



Department Of Business And Public Administration
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**The importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace: How
does emotional intelligence affect employees' well-being ?**

MSc Dissertation

Submitted by: Maria Agrotou

Supervised by: Dr. Alexia Panayiotou

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University of Cyprus

Department Of Business And Public Administration

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Maria Agriotou

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1.Introduction:

With the shift of the decade and the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, back in 2020, a new era of work culture and reality were highlighted, with its peak, the Great Resignation, and the initiation of the social debate on the differences between different generations (from boomers and Generation X to Millennials and Generation Z). Although the massive collection and analysis of data from the current workplace should indicate higher employee satisfaction, the current reality does not reflect that. Statistics have shown otherwise as employees are no longer tolerating toxic cultures, unsupportive environments, unsatisfactory salaries, and the lack of emotional intelligence from their managers. Recent studies have shown that 70% of employees consider work life balance as one of the most important aspects to continue in a company. While 59% of companies' retention depends on their colleague's likability (Cerullo, 2023). Other studies have indicated that managers are one of the key factors for the employees' engagement. In other words, they are one of the main reasons why employees quit their jobs (Harter & Adkins, 2015). Compared to previous decades employees remained in a company because of their salaries and benefits but now these reasons are insufficient. The underlying motive is because employees have shifted their focus on their mental health, wellbeing and feeling supported by a positive environment. Surprisingly, even though the cost of living is extremely high, and inflation is at its peak, employees seem to seek a working environment that will align with their personal values and needs.

Employee engagement is a major ingredient that will guarantee success for companies. Yet, the lack of emotional support from managers towards their employees creates barriers in their relationship. Additionally, miscommunication may lead to conflict and difficulty in maintaining relationships with other colleagues. Consequently, disengagement and miscommunication could be the result of lack of emotional intelligence. When people are

unable to understand their own emotions, there is a high possibility that they are unable to convey their own views towards other people. Which is why emotional intelligence holds great importance (Miller, n.d.). When it comes to organizations, usually, there are specific rules on how employees are expected to behave. Especially when it comes to displaying emotions towards other employees. Generally, they are anticipated to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors. Which may lead to frustration and dissatisfaction as they must keep a specific image (Yadav, 2023).

Currently, emotional intelligence appears to be a lacking skill in many employees which often makes things more complicated for the company. Emotional intelligence is an ability that organizations need to give emphasis and be more welcoming about implementing it. As it will effectively create a better working environment. Throughout the years we could say that companies have always been focusing on gaining and attaining profit with the purpose of becoming market leaders. Despite their goal to achieve this, most of the time companies fail to consider the emotional and physical capability of their employees.

The main aim of this paper is to explore the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace as well as the impact that it has on the wellbeing of the employees. In this study I will highlight the relationship between emotional intelligence and the workplace. By navigating and understanding emotional intelligence as a skill it will help us acknowledge the influence that can have on employees' work and life. I will explore the above objectives through the following questions and subsections: what is emotional intelligence? Why is it important? What is the outcome of being more emotionally intelligent? And does Emotional Intelligence have a positive impact on employee's wellbeing?

This research paper is based on a secondary research method in which we will analyze the already existing bibliography. The literature review will be divided into three different parts.

More specifically, the first part will present an overview of Emotional Intelligence. Particularly, we will first build the foundation of emotional intelligence by exploring the theoretical framework. Afterwards, we will highlight the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence from childhood and try to understand how culture affects development. Eventually, we will also input the significance of socialization. Subsequently, in the second section there will be extensive analysis on the research on leadership, and how emotional intelligence affects the workplace. On the third part there will be suggestions on how Human Resources (HR) can encourage and develop emotional intelligence in the workplace.

2.Theoretical Framework of emotional intelligence

2.1Definition and the importance of EQ

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is a concept that has been developed and studied for many years. If we navigate through the chronological timeline, we will see that many psychologists and theorists have attempted to grasp the idea behind it. However, with the simplest explanation, emotional intelligence refers to the ability of an individual to recognize, express, and control their own emotions. While also being capable of understanding and detecting the emotions of others and responding appropriately (Murtoff, 2023). Emotional Intelligence first appeared in the early 1980s and was first explored by the psychologist Howard Gardner. In his book “Framed of minds” he suggests that people may possess multiple types of intelligences and that each person can have a different type of intelligence depending on the individual’s genetics and experience (Marenius, 2023).

Howard identified eight types of intelligence, two of them were the interpersonal and intrapersonal. Interpersonal intelligence refers to the ability of a person to understand the intentions and moods of other people. While intrapersonal intelligence describes the capability of an individual to understand oneself, including understanding its own fears, desires, and

capabilities. Howard underlines that people are not born with all types of intelligence as they can develop it later in life, for example, mathematical, spatial-visual, and linguistic, among others. The goal of this theory was to challenge the typical idea that there is only one type of intelligence which focuses only on cognitive abilities or otherwise known as IQ (Marens, 2023).

Although Howard discussed the different types of intelligence, the person who would consider to be the father of EQ is Daniel Goleman. His theory was invented around 1995 and has managed to popularize the concept of EQ on an international level. Goleman explored extensively the notion of emotional intelligence, especially in the context of the workplace. As a psychologist he concluded that emotional intelligence can be more valuable than IQ. As a matter of fact, many people tend to believe that IQ is more important than EQ as it can evaluate a person's intelligence and determine their success in life. IQ is often used as the prime determinant of people's achievement during their school years as well as helping them in landing a prosperous career (Deutschendorf, 2020). Even though IQ may have the ability to determine to an extent the intelligence of an individual it cannot always guarantee an accurate result.

Goleman in his book "Emotional Intelligence why it can matter more than IQ" analyzes five vital domains of emotional intelligence and explains how an individual can improve their emotional literacy in terms of self- awareness and identification of their own emotions. Generally, through his book he implies that a person to be considered smart does not necessarily mean to have a high IQ. On the contrary, having high emotional intelligence and being able to interpret the emotions of others may lead to a more successful life. Goleman argues that emotional intelligence has a more powerful connotation than IQ. He believes that having self-control, zeal, and persistence to motivate ourselves can have a greater impact than the intellectual potential we get from our genetics (Goleman, 1996, pg.9).

The book starts by giving a brief introduction on how emotions are the central function in humans and how they guide us during decision making. There is a multitude of different emotions that people can feel, and each person may react differently than others. Emotions are part of human nature and are essential for people to function. The way that people react reflects on their upbringing and culture (Goleman, 1996, pp.15-17). Based on that, Goleman argues that people have two kinds of minds. The first mind represents the emotional state and the second signifies the rational mind. These two minds are equally important in their own way since both construct our mental life. For example, rational mind brings out the comprehensiveness of people like consciousness, awareness, and thoughtfulness. Whereas the emotional mind displays an impulsiveness and an illogical mind (Goleman, 1996, pg.18). When the emotional mind takes over the rational mind people may experience intense feelings leading them to become irrational (Goleman, 1996, pg.18).

2.2. Five domains of EQ

2.2.1 Self-awareness

As it was previously mentioned, Goleman in his effort to grasp a better understanding of emotional intelligence he developed the theory of five domains. These domains are an important tool in the sense of evaluating and improving the emotional intelligence of individuals. The first domain that is being explored is self-awareness. Goleman defines self-awareness as the capability of an individual to recognize their own feelings while it is occurring. In his book he describes self-awareness as something that can be nonreactive and nonjudgmental to our thoughts. However, sometimes when people become too self-aware of their feelings it might lead them to try and restrict them (Goleman, 1996, pp. 49-50).

Another important note to take into consideration is that Goleman states that people have a tendency to fall into different styles when dealing with their emotions. The first style

he talks about is *self-aware*, and these are the people who have clarity, know their boundaries, and have a positive outlook on life. The second style is called *Engulfed*, which describes the people who are often feeling overwhelmed by their own emotions and are unable to escape because they feel helpless. Besides this, since they are in constant battle with their emotions, they have no control over their emotional state. The last style is titled as accepting, in this stage people usually know what they are feeling but at the same time they might do nothing to change them. The accepting style can be divided into two types. The first type is when people are in a good mood and are in a state where they can motivate themselves to change. The second type is when people have clarity about their feelings but are not feeling the need to change even though they are in distress. This type of acceptance is often found in people who are prone to be depressed (Goleman, 1996, pp. 50-51).

2.2.2 Self-regulation

Moving on, the second domain of emotional intelligence is self-regulation or otherwise self-mastery. Goleman explains that in order for people to build self-awareness it lies within the ability of handling their emotions. That is why self-regulation plays a crucial role as it helps individuals' control and manage their feelings (Goleman, 1996, pg. 46). Based on the book, self-regulation is a difficult art for people to master since people need to withstand the emotional downpour. Normally, the aim of self-regulation is to balance our emotions, not to suppress or restrain them. It is essential to understand that each emotion elaborates differently, and it has its own significance. Often, our wellbeing depends on our emotional stability and thus it is imperative to keep emotions regulated. Broadly speaking, several people experience ups and lows in life. However, they do need to avoid unpleasant feelings for them to feel happy (Goleman, 1996, pg. 58). Arguably managing our feelings can be viewed as a challenge, especially when we are alone. Every activity we choose to do during our free time reveals how

we deal with our emotions. The ability of an individual to manage and relieve themselves from stressful situations is vital (Goleman, 1996, pg. 59).

