

The impact of Emotional intelligence in the Digital Age

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital and automation obsessed world emotional intelligence is one important aspect which can differentiate a man from a machine. In this superbly technologically oriented world where most of us are crippled without a machine to help us it is a necessity for all of us to maintain our uniqueness in respect to machine. The uniqueness which differentiates us from a machine is our emotions towards different situations and people around us and how intelligently we handle these situations in a more human way. Simply put emotional intelligence is an aspect of human nature which helps all human being to understand themselves and others and try to overcome any problems or situations in a better way. Previously companies used to give more importance to IQ (Intelligent quotient) but now most of the companies are hiring those employees who are high on Emotional intelligence. The difference between intelligent quotient and emotional intelligence is that in intelligent quotient, people make smart decisions irrespective of people's feelings but in case of emotional intelligence, people make smart decisions by keeping people's feelings in mind. The decision made by keeping in mind people's feelings makes people happy and creates a happy and motivated environment within the organization. Intelligent quotient is from birth but emotional intelligence depends on the environment we are born in and our surroundings and this can be changed according to the situation. In this digital age where the environment is constantly changing and full of challenges where people have stopped thinking about others feeling, emotional intelligence is the only way where people would start feeling a sense of belongingness, start being happy, relieved, motivated and start enjoying life to the fullest. This case study sheds light on the fact that emotional intelligence is very important in today's automated world and also can also be a secret weapon which will help us survive and maintain our uniqueness before machine takes over human being in workplace.

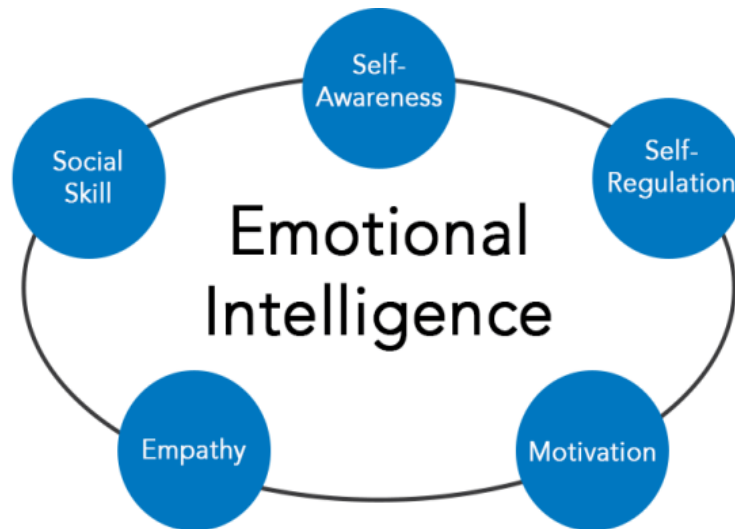
Key words: Emotional intelligence, Intelligence Quotient, Automation, Motivation, happiness, belongingness, machines and feelings.

Introduction

The concept of Emotional intelligence is not new but the name emotional intelligence was first invented in 1990 by two Yale University professors, John D. Mayer of UNH and Peter Salovey. John Mayer defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to accurately perceive your own and others emotions, to understand the signals that emotions send about relationships, and to manage your own and others' emotions." Source (Mayer John (January 2004), "Leading by feel", Harvard Business Review magazine). According to the definition given by Professor John Mayer of UNH, Emotional intelligence is such a behaviour which helps human being to emotionally analyse the

situation by keeping in mind people's feelings and take correct decision. It helps a person to become more emphatic, socially aware and helps in building longtime meaningful relations with colleagues and surrounding people so that any problem faced can be easily tackled and make the work environment a better place to work. Emotional intelligence makes a person more understanding and also helps in self-realization regarding one's potential and the person starts understanding how to handle a critical situation much better. It helps people to understand their strengths and weakness and in turn motivates them to work on their weak area and become much stronger to handle any situation better.

