

How does emotional intelligence improve employee satisfaction and performance with mediating effect of employee engagement? Perspective from Saudi Arabian private companies



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ABSTRACT

The main focus of this study is to examine how Emotional Intelligence (EI) improves Employee Job Satisfaction and Performance (EJSP) with mediating effect of Employee Engagement (EE) in private sector organizations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The nature of the research study is quantitative, and a correlational design has been adopted for the study. Primary data was collected from a sample of 537 employees of private organizations in major cities of KSA. SPSS and Smart PLS were used to run different statistical techniques to test the proposed model. The results of this research study reveal that EI positively impacts the performance and satisfaction level of employees where EE also mediates the relationship between EI and performance and satisfaction level of employees. Also, age, gender, and experience of employees act differently as a moderator in this study. The contribution from this research study would be an addition to existing literature. This research study holds a significant involvement towards theory, practice, and methodological progression in the field of learning and creating EI abilities and its vital influence on performance and satisfaction level of employees in the Saudi Arabian context, as no such study has been conducted in Saudi Arabia, to the best of our knowledge. The study is supposed to provide useful insights into the methodological advances in the field of EI as a learnable ability that can be created. EI should be enhanced to employees to get a significant level of performance and satisfaction in the working environment.

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1. Introduction

Companies and organizations consisted of individuals with sentiments, beliefs, culture, and needs. To affiliate with them satisfactorily and avoid a clash in the workplace frequently, one must be emotionally intelligent. In this predominant evolving environment, organizations need to confront numerous difficulties and adapt to changes. Therefore, to combat the competition and get a competitive benefit, organizations have to exert great efforts and adopt many strategies. There are numerous concerns that have become visible in the current days with respect to the employee's performance and satisfaction because of their

various roles and responsibilities at the workplace. EI and EE are observed to have a direct relationship with the employee's performance and satisfaction in private sector organizations in Saudi Arabia.

The performance and satisfaction level of employees mainly depend on numerous aspects. One of them is EI, which is a genuine intelligence that causes an employee to make progress in each and every issue whether would it be working environment, home, or society? It helps an individual in the establishment of feelings in a reasonable manner, aiming that one can deal with various circumstances in an effective way. Behind the model of EI, a theory does exist that individual progress will prompt professional achievement and progressed EE through building upbeat, self-assured, and well-rounded employees. Capability to control one's feelings along with influencing others' feelings and emotions assume a key job in EE (Sidhu, 2012).

With the overall embracement of EI in the first decade of the 21st century, business researchers and specialists began to put more stress on it as a significant skill of employees during the stages of

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recruiting, promotion, and employee development. Presently, companies are confronting the issue of a generally lower level of EI in the majority of employees. Despite the fact that research studies have suggested different methods to improve employee's EI (Goleman and Boyatzis, 2017). EI is historic, paradigm-shattering, and one of the most persuasive business ideas of the current period. Organizations consider EI as a significant skill because of its important impact on different parts of the business network, particularly the development and performance of employees along with efficiency (Goleman et al., 2013).

Satisfaction and performance of employees are the most explored concept in the field of human resource management. It has got great importance for the researchers and the companies as well EE is an appropriate tool to assist each and every organization in endeavoring to increase competitive advantage as compared to others. Individuals deem a crucial factor that cannot be imitated by the rivals and are viewed as the most important resource whenever they are engaged and involved appropriately (Anitha, 2014).

EE is described as a psychological control of organizational employees on themselves they do at their work jobs. At the point when employees work in an organization, they displayed physically, cognitively, and emotionally. They show emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization at their jobs. It shows positive and negative attachment of employees with their job, other employees, and work tasks. The employees who are positively attached show positive results like high performance and satisfaction while the employees who are negatively attached exhibit lower performance and satisfaction. EE was considered a prevalent idea in the industry from 1999-2005 where it was dealt with among managers, consultants, and policymakers. Academics became more concerned about the idea of EE after 2006 (Welch, 2011) when various examinations expanded the idea of EE to job commitment, work commitment, and organizational commitment. There remains a gap of academic knowledge in EE literature, which constantly inspires the requirement for additional empirical exploration in this domain within varied contexts and different demographic segments.

As per a 2015 Gallup survey on employee engagement, about 32.0% of workers were engaged, 50.3% of them were not engaged, and 16.8% made genuine difficulty by being effectively disengaged (Adkins, 2016). In a period when the competition of hiring and retaining outstanding talent is being driven by business goliaths, by what means can a small privately-owned business secure and engage its workforce? Is emotional Intelligence a positive sign of EE? The outcome of the research study plans to help in creating methodologies to increase EE with the help of EI which can ultimately enhance the performance and satisfaction level of employees. This researcher of the current study wishes to assist in enlightening the relationship between EI and

employee engagement and can, thus, help organizations to define the role and significance of EI.

2. Literature review

2.1. Emotional intelligence and employee engagement

EI and EE are the greatest elements that add to the success of companies. If the employees identify their own feelings and emotions and are ready to control them appropriately, they can work more proficiently and productively which will thus bring EE. Individuals with high EI show a serious level of commitment in the working environment as such individuals can deal with their emotions so they are less engaged with clashes, grow better interpersonal relationships, optimistic, and adjust their objectives to organizational objectives (Deshwal, 2015).

Ravichandran et al. (2011) directed an investigation on 119 employees of information technology and found that there was a weak positive relationship between EI and EE. It demonstrates that EI impacts the engagement of an employee up to a specific limit. EE can be accomplished through the formation of an organizational environment where positive involvement and pride are stimulated, bringing about improved employee and organizational performance. The outcomes of the research examination carried out by Singh et al. (2013) demonstrated that both EI and EE in the organizations under investigation were more than average level. However, a moderate positive significant relationship was found between EI and EE. Therefore, it tends to be inferred that when an employee can comprehend and deal with his/her feelings or emotions well then, he/she can be more engaged.

The drivers of EE investigated by Mwangi (2014) in Kenyan Universities are on areas of strategy or practice that frequently have an impact on commitment (engagement) which employees will generally respond positively. EI through self and social awareness and self and relationship management areas apparently affected and influence employee engagement mostly through vision, direction, company efficiency, and ethics. The outcomes indicate that there is a relationship between the four areas of EI and the drivers of EE. EI was found to incredibly impact the sustainability challenge through employee commitment. So, the proposed hypothesis is:

H1: Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive impact on Employee Engagement.

2.2. Emotional intelligence and employee satisfaction

EI and job satisfaction (JS) are two perceptions of high concern for the modern working conditions.