Our brains are designed in a way that has minimal or no control over what emotion we might feel. However, we have the ability to control the duration of the emotion (Goleman, 1996, pg. 59). It has been discussed that anger is one emotion that people want to escape the most from, given that is difficult to deal with and keep it under control. In fact, it creates a series of different inner monologues justifying the negativity of the mind as it produces the most convincing arguments for venting. Comparing it to sadness, anger can be characterized as energizing, seductive and a persuasive power. Defusing anger might be quite a challenge as it can last for a very long time. For example, the longer we justify and find good reasons to feel anger the longer it lasts (Goleman, 1996, pg. 61).

Additionally, to anger, another powerful emotion is worrying. Unexpectedly, Goleman discovers that worrying can have some benefits. When people get absorbed into their thoughts, they suddenly appear to not pay attention to the sensations of anxiety (Goleman, 1996, pg. 68). People who are chronic worriers face difficulties when it comes to calming themselves. Instead, the first step they need to take is to become self-aware. By understanding what triggers their episodes and identifying the reason behind their worries they might be able to relax (Goleman, 1996, pg. 69). The message that Goleman wanted to pass to the readers is that the people who are capable of self-regulation can improve their quality of life. Whereas people with poor emotional ability to self-regulate are constantly battling with themselves. That is why it is important to have hobbies that will soothe us and lift our moods (Goleman, 1996, pg. 46).

2.2.3 Internal Motivation

Following the above, the third domain that was analyzed in the book was internal motivation. As we have seen, negative emotions tend to preoccupy people and make them

paralyzed consequently interfering with their mental life. Also, negative emotions are powerful in the sense that they make people unable to turn their attention to other things (Goleman, 1996, pg. 78). Goleman illustrates the significance of being motivated. He explains that Olympic athletes, musicians, and chess masters are a very distinctive example of what it takes to be motivated. These three groups can be characterized by their unique trait of motivation as they undertake harsh training routines. For them to rise and excel at what they do, they start from a young age to cultivate their talent (Goleman, 1996, pg. 79).

Goleman implies that starting from your childhood has a lifelong benefit. For instance, musicians usually start at the age of five and practice endless hours. What separates these groups of people from others is that they have some emotional traits such as enthusiasm, confidence, and persistence. Emotions have the power to define us since they can either bring us down or enhance our ability to think, to pursue or solve problems (Goleman, 1996, pp. 79-80). To be simply put, Goleman believes that being passionate about different things in life is more beneficial and rewarding than gaining only materialistic rewards (Swift,2023).

According to the book, it is very difficult to resist impulsiveness. The root for resisting is by having emotional control. Emotion can be defined by the word “move” since by our nature we tend to act based off our feelings (Goleman, 1996, pg.80). The way to face impulsiveness is by becoming hopeful and optimistic. Hope can provide motivation to people as it can reduce stress and helplessness. People who possess high levels of hope can achieve many things since they are feeling resourceful and have found ways to accomplish their goals. From the viewpoint of emotional intelligence, hope will help people overcome anxiety, depression, and setbacks. People who have hope will succeed in life and have fewer distresses (Goleman, 1996, pp.85-86).

Another similar feeling to hope is optimism which means to have strong expectations and believe that things will work out in life. Based on the perspective of emotional intelligence, optimism is an attitude that helps people from falling into the vicious cycle of apathy and hopelessness. Optimism works in two ways such as success and failure. When people fail, they view it as something that can change and will succeed next time. One common example is when people are being rejected by a company. Instead of feeling disappointed that they were turned down they feel optimistic and hopeful. On the contrary, pessimists are accepting their fate and do nothing to change (Goleman, 1996, pg.87).

2.2.4 Empathy

The fourth domain, which is one of the most important ones, is Empathy. Goleman believes that being empathetic is built on self-awareness. He states that the more transparent we are with our feelings, the better we will be in understanding others. Despite this, alexithymics exist and are people who are emotionally blind, tone-deaf and apathetic. Most of the time alexithymics are confused about their feelings and cannot comprehend why other people might express their feelings to them. Not being able to register the emotions of another individual shows the absence of emotional intelligence and the lack of basics of a human being. The ability to recognize how someone feels can be found in different phases in life such as work, romance, parenting, and politics. Usually, people who do not possess empathy are criminals, psychopaths, rapist, and molesters. Goleman emphasizes that emotions are not normally put into words rather than that they are expressed through the tone of voice, gestures, facial expression, and body language (Goleman, 1996, pg.94).

Naturally, empathy unfolds through the early stages of life, specifically from the day babies are born. Moreover, infants are developing sympathetic distress before they even realize it (Goleman, 1996, pp.95-96). It is important to note that when a parent is incapable of

expressing empathy with a specific feeling towards their child it can create a domino effect. Consequently, the child will begin to avoid expressing or feeling specific emotions (Goleman, 1996, pg.98). Goleman also touches on the topic of ethics. He believes that empathy is often linked to ethics, moral judgments, and dilemmas (Goleman, 1996, pg.101).

2.2.5 Social Skill

The last domain Goleman talked about is called social skill. This domain explores the art of handling relationships. As mentioned beforehand, empathy unfolds from the moment we are born and the same goes for our relationships with other people. In the book, Goleman gives several different social contexts on how people are coming face to face with different challenges to their relationships. He portrays different scenarios from childhood to adulthood. More specifically, there is emphasis from how parents teach children on showing their emotions to children communicating and making friends in school. As well as adults in their relationships with their partners and work. Goleman says that having the ability to manage someone's emotions is the core of handling relationships as we develop self- management and empathy. Social skills are competencies that help us deal with others. When someone does not possess any skill, it is more difficult for them to be accepted as they might come off as obnoxious and insensitive. Social abilities enable people to be intimate, persuasive, and more influential to others (Goleman, 1996, pg.109).

A social competence that is discussed is how eloquently or how inarticulately people express their feelings. Goleman provides that there are some unwritten rules on which feelings are permissible to be displayed. One of the key factors is the culture that someone is growing up in. In some countries it is not common to show your feelings towards other people (Goleman, 1996, pg.109). Generally, we learn these basic rules from a young age and mostly from our family environment. Parents usually educate their children on how to behave

appropriately. One keen example is when someone gives us a present, we are taught to politely accept and say thank you without showing disappointment. If we take it from another perspective displaying rules can have a negative consequence as well. Many children learn that it is acceptable to mask your feelings when someone might hurt them. These rules show how our feelings might affect others around us (Goleman, 1996, pg.110).

Goleman's overall message about social skills is that people who do not understand social cues are more likely to have problems in their relationships. Whereas people who do have interpersonal intelligence meaning organizing groups, negotiating solutions, have personal connections and social analysis (Goleman, 1996, pg.114). Organizing groups means possessing the skill of becoming a leader and being able to initiate and coordinate people, while the skill of negotiating a solution reflects a person who can be the mediator preventing and resolving conflicts. Additionally, personal connections refer to having empathy and connecting to people easily. Social analysis represents individuals who detect and understand people's emotions (Goleman, 1996, pg.114). People who do not possess any of the above skills are more frequently seeking approval from others to be accepted. Therefore, for people to become part of social groups they need to have skills in managing the emotions of others (Goleman, 1996, pp.111 -114).

3.The process of Socialization

When attempting to understand emotional intelligence it is important to approach it from multiple viewpoints, the former through Goleman's five domains and its relevant framework, while the latter concerns socialization. Specifically, Socialization is a process where humans are taught to become members of society. They get to learn what are the societal norms and expectations in order to be accepted. This process is not limited only to childhood but also continues to develop through adolescence and adulthood (Handel, 2011, pg. xii). Socialization consists of different social agents and institutions like family, friends, education, culture, religion, and work. Each of these agents impact us differently in the way we develop as individuals (Handel, 2011, pg. xvii).

Socialization does not hold the same meaning as socializing with others. However, it is a process that arises from socialization (Little & McGivern, 2014, pg.142). The importance of socialization greatly matters as it is a critical stage for the individual and society (Little & McGivern, 2014, pg.148). Socialization shows the interactions between an individual and others. For example, it illustrates the way we hold a conversation and how we form relationships. Emotional socialization is linked to emotional intelligence and explains the notion of how people learn to express, understand, and self-regulate emotions depending on social contexts (Kitzmann, 2012). Being a person means to be part of a "socially organized world" (Handel, 2011, pg. xvii). In the next part we will see how family, school, and culture shape us to fit into the societal norms and how childhood cultivates emotional intelligence through the social agents.

