

Self Image Awareness is The Panacea for Growth and Success: A Case Study Conducted on The Middle Level Female Managers of A Government Insurance Organisation, Delhi

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Abstract

Self image awareness implies better self understanding and effective analysis of self emotions and others emotions. The objective of the self awareness process is to create better self awareness, self knowledge, flexibility, adaptability and transformation. And it's the most important element in understanding of emotional intelligence. It has been found that leaders who strive for perfection and excellence observed that self image awareness, empower them to utilize their competencies and potentiality to its fullest, which in turn leads to organizational growth and development. Self image awareness enhances learning and development and also open up the avenues for creativity and innovation.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the degree of self awareness among female managers of a government insurance organisation, Delhi. Here in this study, a well structured questionnaire, consisted of 15 close ended questions followed by scores has been undertaken for the study.

Keywords: *Self image, self awareness, emotional intelligence, leadership, self –development.*

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of self image awareness is getting more cognizance in the today's competitive and turbulent environment. Self-image awareness is highly important for everyone and now a days organizations are emphasizing a lot of the self – image awareness workshops and training programs. It has been found that learning organisation are imbibing trends and tactics from the external environment and adopting changes accordingly. Currently, organizations are more inclined towards- Talent Management, Competency Mapping, Employee Engagement and six sigma in Human resource and in order to carry out such practices organizations are conducting self-image awareness programs. Self image awareness implies that a person can see himself or herself in more better way. According to Jones and Nisbett (1971), knowledge of behavioral variability leads to the conclusion that one's own behavior is responsive to and caused by the demands of the circumstances one has faced. Their finding then leads to the surmise that it is important to understand and become aware of oneself in order to handle complex and challenging situations.

Self-awareness is defined as “the capacity for introspection and the ability to reconcile oneself as an individual separate from the environment and other individuals”. It admits the experience of the self, and has been argued as implicit to the difficult problem of consciousness. One of the basic emotional skills is the ability to recognise different feelings and emotions emanating from within. Many people are unable to acknowledge their beliefs and are disposed to refuse them. As a result the HR function has undergone a spectacular alteration in its operation. Developing the human resources with regard to their self-awareness has become part and parcel of today's organizations which aim to enhance the right attitude and interpersonal skills of employees. It has been said that in order to be professionally sound you need to have your own SWOT analyses so that you will be able to understand the skill gap and would be able to fill that gap through the training and development. Various studies have shown that self image awareness is the most important aspect of emotional intelligence (Ashkansay&Dasborough, 2003). Emotional intelligence revolves around the understanding of self emotions and emotions of others. The aim of the self awareness process is to create better self –knowledge, flexibility and emotions. Self image awareness helps to identify

the strength and weaknesses and after identification of flaws it is the effort of the individual to make effective strategies to come out from the flaws.

There are a number of studies demonstrating the importance of self-awareness and it is continuously growing but there is not yet a comprehensive measure available to and capture this range of effects and outcomes. Instead, it has been found that each new study focuses on a different outcome, or that outcomes are investigated according to what is currently of wider interest in the psychological literature.

The goal of the self-awareness process is to create better self-knowledge, make transitions and strive for improvements, and lastly, accommodate for weaknesses. The self-awareness process brings into question one's identity by allowing one to compare themselves to others and their feedback in a new way. This form of comparison is seen as allowing evaluation of alternatives, identification of problems and progress towards goals. Sharon Merriman of the University of Georgia, Athens, has described the self-aware adult learner as one who:

- Has an independent, self-concept
- Can direct their own learning;
- Has accumulated a reservoir of life experience that can be a resource;
- Has learning needs closely related to changing social roles;
- Is problem centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge;
- Is internally motivated rather than externally, to learn;

Self image awareness results in digging deeper into our identity, traits, weaknesses and also sensitive reactions to the perception of others. The self image awareness theory postulates that such individuals who are very well aware of how others perceived them are better at incorporating information from others into their behavior. Leaders are more effective when they demonstrate that they are open to receive feedback and ready to incorporate such information into their behaviour. The aim of the self image analysis is to make the individual aware of their non productive traits and their repercussions as well, so that the people started adopting changes in themselves.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are various studies have been conducted on the self –image awareness. It has been observed that without self awareness skills, thinking can be distorted by self-deception-a thought process that can lead someone be manifested and cause them to mis communicate (Steiner,2014) Research has shown that highly self-aware individuals in