They serve as a competitive edge in close to personal and organizational life. It is commonly seen that employees with higher EI will have higher satisfaction levels. This is due to the reason that the employees with higher EI can improve techniques to overcome the most possible results which may emerge out of stress, although those with less EI will not be in a situation to handle the stress situations. EI directly influences employee satisfaction just as it does job performance. It has been considered a significant indicator of job performance (Kaur et al., 2019). Findings of another study revealed that there was a positive correlation between EI and employee satisfaction. The association between employee satisfaction and each of the EI standards (self-awareness, self-control, and social skills) were maintained, and obviously, there was no critical distinction between male and female EI and employee satisfaction (Emdady and Bagheri, 2013).

Another exploratory paper intended to discover the relationship between EI and JS and explored EI factors that might influence JS. Findings indicated that EI influences the satisfaction level of employees (Pandey and Sharma, 2016). Furthermore, a study conducted by Kassim et al. (2016) analyzed the relationship between EI and satisfaction among 2,502 college instructors' inside Kano state, utilizing the Wong and Law's (2002) scale administered on a convinced sample. Results revealed a significant relationship between EI and employee JS. Individuals with high EI continually feel positive and that they experience more JS and well-being as compared with individuals with lower EI (Anand, 2016).

The significance connected to JS among employees for organizational achievement has driven analysts to contemplate variables that may be recognized to achieve a higher level of job satisfaction. EI has been discovered to be a factor that directly affects satisfaction. Results showed that there was a positive, moderate, and significant correlation between emotional intelligence and employees' JS (Shukla et al., 2016). Likewise, Rahman and Haleem (2018) found that EI had a significant positive influence on workers' JS. Further, Khan et al. (2017) revealed that all the components of EI significantly predict employee satisfaction. Similarly, Naz and Liaquat (2015) found that EI significantly impacts the JS of employees and psychological ownership. It was recognized that EI and JS are two essential constituents for organizational development along with overall individual success. Many examinations have explored a correlation between EI and JS worldwide in different fields (Gunavathy and Ayswarya, 2011; Çekmecelioğlu et al., 2012; Shooshtarian et al., 2013; Alnidawy, 2015; El Badawy and Magdy, 2015; Mardanpour and Makvandi, 2015; Yusoff et al., 2016; Khanzada et al., 2018; Rahman and Haleem, 2018). The proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive impact on Employee Satisfaction

2.3. Emotional intelligence and employee performance

In the field of employment, work pressure, employee stress, anxiety, distress, or misery are totally associated with the various components of EI. All these emotional symptoms could influence the performance of employees. Emotions influence each and everything employees do. They can lead either to higher or lower confidence, which will influence the performance of employees positively or negatively. Employees who hold a high level of EI can obviously identify the feelings and emotions of other co-workers and supervisors along with precise knowledge of the meanings of other behaviors until they can make the exact assessment about their job roles that are expected by others, and afterward performs versatile behaviors. For that reason, they are more agreeable and more immediately coordinated into companies, and get greater performance (Al Kahtani, 2013).

One of the most significant factors of employee performance in the organization is EI. Performance is the root criteria for obtaining rewards, acknowledgments, promotions, and employee retention. EI is closely involved with the business world right from recruitment till resignation. Subsequently, EI improves the performance of work by letting individuals encourage positive relations, perform well in gatherings and construct higher social status. Research findings indicated that EI directly influenced employee's job performance. EI helps in creating awareness, assists workers in gaining knowledge from others, shares information, and makes trust and concerns for others (Lakshmi and Rao, 2018).

The research study by Shehu and Isa (2017) observed the influence of Emotional Intelligence on the performance of employees with the aim of understanding the impact of emotional intelligence of employees on his or her performance in an organization. 6 organizations from different industries in Maiduguri Borno State were studied in that study. It was revealed that the use of emotional intelligence was a more persuasive motivation to any achievement than financial rewards. This study recommends among others that managers should move attention to, and be more anxious with employing emotional intelligence as a facilitator to drivers of performance instead of the measure of performance.

As indicated by Kaur and Sharma (2019), there are different variables that have been added to EI, leading to upgrading the employee's job performance in the service sector such as mindfulness, compassion, self-realization, self-actualization, optimism, and so on. According to Mahdinezhad et al. (2017), it is expected that EI straightforwardly prompts performance. It is observed that people with high EI are seen to show sentiments as a feature of their job and to act productively. A meta-investigation revealed that EI could be more likely to anticipate performance for

professions. EI has a direct relationship with the performance of employees (Rexhepi and Berisha, 2017) in mostly all kinds of occupations. EI is found as a key achievement factor that straightforwardly offered more than managerial intelligence and intelligence quotient (IQ) in the performance of employees.

Besides different kinds of occupations, a wide scope of ongoing investigations have likewise discovered such direct relationship in different industries and businesses, for example, hotel industry (Karimi, 2014), marketing (Bande et al., 2015), retailing (Sony and Mekoth, 2016), hospital/health services (Samiuddin et al., 2017), and education (Zeidner and Matthews, 2017). Subsequently, we accept that an increased degree of EI brings certain results, particularly employee performance. This direct relationship has grabbed the eye of researchers and experts to explore hidden aspects of construct, context, and effects of EI (as it is learnable) on, improving employees' performance. Another exploratory study demonstrated that employees who were emotionally intelligent tended to be happy with their positions as they could undoubtedly deal with their work-family conflict, conduct, and result (Sidhu, 2012). Additionally, Dagher and Al Hajj (2010) conducted an exploration in the Lebanese service industry and inferred that EI was positively associated with employees' JS. It was also found in another investigation conducted in the Pakistani Health sector that manager/employee's EI plays an important part in employees' performance. Manger/employers with EI characteristics have better work performance through viability, adequacy, proficiency, and JS (Khanzada et al., 2018).

Similarly, most recent examinations discovered EI as a vital skill-boosting performance of employees at the workplace (Rexhepi and Berisha, 2017). Hence, EI has grabbed the eye of researchers concerning the construct, context, and impact. An improved level of EI would significantly contribute towards the upgrade of employee's performance as an outcome (Munir and Azam, 2017). Thus, the following hypothesis was developed in this regard:

H3: Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive impact on Employee Performance.

2.4. Employee engagement and employee satisfaction

As per Heindel (2009), one of the fundamental elements of EE is an employee JS. Satisfaction of employees is the steppingstone to engagement; besides, it is significant for an organization to direct the objectives of the job to the individual objectives of the employee so that he can be satisfied with his job. Employees with more levels of self-viability are bound to be engaged with regard to work because it prompts more temperament through extra efforts and energy to complete tasks and in this way, a more prominent contribution is seen (Chandani et al., 2016).