4.Importance of cultivating EQ from childhood

In this section we will discuss the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence from childhood but also, we will dive in to find how culture determines our emotional development. As previously mentioned, emotional intelligence can be found in every aspect of our lives. From the moment we are born we are faced with different challenges in our relationships with others. Childhood is the foundation of shaping our experiences and it is an extremely important chapter for our growth. The first years of life matter greatly in the development of the brain. It can be considered the architecture of our mental health. Childhood consists of numerous relationships with parents, teachers, and friends, which can play a crucial role in the way that we evolve socially, emotionally, and cognitively (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2012).

Our emotional well-being can be affected by our environment and experiences and sometimes this can have a negative effect. For instance, if a child experiences anxiety and stress at a very young age it can disturb the development of the brain. Also, if a child is exposed to abuse, poverty and neglect from the family it will most probably cause mental problems. A child's first years of life means a lot, since it can have a lifelong impact. On the other hand, a positive environment and experiences help the child to become strong and develop necessary skills (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2012).

Generally, it has been said that early childhood education is vital for rapid growth. Children's brains have the ability to absorb and learn new information rapidly and easily. Early childhood is viewed as a tremendous opportunity for the child to develop cognitive abilities where they can learn to have critical thinking, problem solving and creativity. That is why childhood carries extreme gravity in the early stages of a person's life. Also, for children to reach their full potential they need to be taken care of. For example, they need to be given

opportunities where they learn different skills such as talking, singing, and playing. On the contrary children who do not receive this treatment, they are often deprived and are not progressing (Early childhood development, n.d.)

For children to flourish they need to master both social and emotional skills. In order to do that they need to be supported emotionally by their environment. Encouraging emotional intelligence in the early years can significantly contribute to the development of basic skills like understanding, recognizing, and regulating emotions. Children that possess high emotional intelligence usually excel in managing their emotions, have a positive relationship with others and are more successful academically. When children reach a certain age, specifically the age of two or three, they start to become aware that others have different emotions and opinions from them. After that, in the coming years they will start to put themselves in the shoes of others and try to find solutions to their problem (Ulutaş et.al, 2021).

The beauty of developing emotional abilities is that they start to feel and experience multiple emotions. By the time they get to learn to regulate their emotions they will be able to sympathize and help others. Even though emotional intelligence stands for the ability to understand and recognize the emotions of others, if the child does not possess this ability, they will face problems. Based on that reasoning, children should start from the basic emotions and have more social interactions where it will enable them to experience and understand (Ulutaş et.al, 2021).

4.1 The role of parents: Importance and Parenting style

4.1.1 Parental importance

Parents and teachers are usually the most important role models when it comes to supporting children's development (Thümmler et. al, 2022). The relationship between parents and children can be described by a unique bond (Child development: Parenting matters, 2023). It is acceptable to say that parents are considered to be the first educator to their child and can be characterized as the person who will guide them (Benveniste, 2023). Parenting is a skill of continuously providing opportunities that contribute to their development as an individual. The role of a parent is multifaceted and goes beyond providing the basics to a child. Typically, a child's education starts from home and parents are the ones who are responsible for shaping their character, habits, and personality (Carlie, 2023).

Emotional development can be classified as a lifelong process, and it gets better when children are at the age where they start to talk. As there is an increase in their language ability, children will gain a better understanding of their feelings since they may communicate with them more. Besides this, when children reach the ages between two and five, they are more likely to match their feelings with the respective expressions (Thümmler et. al, 2022). Parents are the ones influencing their children the most when it comes to developing and regulating emotions. If a parent is sensitive and shows responsiveness to the child's emotional needs, then there is a higher possibility for the child to learn to regulate emotions more effectively. However, if the parent fails to respond positively, the child will send back negative signals. Parents' emotional state plays a critical part in the child's behavior. If a parent does not know how to deal with their own emotions, then they will fail to properly teach that to their child as well. As a result, children will not have the right figure to follow (Thümmler et. al, 2022).

Goleman in his book described the characteristic case between young siblings and parental intervention. Specifically, he sets the scene in a family environment where two siblings, a five-year old and a two-year old, are fighting over Lego blocks. The oldest sibling bites the youngest brother as a result of him messing up their Lego game. The mother on the other end starts to yell and tells them to stop playing and threatens to smack him if he does not stop crying. However, the oldest feels injustice for the way the mother treats him and breaks into tears. This leads to a surprising turn of events as the youngest offers emotional support to the oldest sibling, by reassuring him, providing him comfort through patting, distracting, and threatening him to imitate their mother's behaviour and style. From this we can understand that since the mother is not offering the expected parental support, the youngest child steps in to take the role of his mother. Even though he tries to help he adapts multiple tactics from crying, to being empathetic and comforting, to seeking his mother's help and to threatening (Goleman, 1996, pp.108 - 109).

Based on the example, we can draw to the conclusion that the mother herself does not know how to regulate her own emotions and does not know how to provide guidance and reassurance. On the contrary, she resorts to threatening and hitting her child. Both of her children are feeling confused and have no idea on how to control their emotions. This is a great example that shows how a two-year-old child bears someone else's emotions and tries to manage them (Goleman, 1996, pg.108). According to this, we can understand that parents need to learn to regulate both their emotions but also encourage their children to learn how to control their own as well.

4.1.2 Parental Styles

Another important element to take into consideration is the parenting style. In correlation to parental education, it has been discovered that there are four parenting styles namely *authoritative*, *authoritarian*, *permissive*, and *neglectful*. Parental styles include a series of different attitudes and practices that parents use when dealing with their child. Moreover, these styles can also be described as a very complex system of skills that parents are using with the purpose of fulfilling their responsibilities. In this sense, parental education has a permanent impact on society. The way that parents teach is a reflection on their child's mental health and emotional development. Parents are often faced with challenges when raising a child as they must deal with inappropriate behaviors that sometimes lead to conflicts (Șițoiu & Pânișoară, 2023).

Parental styles are an interesting phenomenon to study since they reflect on the development of the child. According to the article of Șițoiu and Pânișoară (2023) there are two different dimensions of parenting that show the extent of responsiveness and demandingness from their child. The first dimension is about a parent respecting their child's individuality and offering opportunities to understand their own behavior. The second dimension describes the requirements that are needed for the child to be taken care of but also it shows the pressure that is exercised upon the child in order for them to be part of the family. These two dimensions show two different sides of parents. The first side is the parental warmth that signifies parents' love towards their child. The second side symbolizes parental severity. For example, it shows what measurements parents use to discipline and monitor the child's behavior. Based on these two dimensions the parenting styles were formed (Șițoiu & Pânișoară, 2023).

The first parenting style is known as *authoritative parenting*. This style describes parents that are displaying balance between warmth and severity. It is known that this style

helps the children to be proactive, have self-esteem and develop emotional independence. Parents are able to master a combination of authority, flexibility, gentleness and empathy. Authoritative parenting is a concept that is a mixture of controlling children but giving them emotional support and freedom of being independent. Parents who use this method are helping their child to develop their skills (Șițoiu & Pânișoară, 2023).

On the other hand, *authoritarian* parents are the complete opposite of authoritative. These kinds of parents are demanding, over-controlling and show no affection or communication (Alegre, 2011). Parents who use authoritarian methods emphasize to their children that they need to follow specific rules and have strict punishments. Also, parents who are acting with authority have extremely high expectations and are not accepting easily. Children who have this type of parent are more prone to develop mental and emotional problems. Parents who use extreme authority drive their children to become aggressive, socially isolated, and hyperactive (Șițoiu & Pânișoară, 2023).

The third style is called *permissive parenting* and describes parents that are full of warmth and do not show any strictness. Children who have this kind of parent are usually anxious, have low academic self-efficacy, have no motivation for personal growth and are not feeling the need to help others. Since there is absence of strictness children are free to break the rules without any consequences. As a result, the child lacks the necessary skills of regulating their behavior and does not know how to make decisions. Usually, these children feel the need to be impulsive and rebellious (Șițoiu & Pânișoară, 2023).

The last parenting style is known as *negligent parenting*, and it illustrates parents that are not involved in the development of their child. Neglectful parents typically do not spend time with their child and there is no affection towards them. The result of the parenting style reflects the family conditions. If a family has a healthy background and is responsive to the

needs of the child, then there is a positive relationship. However, if the origin of the family shows signs of absence, then there is a distant and negative relationship. Generally, these behaviors have a lasting effect as it determines the relationship between parents and children (Șițoiu & Pânișoară, 2023).

4.1.3 Teachers and emotional intelligence

Moreover, along with parents, teachers are the second most influential figure in children's lives, because children spend most of their time in childhood and adolescence in school, surrounded by teachers (Ulutaș et.al, 2021). Teachers monitor, support, guide, provide comfort and care to the children, but also enable children to turn in when experiencing difficulties, if they manage to have a positive impact. However, the role of parents and teachers is distinctive in nature. The former is intuitive, while the latter more structural and “evidence-based”, following knowledge and skills. It is important to note that teachers sometimes operate as mediators when children face conflicts with others. However, sometimes children have the power to influence the behavior of the teacher based on their feelings. Meaning that teachers are not the only ones who can influence the interactions between them (Thümmeler et. al, 2022).

