



RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPROVING THE EQ LEVEL OF STUDENTS THROUGH MENTORING - A BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

The importance of EQ has been rising consistently over recent few years. With the increase in intolerance among the people both personal and professional arenas have turned into a battlefield with bloodshed creating a red ocean. People firstly fail to understand their emotions and even if they do they fail in managing their emotions. It is also a role of education that should equip the students with the tools to manage their emotions. A concrete mentoring process supports the students to effectively understand as well as manage their emotions. Hence leading to the reduction in the gap and increasing the tolerance level. When an education institution produces students with high EQ it invariably contributes towards the better performance and organisational growth. The institution becomes the player in Blue Ocean which is a win-win situation for all. This paper first explores the level of the emotional intelligence possessed by the students. It then proves that the students are not able to manage their emotions. Further the work suggests how mentoring can interfere and facilitate the transformation in the students.

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INTRODUCTION

Mentoring is a relationship which is a two-way learning and sharing experience, based on acknowledgement of capabilities, competencies, emotional connectivity and investment in each other. The mentoring activity provides psychosocial and career functions to the mentee (Kram, 1985). Mentoring relationships in organizations have received considerable recognition as a means for enhancing the career growth and personal development of the individual. Mentoring is a supportive learning relationship between a caring individual who shares knowledge, experience and wisdom with another individual who is ready and willing to benefit from this exchange, to enrich their professional journey (Suzanne Faure). Mentoring is a protected relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained (Audrey Collins). It is a partnership between two people built on trust. It is a process in which the mentor offers ongoing support & developmental opportunities to the mentee, the mentor offers guidance, counseling and support in the form of pragmatic and objective assistance. Both share a common purpose of developing a strong two-way

learning relationship. The mentors are those people, who in their own ways, have been torch bearers in times of darkness. Not everybody is a mentor, but anybody can become one, provided one has the following qualities like:

- Right Orientation
- Right Attitude
- Clarity of Values
- Clarity of direction
- Confidence in self
- Clear and Competent Articulation
- Ability to empathize
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Feeling secure about oneself.

The mentoring process often begins with a simple contact where a mentor and the prospective mentee meet for the first time. This meeting may be formal or casual. The contact leads to the next stage of mentoring process viz., exploration. This is a continuous process of seeking mutuality and compatibility in a relationship. The next essential step that comes is the mutually accepted protocol in the relationship. The next step is to identify goals and objectives after which the approach towards these objectives is planned. Accordingly the appropriate strategies are worked out. Nevertheless these

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strategies are put to work and continuously monitored and reviewed. The final step is to terminate the process and move ahead. The entire process of mentoring becomes most relevant in the context of facilitating the students to enhance their Emotional Quotient (EQ) which is the ability to sense, understand and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions for higher levels of collaboration and productivity.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been defined as “ the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in self and others “(Mayer and Salovey, 1997). The concept of EI became popular due to the work of Goleman (1995). EI can be understood as a personality trait of an employee or as a mental ability of an employee. Goleman (1995) viewed EI as consisting of 5 dimensions –self awareness, self regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills which are important attributes of personality traits. Further these five personality traits are categorized into 25 different emotional competencies. According to Bar- On (1997), “One’s ability to succeed in coping with environmental pressure is influenced by non cognitive capabilities, competencies and skills,” and thus developed the Bar-On (1997) Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) based on intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general mood.

Historically, professionals and academicians were always keen to find ways and means of predicting a person’s potential. For a long time Intelligence Quotient or IQ was the only tool available. It became extremely popular when US Army used it extensively for its recruitment drive during World war I. Research however, indicated that IQ was not a very reliable indicator of an individual’s potential.

Harvard University psychologist Howard Gardener questioned its validity and in apath breaking book “Frames of mind” brought about a concept of multiple intelligence. John Mayer and Peter Slovey worked extensively on what was the termed as intra personnel intelligence and evolved the concept of Emotional Intelligence, which was popularized by Daniel Goleman after he published his book with the same title in 1995.

Emotional Intelligence is thus the ability to design one’s emotions or emotional response in such a way that it enhances ones energy and improves individual and team effectiveness.

Domains of EI

Daniel Goleman described his model of emotional intelligence by referring to four domains of EI viz., Self awareness, Self Management, Social Awareness and relationship Management.

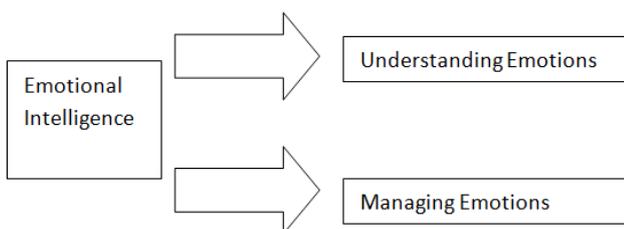


Table 1 A: Table showing the domains of Emotional Quotient

	Perception (what I Know)	Action (What I do)	Process (How I do)
Understanding Emotions	Self Awareness	Self Control	Self Confidence
Managing Emotions	Social Competence	Empathy	Motivation

Objectives

- To identify the level of Emotional Intelligence among management students
- To categorise the level of Emotional Intelligence into understanding the emotions and managing their emotions.
- To understand and explore methods and approaches for enhanced emotional quotient
- To suggest various interventions through mentoring for effective transition from understanding of emotions to Managing the emotions.

