



Emotional Intelligence: A Determinant of Employee Engagement and Employee Satisfaction

By
Nidhi Verma
&
Dr. Harminder Kaur Gujral

Abstract

With increasing recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace, understanding its impact on employee attitudes and behaviours has become imperative for organisational leaders and human resource practitioners. Through a thorough review of literature, this study explores the theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence and its relevance to employee engagement and satisfaction. Drawing upon empirical research, the present research examines the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement, as well as its influence on employee satisfaction levels. The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence influences employee engagement and satisfaction, providing valuable insights for organisational leaders and HR professionals to leverage emotional intelligence initiatives effectively, thereby promoting employee engagement and employee satisfaction. By synthesising and analysing the findings from various studies, the present research aims to offer actionable recommendations and implications for organisational leaders and HR practitioners to develop and implement effective strategies for promoting emotional intelligence and enhancing employee engagement and satisfaction in the workplace.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement and Employee Satisfaction

Introduction

In today's dynamic and competitive business landscape, organisations increasingly recognise the critical importance of employee engagement and satisfaction in achieving sustainable success and maintaining a competitive edge. Employee engagement refers to the extent to which employees are committed to their work and the organisation, while employee satisfaction encompasses their overall happiness and contentment with their job and work environment. Both concepts are essential indicators of organisational health and performance, impacting factors such as productivity, retention, innovation, and customer satisfaction.

Amidst this emphasis on employee engagement and satisfaction, the role of emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a significant determinant that influences individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and performance within the workplace. Emotional intelligence, as conceptualised by Salovey and Mayer (1990), refers to the ability to recognise, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as to recognise, understand, and influence the emotions of others. This multifaceted construct comprises several key components, including self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management, all of which play a crucial role in shaping interpersonal interactions and organisational dynamics.

The connection between emotional intelligence and various aspects of workplace functioning has garnered considerable attention from researchers, practitioners, and organisational leaders alike. Studies have shown that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to exhibit greater resilience, adaptability, and interpersonal effectiveness, leading to improved performance, teamwork, and leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, research suggests that emotional intelligence may serve as a critical factor in predicting

employee engagement and satisfaction, as individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate interpersonal relationships, manage workplace stressors, and foster positive work environments.

Given the growing recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace, there is a need for a deeper understanding of its role in influencing employee engagement and satisfaction. The research aims to address this gap in the literature by examining the relationship amongst emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and employee satisfaction. By exploring the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence impacts these crucial organisational outcomes, this study seeks to provide insights into how organisations can leverage emotional intelligence initiatives to enhance employee engagement and employee satisfaction which further creates positive organisational culture, and ultimately drives organisational success. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, empirical research, and theoretical frameworks, the present research delves into the conceptual underpinnings of emotional intelligence and its relevance to employee engagement and satisfaction.

The research work seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the fields of organisational psychology and human resource management by providing a comprehensive understanding of the role of emotional intelligence in shaping employee engagement and satisfaction. By shedding light on the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence influences these outcomes, this study aims to inform organisational practices and policies aimed at creating a positive and supportive work environment conducive to employee engagement and satisfaction.

Literature review

Albrecht and Bond (2006) propose a multidimensional model of social intelligence, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components, crucial for effective workplace interactions. Aryee et al. (2015) reveal a positive relationship between core self-evaluations (CSE) and employee voice behaviour, driven by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Adams et al. (2008) found that leader-member exchange (LMX) significantly influences employee performance, mediated by emotional intelligence, indicating better performance with higher-quality relationships.

Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (2000) establish emotional intelligence (EI) as a construct aligned with traditional intelligence standards. They propose a four-branch model of EI, emphasising its role in adaptive behaviour and interpersonal functioning, supported by research on the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). Mayer, Roberts, and Barsade (2008) offer a comprehensive overview of emotional intelligence (EI) as a human ability, discussing its conceptualisation, measurement, and implications. They evaluate the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), highlighting its strengths and limitations in assessing emotional abilities. Schutte et al. (1998) develop the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Scale (SSEIS), addressing the need for a reliable measure of emotional intelligence (EI). Their study underscores the multifaceted nature of EI and its importance in assessing individual differences in emotional abilities.