Key Components of Emotional intelligence



According to a Harvard Business Review article from 1998 titled “What makes a Leader”, the key components are the following:

- **Self-Awareness:** Understanding oneself and becoming aware of how one reacts to a particular change of situation in respect to challenges, work, relationship and also understanding the impact of one's change of behaviour on another person.
- **Self-Regulation:** Effectively managing one's natural emotion like anger, anxiety, frustrations, stress, fear depending on the situation in such a way that it does not affect the people around you or the organization. Through emotions like proper understanding, patience and trustworthiness any organization can be made more better so that people working are at ease and starts working towards achieving the organizational goal.
- **Self-Motivation:** Motivation is such a positive energy which is contagious and influences everyone to work efficiently and also creates a happy environment where people loves to stay in the organization. When a person is self-motivated the person is happy and starts working better and seeing one person others are also influenced and this increases efficiency and helps in career growth.

Empathy: Empathy is important in respect to emotional intelligence as it makes one-person unbiased. The person starts analysing the situation in a more humane way and also acceptance towards certain unfavourable situations becomes easy. This approach makes a person more popular and other people starts becoming more attached to these types of people. If a person is empathetic then that person develops a good interpersonal relationship with other people and this leads to a sense of trust, support and mutual understanding which helps in growth of the organization.

Social Skills: In this digital age developing good social skills is very important in respect to emotional intelligence. With social skills one starts developing a good interpersonal relationship with everyone in way of communication, conflict handling, team work and tiding over difficult situations. A person who is having good social skills should also be a good listener as this helps in solving many problems instantly. Through proper social skills a person starts getting cooperation from everyone and this helps in the growth of oneself and also the organization.

Background

In today's tech savvy digital world artificial intelligence through machine learning has captured the entire global market and has made us dependent on machines. Now a days for most of the job related

works we are entirely dependent on machines. This situation is making most of us scared and also is proving the theory correct which many experts in the start of the century had predicted that machines will replace human beings in every sphere and the world will be ruled by machines. It is now a matter of few years when humans will be replaced by machines. A time will come when machines can do each and everything which humans can do.

In the job market machines are being preferred to human beings as machines are doing the jobs more efficiently and more accurately than human beings, they can do the jobs in less time compared to human beings. Many HR managers in companies are also taking help of artificial intelligence for effective recruitment, career development, performance management, and interview and also predict human nature. By the help of data analysis algorithms many repetitive works are being conducted with the help of machines and people in charge of these types of repetitive works are getting enough time to do other important tasks which are beneficial for both employees and the organization. In organization machines are being used to chat with employees so that employee's engagement towards the organization increases. Artificial intelligence is also helping in weather forecasting, exam preparation for students, helping doctors to predict regarding patients' future diseases, helping airlines regarding passenger's details and also helping police in many ways. In short machines are in every sector and are proving to be better than human beings.

Then what is the future of human being? Is human being proceeding towards its doom? Is there no way to save human being from being replaced by machines? These questions are being asked by most of us and many researchers are also trying to find out an answer for the same. Through many reviews and researches we are now relieved to know that there are still hope left. The researches point out to the fact that however the machine tries it can never replace a human being as there are certain unique qualities a human being possesses which cannot be

replaced by a machine and human being will always be needed in workplace along with machines.

The unique quality which a human being possesses is emotional intelligence and this quality is the powerful weapon which will always make a human being needed in the workplace. Emotional intelligence is nothing new. Every human being possesses this quality from birth but till now this quality was taken for granted. Emotional intelligence is such a quality which makes a person understands his and others feelings. The person starts feeling for others, makes decision keeping in mind peoples feeling. This creates a sense of belongingness, happiness and positive environment which makes everyone stick to the present organization and thus the self and organization goal is achieved.

“Human beings can’t just plug in more servers when we reach our limits processing new information. Instead, we must rely on our own, often biased, preferences, habits, and rules of thumb.” Source: Harvard Business Review. According to the writers Barry Libert and Megan Beck of Harvard Business Review unlike machines when a human being reaches its limit it cannot plug in too many servers to recharge itself but can get recharged and start fresh by utilizing its unique qualities through emotional intelligence. Therefore it is necessary that in order to maintain ones position in the workplace in this digital age, artificial intelligence through its machine learning algorithms and human beings emotional intelligence come together as each one is incomplete without the other.

Why do we need emotional intelligence in the digital age?

Today's tech savvy job world consists of employees who belong to two types of generation. Generation X (born between 1965-1970) and Generation Y (born between 1982-1997). The workplace has become very diverse as Generation X contributes to 90% of the entire workforce and Generation Y also contributes to almost half of the workforce. It is

quite challenging for managers to manage such a diverse workforce. Both these generation are different in every aspect right from age differences, thinking, attitudes, decision making, capability, experiences, needs, aspirations and values.

