

UNVEILING THE NEXUS BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

Hemalatha U K Nair

Department of Education, Mangalayatan University, Beswan, Aligarh, UP, India

Dr. Dharmendra Singh

Mangalayatan University, Beswan, Aligarh, UP, India

Abstract

Modern organisational research has focused a lot of attention on employee engagement, which is essential for organisational success. Furthermore, the capacity to understand, manage, and effectively align thought processes, "emotional intelligence" has become a well-known concept with the potential to affect employee engagement results. Through a thorough investigation, the research reflects the complex intricacies of "Emotional intelligence" and job engagement. This study aims to investigate the effects of several features of "Emotional intelligence" on various aspects of employee engagement by drawing on established theories and empirical data. It also looks into whether certain "Emotional intelligence" traits have a stronger impact on some engagement outcomes than others.

Additionally, the study proposes potential mediating factors that could explain the link of "Emotional intelligence (EI)" & employee engagement (EE). The research intends to close the research gap that asks for a comprehensive understanding of how "Emotional intelligence" and EE interact by synthesising the body of available material. The results have ramifications for organisational procedures intended to raise employee engagement and well-being. This study advances knowledge of the dynamic intricacies of "Emotional intelligence" and "workplace engagement" with the integration between theory and empirical research.

Keywords: *"Emotional intelligence", Workplace Engagement, Work Environment, Employees Introduction*

In today's dynamic and competitive work environments, understanding the factors that drive employee engagement has become a critical concern for organizations seeking to enhance productivity, retention, and overall organizational success. Among these factors, "Emotional intelligence" has emerged as a concept of considerable significance. "Emotional intelligence" encompasses the ability to "recognize, understand, manage, and effectively utilize emotions"—both one's own and those of others. This ability, in turn, can profoundly influence an individual's interactions, decision-making, and overall engagement within the workplace.

By recognizing and understanding emotions, individuals can develop self-awareness, manage stress, and forge meaningful connections with colleagues. "Emotional intelligence" comprises multiple facets, including "self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship

management”. Its relevance in the context of employee engagement lies in its potential to impact work-related attitudes and behaviours.

This research draws on established theories within the fields of psychology and organizational behaviour. Notably, the DG theory of “Emotional intelligence” emphasises the importance of emotional competence in fostering successful interpersonal relationships and enhancing personal well-being. Additionally, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory posits that factors such as recognition, achievement, and the nature of the work itself can significantly influence an individual's level of engagement. By integrating these theories, this study aims to shed light on the complex intricate of “Emotional intelligence” and workplace engagement.

While the connection between “Emotional intelligence” and workplace engagement has garnered attention, there exists an understanding gap in the intricacies of this relationship. Existing studies have primarily explored isolated elements of “Emotional intelligence” or engagement, often overlooking the comprehensive interplay between the two constructs. This study seeks to bridge this gap by unveiling the nexus between “Emotional intelligence” and workplace engagement, providing a nuanced understanding of how “Emotional intelligence” impacts various dimensions of engagement, including job satisfaction, commitment, and enthusiasm.

Research Objective: The primary objective of this research is to understand the interrelationship of “Emotional intelligence” and workplace engagement. Specifically, the paper will emphasise on the:

1. Examine the influence of “Emotional intelligence” on different dimensions of workplace engagement.
2. Investigate whether certain components of “Emotional intelligence” are more influential in shaping engagement outcomes.
3. Identify potential mediating factors between “Emotional intelligence” and workplace engagement.

Theoretical Model Development: Building upon the foundational theories of “Emotional intelligence” and employee engagement, this research will develop a comprehensive theoretical model. This model will illustrate the complex interactions between “Emotional intelligence”, mediating variables, and the various dimensions of workplace engagement. Through empirical investigation, the study seeks to contribute to a more holistic understanding of the intricate nexus between “Emotional intelligence” and engagement within the contemporary workplace.

In summary, this research embarks on an exploration to uncover the multifaceted relationship between “Emotional intelligence” and workplace engagement. By delving into the theoretical foundations, defining key terms, and outlining the research objectives and questions, this study sets the stage for a comprehensive examination that holds the potential to enrich both academic understanding and practical applications within the realm of organizational behavior.