Blue Ocean Strategy in education

Blue Ocean Strategy was developed by W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne. They observed that companies tend to engage in head-to-head competition in search of sustained profitable growth. Yet in today’s overcrowded industries competing head-on results in nothing but a bloody red ocean of rivals fighting over a shrinking profit pool. Lasting success increasingly comes, not from battling competitors, but from creating blue oceans of untapped new market spaces ripe for growth. Blue Ocean Strategy challenges everything you thought you knew about strategic success and provides a systematic approach to making the competition irrelevant. Creating blue oceans builds brands. So powerful is blue ocean strategy, in fact, that a blue ocean strategic move can create brand equity that lasts for decades. Although it is intrinsically a business concept for the marketplace, the Blue Ocean Strategy holds apt relevance for the education sector. The educators can embrace strategic innovative thinking in their institutional ecosystems and management by applying the logic of the Blue Ocean Strategy. An educational institution is a ‘corporate entity’ in a ‘red ocean’ of imperatives that require solution-driven action such as demand exceeding supply leading to too many students in a class, real or imagined overwhelming workload encountered by teachers and pedagogical issues of learning and teaching mismatch.

Educators can address those issues from a ‘blue ocean’ perspective by initiating value innovations that offer new alternative approaches, practices or services to make their schools dynamic, vibrant and capable of seizing transformative opportunities in the ocean of society. Educators can apply the core principles of the Blue Ocean Strategy to various facets of school operations such as pedagogy, student management, protégé mentoring, extracurricular activities and in-service training for teachers.

Methodology

The empirical study has been carried out taking the sample size as 100 MBA students. A standardized questionnaire has been

administered to evaluate the various components of emotional quotient. These have been categorized under 3 major groups viz., Perception, Action and Process. This questionnaire helps in identifying the students' ability to understand their emotions and subsequently manage their emotions effectively.

Hypothesis

Ho: Management students are not able to understand and manage their emotions effectively.

H1: Management students are able to understand and manage their emotions effectively.

Table 1. Table showing the ability of the MBA students in understanding their emotions and managing theme effectively in terms of perception, action and Process

	Perception	%	Action	%	Process	%	Overall Total	Overall %
Understanding the emotions	Self-Awareness	87	Self-Control	86	Self Confidence	89	262	84
Managing the emotions	Social Competency	13	Empathy	14	Motivation	11	49	16%
Total	100		100		100		311	

Table 2. Table showing the ability of the MBA students to apply their self-awareness into social competency

	Perception	Percentage
Understanding the emotions	Self Awareness	87
		87%
Managing the emotions	Social Competency	13
		13%
Total	100	

Table 3. Table showing the ability of the MBA students to apply their self-control into empathy

	Action	Percentage
Understanding the emotions	Self Control	86
		86%
Managing the emotions	Empathy	14
		14%
Total	100	

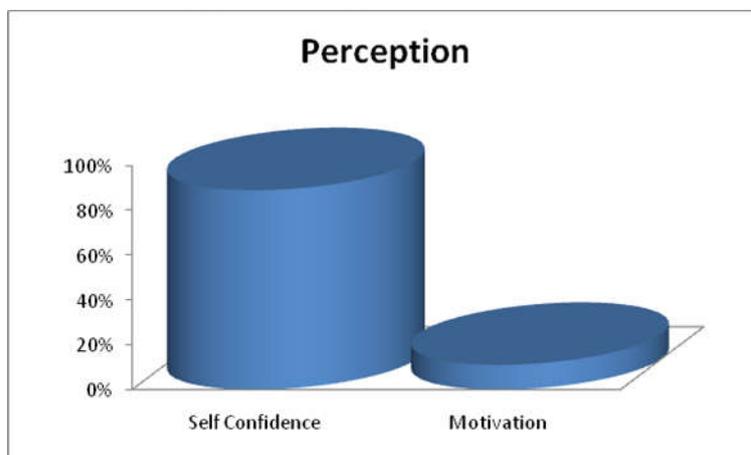


Table 3. Table showing the ability of the MBA students to apply their self-confidence into motivation

	Process	Percentage
Understanding the emotions	Self Confidence	89%
	89	
Managing the emotions	Motivation	11%
	11	
Total	100	



Data Analysis

Applying chi square test :

$$X^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$$

$$= 0.2546$$

At 5% level of significance, for 2 df, $X^2_{tab} = 7.378$

Since $X^2_{cal} < X^2_{tab}$, we accept H_0 , i.e Management students are not able to understand and manage their emotions.