comparison to low self- aware individuals, perceive the content of their subjective experience more intensely and more acutely (Scheier and Carver, 1977,1981)and react more strongly to social rejection (Fenigstein, 1979) and know themselves better (Carver and Scheier,1981, Turner,1976). Self awareness motivates self-evaluation and self regulation: self –aware individuals found themselves in a better position than non self –aware individual to compare Wicklund,1972;Scheier and Carver,1988;see also Pinard,1992). Self awareness is not a destination point, but rather an emerging process where one continually comes to understand his or her unique talents, strength, sense of purpose, core values, belief and desires (p.324).Self – awareness affects, among many social behaviours,conformity and attitude change(Froming and Carver, 1981)and compulsive self-awareness mediates psychopathology especially depression and social anxiety){Buss,1980;Ingram,1990}.Fenigstein et al. wrote that “increased awareness of the self is both a tool and a goal” (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975, p. 522) while more recently an extensive review has demonstrated that different aspects of self-awareness, including mindfulness and rumination, mediate the impact of mindfulness-based interventions on mental health outcomes (Gu, Strauss, Bond, & Cavanagh, 2015). The importance of self-awareness goes beyond well-being and mental health to include substantial impacts on day-to-day functioning. It has important effects on performance, with reflection and mindfulness encouraging persistence with tasks despite performance-related stress (Feldman, Dunn, Stemke, Bell, & Greeson, 2014) and rumination related to interpersonal difficulties (Brinker, Chin, & Wilkinson, 2014).

The anticipation of how others perceive you is often referred to as other awareness (Mayor, Salovey & Caruso,2004).Emotional intelligence has been identified as an important component of self-awareness (Ashkansay &Dasborough,2003) and vice versa. Self – awareness has been explicitly identified as a key component of emotional intelligence (Gill, Ramsey & Leberman,2005;Goleman 2001). Emotional intelligence can be defined as the individuals potential to motivate oneself. Thus becoming more aware of oneself through increased awareness of how we are perceived by other is also a very important aspect of the emotional development. It allows us to understand the gap and can enable us to adopt changes in our behaviour and control our emotions more appropriately.This transcends into the workplace where emotional intelligence is important for job performance (Lopes, Grewal,Kadis,Gall &Salovey,2006)constructive conflict management (Bodtker &Jameson,2001)and

enabling leaders to effectively manage their emotions in order to cope with organisational changes and adjust accordingly (Lopes et al.,2006).

The self-awareness makes an impact on people's day-to-day lives and provides initial evidence of the outcomes associated with the practice of common mindfulness and self-awareness techniques(Steiner, 2014).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on Middle level female managers, i.e. Administrative officers and Assistant Managers with graduate and post graduate degree in different fields. In terms of experience, the female managers having experience from 5 years to 26 or more years of experience mostly with the same organisation of a very big government insurance company situated in Delhi. Data was collected from 55 female graduates and postgraduates with a mean age of 34.41 (range 22-56 years) The total sample size for the study was 100 but only 70% of the filled questionnaire were received, out of which only 55 completed questionnaire were selected for the analysis. The percentage method was applied as a statistical tool for the analysis. The selected instrument is developed by Shivalik Ventures Private Limited. The instrument consists of 15 close ended responses followed by a score assigned to every response. The analyses and interpretation is based on the total score obtained by respondents. The scores of the respondents are divided into four strata such as 40-50, 50-60, 60-70 and 70-80.The responded drawn score tested under the decided range and categorised the degree of self image awareness accordingly.

Data Analysis and interpretation

The purpose of this paper is to identify the range of self-image awareness and the moral obligations of

leaders in understanding and developing personal qualities. As leaders strive for excellence, self – improvement, and self-awareness that can empower them enough to unlock their own potential and the potential of their organizations. It is desirable in the organisations that every employee must be very well aware of their capacity of taking initiative and responsibility. Learning organisations are basically the developing organisation which took the initiative of adopting the latest practices and practices implementation in the organisation through new startegies and latest trends such as talent acquisition and management, competency mapping and employee engagement etc. The competency mapping is basically a drive to identify the key performance area and key potential area of the employees so that job matching would be effective and efficient and transforming employee into more productive assets. The analysis of this research paper based on the score obtained by the respondents and on the basis of that researcher has predicted the behaviour and perception of the respondents based on the categorisation. The range defines the traits, behaviour and responses under the different or challenging situations.

It has been observed that the respondents who scored lesser score are such people whose self image awareness is deplorable. They are not having much of insight of themselves. The attitudes of the individuals are submissive, and they feel a constant need for the approval and acceptance of others as their confidence level is zero. They don't like talking about themselves at all, and are afraid of letting go attitude. Such people refuse to make an effort to develop intimate relationships due to lack of information.

