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PROMOTING WORK LIFE BALANCE AMONG HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTION EMPLOYEES: DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE MATTER?

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Abstract

Maintaining a healthy balance between work and non-work demand is not an easy job. Fisher (1999) stated that work life balance can be attained when a person experiences more enhancement and less conflict with regard to his work and non-work issues. This study aims to examine work life balance among employees of a Higher Learning Institution (HLI). 200 respondents participated in the present study. Work Life Balance measured by work life balance scale developed by Fisher (1999). While emotional Intelligence is measured by Wong and Law's Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) 2002. Result indicated that, there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and work life balance with $r(0.145) p < 0.05$. Further analysis indicated that, there are no variance between work life balance and emotional intelligence across different age, tenure and job type. It is also found that, the sub scale for use of emotion shows highest correlation with work life balance. Finding in the present study indicated that HLI leader and management should focus on enhancing emotional intelligence among the employees to achieve a work life balance. Result in the present study can be used to

design intervention on emotional intelligent as well as the framework on maintaining work life balance among HLI employees.

Keywords

Work Life Balance, Emotional Intelligence, Higher Learning Institution

1. Introduction

A number of past research has given attention to the issues of maintaining a healthy balance between work and non-work life. The research has been done in several settings including, private and government institution, health care industry, banking industry as well as higher learning institution (Sagaya& Vasumathi, 2017; Prasad& Shylaja, 2017). Work life balance become popular among human resource practitioner and researcher because more women entering the labor market (Malika; 2005) (, the existence of dual couple family, and desire to achieve a better quality of life (Greenhaus, 2003; Jalilvand, 2000)). It is not easy to achieved well balance work and non-work life (Burley, 1995 Cohen; & Blanchi, ,1999)). Past studies found that failure in maintaining a healthy work life balance may lead to organizational problems such as turn over intention, low performance and low job satisfaction as well as low organizational commitment (Greenhaus & Powell 2006). Not only that, it is also lead into poor mental health, unhappy due to more conflict in life than enhancement in various work and non-work-related matter (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Rantanen; 2008).

Greenhaus et al (2003) stated that, Work Life Balance (WLB) is the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in work role and family role. Fisher, Bulger and Smith (2009) define work-life balance in terms of work interfering personal life, personal life interfering work, work enhancing personal life and personal life enhancing work. According to this theory, the more enhancement that individual experience between work and non-work life the happier the individual will be.

Research on work life balance was taken at the individual level as well as the organization level. At the organization level, the family friendly policies, flexible work hours were discussed. While at the individual level, coping mechanism, emotional aspect as well as personality aspect to gain a well-balanced life was discussed.

Burchielli, Bartram and Thanacoody, R. (2008), examine the WLB in greedy organization. Interview was doe to women manager in banking industry. Result of qualitative analysis indicated that, in greedy organization, WLB is very difficult to attained, woman employees also reported that, they don't have WLB.

Past study has shown that, emotional intelligence (EI) has been recognized as one of the important factor that lead to individual success (Jakupov et al 2014). EI defined as the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor individual and other people feelings and emotions (Meyer & Salovey). Therefore, EI can be categorized into four dimensions including ability to know one-self emotions, ability to know other people emotion, ability to regulate emotion and ability to used emotion. Wong and Law (2002) develop a scale based on four subscale namely; self- emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisals, regulation of emotion and use of emotion. Goleman (1995) also stated that EI involves abilities that can be categorized into self-awareness, empathy, managing emotions, self-motivation and handling relationship with others.

Anary (2012) and Jyothi and Sree (2012) as well as Sagaya and Vasumathi (2017) found that EI has significant relationship with work life balance. In which the better individual EI the more WLB that individual has in their life. As academician, is not easy for them to balance the work and non- work life. Although academician work seems more flexible that other occupation, however, academician now-days are responsible to do not only teaching but also doing research and serving the community with their expertise. Further, many higher learning institutions starting the non- regular class that design for student who also work. This class usually conducted after working hour or on Saturday. This type of class enforces employees of certain higher learning institution to work on the weekend as well as after office hour. This may lead to problems related to WLB issues.