JS has been one of the significant components of EE. It is evident that EE is identified with numerous important people and organizational outcomes including retention, motivation, and profitability. It tends to be a strong indicator of JS. It helps in distinguishing and foreseeing long-term successes including employees JS (Barden, 2017). Hence, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H4: Employee Engagement has a significant positive impact on Employee Satisfaction.

2.5. Employee engagement and employee performance

Researchers and specialists specify that a low level of EE at the workplace is presently one of the most worrying economic problems worldwide. The possible result of this phenomenon is the decrease in the work performance of employees. For that reason, it becomes the paramount need to comprehend the idea of work engagement of employees, its meaning for employees, and its implications for employers (Motyka, 2018).

Employee performance shows the financial and non-financial results of the employees that have an immediate relation with the performance of the employees and organization as well. Many studies show that a significant method to upgrade employee's performance is to emphasize encouraging EE. Research studies (Christian et al., 2011; Fleming and Asplund, 2007; Rich et al., 2010; Richman, 2006; Macey and Schneider, 2008; Leiter and Bakker, 2010; Anitha, 2014) recommend that the existence of significant levels of EE improves employee job and task performance. Demerouti et al. (2010) argued that engagement can prompt increased performance because of different factors. These outcomes are upheld by an increased number of studies showing a positive relationship between employee engagement and his/her performance (Halbesleben, 2010; Mone et al., 2018).

Another study proposes that EE is described as one of the key determinants in sustaining and raising the level of performance of employees. As per the managerial viewpoint, EE can be utilized as a useful mechanism to enhance employee performance (Hee et al., 2018). The work environment in the present time has emerged extensively. The process by which we expect that engagement should happen and should be completely seen so managers can have techniques or oversee other context issues to empower full EE. Right employee management techniques drive and increase the performance of employees. The proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H5: Employee Engagement has a significant positive impact on Employee Performance.

2.6. Employee engagement

Employee Engagement (EE) is characterized commonly as the degree of commitment and

inclusion an employee or worker has concerning their companies and their values. At the point when an employee is engaged, he is aware of his responsibilities and duties in the business objectives and propels his partners close by for the achievement of the organizational objectives. The positive approach of an employee with his/her place of work and its value framework is generally indicated a positive emotional association of an employee with his/her work. Employees who are engaged go beyond the call of duty to play out their function in excellence (Anitha, 2014).

Work engagement can be characterized as a positive and fulfilling perspective. While applying the term to the working environment, commitment or engagement can be depicted as including positive emotions towards work and the actions (Ravichandran et al., 2011). Employee commitment or engagement research has encountered expanded consideration from researchers and professionals (Kataria et al., 2013). Employee commitment is centered on understanding how much workers focus on a person or thing inside their work environment, how hard they work, and how long they stay due to that responsibility (Alvi et al., 2014).

De Clercq et al. (2014) suggested that EE is a combination of positive feelings that welcomes compatibility and emphasizes objective arrangement, bringing the decrease of organizational resistance. Work is a noteworthy aspect of a person's life, and accordingly, EE is a significant conception at work. The concept of EE is an estimation of how glad employees are with their respective positions; working conditions and how proficient their performance levels are (Deshwal, 2015). Engaged employees are something beyond glad or searching for acknowledgment or compensation, they are effectively pushing an organization forward. An employee who is engaged asked "How might this benefit us?" rather than "What it's in it for me?" As a clear differentiation from job satisfaction, active commitment wants the employee to be mentally accessible, immersed intellectually, emotionally dedicated, and physically active (Waldron, 2017).

Social Exchange Theory (SET) gives a hypothetical foundation to clarify why employees decide to turn out to be pretty much occupied with their work and organization. The states of engagement in models can be viewed as a monetary and socio-emotional exchange of assets. At the point when employees get these assets from their companies, they feel obliged to reimburse the organization with a higher level of engagement. As far as the explanation of engagement concerns, workers feel obliged to bring themselves more profoundly into their job performance as reimbursement for the resources they get from their organization. As indicated by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) in the SET, engagement comes from a series of relationships between two parties that rely upon one another to accomplish an objective. An essential concept of SET is that relationships develop with the passage of time into believing, faithful and

common responsibilities as long as the parties submit to specific rules of exchange. Therefore, the proposed hypotheses are as follows:

H6a: Employee Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Satisfaction.

H6b: Employee Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Performance.

2.7. Emotional intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is characterized as a kind of social capability including the ability to look at one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to differentiate among them, and to utilize emotional information to control one's reasoning and activities. EI is a genuinely explicit ability that associates an individual's process of information with his or her process of emotions. It is fundamentally a bunch of qualities identifying with the emotional aspect of life abilities, for example, creating and dealing with one's emotions, understanding the emotions of others, and creating relational connections in a successful and proficient way. Accordingly, EI is not the same as emotions, emotional styles, emotional attributes, and traditional methods of intelligence dependent on general mental or intellectual capability (Kaur et al., 2019).

EI is the aptitude of an individual to observe one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to segregate between various feelings and mark them suitably, and to utilize emotional information to monitor reasoning and behavior. There are three significant models which include Ability Model, Trait Model, and Mixed Model. In the ability model, EI is considered as a person's capability to deal with emotional information and use it to explore the social background. This model considers EI as an ability that can be started, established, and improved. The model presumes that a genuinely keen individual uses this capability to relax one's own emotions down in each sort of problematic condition in a constructive manner. The Trait Model reflects EI as a quality of personality incorporating behavioral dispositions. The Mixed Model views EI as both ability and quality. The model characterizes EI as a variety of abilities and qualities. This current study has utilized the ability model of EI that regards EI as the capability of an individual to comprehend and control one's own emotions, comprehend the emotions of others, and deal with the relationship with others in a valuable manner (Munir and Azam, 2017).

2.8. Employee performance

Performance shown by employees is mainly results obtained and achievements made at work. Performance alludes to keeping up plans while focusing on the outcomes (Anitha, 2014). As indicated by Kaur and Sharma (2019), employee

performance (EP) emphasizes the "viability of worker's clear activities that guide to accomplish organizational objectives". EI is considered a key driver for managing, coordinating, and controlling the emotional, individual, and social skills of individuals at work. EI has a huge effect on work performance. EP refers to the accomplishment of objectives in a viable and productive way. It is an individual-level variable that considerably adds to the complete performance of the organization. EP is categorized into two unmistakable components of in-role performance and extra-role performance. The in-role performance consists of carrying out compulsory tasks related to the job officially required by the job while extra-role performance incorporates organizational citizenship behaviors which contribute positively to the success of organizational objectives by making a positive impact on the social and psychological state of an organization (Munir and Azam, 2017). Moreover, the actions that include the final products and process mention also as the job performance. Regardless, the individual process can be impacted by the general performance of the company. The reason is that the individual's performance is not only determined by actions but includes other factors as well, for example, the external factor. Though all analysts have various thoughts in defining performance, most scientists give a similar definition about performance, which is the outcome that is attained (Al Kahtani, 2013).