The biggest challenge in front of any manager is bringing them together on the same platform and motivate them to think alike and work alike. In order to achieve the desired result, the managers have to understand each generation and try to come up with certain concrete plan which will motivate both the generations and make them come together and start working as one. This can only happen by gaining trust and mutual respect from both the generations. This can easily be done through emotional intelligence.

Importance of emotional intelligence in the digital age

In this machine dominated digital age the greatest challenge faced by any manager is managing its diverse workforce. It is simpler to manage machines rather than managing human beings. Human beings are having different feelings, aspiration, attitudes, values, experiences and managing all of these is a great task. Gone are the days where manager's job was to only give orders and people used to listen and do the job without uttering a single word. Now a day the situation is different. People are now more knowledgeable, experienced, smart, intelligent and efficient who won't do any job without being convinced regarding the same. Another challenge is that there is end number of job opportunities for capable people. In order to have employee retention, employee engagement, career development, efficient work force, employee succession and motivated work environment managers has to be a friend, philosopher and guide for the employees. This will enable a manager to understand its workforce much better and will give rise to a better understanding and motivated work environment.

The situations where emotional intelligence can act as a secret weapon for the managers are as follows:

- **Efficient Team-** In order to build an efficient and motivating team good managers has to set up a good work environment which consists of trust, mutual understanding, positive attitude and conflict resolution. This can only be achieved if the manager understands each of its team member's emotions and starts handling them with empathy and this can be achieved through emotional intelligence.
- **Change management-** In today's dynamic work environment there is change in every aspect right from project to team member. It is very difficult for every manager to cope up with this change. In order to be able to be successful in this ever-changing dynamic environment a manager has to understand the changes and also foresee how this change is going to affect the team performance and the organization and deal with this change is a very understanding way.
- **Change agent-** The manager's job is not only to give support and direction to its team mates but also to all those people who are associated with the organization. The kind of decision which the manger makes affects everyone; hence the decision should be made keeping in mind everyone's benefit. The manager can act as a change agent and start making decisions which is for everyone's benefit and also convey the same to everyone so that the organization is benefitted.
- **Career development-** In this unpredictable digital age job hopping is the latest trend. Employees don't stick to one job for a longer time as there are ample opportunities available. In order to make employees stick to a job for a longer time it is necessary that the smart managers should understand the need and chalk out a career development path so that the employees are motivated and start growing in the organization and also the organization starts growing. This effective career development path for employees can be only designed by

understanding people's needs through

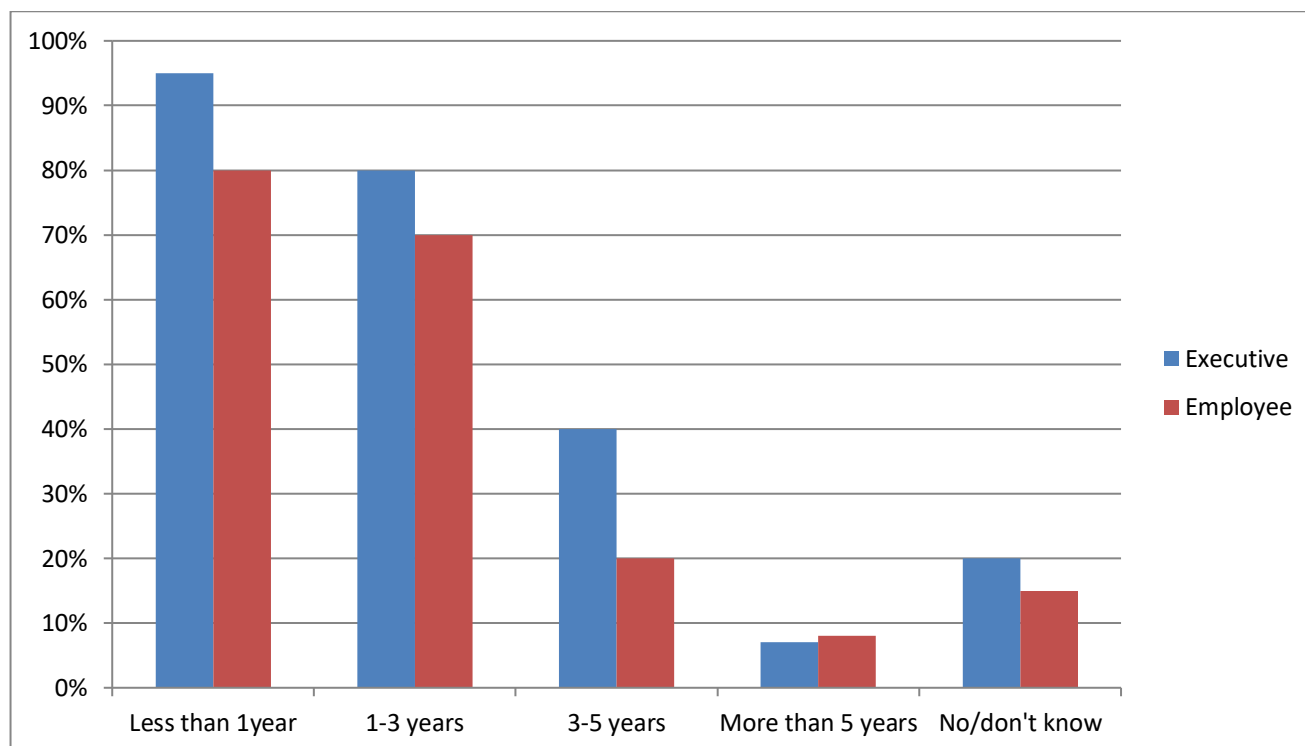
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Findings