Another important thing to consider is that children tend to transfer their feelings from home to school. The school environment can be classified as a place where children search for people who can trust and feel safe as they share their feelings and experiences. Teachers are responsible for identifying and responding appropriately to the child's emotions. Children's behavior varies and sometimes causes misunderstandings between teachers and children. For that reason, it is crucial that schools should create programs that encourage emotional intelligence. By supporting emotional intelligence in education children will feel safe, be positive and have healthy behaviors and communication with others. Teachers are viewed as role models since their habits and behaviors can be mimicked by the children. Teachers who

possess the right competencies will help students to become successful and problematic behaviors will decrease (Ulutaş et.al, 2021).

A distinctive difference that shows how educational systems make the difference is emotional intelligence in the Nordic countries versus the Mediterranean countries. Nordic countries are famous for their different teaching methods in education at schools. They use methods and tools that encourage learning and are mostly required to work in groups. On the contrary, in mediterranean countries teachers are mostly using methods of lectures, notes, exams and reading. The relationship between teachers and students is mostly based on the discussion of the material of the class. Nordic schools focus on teaching children to think and be creative (Pantovic, 2012).

A remarkable example of educating emotional intelligence in schools is the case of Denmark. It has been reported that Denmark has been named as one of the happiest countries in the world. Denmark has been mandatorily teaching empathy in schools since 1993 and it is considered the main factor for the country's happiness. It has been found that empathy prevents bullying and promotes success in building relationships. As a result, empathetic teenagers are more successful and are more goal orientated. Danish schools have implemented empathy lessons that are scheduled for one hour a week for students of the ages 6 to 16 years old. During that one-hour children have the freedom to express their problems to their teacher and peers and try to find solutions together. If by chance, there are no problems to solve children are given the time to relax (Empathy? In Denmark They're Learning it in School, 2019). This example highlights how learning to be empathetic can make a difference in the quality of life.

4.2 Culture and emotional intelligence

In relation to the above, another matter related to the cultivation of emotional intelligence is the culture that someone is growing in. Culture plays a significant role in the way we think and express our feelings. Arguably, culture can be viewed as a “tool” that shapes the members of society, especially their behaviors and reactions. Also, culture can be considered as a guide that members need to follow in order to be accepted by others (Mansour, 2017, pg.54).

It has been found that in Western Cultures it is more acceptable to show publicly emotions like excitement and affection whereas, in Eastern cultures people appear calm, restrained, and keep low profile (Gonzales,2022, pg.29). A characteristic example of cultural differences is a study that was conducted in China and Taiwan. Children discussed that it is more acceptable to express physical discomfort than it is to show negative emotions like anger or sadness. They claimed that parents paid more attention to physical discomfort than emotional distress. In the study, children stated that when they felt negative emotions they would choose to sit quietly or use facial expressions to make a statement rather than using words. Children believed that by verbally expressing their feelings they would get scolded by adults (Gonzales, 2022, pg. 29). It is commonly known that emotions are the main link in building relationships, and it seems that the way we express emotions is deeply rooted in culture. Most of the time people follow unwritten rules that are based on the values, beliefs, and expectations of culture (Gonzales,2022, pp. 29 -30).

To elaborate, Goleman has also demonstrated an example in his book about social consensus in terms of displaying emotions. His example refers to Japanese students watching a film about a person with authority. During the film they appear to show only the slightest reactions. However, when they were left alone their faces showed a mixture of different

emotions. This experiment showed that there are some unwritten rules that they need to follow in their culture. They are ordered to show the minimum reaction when they are in the presence of an authoritative person. Yet we could say that they have a tendency to dramatically exaggerate facial expressions in front of others (Goleman, 1996, pp.109-110).

Cultural differences are very intriguing when it comes to understanding how people view emotional intelligence. Cultural dimensions show comparison between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. European and American cultures are part of the individualistic cultures. Parents in individualistic cultures usually celebrate the success of their child but also encourage them to express their emotions. Whereas in collectivistic cultures parents are discouraging their children from showing emotions and are instructed to keep them to themselves. Asian parents tend to minimize their children experiences and achievements. By that it is concluded that Asian parents “down- regulate” emotions and western parents “up-regulate” emotions (Gonzales,2022, pg.30).

5. Significance of EQ in the workplace

The notion of emotional intelligence in the workplace carries great importance. EQ is a factor that contributes and impacts the workplace in many ways. For example, it has the power to affect a wide range of work behaviors such as relationships, communication, teamwork, organizational effectiveness, work performance and well-being (Zeidner et al., 2004). Most of the time, for employees to be able complete their tasks, they are required to interact with other colleagues and understand diverse viewpoints. However, to accomplish that, they need to excel in their interpersonal skills and relationships (Kapur, 2018). To ensure that there is a healthy environment it is important to have good role models, and, in most cases, this derives from the good example of leaders and managers. Similarly, when a team operates with emotional intelligence, it creates an environment of effective communication, high job satisfaction and accomplishment of company's targets. If an organization lacks emotional intelligence, then it creates a domino effect since everything is interconnected (Kapur, 2018).

This section of the paper will focus on demonstrating how emotional intelligence is necessary in management and leadership to increase productivity and efficiency. Specifically, we will go through employee's relationships and workplace conflicts, followed by how relationships affect employees if they do not have networking opportunities or friends in their work environment. Additionally, it will highlight how by not having emotional intelligence employee's communication and trust will be affected. The next chapter will focus on the factors that affect employees' well-being, such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and culture. Afterwards, we will illustrate how emotionally intelligent leaders and managers have a huge impact on employees' engagement and well-being. Moreover, we will see the theory of Goleman in a more analytical and applicable manner. Lastly, the final section will provide suggestions on how human resources can help employees develop their emotional intelligence.

Having emotional intelligence in the workplace has great benefits as it strengthens the commitment of the employees towards their company. Employees who have self-awareness, self-management, empathy, and social skills are instantly separated from the average employee. It has been noticed that employees who appear to be disconnected from their jobs often have low commitment and low performance. On the contrary, employees who are enthusiastic and devoted to their jobs go above and beyond for their workplace and often exceed expectations (Gonzales,2022, pg.193).

In the book of Gonzales (2022) there were identified three types of employee's commitment. The first type is known as the *affective commitment* and describes the people who exhibit affection and sentimental attachment to their job and workplace. These kinds of employees not only tend to align best with the goals and the values of the company, but they also appear to sincerely like to be part of the organization. The second type is called *continuance commitment* which signifies the employees who wish to remain and continue to work in the same conditions. These employees mostly stay in the company for the monetary benefits, for the professional recognition they receive from their company and for the social relationships that they have built over the years. (Gonzales,2022, pg.193).

The last type is known as the *normative commitment*, which illustrates the employees who feel a sense of obligation towards their company. Simply put, these employees feel gratitude and remain in the company due to loyalty. Moreover, they feel grateful towards the organization for their investments towards their education, growth, and benefits. By knowing what kind of commitment employees put into the workplace, managers and leaders can have a greater understanding of detecting the gaps that may lead employees to feel disconnected. As a result, they may find ways to motivate them (Gonzales,2022, pg.193).

5.1 Employees relationships, Workplace conflicts and EQ

5.1.1 Employees Relationships, networking, and friendships

Good workplace relationships are extremely vital for organizations to function. When it comes to understanding how an organization can meet their targets, it lies within the ability of having good relationships and teamwork. Organizational behavior can be described by the complexity of numerous relationships between employees. In order for the relationships to work out and be maintained employees need to overcome their behavioral differences. These relationships have the power to construct the organization's atmosphere and climate. Most of the time, the climate of an organization heavily relies on communication, flexibility, and adjustment. On another note, it also depends on the individual's skill in dealing with the attitudes and views of their colleagues (Dumbravă, 2011).

As we have established, workplace relationships illustrate the interactions that employees have with each other, their connections, and their dynamics. Moreover, relationships at work include interactions between supervisors, leaders, managers and colleagues from multiple levels and departments. Which explains the magnitude of relationships since they can affect job satisfaction, well-being, work experience and cooperation. Good relationships are described by excellent communication, trust, respect, values, and support. Whereas negative relationships tend to be characterized by hostility, lack of cooperation and conflicts that may result in stress and low productivity (Bella, 2023).

By ensuring that employees are able to put aside their differences and focus on being collaborative without showing any hostility, it creates a productive and supportive environment. The capability of communication is a skill that is linked to EQ. As we have previously seen emotional intelligence consists of being empathetic, controlling emotions,

having self- management and good social skills. Employees that exhibit high EQ can manage their own impulses and communicate their needs with others effectively (Dumbravă, 2011).