As summed up by Gryn (2010), that there are two measurements of the performance of an individual, which include contextual performance and task performance. The contextual performance includes the actions of somebody that not a part of job responsibilities. Examples include volunteers to play out the extra undertakings, supporting others, and following the strategy, yet imperative to execute business objectives. Anybody who has personality attributes such as EI and awareness will mostly engage in those activities. The task performance is the job concerned with the activities that led to converting inputs to outputs that normally include the production of products and services (Al Kahtani, 2013).

2.9. Employee satisfaction

Employee or JS has been characterized from various perspectives. It is accepted that employee satisfaction essentially shows the happiness level of employees whether they like the specific job tasks or what the job involves. Others consider that it is not as oversimplified as this definition proposes and rather that multidimensional psychological reactions to one's job are included (Kaur et al., 2019). Employee or JS is a marvel which can be clarified as having both cognitive and emotional character. The cognitive segment is composed of decisions and convictions about the job while the emotional segment involves sentiments and feelings related to the job. JS mainly depends on one's sentiments or

perspective with respect to the nature of work (Anand, 2016).

Employee satisfaction includes emotional, intellectual, and behavioral factors. The emotional variable refers to feelings and emotions concerning the job, for instance, fatigue, pressure, or joy. The cognitive or intellectual variable indicates convictions regarding one's profession, like feeling that one's employment is challenging and tough reasonably. Ultimately, the behavioral variable practices of employees identified with their job including coming and staying late, or showing up as sick, and so on. JS may affect ability, productivity, absences, turnover, resignation, and finally success of employees (Suleman et al., 2020). Employee satisfaction is a vital part of the organizational atmosphere and a significant component in the employee-management relationship. It is the positive emotional condition that happens when an individual's actions appear to satisfy significant job values provided; these qualities are viable with the person's needs. It really refers to the degree to which an individual likes his/her job or it might be considered as the emotional connection one has with his/her job. Fig. 1 shows the conceptual framework.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Study design

To attain the objectives of the research study, the relationship among variables was established and measured by applying different techniques. This current study follows a positivistic philosophy and adopted a deductive approach where the hypothesis was developed based on existing theory and then they were tested. The nature of the study was correlational, and a quantitative technique was used to collect the primary source of data. The survey method was used to collect the data from an individual unit of analysis in a natural environment.

3.2. Population and sample

To analyze the EI of the private sector of Saudi organizations, data was collected from people residing in major cities of Saudi Arabia. To achieve the desired results, data was collected from a suitable sample size as it is not possible to collect data from the whole population. There are different methods to define an appropriate sample size. According to Hair et al. (2017) for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) "rule of thumb" is most appropriate. SEM states that 10 observations per item are enough to get enough sample size. In the current research study rule of thumb was used, which considers 300 of sample size is sufficient.

3.3. Measurement of variables

To collect the data, well-established scales were adapted from previous studies. EI was measured

with four dimensions which include Self-emotion appraisal (ISEA), Use of emotions (UOE), Others' emotion appraisal (OEA), and Regulation of emotions (ROE). Employee Engagement was measured with two dimensions which are Job Engagement and Organization Engagement. The questionnaire was developed in English to make it easier. A structured questionnaire was used that is based on 2 parts; the first part was about the demographical factors including age, gender, and

experience of employees. The second part incorporated 38 questions that were relevant to the constructs of the model. A five-point Likert scale was used starting from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. All constructs were obtained from studies that were conducted previously. It was directed in electronic format using Google forms and posted over different social media platforms. The respective item of each variable with its source is given in Table 1.

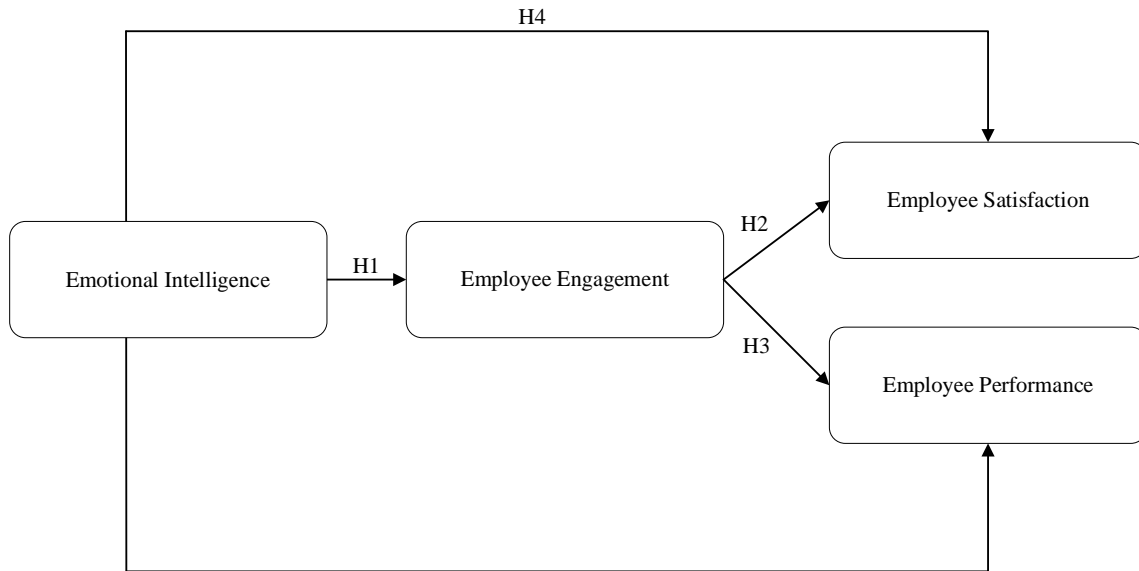


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework

Table 1: Variables and their measure

Constructs	Items	Source
Emotional Intelligence	16	Wong and Law (2002)
Employee Engagement	11	Saks (2006)
Employee Performance	6	Tseng and Huang (2011) Kanwal and Tariq (2016)
Employee Satisfaction	5	Hanaysha and Tahir (2016) Inda and Mishra (2016)

3.4. Data collection

Data was collected through the purposive sampling method where online questionnaires were distributed to individuals over different social networking sites. Initially, approximately 1000 questionnaires were distributed online. Out of which nearly 600 questionnaires were received back; approximately 60% was response rate. After initial screening few questionnaires were removed from the final analysis as they were incomplete. Finally, 537 were used for hypothesis testing and data analysis. Respondents were selected on the basis of purpose of study rather than their demographical characteristics despite, the data covered demographic factors such as gender, age, and experience of private-sector employees.