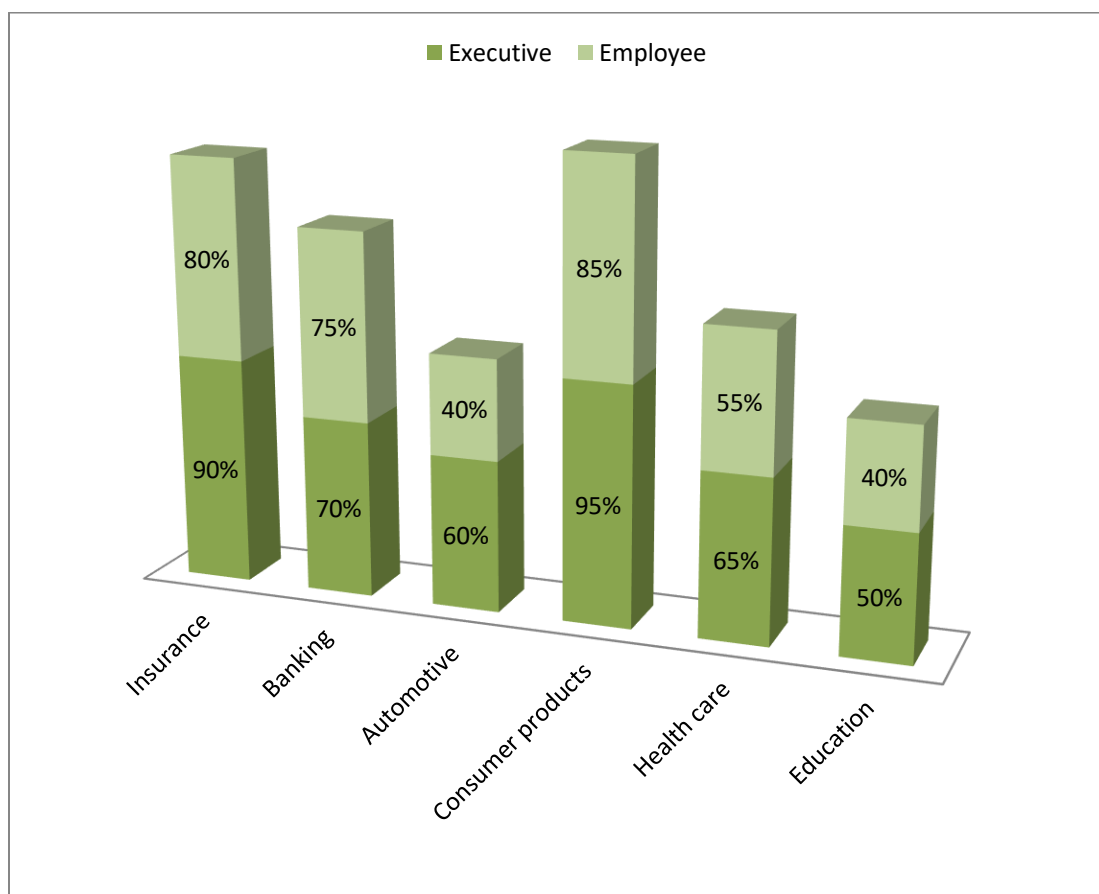
1. Emotional intelligence will be considered as an integral skill within 1-5 years

