and the result showed that overall emotional intelligence was significantly related with personality dimension.

Another study done by Grehan (2011) to explore the relationship of personality traits and emotional intelligent among 63 psychology students, the result showed that there is relationship between personality trait
conscientiousness and EI were significantly correlated with the internship rating. Earlier study by Brackett & Mayer (2003) also found that there is significant correlation between EQ and personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness). There was also a study being done to examine the relationship between Eq and job performance. The finding indicated that those with higher EQ scores significantly lower stress and distress (Slaski and catwright, in Dulewicz, 2003).

2. Methodology

Participants; A total of 120 participants of lecturers who are appointed as administrators are involved in this research. The mean age of the sample is 47 years old. Some of these lecturers are appointed as the dean or the assistance dean of the faculty and also to hold the various administrative posts in the university.

2.1. Measurement; Eysenck Personality Questionnaire – Revised short version (EPQ-RS)

The Eysenck Personality questionnaire is a questionnaire to assess the personality types. It comprises 48 items and consists of three measures corresponding to the three personality traits such as extroversion, neuroticism, psychoticism and a lie scale (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1992). This is a self-reported questionnaire. Each question has a binary response, ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

2.2. Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002)

The WLEIS was designed as a short measure of EI for use in organizational research. It comprises 16 items, responded to on a 7-point Likert scale and measuring four dimensions: “self-emotion appraisal”, “emotion appraisal of others”, “use of emotion”, and “regulation of emotion”. Wong and Law (2002) report good internal consistency reliabilities for their measure. In terms of validity, they present data showing that scores on the WLEIS are related to job performance and job satisfaction.

2.3. Procedure

The entire data collection process were completed within three months. Initially the questionnaire were given to the respective respondent and they were given a week to complete the questionnaires.

3. Findings

Table 1. The number and percentage of respondent by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent %</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45.80</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>54.16</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
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Table 1 presents the number and percentage of the male and female respondents. Based on the table 1 the total number of respondents is 120, inclusive 65 (54.16%) female respondents and 55 (45.8%) male respondents.

Table 2. Pearson correlation between emotional intelligence (EQ) and personality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Personality</th>
<th>Emotional Intelligence</th>
<th>Dimension of Personality</th>
<th>Emotional Intelligence</th>
<th>Dimension of Personality</th>
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The result analysis in table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between extraversion ($r=.271, p<.01$), neuroticism ($r= -.348, p<.01$), lie ($r=.239, p<.01$) and emotional intelligent (EQ), but the result shows that there is no relationship between psychoticism and EQ.

The significant relationship between EQ and personality trait such as extraversion shows that the higher the respondent’s level of emotional intelligence the more extraverted the person is. In this case we can say that a person with high emotional intelligence are tough minded, always active in their organization, very sociable among their colleagues, outward oriented and emotionally stable. The finding supported by other researchers such as Bibinaz Ghiabi (2011), Mcree (2000), Fabio (2008). Extravert individual with high emotional intelligence is considered to involve emotional empathy, can control over emotion and able to response to various life situations such as stress and difficult situations.

The result also shows that there is a negative relationship between emotional intelligent and trait personality of neuroticism, which indicate the higher the level of emotional intelligence of the respondent the lower the trait of neuroticism. The finding indicates that a person with high emotional intelligence can manage their stress, anxiety and their mood. This finding supports earlier research by Sato (2005). He stated that individuals high in neuroticism tend to have a highly reactive autonomic nervous system, making them emotionally unstable. In contrast, the autonomic nervous system of individuals who are low in neuroticism are not very reactive, and they are therefore more emotionally stable (Eysenck, 1990).

4. Conclusion

The finding of this study shows that there is relationship between EQ and trait of personality. The result indicates that a good administrator should have not only EQ but also desirable personality trait.

References