Findings

1.Perception

It can be observed from the above chart and table that most of the students are aware of their emotions but they are not able to transform it into social competency.

2.Action

The analysis of the above data collected proves that majority of the students can have control on their emotions most of the time. But they are not able to transform themselves into empathetic beings so as to understand and control others emotions.

3.Process

The deduction from the above is that almost all the students possess self-confidence but they fail to manage others by motivating their confidence. Thus from the above findings it can be concluded that majority of the student respondents are able to understand their own emotions but are not able to transform and manage others emotions. This is the gap created in their emotional quotient level.

Role of mentors in effective EQ management of the student

Mentors have a vital role in the emotional development of their protégé. Mentors can help their protégé learn how to express their feelings through instructing, modelling, and guiding them in applying the skills of emotional management. As a mentor, helping the protégés with their feelings can both help them feel better and reduce behaviour problems. Students who are able to manage their emotions often experience more positive feedback from others and are more successful in everyday life.

What should mentors include?

- Self-awareness is fundamental to emotional management. The mentors can attend to your protégé's emotional needs more effectively when they are in good psychological health themselves.
- Mentors need to observe their protégé's behavior and really listen to them. Restating the expressed words can also benefit.
- A lot of encouragement should be given to the protégé to express his/her feelings verbally.
- The mentors have to develop sensitivity to both verbal and non-verbal cues of their protégé's such as facial expression, gesture and tone of voice.
- They should openly accept their protégé's feelings, including negative emotions.
- The very essential task of the mentor is to support their protege when he/she is frustrated and distressed.
- Mentors can teach their protégé to understand and express emotions better by discussing feelings related to daily events, demonstrating and modeling the expression of feelings.
- They could also encourage their protégé to take others' perspectives and help them understand others' thoughts and feelings.
- Any mentor by default has to be empathetic to their protégé's feelings.
- The mentor should always avoid being judgmental and critical and also abstain from giving advice prematurely.
- The mentor has to guide his/her protégé to evaluate their own problem-solving strategies, identify problems associated with inappropriate strategies such as acting out through defiance, aggression, or emotional outbursts.
- Encourage your child to utilize effective problem solving strategies. Try to recognize the problem and to plan a course of action to solve the problem.
- Generate ideas to solve the problem, think ahead about the consequences of the solutions and choose the best plan of action.
- Encourage your child to evaluate whether the plan is effective and to think of alternative ways to solve a problem.
- The mentor should be parental in behaviour and so has to acknowledge the protégé's accomplishments and strengths.

How Mentoring becomes a Blue Ocean Strategy

The essential elements of the Blue Ocean Strategy are the buyer value addition and innovation. The new ocean is created by enhancing the value for the buyer. Increasing the value can be supported by the innovation.

The various approaches of mentoring used for improving the emotional quotient level of the students so that they learn to manage their emotions well, can be qualified as a Blue Ocean Strategy as:

1. These approaches add value to the buyer (i.e the student) by way of transforming him/her from self-awareness to social competency, from self-capability to empathy and from self-confidence to motivation.
2. Many new techniques of mentoring can be innovated in order to enhance the EQ level of the students. Further attempts can be made to generate new models of mentoring that focus only on emotional quotient of the students.

Thus mentoring can involve breakthrough methods and models to transform the students in terms of their emotional level which not only adds value to the buyer (student) but also all the stakeholders of education sector.

Organisational effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is the concept of how effective an organization is in achieving the outcomes the organization intends to produce. Most of the educational institutions by and large want to produce students of good character and performance to the society. The onus of molding sound individuals both professionally and emotionally lie in the sole hands of the educational houses they attend to. It has indeed become imperative for the institutions to thus take up the responsibility of sculpting their students into emotionally upright future leaders apart from inculcating other required technical skills. An institutional organization that succeeds in creating quality students in terms of emotionally strong and professionally high will indeed prove its organisational effectiveness and gain competitive advantage over the others.

The major link between the students and the organizational management are the teachers who coach and mentor the students. Therefore, the mentoring services of the students can upgrade the performance of the students. This strategy leads to organizational effectiveness and helps any educational institution to change from a Red Ocean environment to a blue Ocean making competition irrelevant. Over the past decade or so, emotional intelligence has increasingly come to be seen as a critical factor of success on and off the job. In the June 21st 1999 edition of Fortune Magazine's cover article, 'Why CEOs fail', authors Ram Charan and Geoffrey Colvin categorically state that successful CEOs shine not so much in the areas of planning or finance, but in the areas of E I. Studies reveal that people with average IQ, more often than not, outperform those with higher IQ. The reason is Emotional Intelligence. The tools to deal with emotions that are critical to effectiveness in work and life must be taught early. Such emotional training adds an important aspect to education in that it would prepare learners to better cope with environmental demands and increase their ability to function and succeed in life.

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