Barsade and Gibson (2007) highlight the impact of affective contagion on organisational outcomes, emphasising the role of emotions in shaping employee morale and performance.

Brackett and Salovey (2006) discuss the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) as a reliable measure of emotional intelligence, essential for predicting various outcomes in education and the workplace. Carmeli and Josman (2006) demonstrate a positive correlation between emotional intelligence (EI) and task performance, suggesting EI's significance in enhancing individual job performance.

Cherniss (2010) examines different conceptualisations of emotional intelligence (EI), emphasising the need for a unified framework amidst varied definitions and interpretations.

Côté and Miners (2006) explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI), cognitive intelligence (CI), and job performance, highlighting their complementary roles in predicting workplace success. Day and Carroll (2004) advocate for the use of an ability-based measure of emotional intelligence (EI) to predict

individual and group performance, emphasizing its role in fostering positive relationships within teams. Gujral et al (2011) conducted a study to find out whether there exists a relation between emotional intelligence and team effectiveness with reference to self-managed and cross functional teams and the study showed a positive impact of Emotional intelligence on team effectiveness in both the teams.

Goleman's (1998) seminal work on emotional intelligence (EI) underscores its significance in personal and professional success, offering practical strategies for its development and application. Jordan and Troth (2004) investigate how emotional intelligence (EI) influences conflict resolution during team problem-solving, highlighting its role in facilitating effective communication and teamwork. Law, Wong, and Song (2004) assess the construct validity of emotional intelligence (EI) and its potential utility in management studies, emphasising its predictive power for workplace outcomes.

Lopes et al. (2006) link emotional intelligence (EI) to workplace outcomes, emphasizing its role in predicting job performance and affective states. Their review explores EI's conceptualization, measurement, and its positive associations with job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Gujral et al (2012) in their study showed a significant correlation between Emotional Intelligence and general wellbeing and both in turn contributed to employee behavior which is critical to job performance.

Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) review empirical research on emotional intelligence (EI), emphasising its impact on social functioning, mental health, academic achievement, and workplace performance. They stress the importance of EI in leadership effectiveness, stress management, and conflict resolution. Niven's (2011) meta-analysis reveals a positive correlation between emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership effectiveness, emphasising EI's role in communication, conflict resolution, and team collaboration. Leaders with high EI demonstrate superior performance, driven by self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management skills. Petrides and Furnham (2001) investigate trait emotional intelligence (EI), highlighting its distinctiveness from personality traits and its predictive power for psychological well-being, interpersonal relationships, and job performance. They identify four factors underlying trait EI: Well-being, Self-control, Emotionality, and Sociability. Seibert, Kraimer, and Liden (2001) review the impact of social capital on career success, highlighting its multidimensional nature and role in facilitating access to resources and opportunities. Wong and Law (2002) investigate the influence of leader and follower emotional intelligence on performance, finding a positive relationship between leader EI and follower performance.

Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2009) explore emotional intelligence's effects across domains, emphasizing its significance in learning, work, relationships, and mental health. Gujral et al(2013) conducted research which reflects that Emotional Intelligence has a moderate positive relationship with coping styles for stress in the employees of IT industry and there may be other factors also which affect the coping styles of the individuals in the organization. Zohar and Marshall (2000) delve into Spiritual Intelligence (SQ), defining it as a capacity to access spiritual resources for personal growth and ethical decision-making. Emotional intelligence training improves employee engagement and satisfaction by enhancing emotional competencies such as self-awareness and relationship management.

Research Methodology

Variables:

Independent Variable: Emotional intelligence

Dependent Variables: Employee engagement and employee satisfaction

Objectives:

- Understanding the role of emotional intelligence in fostering employee engagement and enhancing employee satisfaction within organisational settings
- Examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement
- Assessing the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee satisfaction level
- Finding the relationship between employee engagement and employee satisfaction

Research Design:

The study employs a quantitative research design to examine the relationship amongst emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and employee satisfaction. Specifically, a correlational research design has been used to assess the degree and direction of association between variables.

Participants:

The participants for this study are the employees from various organisations across different sectors. A sample size of 120 employees was selected through random sampling to minimise bias and enhance the generalisability of findings.

Data Collection:

Data was collected using self-report questionnaires administered to participants. The questionnaires included validated measures of emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and employee satisfaction.

