THE IMPACT OF A TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO IMPROVE EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS OF RETAIL EMPLOYEES

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Abstract - The study aimed to examining the effect of a training program on developing emotional and social skills in retail employees, through a pre-and-post experimental design. The training program aimed at helping retail employees develop their skills in empathizing with others, understanding and managing emotions, relationship building and conflict management. An experimental group of 92 employees was exposed to 11 hours of training in three sessions, while a control group of 26 employees received only the pre- and post-assessment of the aforementioned skills. Both groups had to complete a series of actual and self-report measures of the trained skills administered three times: at the beginning of the training program, at the end, and three months later. Paired-samples t-test analysis showed that, in the experimental group, the training program was effective in (statistically significantly) improving the level of empathy, emotional self-awareness, and relationship building, but improvements in emotional self-regulation and conflict management were not significant. Furthermore, three months later, a lower but significant improvement in empathy was found. On the other hand, no significant change was found in the control group. Our findings suggest that such a training program, despite its short duration, can be used to effectively empower the emotional and social skills in retail employees.

Keywords - Emotional Skills, Retail, Social Skills, Training Program