Relationships at work carry a lot of weight. If we take a moment to think about it individuals tend to spend most of their time with their colleagues instead of their family and friends. Even when employees are not working, they tend to be preoccupied thinking about their work. It appears that humans tend to be defined by what type of job they do and with whom they work with. In a similar manner, workplace relationships have the capacity to define us. Generally, relationships can vary based on what type of connection people have with each other. For example, the closer the relationship someone has, the stronger the emotional connection is (Sias, 2009, pg. 2)

Based on the article of Fryczyńska and Ivanova (2019) they analysed the critical role of relationships in the workplace and building strong networking with fellow colleagues. Specifically, they stated that networking is a strong component to have in a job as it creates opportunities and helps with personal growth and success. Networking can be described as the attempt that an individual makes to develop and maintain relationships with others with the objective of excelling in their career, getting new opportunities and climbing their respective career ladder. Networking behaviour involves individuals socializing and engaging in activities. Moreover, networking can be considered as a behavior that focuses on cultivating and utilizing interpersonal relationships to the fullest (Fryczyńska & Ivanova, 2019, pg. 326)

In addition to the above, according to Alexandra Gerbasi, Andrew Parker, and Cécile Emery (2023) they explained that networking is linked to social capital and organizational structure. For example, social networks provide access to resources due to the individuals social capital. Employees who have social capital benefit in many ways such as higher individual performance, teamwork, and creativity. However, all this falls within the power of having a

higher position in the organizational structure. Employees who fall on structural holes are often faced with more difficulties (Gerbasi et al., 2023, pp. 6-7).

Moreover, in a company the relationships and networks between employees can be divided into two types namely, instrumental ties and affective ties. The former type refers to the relationship that is related to seeking advice, knowledge, and information. Knowledge relationships are indeed powerful as by having informal relationships with colleagues it is easier for information and advice to be exchanged. As for the latter type it refers to friendships, trust, dislikes, distrust and de-energize. A good network at work is essential since it can determine someone's productivity, performance and well-being (Gerbasi et al., 2023, pp. 2-3).

As has been already highlighted, in a workplace employees can form different types of relationships with each other, however, one of the most important ones is friendship. It is important to point out that people desire to form and have long-term relationships, especially at work. Friendship is based on trust, which often this relationship creates a safe environment for people to express themselves, their ideas and gossip. It has also been shown that friendships have the power to increase cooperation, communication and share information between employees which indicates a positive outcome for work (Gerbasi et al., 2023, pp. 14 -15).

In the article of Ofoegbu and Akanbi (2013), the link between emotional intelligence and workplace friendships was discussed. They explained that workplace friendships are impactful in numerous ways as they can affect organizations' overall productivity. They stated that friendships are very beneficial to the employees as they can help them relieve stress, and make them more creative, motivated, and satisfied with their job. Moreover, friendships can increase interaction and decrease turnover. In addition to that they emphasized that employees who have friends at work are more prone to take accountability for their actions, prevent

negativity and be more honest. It has also been observed that friendships help employees to accept any organizational change without having problems (Ofoegbu & Akanbi, 2013).

Based on the above, we understand that the emotional state of employees bears great interest. Sometimes employees may find themselves in stressful situations resulting in them searching for a supportive system. In this type of case employees try to find *social support* through their friends. *Social support* refers to verbal and nonverbal communication between two individuals that seek to alleviate the uncertainty of a situation. Workplace friends are considered to be one of the most important sources of support, especially for people that suffer from stress and anxiety. Employees who are surrounded by friends at work can more easily discuss topics regarding work and personal matters. In these situations, this relationship can function both as instrumental and emotional support (Sias, 2009, pg. 96).

5.1.2 Workplace stress, conflicts, and EQ

Another matter related to relationships and emotional intelligence is workplace stress and the conflicts that may arise between employees. Workplace stress is a standard phenomenon in the current work culture, as workplace environments are fast paced, intense and require constant attentiveness, often difficult to place boundaries. That is why it is important for employees to improve their emotional intelligence. For instance, if employees enhance their emotional intelligence, then it will certainly help to manage stress, be more empathetic and build stronger relationships with others. If people are aware of the different opinions and angles of a conflict it will be easier to assess and minimize these situations. Employees who are emotionally intelligent will be able to put up with work pressure and overcome challenges (Gonzales, 2022, pg. 195).

Usually, workplace stress can be defined either as a physical or mental reaction that occurs because of conflict in an organization. It is understandable that working in an

environment that causes stress can easily harm both the employees and the employer. Workplace stress can stem for various reasons, such as having a large number of tasks and requests in an understaffed environment, being assigned tasks that do not match skills or abilities. It has been identified that workplace stress usually occurs when employees are coming face to face with difficult demands that do not match their abilities. As a result, employees will feel pressure that leads them to work less effectively. Additionally, social and environmental components can impact workplace stress (Gonzales,2022, pg. 195).

In addition to the above, some other reasons that have been proven to contribute to workplace stress are physical issues, ethical issues, organizational practices, work factors and relationships. Specifically, physical issues mostly refer to heavy workload leading to physical exhaustion. Consequently, employees are unable to concentrate and think clearly. As for the ethical issues, they are related to conflicts and misunderstandings due to lack of communication. The third factor which concerns organizational practices is the consequence of lack of autonomy and unclear responsibilities. Moreover, stress that occurs because of work factors is mostly because of the unreasonable performance pressures and extreme working hours. Lastly, Relationship issues are mostly due to poor interpersonal relationships, poor relationships between supervisors and employees, bullying, competition, and conflict (Gonzales,2022, pp. 195-196).

Based on these reasons stressful work environment may cause various health problems such as poor concentration, short tempers, anxiety, and weak immune system. In addition to that, employees who experience stress are often following negative habits and unhealthy lifestyles including excessive drinking and eating unhealthily. It is essential to understand that individuals who practice self- awareness by understanding their strengths and needs are able to reduce stress and avoid conflicts at work (Gonzales,2022, pg. 196).

Except from workplace stress, conflicts are another phenomenon that happens very often in our interactions with other people, especially in the workplace. There are multiple reasons why conflict may arise at work. Some of the most common causes are disagreements, different opinions and beliefs, personality differences, excessive competition, and incompatibility. Conflicts may impact the organization in various ways and if the conflicts are not taken seriously then they may lead to costly consequences for the company both financially and the loss of employees. Workplace conflict is a serious matter since not only does it have the power to affect employees personally but also the whole company as well. From the personal perspective of employees, they might become emotionally exhausted and frustrated. As a result, to lower their job satisfaction, job performance and create a hostile environment that may cause a drop in the level of trust, cooperation, and support. If companies are unable to resolve conflict, then stress, tension and aggression will increase (Gonzales,2022, pp. 196 - 197).

Even though conflicts most of the time are perceived with a negative connotation it has been acknowledged that through conflict people may understand better someone's perspective, yet this is not always the case. More importantly, if conflict is handled through positive enforcement, then there will be an increase in group unity, cooperation, and better communication. It is essential to take into consideration that when conflicts take place it may be because of the difference in personalities and perception that they have regarding their co-worker's behavior. Sometimes employees who experience tensions at work are mostly due to people who appear to be difficult to or unpleasant to work with. For example, employees who may be perceived difficult are known as the "backstabbers", "busybody's", "yes and no person" and lastly the "harasser" (Gonzales,2022, pg. 197).

The *backstabber person* is someone known as the person who puts a friendly act and gossips behind their backs. As for the *busy body*, it refers to people who love to get involved

in the personal lives of people with the purpose of gaining power. The *yes and no person* are about two types of people. The former is about someone who overpromises and underdelivers. As for the latter is someone who finds many excuses and refuses to help and cooperate. The last type, which is the *harasser*, is someone who attacks and sets up other coworkers to fail in an attempt to gain acknowledgment from the boss (Gonzales, 2022, pg. 197).

To handle these types of people it is important for employees to view them from a different point of view. Firstly, it would be ideal to look into their behavior rather than the person themselves and try to embrace a positive attitude. To be able to manage difficult people and minimize conflicts employees need to become self-aware and to self-regulate. Particularly, they need to keep track of their emotions and identify which emotions are associated with negative incidents such as being disrespected, criticized, or excluded. By developing emotional intelligence and mindfulness, it will help employees to become more self-aware and understand better their feelings and their triggers. This will be a great way to cope and solve conflict. Nevertheless, communication is the key to successful relationships at work (Gonzales, 2022, pg. 198).

5.2 Factors influencing workplace well-being and EQ.

5.2.1 Defining Workplace well – being and EQ.

Wellbeing is becoming increasingly more important in the workplace as it is the foundation for an employee's productivity and job performance. Nowadays employees have been hinting that well-being is one of the most important aspects to continue working for a company as it helps them to function more effectively (Sivanthinathan et al., 2023). Considering the data that we have available today, organizations should care more for their employees' well-being, not merely for ethical reasons, but also because it is considered to be a strategic advantage for businesses. It is no secret that in today's world competition is at its peak

resulting in employees becoming more frequently exhausted. If organizations prioritize mental health, it is a guarantee that it will attract and retain talent (Pleiner, 2023). Specifically, it was noted that 60% of Gen Z workers take into account mental health as one of the main resources when choosing an employer (Pleiner, 2023).