3.5. Data analysis

Data Analysis was carried out using two software; (1) Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and (2) Partial Least Square (PLS). Demographic analysis

was done using SPSS while Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was applied to measure the path model. Fig. 2 shows the path model.

4. Data analysis

A survey method was used for data collection. Initially, more than 1000 questionnaires were distributed among them nearly 600 were received back with a response rate of 60%. After initial screening and removing the incomplete responses a total of 537 were used for final data analysis. Before the actual analysis method bias was checked as data was collected from a single source. Herman's single factor test (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986) was adopted, the factor solution results in 37 percent of the variance. The cumulative percentage of 37% shows that there is no biasness in the data as the threshold value is 50%.

4.1. Demographic sample

Among 537 responses used for final analysis 56% were male, other 44% were female. Whereas age factor results show that 52% (278) of respondents fall below the age of 25 years; other 34% (182) were between 26-30; 9% (48) were between 31-35, 4% (19) were between 36-40 and only 2% (10) were above 40 years old.

Employee experience statistics show that 13 % (67) have 1-3 years of experience, 37% (308) have

4-6 years of experience, 14% (80) have 7-10 years of experience, and the remaining 15 percent (82) have more than 10 years of experience. Detail of result is given in Table 2.

4.1.1. Graphical representation of demographic results

All demographic characteristics are shown graphically for clear and easy understanding (Fig. 3).

4.2. Data analysis tools and technique

Structured Equation Modelling (SEM) is a modern-day technique and considered more reliable for data analysis in the present age. For initial data screening and descriptive statistics, SPSS was used. Further, smart PLS (Partial Least Square) by Hair et al. (2012) was employed as a software tool to conduct element-based SEM.

4.3. Hypotheses testing and study result

Model stability was ensured by applying the “Confirmatory Factor Analysis” (CFA) by examining

the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument. Cronbach Alpha and Composite reliability was used to check the reliability of data and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio and Average Variance Extracted was used to establish the convergent and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2012).

4.4. Measurement model analysis

4.4.1. Reliability and validity of the instrument

Reliability is a measure of consistency in data, it shows that to what extent a measuring instrument gives stable and consistent results. Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite reliability were used as a reliability measure. The result of the analysis shows that all constructs have a value greater than the threshold value i.e. 0.7 as shown in Table 3. Moreover, the average variance extracted was applied to determine the convergent validity of data. Its value should be greater than 0.5 and the result shows that all values were greater than 0.5 establishing the convergent validity as shown in Table 3.

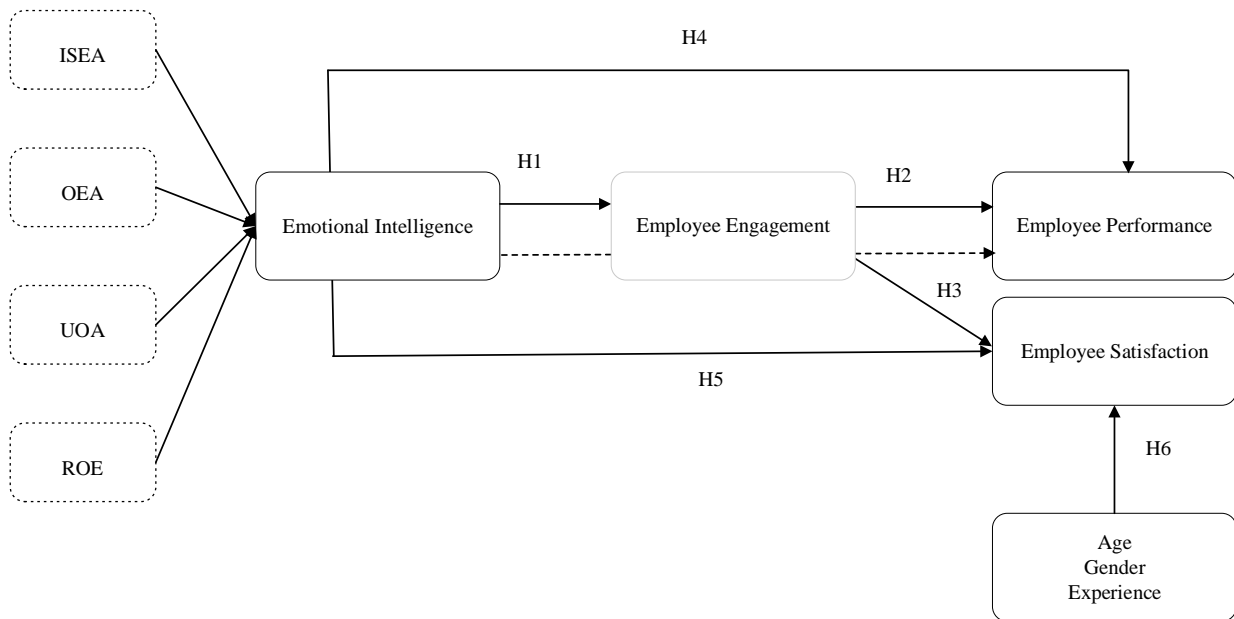


Fig. 2: Path model

Table 2: Demographic characteristics

Demographics	Codes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	(1) Male	300	56%
	(2) Female	237	44%
Age	(1) 21-25	278	52%
	(2) 26-30	182	34%
	(3) 31-35	48	09%
	(4) 36-40	19	04%
	(5) 41 and Above	10	02%
Experience	(1) 1-3 Years	67	13%
	(2) 4-6 Years	308	37%
	(3) 7-10 Years	80	14%
	(4) 11 years and Above	82	15%