Figure 1



- The responses for the finding that “Emotional intelligence will be considered as an integral skill in the digital age within 1-5 years consists of two categories of people, **Executive**- represents senior management, Mid management and HR, **Employee**- represents those employees who are in non-supervisory role.
- Sample size N=100, N=50 for Executive and N=50 for Employee
- Figure 1 shows that 90% Executive and 80% Employee agree to the fact that Emotional intelligence will be considered as an integral skill in the digital age in a time span of less than one year.
- Figure 1 shows that 80% of the Executive and 70% of the Employee also agree to the fact that Emotional intelligence will be considered as an integral skill in the digital age in a time span of one to three years
- Figure.1 also shows that 40% of the Executive and 20% of the Employee also agree that emotional intelligence will be considered as an integral skill in the digital age within three to five years
- Figure 1 also points out to the fact that majority ranging from 80 to 90 % of people are of the view that “Emotional intelligence is actually an integral skill in the digital age” and should be practised seriously so that human can survive in this digital age with ease

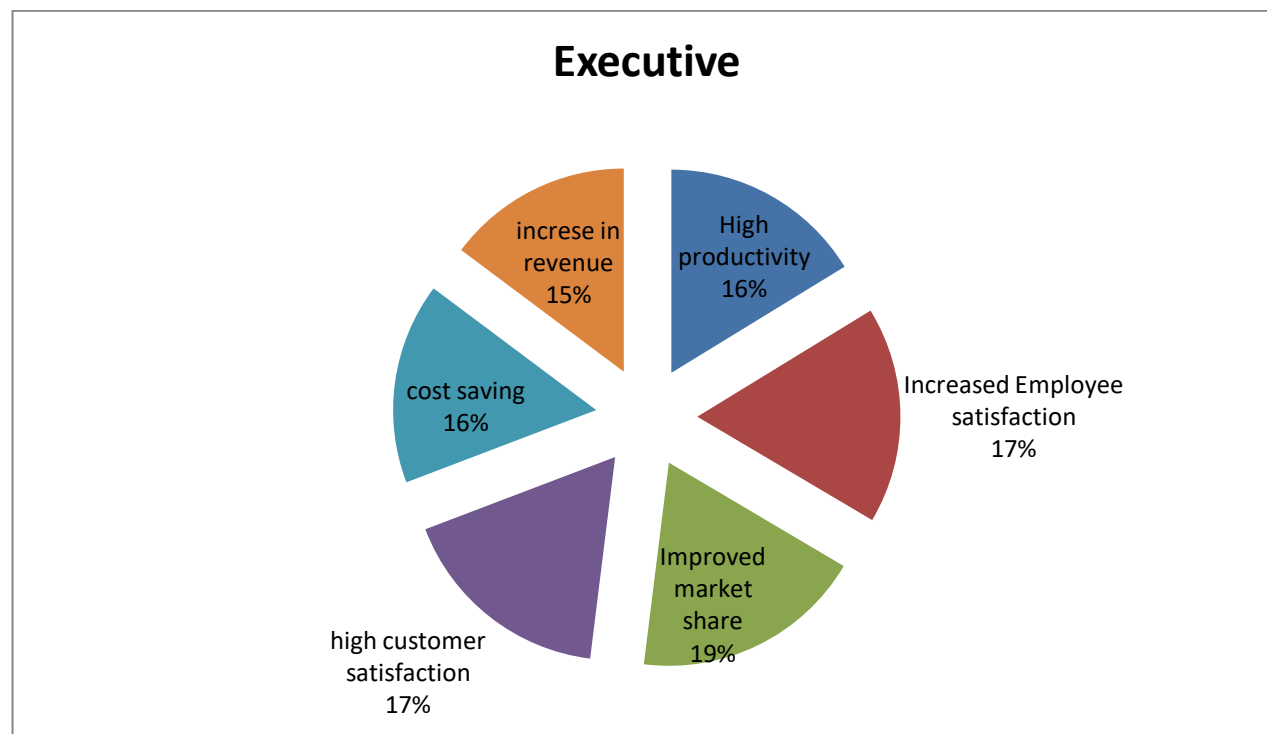
2. Sector wise Emotional intelligence is an important skill set in the digital age.