In general terms, well-being can be described as the state of being happy, comfortable, and satisfied with life, which includes physical, social, and emotional aspects (Schulte & Vainio, 2010). However, well-being in the context of the workplace can be defined as the employees' expectations and working conditions that may impact on their health and happiness (Sivanthinathan et al., 2023). Most of the time well-being at work can be influenced by mental and physical health, job security, work engagement and work benefits (Schulte & Vainio, 2010).

Workplace well-being can be measured through two dimensions namely, *interpersonal*, and *intrapersonal*. The first dimension, which is *interpersonal*, refers to the perception that the individuals have based on their outside image which includes self-acceptance, social acceptance, positive interaction, and social integration. Whereas the second dimension, which is the *intrapersonal* refers to the perception they have about their self. This dimension includes the feelings the individuals have about their work, likewise social contribution, autonomy, and personal growth. Generally, the welfare of the workplace is extremely important as it has positive effects on improving employee's performance (Supardi et al., 2023, pp. 322-323).

Well-being is very crucial for employees since it can operate as a reflection on their work, work environment and their relationships with their colleagues. Workplace well-being is essential as it helps employees deal with challenges, conflicts, reduce stress and manage their mental health. By reducing or preventing any accidents at work, it will help to lessen sick leaves, avoid having conflicts or declines in productivity. Also, if organizations prevent as

much as they can their employees from becoming burned out it will certainly help with their well-being. It has been recognized that mental health is one of the leading causes of short-term sick leave as well as long term incapacity to work. As a result, companies are facing costly consequences (Gonzales, 2022, pp.208-209).

In these cases, it is important to have emotional intelligence since it is a factor that is associated with well-being due to the fact that it helps individuals to take control of their emotions. It is evident that individuals who have high EQ are more satisfied with their well-being. For example, EQ is considered to equip employees with the necessary skills to cope with stressful situations at work. As already discussed, emotional intelligence is greatly beneficial to employees since it helps them diffuse conflicts and are more aware of what triggers them (Sivanthinathan et al., 2023).

5.2.2 Well-being and Job satisfaction.

One of the most critical factors that are known to affect well-being is job satisfaction. It is incredibly important to understand the power that job satisfaction has on the employees since it can have negative effects both on the employees and the organization itself. Most of the time the attitudes and emotions of employees reflect what kind of feelings they have towards their job and workplace. In simple words, job satisfaction can be described as the combination of positive or negative feelings that employees have towards their work, environment, and coworkers. For example, an employee who has high levels of job satisfaction tends to perceive their job with positive emotions. Whereas employees who are dissatisfied tend to feel negative emotions about their job (Kumari& Rachna, 2011).

Job satisfaction is linked to emotional, intellectual, and behavioral variables. The emotional state of an employee reveals the emotions that employees have towards their job, likewise, if they are feeling exhausted or pleasure. The intellectual variable showcases the

beliefs that employees have about their job (Suleman et al., 2020). For instance, employees may believe that their job is either interesting, rewarding, or boring. Job satisfaction can be detected by the employee's willingness to work hard and be part of the organization (Supardi et al., 2023, pp. 322). The last variable, which is the behavioral variable, refers to the employees' attitude and practices. For instance, if they come late to work or being sick often. Job satisfaction is a prime example of affecting employee's capability, productivity, engagement, turnover and absenteeism. On another note, job satisfaction also depends on what kind of rewards employees receive based on their work (Supardi et al., 2023, pg. 323).

It is clear that employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs have a tendency to withdraw from a company whereas employees who are satisfied remain. Job satisfaction is affecting employees' personal lives and therefore increases the chances for turnover. Also, if there is poor communication, lack of opportunities and lack of recognition it makes it easier for employees to resign and find new opportunities (Suleman et al., 2020). Generally, job satisfaction operates as a reflection of the emotional state of the individual. When an employee is satisfied with their job it can be considered a positive sign. Meanwhile, dissatisfaction occurs when the individuals are not feeling fulfilled (Supardi et al., 2023, pp. 322-323).

For employees to be characterized as satisfied with their job, they need to have autonomy and role clarity. It is apparent that autonomy gives employees a sense of control over their decisions, and it enables them to find solutions to problems and conflicts in a more effective way. Having autonomy has a higher percentage of making the employees motivated about their tasks and increases their well-being (Supardi et al., 2023, pg. 323).

In the article of Suleman et al., (2020) it was highlighted that organizational profitability heavily relies on well-being, satisfaction, and occupational fulfillment. If there is dissatisfaction with their job it makes employees' commitment lower, and the organization will

be unable to meet their company's target. According to the authors, to achieve job satisfaction, it all depends on five main criteria namely, achievement, responsibility, the work itself, recognition, and advancement. Some other predictors for job satisfaction are compensation, salaries, working conditions, supervisors, colleagues, and job security. Lastly, an additional factor that matters incredibly to job satisfaction is the environment that employees are in. For example, employees feel satisfaction if the environment is clean, and the employees are operating effectively without conflicts. On the contrary, if the environment is unpleasant e.g. noisy and distracting then employees will feel dissatisfied and will not complete their work. Consequently, the higher the emotional intelligence is then the higher the job satisfaction and the well-being will be (Suleman et al., 2020).

5.2.3 Well-being and Work- life balance.

Another aspect that is linked to the well-being of the employees is work-life balance (WLB). It is apparent that nowadays employees are getting burned out from working long hours and overtime with the purpose of gaining recognition, promotions, and higher salaries. It has been found that employees are becoming "time-poor" since they are working long hours resulting in them becoming unable to deal with other aspects and events of their lives. Consequently, this is causing work and family conflicts, mental and physical issues, and work-life balance problems (Gonzales,2022, pp. 219 -220).

With a simple definition work-life balance can be defined as the individual's ability to manage their time in a way that they meet their work and family commitments as well as their other non-working obligations. Beside this, work-life balance can be characterized as the way that employees can prioritize their well-being and their self-care (Delecta, 2011). It is clear that to achieve work-life-balance is not an easy task since it can cause many negative consequences like deterioration in health, tension between relationships, decline in productivity, cause fatigue

and psychological issues (Gonzales,2022, pg. 220). Many studies have identified several factors that influence work-life balance including gender, personalities, family and parental status, work demands, performance standards, work flexibility and social support (Gonzales,2022, pp. 220 -221).

Firstly, we have gender which is a factor that highlights the difference between men and women's priorities about work and family. For example, women tend to have more responsibilities about childcare and housework, whereas men tend to take the role of breadwinner. Even though this is partially true it is not always the case since nowadays women are focusing on advancing their careers. To this day women still get to work long hours, take care of the house and the children. These roles may create conflicts between work and family commitments (Gonzales,2022, pg. 220).

The second factor, which is personality differences, is about the individuals who know how to set boundaries between work and life. Based on their individual's unique personality, emotions, and values it displays how they perceive work-life balance. Some of these individuals are unable to set clear boundaries between work and life, while for others it is easier to do. It has been found that individuals who usually show openness are more likely to have balance in their life whereas individuals who have neurotic personality type are more prone to show vulnerability and imbalance (Gonzales,2022, pg. 221).

Family demands in one of the most critical factors that affect work-life balance. On the one hand, married individuals who have parental roles find it hard to establish boundaries and balance between their roles as parents and as workers. For example, it seems that they struggle to keep balance with family commitments, household demands, spousal support, and stress. Raising a child and caring for the elderly can be quite demanding, resulting in more family

responsibilities. Therefore, sometimes parents may put their work on the line by shortening their working hours consequently making it for them more stressful (Delecta, 2011).

The working environment and the job of employees are key factors to having a balanced life. Employees and organizations tend to come face to face with demanding work leading to employees working long hours and having high workloads. Moreover, employees seem to find themselves to be part of distressing situations that may even cause conflicts between employees. These situations can lead employees to emotional and physical exhaustion impacting their quality time on a personal level. That is why it is important for employees to have social support in order to alleviate their problems. Employees who have social support may be able to cope better with stress and challenging times (Gonzales,2022, pg. 222).

Sustaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial for the organization and for the employees. If individuals have an overall understanding of their personal needs, then employees will be able to implement a better work-life balance (Gonzales,2022, pg. 223). Employees emotional state affects their behavior and performance and for that reason it is essential to have EQ. Employees who show that they have high emotional intelligence seem to have a better work life balance as they appear to cope better with stress and challenges (Gonzales,2022, pg. 237). Work – life balance and EQ have proven to be good indicators for decreasing stress and turnover. Additionally, it helps employees to make better decisions, manage conflict and show empathy towards other colleagues (Gonzales,2022, pg. 239). That is why organizations need to help and support their employees in finding work life balance. By doing that it will ensure an increase in their engagement, productivity, and commitment (Gonzales,2022, pg. 223).