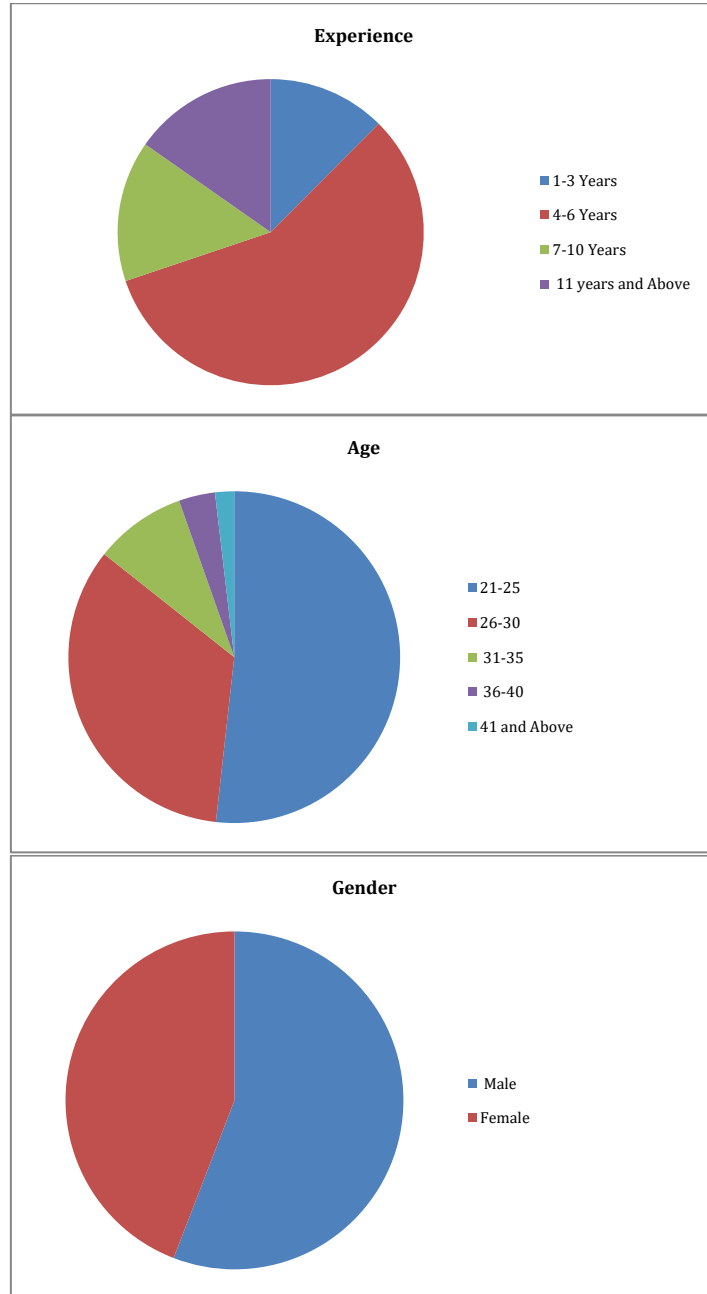


Fig. 3: Pie charts

Table 3: Reliability and validity statistics

NO		Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
1	EP	0.915	0.933	0.699
2	ES	0.788	0.865	0.621
3	JE	0.903	0.928	0.721
4	OE	0.785	0.85	0.538
5	OEA	0.668	0.797	0.498
6	ROE	0.807	0.873	0.633
7	SEA	0.818	0.88	0.65
8	UOE	0.778	0.87	0.691

Discriminate validity is a measure of the difference between two variables. The heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of Correlations (HTMT) is used to measure discriminant validity while using PLS. As suggested by Hair et al. (2012) HTMT is a better measure as compared to the Frnell-Larcker criterion while using PLS to access the discriminant validity. HTMT is the effective criterion, as it attains the least specificity rates of all the simulation conditions. HTMT results that are near to 1 specify a lack of

discriminant validity. Its threshold value is 0.9 more strictly 0.85 is followed. All the values of HTMT show that discriminant validity was ensured as shown in Table 4.

Red values are HTMT values of dimensions with their respective constructs which are higher than 0.85 because the same items are also loaded on both constructs and dimensions. But these values do not cause any problem; therefore, these values were ignored, and further analysis was done.

4.4.2. Variance inflation factor (VIF)

It is a measure of multicollinearity among the criterion variables. If the correlation between two independent variables or dimensions of one variable becomes too high, then the issue of multicollinearity does exist. VIF is a measure of multicollinearity, and its value should be less than 5. One recent scholar suggests that VIF should be less than 0.35. In the

current study, there is only one independent variable, but it has four dimensions. Similarly, a mediator also had two dimensions. VIF results revealed that all dimensions of EI obtained a VIF value less than 5 and employee engagement's dimensions value were under threshold value. Thus, the result shows that there was no issue of multicollinearity did exist (Table 5).

Table 4: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations

	EE	EI	EP	ES	JE	OE	OEA	ROE	SEA
EE									
EI	0.422								
EP	0.403	0.243							
ES	0.381	0.484	0.273						
JE	0.948	0.209	0.353	0.174					
OE	0.947	0.442	0.197	0.410	0.316				
OEA	0.479	1.027	0.237	0.485	0.192	0.532			
ROE	0.299	1.06	0.214	0.406	0.146	0.310	0.844		
SEA	0.327	0.871	0.135	0.338	0.185	0.340		0.704	
UOE	0.344	0.927	0.282	0.530	0.147	0.392	0.834	0.806	0.375

Table 5: Variance inflation factor

	EE	EI	EP	ES
EE				
EI	1.15		1.02	1.02
JE	1.066		1.02	1.02
OE	1.205			
OEA		2.058		
ROE		3.045		
SEA		1.528		
UOE		2.321		

4.4.3. Second order construct

In this study, two constructs were treated as second-order or higher-order constructs. Both EI and EE were treated as a second-order, having four and two dimensions respectively. To establish the reliability and validity of the higher-order model, weights and their significance were measured. All dimensions should exert some weight on their respective construct (must be greater than 0.1) and all weights should be significant. Table 6 shows weights and significance. Fig. 4 shows the factor loading and weights.

4.5. Structural model analysis

Structural paths hypothesized in this study were measured by applying the Bootstrapping technique. It is a non-parametric technique used to test the hypotheses in which sample data is resampled and results are generated. 500 sub-samples were used to test the hypotheses in this study.

4.5.1. Coefficient of determination (R²)

The coefficient of determination (R²) is a measure of overall model change due to criterion variables. It measures the model fitness and total variation independent variable to all independent variables. Its value is greater than 0.3 which is considered a good fit. The current model shows the 96% change in employee performance and 22% change in employee satisfaction due to exogenous constructs.

4.6. Hypotheses testing

Bootstrapping technique with 500 sub-samples was used to test the hypothesized relationships. The result illustrates that there exists a significant relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and employee engagement (EE) as ($\beta=0.386$, $t=10.81$, $p=0.000$), leading to acceptance of H₁ at 99% level of the confidence interval. Employee engagement has a significant positive impact on Employee Satisfaction (ES) as ($\beta=0.251$, $t=5.143$, $p=0.000$) and Employee Performance and (EP) as ($\beta=0.037$, $t=3.176$, $p=0.001$), leading to acceptance of H₂ and H₃ at 99% level of the confidence interval. Further, the impact of EI on ES and EP was measured. Results indicate that EI has significant positive impact on ES as ($\beta=0.313$, $t=6.373$, $p=0.000$) and EP as ($\beta=0.967$, $t=16.894$, $p=0.000$). Therefore, H₄ and H₅ were accepted with a 99% confidence level. Further, the f² measure the effect size, its value should be greater than zero means the predictor should have some effect on the dependent variable. The result of this study shows the medium to high effect size value except for EE effect on EP which indicates low effect size. As f-square have three different value greater than 0.35 larger effect size 0.15 is medium and 0.02 is smaller effect size.