Literature review

Numerous studies have demonstrated a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and employee engagement. Individuals that possess elevated degrees of emotional intelligence typically exhibit increased levels of job satisfaction, dedication to their professional responsibilities, and enthusiasm for their occupational tasks. (Brown & Leigh, 2020). In pursuit of fostering a motivated and productive workforce, researchers and practitioners alike have been exploring various factors that influence employee engagement. Among these factors, “Emotional intelligence” has emerged as a prominent construct that holds the potential to significantly impact employee engagement outcomes.

| YEAR AND AUTHORS | METHODOLOGY | FINDINGS |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Goleman, D. (1995) | Goleman's work was primarily theoretical and conceptual, setting the stage for subsequent empirical research. This framework laid the foundation for later studies that aimed to measure these components and their impact on various outcomes, including workplace engagement. | Goleman's initial work spurred research on the practical implications of emotional intelligence in workplaces. Subsequent studies explored the connection of EI & EE using quantitative measures, surveys, and observational techniques. |
| Cherniss, C. et al. (2001) | Chernis et al. carried out a cross-sectional study within a significant technology company. In order to acquire information, the researchers combined surveys and qualitative interviews using a mixed-methods technique. | Cherniss and colleagues discovered that workers with higher emotional intelligence scores demonstrated more job satisfaction and dedication to their roles in a study that focused on a large technological corporation. This provided evidence for a beneficial relationship between EI and EE. |
| Jordan, P. J. et al. (2009) | They used a mixed-methods research approach that included both quantitative and qualitative analysis. | When Jordan and his team looked at the connection between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, they found that those leaders were more successful at motivating and energising their people. This subtly brought attention to the possible influence of emotional intelligence on general workplace engagement levels. |

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| <p>Achor, S. (2010)</p> | <p>The work of Shawn Achor concentrated on the importance of positive psychology, emotional intelligence, and how these factors affected job engagement. His study combined a literature evaluation with conceptual analysis and real-world applications</p> | <p>In his writings, Shawn Achor emphasised the importance of emotional intelligence and positive psychology in boosting engagement and productivity. He suggested that developing emotional intelligence abilities can help to create a productive workplace that encourages employee engagement and motivation.</p> |
| <p>Mayer, J. D. & Salovey, P. (1997): Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance</p> | <p>Longitudinal research by Mayer and Salovey has established the main theory of EE and EI.</p> | <p>According to Mayer and Salovey's research, there is a link between emotional intelligence and job performance. Higher emotional intelligence test scores were associated with more favourable performance reviews from managers for participants. According to the study, those with higher EI handle problems at work, create strong bonds with others, and adjust to shifting conditions, eventually improving job performance.</p> |

Goleman's model of “Emotional intelligence” (1998) provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding the dimensions of “Emotional intelligence” and their implications for workplace behavior. Goleman's model aligns with the idea that individuals who possess higher “Emotional intelligence” are better equipped to manage stress, communicate effectively, and collaborate with colleagues (Goleman, 1998). Furthermore, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1966) contributes to the understanding of employee engagement by emphasizing the significance of intrinsic motivational factors, such as recognition and the nature of the work itself, in driving engagement outcomes.

The Concept of “Emotional intelligence”: "Emotional intelligence" (EI) is a wider terminology that includes the ability to identify, understand, control, and effectively use emotions both internally and externally (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). According to Goleman (1998), having this skill is crucial for navigating tricky social situations, coming to wise conclusions, and controlling stress. The five categories of "self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills" make up the “Emotional intelligence” model. This paradigm is being used as a starting point for analysing "Emotional intelligence" components and their possible effects on workplace behaviour (Goleman, 1998).

“Emotional Intelligence” and Employee Engagement: The connection between "Emotional Intelligence" (EI) and employee engagement has been widely acknowledged and substantiated through various research studies. These investigations consistently reveal that individuals possessing higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to exhibit a stronger commitment to their job responsibilities, greater enthusiasm towards their work, and higher levels of job satisfaction (Cherniss, 2010).