5.2.4 Workplace well-being, Culture and environment.

Two common factors that play an incredible role in the well-being of the employees are the *culture* and the *environment* of the workplace. As it seems, jobs are not only a source of income but also are a source that defines our social identity, satisfaction, happiness and belonging. Each workplace has a different environment, climate, and culture. The environment and culture are mostly defined by the organization's values, beliefs, and purpose (Gonzales, 2022, pg. 199). Organization culture is a framework that showcases how an organization treats their employees. For instance, the beliefs of the organization affect and control how the employees dress, behave, or perform in a job. Ultimately, organizations create a specific culture with the purpose of establishing the standards and the limitations of the behaviors of the employees. Moreover, the culture works as a reflection of what kind of employees are part of the organization, the management style, and the structure. Another important note to take into consideration is that organizational culture shapes the way that individuals connect and communicate with their colleagues (Bamidele,2022).

Culture is indeed powerful as it impacts the employee's morale, the profits of the company, productivity, and turnover. Besides this, the culture of the company can operate in a way to attract new candidates but also to retain their own employees. If a culture is strong then employees feel valued and stay motivated to work harder. It is evident that culture affects employee's happiness and engagement. If a culture is positive, then it helps employees feel satisfied with their jobs and are keener to keep working for an organization that promotes flexibility, work-life balance, and development (Fonseca, 2023).

In addition to culture, the *environment* of the workplace is of great importance as it affects their well-being, their mental health, and the quality of their work. As has already been established, employees tend to spend a considerable huge amount of time inside of an office,

which has a direct influence on their well-being. It is understood that employees who are satisfied with their physical environment are more likely to produce a better quality of work. Most of the time when referring to the physical environment it means to have a good layout of the place, the temperature, the air quality, lighting, good ergonomic tools, and the noise conditions. All these factors contribute significantly to the employee's performance and productivity. For example, the layout of the workplace influences notably the employee's behavior (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011).

Nowadays, organizations are adapting to more contemporary open designs where there is absence of walls and ceiling. This is happening because companies try to lower the cost but also to strengthen the relationship between employees. On the one hand, this kind of design might elaborate to increase communication and productivity. However, this does not always bring good outcomes. In reality, many employees feel that this design has many negative consequences such lower productivity and efficiency. These types of offices have proved that there is a lot of noise, lack of privacy and other distractions. Some individuals like to have their own personal space as they might feel violated and uncomfortable since there is no privacy. Studies have shown that open display offices decrease job satisfaction, motivation, lower productivity and increase stress (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011).

Similarly to this, colour is another factor that influences the mood and the well-being of employees. The colour in the office can affect the psychological aspects. For instance, some colors provide calmness and comfort. That is why it is important for organizations to choose the right colours in the office to boost productivity. Lastly, if organizations focus on improving the working environment not only it will decrease absenteeism rates and sick leaves but also will increase employee's motivation (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011).

6. Importance of emotionally intelligent managers/leaders

6.1 What is effective leadership and why it is important?

As we have established before, a workplace environment is a place that consists of numerous relationships with others and yet one of the most important ones is the relationship between leaders and their employees. Leadership can be defined as the ability to effectively influence your subordinates and peers in a working environment through thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. Moreover, leadership means to influence a group of people who are engaged in accomplishing the same goals, keep a positive environment, motivate, and guide people through difficult situations. However, to accomplish the goals it is important for leaders to influence in an ethical way (Rowe & Guerrero, 2011, pg.2).

In addition to the above, to be an effective leader it requires to have a combination of skills, traits, behaviors that show that they can manage people effectively. Usually, these skills include communication, emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, decision making and motivating others. Moreover, effective leadership is linked with positive outcomes as they tend to increase productivity, employee engagement, job satisfaction, and higher performance (Babatunde et al., 2023, pg.153). Leadership is incredibly important in organizations as it is the main pillar for business to succeed. Leaders are there to make decisions and set directions. Without good leadership the organizations will face difficulties such as conflicts and arguments (Mills, 2005, pp.10-11). Leadership is not an easy job to do as there is a lot of responsibility coming with that position (Mills, 2005, pg.14). Leaders need to be able to adapt and address specific situations of the organization as well as being able to create an empowering and supportive environment (Babatunde et al., 2023, pg. 154).

6.2 Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

Emotional Intelligence is a factor that is deeply associated with leadership. In recent years, it has been recognized that employees are looking for emotionally intelligent leaders and managers. Based on current studies it has been found that managers and leaders can have a greater impact on the well-being and mental health of their employees than their doctors or therapists. Emotionally intelligent leaders and managers are considered to be one of the main criteria for employees to keep working in an organization (Finn, 2023). As Goleman says the traditional characteristics of a leader such as intelligence, toughness, determination, and vision are needed but these qualities are insufficient without emotional intelligence. Goleman believes that a person without emotional intelligence won't make the best leader even if they do have the best training in the world (Goleman, 2021, pg.25).

Emotional intelligence plays a vital role in leadership as it helps leaders to build strong relationships, promote teamwork and help enhance a positive environment. Leaders who are high in emotional intelligence are inspiring, motivating and are able to resolve conflicts. Emotional intelligence is a great way for leaders to communicate their visions, goals, and expectations to their employees. Leaders who exhibit high EQ means that are more capable of adjusting their communication according to the needs of the team. This can have a positive outcome in interactions and productivity (Jain & Ackerson, 2023). Indeed, communication is the basis for a healthy relationship, especially between employees and managers. It is a way to ensure that engagement exists. For example, employees who hold regular meetings are more engaged in their work than employees who don't have regular meetings. Employees who have daily communication with their managers are more successful in keeping their employees engaged (Harter & Adkins 2015).

In a similar way to communication, emotional intelligence helps leaders to build strong relationships with their employees. For example, leaders who are emotionally intelligent can create an environment of trust as they will help their employees to express their emotional needs. If leaders are high in EQ, then they will create a positive environment where employees will feel appreciated and valued. This is one of the most important factors as they can increase job satisfaction and engagement. Lastly, emotional intelligent leaders know how to handle conflicts and manage them in a positive way. In these cases, leaders can stay calm and compose while showing empathy towards their team members. By using emotional intelligence leaders will be able to diffuse any kind of tension and create a harmonious environment (Jain & Ackerson, 2023).

When discussing what makes a good leader there are a few things that need to be taken into consideration. A good leader needs to have some characteristics and skills that can help them transform into an effective leader. Some of them are honesty and integrity, confidence, self-awareness, and empathy. Firstly, integrity is one of the most fundamental traits of a leader since it is the foundation of trust between leaders and followers. The practices of leaders demonstrate the level of openness about their purpose to their followers. Another important trait of an effective leader is having self-confidence. Employees want to work for someone who shows that they are self-confident of their decisions (Gutterman, 2023, pp. 8-9).

Rewinding back at the beginning of this paper we explored Goleman's theory about the five domains which included self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. It appears that these domains are characteristics that are essential for effective leadership. As already explained before, self-awareness is the ability for an individual to recognize and understand their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and needs. According to Goleman, self-awareness seems to be one of the most important traits of leadership as leaders are required to make constant judgements on themselves and others. Therefore, people who know how to

assess themselves in an honest way are capable of doing it for the organization as well (Goleman, 2021, pp. 28,30). Self-awareness for leaders is necessary as it not only helps them recognize their strengths and areas of improvement but also helps them to not make decisions based on emotions. Leaders who are self-aware are more effective and capable of inspiring their employees (Cecchi-Dimeglio, 2024).

The second domain, which is self- management, is also important for leaders. Self-regulation creates an opportunity to acknowledge emotions and stop them from making decisions on impulse. The ability to control feelings and impulses helps to create an environment of trust and fairness. This results in employees becoming more productive, engaged and lowers the percentage of turnover (Goleman, 2021, pp. 30-31). Generally, if leaders are aware of their personal emotions and know how to effectively manage them, then they will be able to manage the emotions of their subordinates as well. Studies have shown that leaders who are able to identify their own emotions are capable of identifying the emotions of their peers. Another positive outcome of leaders knowing their emotions is that they make better decisions. Having emotional intelligence is a huge advantage as it allows leaders to motivate their employees but also be more open minded and flexible. Additionally, if leaders know how to manage emotions, then they know how to alleviate negative events and help to redirect their employees' moods (Fianko et al., 2020, pp. 227-228).

The third domain, which is empathy, is one of the most crucial characteristics that leaders must have. Goleman states that leaders who have empathy know how to consider the emotions of their employees especially when making decisions. Moreover, leaders who take into consideration their employees' perspective means that they acknowledge their emotions. For example, if leaders let their employees speak up about things that frustrate them it may guarantee that there will be less tension and conflict within the team (Goleman, 2021, pp. 34-35). Leaders who can put themselves into the shoes of others show that it can help them

understand the causes of a conflict and find solutions to the problems. When there are conflicts in the organization emotions may run high, resulting in making it difficult to communicate with others. Hence, leaders who are high in EQ know how to handle this situation (Babatunde,2023, pg.156). Leaders who know how to use empathy are already in an advantageous position as they can perceive themselves and others in a more emotional way. They might use more emotional communication and inspirational leadership to communicate their messages. Empathy is needed as it is the key for effective leadership and success (Fianko et al., 2020, pp. 227-228).