4.7. Mediation result

Mediation result shows that Employee Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between EI and Employee Satisfaction leading to

acceptance of H6a ($\beta=0.097$, $t=3.173$, $p=0.001$). Similarly, EE significantly mediates the relationship between EE and EF as $\beta=0.014$, $t=3.861$, $p=0.000$. So, both the mediation hypotheses H6a and H6b were accepted with a 99% level of confidence interval. Lower limit confidence interval (LLCI) and

upper limit confidence interval (ULCI) values were non-zero values with the same sign, so all hypotheses were significant. Table 7 shows the hypotheses result and Fig. 5 shows the bootstrap result. Table 8 shows the hypotheses summary.

Table 6: Weights and significance

Construct	Dimension	Weights	Significance (t-value)
Emotional Intelligence	SEA	0.280	17.694
	OEA	0.258	16.305
	UOE	0.293	22.876
	ROE	0.383	29.620
Employee Engagement	JE	0.774	18.032
	OE	0.483	9.192

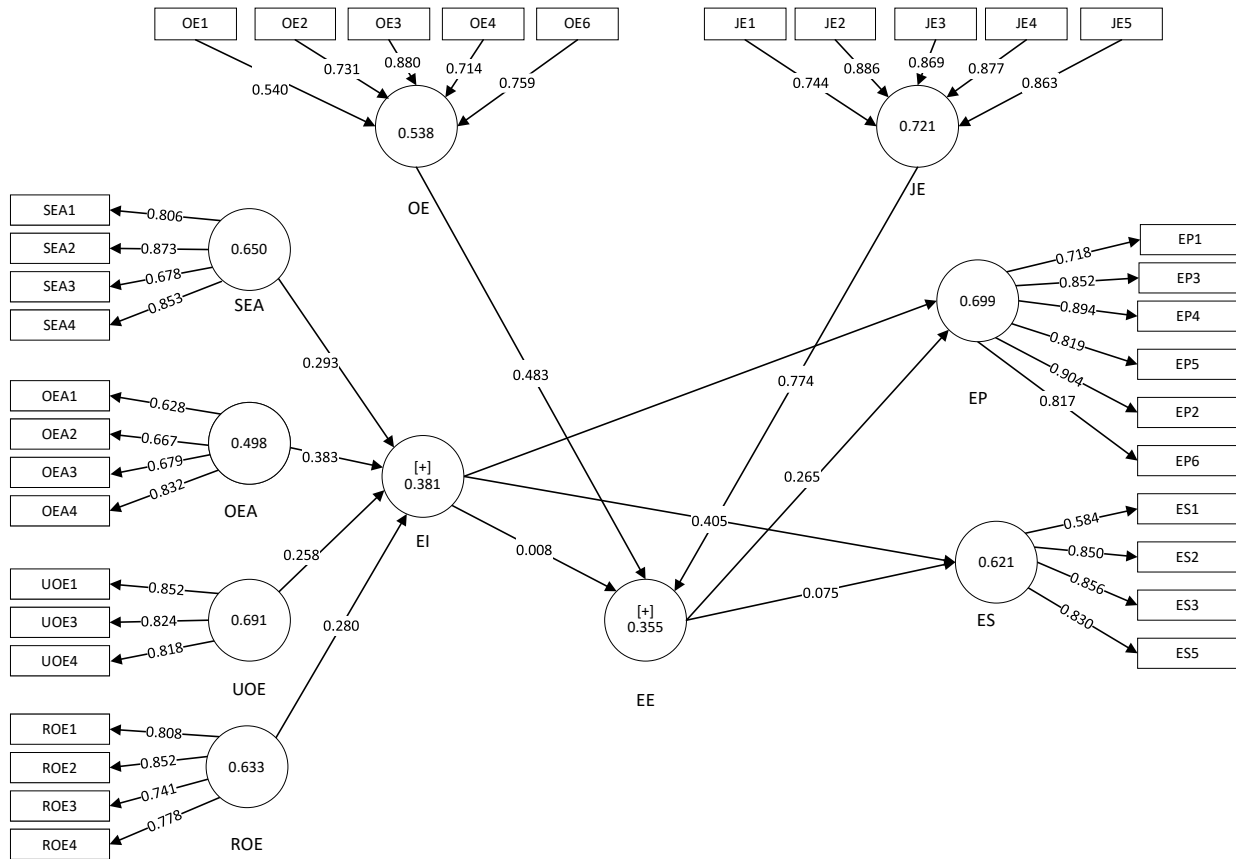


Fig. 4: Factor loadings and weights

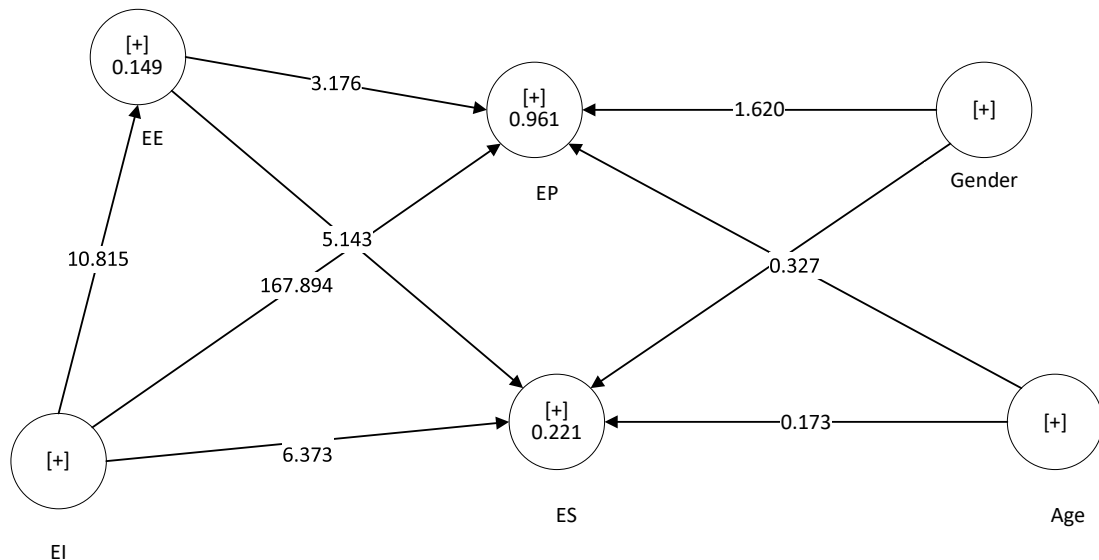


Fig. 5: Bootstrap result

Table 7: Hypotheses result

Hypotheses	Beta	t-Statistics	p-Values	f-Square	LLCI	ULCI
EI -> EE	0.386	10.815	0.000	0.386	0.320	0.435
EI -> EP	0.967	167.894	0.000	0.967	0.958	0.976
EI -> ES	0.313	6.373	0.000	0.313	0.227	0.389
EE -> EP	0.037	3.176	0.001	0.037	0.017	0.055
EE -> ES	0.251	5.143	0.000	0.251	0.166	0.328
EI -> EE -> EP	0.014	3.173	0.001	0.014	0.007	0.021
EI -> EE -> ES	0.097	3.861	0.000	0.097	0.059	0.140

Table 8: Hypotheses summary

Sr. No	Hypotheses	Results	Reasons
H ₁	Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive impact on Employee Engagement.	Accepted	Significant
H ₂	Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive impact on Employee Satisfaction	Accepted	Significant
H ₃	Emotional Intelligence has a significant positive impact on Employee Performance.	Accepted	Significant
H ₄	Employee Engagement has a significant positive impact on Employee Satisfaction.	Accepted	Significant
H ₅	Employee Engagement has a significant positive impact on Employee Performance.	Accepted	Significant
H _{6a}	Employee Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Satisfaction.	Accepted	Significant
H _{6b}	Employee Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Performance.	Accepted	Significant

5. Conclusion and recommendations

In the professional field, work pressure, anxiety, stress, and discouragement or fractiousness are all identified with different components of EI. All these signs of EI could harm the performance and satisfaction level of employees. It can either make the morale level high or low, which will eventually influence the performance and satisfaction of employees in a positive or negative manner. The current research study aimed to find the relationships between different variables like Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement, Employee Performance, and Employee Satisfaction. Results revealed that all the hypotheses proposed in this research study are accepted and showed a significant positive relationship among the variables. Emotional Intelligence positively influences Employee performance and satisfaction level which means that when employees are emotionally intelligent, ultimately it will enhance the performance and satisfaction level of employees. Also, Employee Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between EI and Employee Performance and Employee Satisfaction which means that when employees exhibit emotional intelligence while working at the job, they will become more engaged towards their work which in turn improves their work performance and satisfaction with their job.

This research is significant for top management in making decisions and verdicts with respect to the review of different measurements which may decrease the performance and satisfaction of employees. Improved performance of employees can be refined through recognizing the components which can make inconvenience in the normal schedule of psychological working. This study approves the self-efficacy theory and gives bits of knowledge about positive concerns of improving emotional intelligence and also delivers visions related to positive implications of enlightening EI. The current research study likewise found critical

direct relationships between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Performance and Emotional Intelligence and Employee Job Satisfaction which is like the outcomes of [Rexhepi and Berisha \(2017\)](#). Researchers also give a conclusion that an increase in EI can bring about higher employee Job Performance and Satisfaction levels. Employees should be given an opportunity to foresee how to react in various circumstances, changes, occasions and adequately handle these responses. Top management should resolve the disputes to sustain and create a feeling of trust and participation positively. Positive thinking and attitude can prompt the generation of new ideas to determine differences, guarantee trust and ensure involvement over all the organization.