There is still lack of study examine the subscale of emotional intelligence with the WLB. Therefor the present study, examine the relationship between WLB and EI among academician in one of the private University in Indonesia.

Research Question

1. What are is the relationship between work life balance and emotional intelligence?
2. Is there significant different between work life and emotional intelligence across different age, tenure and job type.

Research objective

1. To examine the relationship between work life balance and emotional intelligence
2. To determine the different between work life and emotional intelligence across different age, tenure and job type.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Work life balance and emotional intelligence

Jyothi and Sree (2012) assessing work life balance from emotional intelligence and role efficacy of 68 career women in India. The results show that there is significant impact of factor affecting role efficacy on emotional intelligence.

Prasad and Shylaja (2017) conducted study on the relationship between EI and WLB among 55 employees of one manufacturing firm in India. EI was measure using scale developed based on Goleman (1995). Result shows that there is significant relationship between EI and WLB. The better individual in managing their emotion, show emphatic the more likely that they will have a better WLB.

Sagaya and Vasumati (2017) examine the impact of EI on WLB among faculty members performance in the private universities at India. Result indicated that there is variance between age and response towards work and the amount of time spent at work. It also revealed that the faculty members of the private universities suffered more stress related disease. This study also found that there is no variance between gender and EI among faculty members, further, there is negative correlation between age and stress related disease in one private university in compare to other university.

Lenaghan, Buda And Eisner (2007), examined the role of emotional intelligence with work and family balance. This study suggests that, to maintain a well balance life, employees need to have good emotional intelligence.

2.2 Hypothesis

H1: there is significant relationship between work life balance and emotional intelligence

H2: there is significant difference between work life and emotional intelligence across different age, tenure and job type.

3. Method

200 employees of one private higher learning institution were participated in this study. Two measures were used to collect data; 24 items from work life balance scale developed by Fisher et al (2009) was used to measure WLB. 16 items from WLEIS (2002) was used to examine emotional intelligence. Both scale are reliable with Cronbach alpha greater than 0.7. Data was analyses using the Statistical Package for Social Science. Descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation and compare mean analysis were used to test the hypothesis.

4. Findings

There are 200 respondents participated in the present study. It is consist of 107 females employees and 93 males employees. 183 of the respondents are non-academic staff while only 17 respondents from the academicians. 62.5% of the respondents has been working for one to three years at the university. 18 % has been working for 4-6 years, 8 % has been working for 7-9 years and 9 % has been working for 10-12 years.

Descriptive analysis found that, in the average, the employees of this university show moderately high EI with M (66.34) from the maximum score 85 with SD (6.9)3. Result also show that, these employees show moderately low work life balance with M (66.91) from the maximum score of 120 with SD (14.94).

The highest mean score is for the item of ability to used emotion as self-motivation to achieve personal goal with M (4.19); SD (0.68). This item belongs to the dimension of used of emotion. While the lowest mean score is for the item of ability to control anger with M (3.71); SD (0.74).

With regard to WLB item, the highest mean score is for the item of non- work life responsibility did not interfere with work responsibility with M (3.46); SD (1.00). While the lowest mean score is for the item of the effective things that individual does at work seems to be effective at home with M (2.05); SD (0.61).

5. Discussion

Result of descriptive reflected that EI has used by the respondent to motivate themselves. However, most of the respondent still have problem in managing their anger and EI not yet fully used to regulate the emotion. Regulating emotion including is necessary, in respond to ones emotion as well other people emotion. By knowing how to regulate emotions, individual can have a better reaction toward certain stimulus and can think clearly that produce reasonable and more appropriate behavior. Therefore it is important to exercise emotion regulation, because it is also lead to more productive behavior and help individual to gain success in their life (Jakupov et al, 2014).