Lastly, social skills have a significant meaning as it shows how leaders can manage their relationships with others. Goleman states that social skills are not as simple as they sound as it requires to show friendliness with a purpose. Leaders use friendly tactics in a way to direct their employees in the desired direction whether this is a new strategy or agreement. People know how to be effective in their job when they know how to understand and control their emotions as they can empathize with others. In these cases, motivation contributes to social skills as people like to be optimistic and are driven to achieve their goals. Social skills are crucial as they help to manage teams. With no doubt leaders are aware that in order to accomplish their goals they need to have social skills. If a leader is unable to express themselves then the organization is set to failure. Additionally, motivation will be useless if a leader cannot communicate their passion and vision for organization. Therefore, social skill is the ability that allows them to express themselves in an effective way (Goleman, 2021, pp. 37, 39).

Finally, emotional intelligence is a critical indicator for effective leadership since it helps leaders to recognize the emotional state of their employees and helps them find solutions to problems. If leaders create an environment where employees can share their emotional experiences, then it will influence the performance of employees. By having emotional intelligence, leaders can monitor their employees and shape their perception of work and help

them with their needs. On the contrary, if leaders and managers lack emotional intelligence then it will be difficult to build good relationships with their peers, colleagues, and clients (Fianko et al., 2020, pp. 229- 230).

7.How can Human Resources help with the development of EQ?

After carefully explaining the importance of emotional intelligence, now is the appropriate time to suggest ways that Human Resources (HR) can take part in developing and improving employees' emotional literacy. First of all, it is expected that conflicts can unfold into the workplace and HR would be one of the main sources of resolving the disagreements between employees. However, for that to happen HR professionals should possess traits of emotional intelligence. Professionals with high emotional intelligence will be able to defuse and eliminate demanding situations by showing empathy and understanding towards employees' problems.

In the workplace it is imperative that not only HR professionals are equipped with emotional intelligence but also the employees of the organization as well. To accomplish that there are two functions in HR that can help to incorporate emotional intelligence. The first function is recruitment and selection, and the second function is training and development. According to Kaur (2011) during the hiring and selection process HR professionals tend to focus on the candidate's educational qualification, skills, and experience. However, it would be ideal to not only focus on these qualifications but also focus on the emotional competencies that fit the role. For example, if an organization is hiring a CEO, it would be ideal to see if they have competencies such as self-confidence, optimism, motivation, and self-regulation. Similarly, if they hire managers they could focus on emotional competencies like self-control, trustworthiness, and achievement. Therefore, depending on what competencies the

organization is seeking in a candidate, they should adopt the appropriate methods to evaluate them (Kaur, 2011, pp. 10-11).

One of the most common methods that are used to qualify someone's abilities are behavioral questions during the interview. For example, through the interview HR will be able to understand a candidate's behavior, thoughts, and feelings regarding specific scenarios. Another effective approach is to create a self-report questionnaire for candidates in which they will explain their behaviors in specific settings. This tactic will help to predict candidates' emotional characteristics. It is important to note that the influence of EQ starts from the retention and recruitment. Generally, the hiring process is crucial as the person who is in charge of hiring should be emotionally intelligent themselves (Kaur, 2011, pg. 11).

The second function, which is about training and development, concerns the employees that are already part of the organization. To cultivate the emotional intelligence of employees, they need to undergo training and development, which requires a lot of effort and maintenance. In this case there are various strategies and approaches that HR can employ to cultivate their emotional literacy. The first step of all is to assess the organizational needs. By determining and identifying the skills that are more critical for the job, it will be easier for HR to develop a training program that will help them enhance the necessary competencies. The second step is to evaluate the individual. By understanding what the weaknesses and the strengths of the individual are it will be easier to provide feedback that will help them develop their skills. The third step is to set clear goals. It is evident that employees need to know what kind of competence is and how to acquire it (Kaur, 2011, pp. 11-12).

Hence, in order for the employees to develop their skills, HR needs to develop training that will encourage and motivate employees to participate. One way to approach it is to make the training in fun way by playing games. By letting employees get to know each other through

a relaxing activity or sports match it gives them an opportunity to come closer and learn things about them. In reality, empathy and emotional intelligence cannot be cultivated if people are not given the opportunity to spend some quality time together. Generally, it is easier to understand someone at work and empathize with them if you spend time together in a non – work related activity. Another way to help employees to improve their emotional intelligence is by prioritizing frequent communication. By scheduling meetings regularly, it will help to keep the organization in check but also help employees learn to understand EQ in a more practical way (Boogaard, 2023).

Lastly, one of the most frequent problems that arises in the organizations is the conflict between employees. As a result, employees may become unhappy and disengaged. In these situations, emotional intelligence is the prime tool for managing conflicts. What HR can do is to implement policies and procedures that help in addressing team and interpersonal conflicts. One way to do this is to create programs in which employees can develop their social skills. The majority of the time that conflicts may arise is due to the fact that employees may have different personalities or because they may lack communication skills. That is why it is important to foster training sessions in which employees can strengthen their communication skills. During these training sessions the program can focus on teaching the employees skills on how to understand, resolve and negotiate conflicts effectively (Gonzales, 2023, pp.198 - 199). Finally, both functions are equally important since they help in integrating emotional intelligence and make the workplace more successful.

8. Conclusion and suggestions

Taking everything into consideration, emotional intelligence is undeniably a crucial factor that workplaces need in order to excel. The main aim of this paper was to explore the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace as well as to investigate how EQ can affect the well-being of the employees. In this study, we attempted to illustrate the different variables and angles that may be affected if emotional intelligence is not present. This research paper began by providing some background on the theoretical framework of EQ and attempted to explain the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence from childhood. We concluded that childhood, socialization, and culture greatly influence individuals as they are the foundation for shaping experiences and affect growth and development later in life.

After providing the necessary background information on EQ, we continued to explore the chapter of emotional intelligence within the context of workplace. We started by explaining how workplace relationships can affect the well-being of the employees. More specifically, we showcased how not having EQ would not only create conflicts between employees but also cause stress. Afterwards we moved on to the aspects of job satisfaction, work-life balance, environment, and culture. All these factors are interconnected with each other as they can have a domino effect on the mental health of employees. These factors demonstrated how not having emotional intelligence would result in employees feeling dissatisfied and disengaged.

The last chapter of this paper was about the importance of having emotionally intelligent leaders and managers. This chapter was one of the most important ones as leaders and managers are the main link to make an organization successful. We concluded that an organization without good leaders and managers is doomed to fail. To sum it up, emotional intelligence is equally important as IQ so workplaces should focus on enhancing both emotional competencies and cognitive and intellectual skills. Both of them are necessary for

organizations to succeed so it would be ideal to prevent them from making distinctions and focusing only on IQ.

If organizations wish to improve and grow, then emotional intelligence is one of the best ways to achieve that. As we have seen throughout this paper emotional intelligence is an element that affects a wide range of components such as childhood, culture, relationships, productivity, well-being, job satisfaction and leadership. Generally, organizations should focus on finding ways to improve all these factors by implementing emotional intelligence. We would suggest that companies and management take into account the issue of EQ as an integral aspect of life. Organizations should focus on allowing their employees to express their emotions and help them address them properly instead of neglecting them. In addition, some employees seem to be emotionally intelligent, but they feel that it is better to eliminate the idea of expressing their emotions as they believe it is more beneficial for the organization. Our suggestion for that would be to provide psychological support given by professionals which will help them keep their emotions on track. Also, HR could provide opportunities that enable them to express their emotions and opinions. An additional suggestion would be that organizations should organize activities or events once a month where employees can bond with each other and help them alleviate stress.

On the other hand, employees should also take time and try to improve their emotional intelligence on their own. They should try and pay more attention to their emotions by becoming self-aware and doing self-management. In these cases, they could try and analyze their behavior in certain situations and try to receive some feedback from their colleagues. Also, they should try and be more understanding of their coworker behavior before having explosive outbursts and take their anger on them. Finally, it would be good to not suppress their emotions as it will make them unhappy and depressed.

In conclusion, the current work culture and workspace require changes in approach by companies, management, and the human resources departments. The current cost of living, the non-competitive salaries of blue-collar jobs in comparison to jobs that were previously considered high profile or well-paid (such as lawyers, accountants etc.) render the current job market unsatisfactory, as also evident through the “*Great Resignation*”. Employees take into consideration the benefits, the management, and a human centric approach to work, since salaries are insufficient and benefits non-existent, there is not much incentive for people to accept poor management. Emphasizing and enhancing emotional intelligence in the workplace can attract employees, increase employee satisfaction and productivity.

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