Consequently, the relations ought to consider EI as a key factor in increasing the performance and satisfaction level of employees. It is suggested to managers to improve EI in employees for getting a more significant level of performance and satisfaction in the working environment. This research study also found the mediating role of Employee Engagement between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Performance and Satisfaction level. All hypotheses of this research study are accepted and show the significant relationship among the variables. Basically, in light of the distinguished impacts of EI on the performance of employees, this examination proposes that relationship must incorporate training programs concerning the enhancement of EI in their general training portfolio. Despite the fact that this research study assessed the impact of EI on job performance, yet prosperity impacts of EI are far-reaching. Organizations can increase engagement by opportunity thinking, enhancing employee decision-making, and commitment. Organizations need to ingrain a feeling of involvement, good feelings about their work, and a sense of community in employees ([Chandani et al., 2016](#)).

Additionally, EI is a learnable skill that can be improved through the ability of its training and

coaching. Yet, during this, subjects should have solid self-confidence (self-efficacy theory). It is additionally presumed that improvement in EI can bring higher performance and satisfaction to employees. Subsequently, the companies ought to consider EI as a key achievement factor in upgrading employee's performance along with their satisfaction level.

5.1. Limitations and future implications

Like every other research study, this current study also contains a few limitations or possible guidelines for future exploratory studies. The Current study has used EI as a sole indicator variable of employee performance and satisfaction. Future investigations may incorporate factors of motivation and commitment in the comparable research plan. Intensifying the research study to different organizations and companies at different geographical locations and across various nations would give a more prominent understanding of the potential strength of the relationships explored in this study. Likewise, future studies may give extra or new proof concerning the relation between managerial emotional intelligence and performance or satisfaction level of employees along with the employee engagement to clinical and operational quality process results, plus operational performance, expense and revenue impact, and customer service benefits. Doing so could prompt new and creative approaches to create EI and engagement among supervisors, managers, and employees, update work processes, boost the socio-technical part of work to improve organizational and individual performance and satisfaction, and sustainability of the organization. By increasing the number of members, future research examinations could investigate the influence of this relationship on social contrasts, aptitude or experience levels, age, and other demographic contrasts. The future scope of this research study is very wide from alternative points of view. This study can be led at different levels of an organization, for example, large scale and MNCs to strengthen the model. Future investigations may use mixed (Goleman, 2011) and/or trait models of EI or with some mixed design in comparative context with comparable examination design in order to compare the usefulness of interventions.

The author argues that this current study is a significant involvement towards theory, practice, and methodological progression in the field of learning and creating EI abilities and its vital influence on performance and satisfaction level of employees. The current investigation adds to the methodological advancement in the field of EI as a learnable ability that can be created. Additionally, this research study has been endeavored to discover the possible role of employee engagement as a mediator EI, EF, and ES in e Saudi private sector organizations. The results of this investigation could fill in a gap in the literature as a valuable source of information and knowledge in further exploration

despite the fact that these outcomes might be industry and environment-specific. It is suggested that comparable exploration ought to be led in different parts other than the private sector (like clinical, authoritative, and so on.) so as to expand the significance of the outcomes.

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Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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