Figure 2

- The response to the finding that “Sector wise Emotional intelligence is an important skill set in the digital age” consists of 2 categories of respondents **Executive**-represents senior management, Mid management and HR, **Employee**- represents those employees who are in the non-supervisory role.
- Sample size N=100, N= 50 for Executives, N=50 for Employees
- Figure 2 states that 90% of Executives and 80% of Employees agree to the fact that Emotional intelligence is an important skill set in the Insurance sector
- Figure 2 states that 70% of Executives and 75% of Employees agree that Emotional intelligence is an important skill set for Banking sector
- Figure 2 states that 60% of Executives and 40% of the Employee agree that emotional intelligence is an important skill set in Automotive sector
- Figure 2 states that 95% of Executives and 85% of the employees agree that emotional intelligence is an important skill set in consumer product sector
- Figure 2 states that 65% Executives and 55% Employees agree that emotional intelligence is an important skill set in Health care sector
- Figure 2 states that 50% Executives and 40% Employees agree to the fact that emotional intelligence is an important skill set in Education sector
- Hence this finding proves that in this digital age Emotional intelligence is important in every sector and we cannot ignore it.

3. Emotional intelligence is instrumental in organisational growth

Figure 3



- The response to the finding “Emotional intelligence is instrumental in organisational growth” consist of one category of respondent, **Executive**- represents Senior management, Mid management and HR.
- Sample size N=50
- Figure 3 states that Emotional intelligence contributes to 15% more increase in present revenue.
- Figure 3 states that Emotional intelligence contributes to 16% more increase in present employee productivity rate.
- Figure 3 states that Emotional intelligence contributes to increased employee satisfaction by 17% in the present.
- Figure 3 states that Emotional intelligence contributes to high customer satisfaction by 17%.
- Figure 3 states that Emotional intelligence contributes to higher cost saving of the organisation by 16%.

The above finding clearly proves that Emotional intelligence is really beneficial from organisation point of view and it is the need of the hour to practise Emotional intelligence in every aspect of life.

Conclusion

In today's automated digital age human beings have embraced machines and have started behaving like machines. They are so much influenced and dependent on machines that for each small work they take help of machine. Somewhere down the line human beings have forgotten to laugh, to connect with family, friends, colleagues and also have stopped feeling for others. They have become so stone-hearted that they don't think twice before making an important decision about what will be the effect on the other person? This nature has started creating lots of problems within the organisation in terms of demotivation, job change,

misunderstanding, dissatisfaction, low performance, high job turnover and rebellious nature of employees. In order to stop this and to make the organisation a better place where everyone is happy and motivated and are working efficiently it is the need of the hour for every manager and also an individual to practice emotional intelligence and analyse a particular situation with empathy so that people are not hurt and also decisions are conveyed in a much better way which would fulfil both the individual and the organisational objective.

Recommendations

In this digital Age artificial intelligence is the important trend. In this age in order to maintain ones position human being should be depending on emotional intelligence which is a boon for every mankind. Instead of being frightened of the fact that machines would take over human beings' position and that human being would be not accepted in the job market, it is but necessary for both man and machine to come together and build such a strong bond that machines with their ability of being perfect and human with its emotional intelligence can be a deadly combination to overcome any situation in the future.

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Authors Profile



Dr. Reena (Mahapatra) Lenka has 10 years of teaching experience as an HR faculty in different MBA institutes in Pune, India. She has 10 years of industrial experience as an HR person. She is presently working as an Assistant professor HR at Neville Wadia Institute of Management Studies and Research, Pune. India. Dr. Reena has 6 Publications out of which 3 Scopus publications to her credit in HR stream. She has also attended 2 International conferences. Dr. Reena (Mahapatra) Lenka's educational qualification: PhD (HR), MBA (HR), PGBDM (Marketing) and BSc (Bio-science).