The female respondents self image does not quite correspond to the person they would like to be. By trying to project an ideal image, they err on the side of excess, in order to mask the insecurity.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents-

Respondents	Age	Respondents	Age	Respondents	Age
N1	22	N19	50	N37	30
N2	23	N20	50	N38	30
N3	25	N21	50	N39	30
N4	26	N22	50	N40	26
N5	27	N23	55	N41	26
N6	30	N24	55	N42	26
N7	34	N25	55	N43	26
N8	23	N26	35	N44	28
N9	25	N27	35	N45	28
N10	25	N28	35	N46	28

N11	25	N29	35	N47	28
N12	25	N30	27	N48	34
N13	45	N31	27	N49	34
N14	45	N32	27	N50	28
N15	40	N33	27	N51	28
N16	50	N34	30	N52	29
N17	50	N35	30	N53	30
N18	55	N36	30	N54	56
		N55	50		
		Mean	34.418182		
		SD	10.573711		

Table 1 shows that the average age of the respondents is 34.41years and standard deviation is 10.57

Scores	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80
Respondents	5	24	22	4
Mean	58.30909091			
SD	6.48037701			

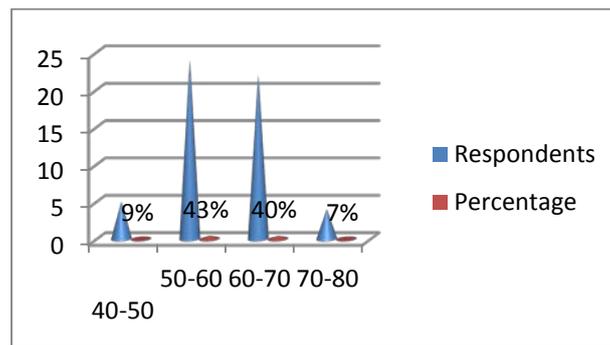


Fig: 1

Table 2 shows the scores of the respondents. The means value is 58.30 and standard deviation is 6.4. It is evident from the table that only 5 respondents' score is ranging between 40-50, which shows that the respondents which belongs to this score range are such type of people who want to make others believe that they are very high headed and an exceptional being individual. And end up believing it themselves. Such type of people convinced that they're always right, and incapable of respecting other people's points of view.

Above mentioned table 2 shows that maximum number of respondents ranging between 50-60 which highlighted that such types of respondents take criticism badly, and have a strong tendency to treat others as inferior, an attitude which is not particularly conducive to forming lasting friendships. Everyone possesses some good qualities - they are certainly not the only one! If

they create an impression of being accessible to others, it's because they want to prove their own superiority. Such people have a tendency to over impose themselves. Therefore, instead of having a magnetic personality, they seem to alienate well-balanced people, who probably find somewhat hard to take. On the other hand, such people seem to attract persons of submissive nature, who are easily depressed, and who lack self confidence. Such types of people are showing more traits like transactional leadership.

The above mentioned table 2 shows that 22 respondents are ranging between 60-70 scores. It is evident from the analysis that such respondents who belong to such score have excellent knowledge about themselves, which probably corresponds pretty close to reality. It has been found that people under this mentioned score like to accept themselves the way they are, and they

doubtlessly try to exploit their abilities to their fullest. Such type of people are balanced person who respects other people. They also a tolerant person and can proved to be the catalyst for the organisation. Such type of leaders can transform the organisational culture and would be able to bring about organisational change. They are the people who go with the time and make efforts to align with the need of the hour. They attract friendship with ease, and encourage open discussion among team members.

In addition to this, the respondents who scored second highest belongs to such people who feel good about themselves and it is evident that a good heart is the indication of the good health. It has also been found that a healthy mind leads to healthy employees who in turn make healthy organisation. Now a day's health of the employees is the major concern of the organisations that's why tremendous initiatives taken by the organisations to maintain the health of the employees such as yoga, meditation and flexible working hours etc. Which vary from organisation to organisation.

Lastly, the highest scorer is such people who are having goal clarity, they are much like such people who have no trouble attaining the goals which they design for themselves. They are the happiest people and they are pretty well aware of how to tackle the problem. They can be categorised as Transformational and level five leadership style.