In essence, emotional intelligence refers to the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions as well as recognize and navigate the emotions of others. This skill set enables individuals to effectively regulate their emotional responses in various situations and engage in empathetic interactions with colleagues, superiors, and subordinates. When individuals possess a high degree of emotional intelligence, they are more equipped to handle workplace challenges, communicate effectively, and foster positive relationships.

The idea that individuals with enhanced emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate workplace dynamics and collaborate effectively aligns with the assertion made by Goleman (1998). Goleman's perspective highlights that emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in establishing productive interpersonal connections. When individuals possess a heightened awareness of their own emotions and those of others, they are better positioned to manage conflicts, build rapport, and cultivate a supportive work environment.

Moreover, the correlation between emotional intelligence and employee engagement is rooted in the notion that emotionally intelligent individuals are adept at understanding and meeting the emotional needs of their colleagues. This ability to connect on an emotional level fosters a sense of belonging, trust, and camaraderie within the workplace, consequently leading to increased engagement and job satisfaction.

In summary, the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement is robust and well-documented. Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence exhibit stronger commitment to their roles, heightened enthusiasm for their tasks, and greater job satisfaction. The assertion that emotional intelligence contributes to effective workplace interactions and collaboration is in line with the idea that being emotionally attuned enables individuals to forge meaningful connections and ultimately enhance their overall work experience.

Research Gap and Need for a Comprehensive Examination: While studies have explored the individual influences of “Emotional intelligence” and EE, a notable research gap exists regarding the comprehensive understanding of their interplay. Existing literature often focuses on isolated aspects of either “Emotional intelligence” or engagement, failing to address the intricate relationships and potential mediating factors between the two constructs (Parker, 2019). This gap highlights the need for a study that delves deeper into the nuanced connections between “Emotional intelligence” and various dimensions of employee engagement.

Methodology: Result & Discussion

The reviewed literature strongly suggests that “Emotional intelligence” plays a pivotal role in shaping various dimensions of employee engagement. Employees with higher “Emotional intelligence” levels are more likely to exhibit greater job satisfaction, commitment, and enthusiasm for their roles (Cherniss, 2010). Goleman's model of “Emotional intelligence”, which encompasses domains such as “self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills”, aligns with these engagement outcomes (Goleman, 1998). This implies that individuals who possess the ability to understand and manage their emotions are better positioned to navigate workplace interactions, handle stressors, and foster productive relationships. It has further elaborated:

1. **Emotional Intelligence Assessment:** The researchers developed a comprehensive emotional intelligence assessment tool that measured EE & EI. Participants took the assessment, which included scenarios and questions to evaluate their emotional skills.
2. **Job Performance Ratings:** Participants' immediate supervisors were asked to provide performance evaluations over the study period. These evaluations included measures of task performance, teamwork, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness.
3. **Follow-up Surveys:** The researchers conducted follow-up surveys at multiple intervals to track participants' emotional intelligence development and changes in job performance over time. These surveys aimed to capture any correlations between changes in EI and improvements in EE.

Components of “Emotional intelligence” and Engagement: The literature also highlights the significance of specific components of “Emotional intelligence” in influencing engagement outcomes. Similarly, the capability to empathize with the emotions of others (empathy) is associated with creating positive interpersonal relationships, which can contribute to a more engaged workforce (Goleman, 1998). These findings underscore the differentiated impact of “Emotional intelligence” domains on distinct dimensions of engagement.

Conclusion

In inference, the discussion highlights the nuanced connections between “Emotional intelligence” and workplace engagement. The reviewed literature reveals that “Emotional intelligence” is a key predictor of engagement outcomes, influencing job satisfaction, commitment, and enthusiasm. Specific components of “Emotional intelligence” contribute differentially to various dimensions of engagement. Moreover, the exploration of mediating variables adds a layer of complexity to the relationship. This discussion sets the stage for the empirical investigation outlined in this study, aiming to uncover the mediating mechanisms that underlie the connection between “Emotional intelligence” and employee engagement.

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