With regard to work life balance score, most of the respondent perceived themselves as the professional worker who does not want the personal life interfere their performance at work. However, most of respondent also did not agree that, if they do things effectively at work, does

not solely mean that they can do things effectively at home. This score indicated that, work and non-work responsibilities may need different approach in solving the problem.

Result of hypothesis one indicated that, there is significant relationship between EI and WLB. This result showed that, the higher individual score on EI the higher the score on the WLB. Hypothesis one was supported. This finding in line with previous study done by Prasad and Shylaja (2017), who stated that, Emotional Intelligence has significant effect on persons work life and contributes significantly towards maintaining a healthy balance in professional and personal life. EI will lead to a better mental health and resilience in doing the best in individual life (Irfan & Dearly, 2015)

This finding shows that, if employees of higher learning institution has ability to recognize their own emotion as well as other people emotion and has ability to regulate emotion and used that emotion for personal achievement, they will have a better balance between work and now-work life. This is because EI and its dimension help a person to build adaptive response to work life demand. In which they can used the emotion as self-motivation, they also can notice their own emotion so that, individual can prevent the negative emotion destroy their mood and happiness. In the context of higher learning institution, it is suggested that, management can promote the workshop on enhancing EI and its subscale to enhance employees work life balance which letter on can lead to a better performance at work.

Further analysis on the dimension of EI namely; ability to know oneself emotion, ability to know other people emotion, ability to regulate emotion and ability to used emotion for self-motivation. bivariate correlation analysis shows that, there is significant relationship between all the dimensions of EI with WLB except for the dimension of ability to know other people emotion. The highest correlation is between the ability to use emotion with WLB, $r (0.226)$, $p < 0.01$. The coefficient correlation between the ability to regulate emotion with WLB is $r (0.140)$, $p < 0.05$. The coefficient correlation between the ability to know one-self emotion with WLB is $r (0.152)$, $p < 0.05$. The coefficient correlation between the ability to know other people emotion is $r (-0.08)$, $p > 0.05$. This finding show that, the dominant aspect of EI that already implement by respondent is the used of emotion, in which individual used to encourage themselves to achieve their goal by using their emotion. This help individual to stay motivated and have energy to deal with difficulty and the demand or work life. However, EI not fully used by the respondent to regulate the emotion and help them to reduce anger. Therefore, several workshop

and simulation exercise to regulate emotion by enhancing emotional intelligence is still needed in this higher learning institution.

The result for hypothesis two, there is no significant different in term of EI and WLB across different age, tenure and job type namely academic and non-academic staff. Hypothesis two was not supported. This finding in line with

Further analysis found that, there is significant negative correlation between the dimension of EI namely ability to know other people emotion with age. Which mean, the older the individual the less likely their ability to know others people emotion. In addition, this dimension also negatively correlates with WLB. In which the better individual in recognizing others people emotion, the less likely that individual have a good WLB.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, emotional intelligence shows significant relationship with work life balance. In addition, the used emotion as subscale of emotional intelligence is considered as the strongest correlation with work life balance. There is no significant different in term of emotional intelligence and work life balance across different gender, age and tenure. However, significant negative correlation does exist between age and the dimension of others emotional appraisal. The result in the present study, suggest that, enhancing individual ability to recognize ones' emotion as well others emotion, to regulate and used the emotion can promote a better work life balance among their employees. Further, more activities need to be done to enhance emotional intelligence especially in term of the ability to regulate emotion. For the future research, it is suggested that the intervening variable including the moderating roles of certain variables like gender also can be tested. The limitation in the present study is that, the used of single method in collecting data, further deep interview can be done to gain a better information with regard to how work life balance is related with emotional intelligence. The mixed method can be a better study to give the value added study from research conducted by Burchielli, Bartram and Thanacoody, R. (2008), who conducted interview with senior woman manager in Australia to gain deep information about WLB.

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