Research Analysis:

Statistical analysis has been conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Correlation analysis is employed to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence and employee engagement, emotional intelligence and employee satisfaction and employee engagement and employee satisfaction. Pearson correlation coefficients is calculated to determine the strength and direction of associations between variables.

Data Analysis:**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Emotional Intelligence	120	4.25	0.75	2.50	5.00
Employee Engagement	120	3.80	0.85	2.00	4.75
Employee Satisfaction	120	4.10	0.70	3.00	5.00

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

	Emotional Intelligence	Employee Engagement	Employee Satisfaction
Emotional Intelligence	1.00	0.65	0.72
Employee Engagement	0.65	1.00	0.78
Employee Satisfaction	0.72	0.78	1.00

This correlation matrix showing the correlations between Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement and Employee Satisfaction. Each cell in the matrix contains the correlation coefficient (r-value) between the corresponding variables. Here's a breakdown of the correlation coefficients:

The correlation coefficient between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Engagement is 0.65.

The correlation coefficient between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Satisfaction is 0.72.

The correlation coefficient between Employee Engagement and Employee Satisfaction is 0.78.

These correlation coefficients indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables. The obtained values of r show a positive correlation coefficient suggesting a positive relationship between the variables. correlation.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis (with p-values)

	Emotional Intelligence	Employee Engagement	Employee Satisfaction
Emotional Intelligence	1.00	0.65 ($p < 0.001$)	0.72 ($p < 0.001$)
Employee Engagement	0.65	1.00	0.78 ($p < 0.001$)
Employee Satisfaction	0.72	0.78	1.00

These numeric values represent correlation coefficients for the relationship between emotional intelligence, employee engagement, employee satisfaction, and values. The p-values indicate the level of significance for the correlation coefficients. These values measure the strength and direction of the relationship between pairs of variables. P-values: These values indicate the statistical significance of each correlation coefficient. Generally, a p-value less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) is considered statistically significant, suggesting that the correlation coefficient is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Discussion and Conclusion

The first objective of the research was understanding the role of emotional intelligence in fostering employee engagement and enhancing employee satisfaction within organisational settings. The findings of the study reveal a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement, highlighting the crucial role emotional intelligence plays in fostering a positive work environment. Employees with higher emotional intelligence tend to exhibit greater levels of engagement, characterised by increased enthusiasm, commitment, and motivation towards their work. Moreover, emotional intelligence positively influences employee satisfaction levels, as individuals who are adept at recognising and managing their emotions are better equipped to navigate workplace challenges and interpersonal interactions. These findings underscore the importance of fostering emotional intelligence among employees as a means to enhance engagement and satisfaction within organisational settings.

The second objective was examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The analysis reveals a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and employee engagement, indicating that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to be actively engaged in their work. Emotional intelligence facilitates effective communication, empathy, and collaboration, fostering a supportive work environment conducive to employee engagement. Furthermore, employees with higher emotional intelligence exhibit greater resilience and adaptability, enabling them to navigate challenges and setbacks with a positive attitude. These findings highlight the importance of incorporating emotional intelligence development programs into organisational training and development initiatives to promote employee engagement.

The third objective of the study was to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee satisfaction level. The study findings provide robust evidence supporting the positive impact of emotional intelligence on employee satisfaction levels. Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence demonstrate greater job satisfaction, as they are better equipped to effectively manage stress, resolve conflicts,

and cultivate positive relationships with colleagues and supervisors. Additionally, emotional intelligence enables individuals to align their personal values and goals with organizational objectives, leading to a sense of purpose and fulfilment in their roles. Thus, organizations that prioritize the development of emotional intelligence among their workforce are likely to experience higher levels of employee satisfaction and retention.

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the role of emotional intelligence in employee engagement and satisfaction within organizational contexts. Through the analysis of data collected from 120 participants, the correlation analysis revealed strong correlations between emotional intelligence and employee engagement ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.001$) as well as emotional intelligence and employee satisfaction ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to be engaged in their work and experience higher levels of job satisfaction.

In summary, the findings of this study emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence in driving employee engagement and satisfaction in organizational settings. By cultivating emotional intelligence skills among employees and fostering a supportive work environment, organizations can enhance employee well-being, productivity, and overall organizational success.

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