In fig :1, when we analyses from the percentage perspective than it has been found that lowest percentage belongs to such category people who are actually touching the zenith in terms of self image awareness. Moreover, the majority of the female respondents belonged to score ranging between 50-70, which shows still they need to learn more regarding their own awareness. New York Times also emphasised that the self-awareness method called double-loop learning (Klosowki, 2014/life.hacker.com). Less common, but vastly more effective is the cognitive approach (Argyris, Klosowki, 2014/life.hacker.com). In his book, Thinking fast and Slow, researcher Daniel Kaheman point out that even after years of studying biases and basic human decision making, he still has all the faults he had before. Likewise a, a review article from the journal Current Directions in Psychological Science, points out that we have so many blind spots that self-awareness is often impossible. Essentially, we're driven to maintain a particular self-image to the point where we don't notice our own feelings.

Now, the analysis shows that the female employees are very well aware of themselves, they are having decision making ability and they are flexible

enough for learning and development. It has been observed that the majority (24) of the respondents is having a higher degree of self- image awareness, it might be due to task, challenges, responsibility and self image awareness. In terms of education, the data reveal that years of experience and post graduate degree is not having any direct impact with regard to the degree of self awareness. Hence, years of experience, post graduate and graduate degree are not a contributing factor in the degree of self-image awareness, however, individual self understanding, self recognition, self talk and observations play a dominant role. The self image awareness leads to identification of talents, competency, potentiality, knowledge, skill, ability which in turn contributes to the key performance area. All the organisations are more likely focussing on key performance indicators which based on self image awareness as self-improvement is not possible without self awareness because in self image awareness, individual collects data about herself/himself and brought changes accordingly. Socrates's ukase was "know thyself", self – knowledge requires more than intellectual examination. It demands knowing something about yourself and your feelings and responses, reflexes towards anything.

CONCLUSION

In humans, at least, self-awareness is pretty much taken for granted (Gallup, 1987). The individual can observe-acquire the self-information. Self-awareness is dependent upon a distance between the individual and himself- herself. There are various researches have made from more than a decade, which shows that self- awareness is a major contributing factor for the success, growth and development. Self- image awareness makes an individual to understand his/her own capabilities, intelligence, and potentiality. The above mentioned data reveals that most of the female managers in the insurance sector are very well aware of themselves and resultant which they are doing exceptionally well for the themselves and for the organisation as well. Undoubtedly, self –image awareness draws the line between do's and dont's hence, it may reduce the chances of errors. In other words, when an employee or organisation is pretty well acquainted with the available talent and potentiality then organisation would be more able to take the correct decisions resultant which growth and development takes place. In the light of the above discussion it can be summarised that self – image awareness is the need of an hour.

If we are not skilled in self-awareness or if we are in denial then we could not be able to understand ourselves and our personal needs, strengths and weaknesses. Studies shows that continuous learning

and development depends on accurate and meaningful knowledge about oneself. It has been observed that lack of self awareness can be devastating to the learning process and outcomes. The self-image awareness process provides individuals with greater control over events in their lives. Self-awareness becomes the most important ingredient of emotional intelligence. Available studies revealed that self-image awareness, acts as a panacea to combat complexity and chaos in contemporary organisations. It has also been found that certain time challenges make you realise your potentialities, skill and qualities this may in turn leads to talent identification.

Strategies for improving the self-image awareness:-

In the light of the available analysis and literature review, a researcher can suggest certain remedial measures for the self-image awareness and improvement. Such as –

- **Make efforts to analyse yourself objectively:** Although nearly impossible to actually analyse oneself objectively, but it's always worthy. Individuals have to apply a mirror analysis and asked their colleagues or friends for their feedback and take their criticism positively.
- **Keep a record:** It has been said that our memory colours the past incidents pretty deeply and a Senge (1995) also emphasised that individuals learns from their mistakes. Hence, if you want a more accurate gauge of yourself, then it is advisable to document the experiences like the organisations maintain their records in the form of Archives'. So, an individual can also maintain their own records and it is now a day's quite easy as well due to technology. Various apps are available on the mobile which will very helpful in maintaining your personal and professional information. If you want to have deeper understanding of your decision making skills, Harvard Business Review in one of the podcast suggests that writing down what you think will happen with a decision, then wait nine to ten months and review what you wrote.
- **Self-review or self -analysis:** It is always advisable to review yourself or do the autopsy of everything what you have done after a task. As self analysis laid a road for improvement.

It is very essential to know that self image awareness is introspective, but it is not a navel gawk. Self- absorption and pondering doesn't offer you anything but

being aware of your flaws and acting on them can help you to improve. You might not even realise that certain times what you are doing doesn't correlate to what you want.

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