

## **The Effect of Labor's Emotional Intelligence on Their Job Satisfaction, Job Performance and Commitment**

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### **Abstract**

Emotional Intelligence is one of the most important concepts introduced to psychology and management in the last decade. The purposes of this study were to determine the effect of labor's emotional intelligence on job satisfaction, job performance and commitment in Fars Province industries in Iran.

The population from which we drew our sample consisted of employees employed in Fars Province industries in Iran. A total number of three hundred and fifty participants who were selected randomly answered the questionnaires. Two hundred eighty nine questionnaires were used for analysis. The instrument to measure employees' emotional intelligence was the MSEIS<sup>1</sup> (Schutte, Malouff, & Hall, 1998), and the Grikson<sup>2</sup> (1983) was used to gather information about employees' job satisfaction. Also, Alen and Mayer's questionnaire (1990) was considered in order to collect employees' commitment data.

The results showed that employees' emotional intelligence was positively correlated with job satisfaction. Then, there was a significant relationship between the labor's emotional intelligence and their job performance. Also, there was not any relationship between labor's emotional intelligence and their commitment. The results underline the important role of emotional intelligence and its effect on work situations.

### **Keywords:**

Emotional intelligence, Job satisfaction, Commitment, Job performance.

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1. Modified Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale

2. The Smith, Kendall and Bullin's job satisfaction questionnaire was modified by Grikson to decrease the questions in 1987.

## Introduction

Emotional Intelligence is one of the most important concepts introduced to psychology and management in the last decade. Thorndike (1920) who proposed the concept of social intelligence defined it as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls to act wisely in human relationships". Following this theory, Gardner (1983) in his seminal work on the theory of multiple intelligence, described the personal intelligence as the "knowledge of the internal aspects of a person: Access to one's feeling life, one's range of emotions, the capacity to effect discriminations among these emotions and eventually to label them, and to draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's own behavior".

The concept of emotional intelligence was introduced in 1990, when two articles were written by Salovey and Mayer. They defined it as "the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate between them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions". Since then, EI has been used by many researchers in psychology and management.

In the context of the emerging affective revolution in social and organizational psychology, EI is proposed as an important predictor of key organizational outcomes including job satisfaction (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). There is accumulating evidence that EI abilities and traits influence job satisfaction and employers should select the employees, especially in jobs that demand a high degree of social interaction (Carmeli, Yitzhak-Halevy, & Weisberg, 2009).

In 1997, Mayer and Salovey described four abilities that contribute to emotional Intelligence:

1. Perception: It involves accurate verbal and non-verbal expression and appraisal of emotion.
2. Assimilation: It involves generation of emotion to assist in problem-solving.
3. Understanding: It involves acquisition of emotion knowledge designed to promote intellectual and emotional growth.

4. Management of emotion: It involves regulation of emotion in the self and in others.

Job satisfaction has been defined in several different ways. According to Spector (1997) "job satisfaction is simply how people feel about different aspects of their jobs .It is extended to which people like or dislike about their jobs".

Many factors such as organizational factors, environmental factors, job nature and employee's characteristic influence on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction depends on the balance between work-role inputs and work-role outputs .Employees compare their inputs and outputs. If outputs increase relatively to inputs, job satisfaction will increase.

According to Webster, commitment is "an agreement to do something in the future". Commitment is the degree of employee's involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organization. Employees have loyalty, when they have many job opportunities, but they prefer to stay in the organization (Bhuiyan & Mengue, 2002).

Porter (1974) believes that three factors cause to increase the commitment .These consist of organization goals acceptance, attempt to reach the goals and tendency to stay in organization.

Job performance, most commonly refers to the degree a person performs his job well. Performance is an extremely important criterion that relates to organizational outcomes and success. Among the most commonly accepted theories of job performance comes from the work of Campbell and colleagues (1970). Campbell describes job performance as an individual level variable. That is performance is person's behavior and something a single person does. Performance is not outcomes. Outcomes are the result of an individual's performance.

### **Review of Literature**

Psychological research increasingly suggests the importance of EI in predicting success in life (Bar-On, 1997). On the other hand, researches in management and organization showed that people with high level of EI are more effective in team performance and team

leadership (Rice, 1999) and more adaptable to stressful events (Nikolaou & Tsousis, 2002).

Goleman (1995) studied about the effect of EI on job satisfaction and commitment. Results showed that there is a significant relationship between EI and job satisfaction and employees with high EI seek the jobs that need high ability. Otherwise, there is not a significant relationship between EI and commitment, because employees with high EI have many job opportunities and they are able to choose the best one.

Abraham (2000) found that although EI was related to job satisfaction, this was moderated by the environmental characteristics like job control. Based on these results, it is not sufficient to hire emotionally intelligent employees and organizations must offer autonomy in decision making.

According to Goleman (2001), EI at the most general level, refers to the abilities to recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and in others. The results of his study showed that the salespeople of a national insurance company who have strong emotional skills sold more than the weak ones.

Wong and Law (2002) found the significant relationship between EI and job satisfaction and job performance. According to Patra (2004) EI can create a pleasant workplace and effect employees' job satisfaction and efficient management and organizational development.

The purpose of Rozell, Pettijohn and Parker's (2004) study was to determine the relationships existing between customer-oriented selling, emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. The results indicate that a salesperson's customer-orientation level is significantly related to emotional intelligence and commitment.

Sy, Tram and O'Hara (2006) examined the relationships among employees' emotional intelligence, their manager's emotional intelligence, employees' job satisfaction and job performance for one hundred eighty seven food service employees from nine different locations of the same restaurant branches. The researchers found that the employees'

emotional intelligence was positively associated with job satisfaction and performance. In addition, manager's emotional intelligence had a more positive correlation with job satisfaction for employees with low emotional intelligence than for those with high emotional intelligence.

Choi and Chen (2007) examined perceptions of the fairness of the compensation systems of international joint ventures in China. Compensation is one of the important factors in job satisfaction theory. It is argued that perceptions of compensation system fairness are positively related to the three distributive justice dimensions that are performance-based distributive justice, comparative distributive justice relative to foreign expatriates, and comparative distributive justice relative to local colleagues. In particular, compensation system fairness was more strongly associated with performance-based distributive justice than with the other two distributive justice dimensions based on social comparison.

Jamali, Sidani and Abu-Zaki (2008) empirically investigated variations in EI competency scores (self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness and social skills) in a sample of employees and managers. The findings suggest differences in EI scores across different EI competencies for males and females. With males scoring higher on self-regulation and self-motivation and females scoring higher on self-awareness, empathy and social skills and that EI levels increase significantly with managerial position.

Kafetsios and Zampetakis (2008) examined the extent to which positive and negative affects at work mediate personality effect on job satisfaction by using the Wong-Law emotional intelligence scale. The result showed that in males, affect at work fully mediated the EI effect on job satisfaction. In addition, use of emotion and emotion regulation were significant independent predictors of affect at work.

Law and Wong (2008) studied about the effect of EI on job performance among research and development scientists in the large computer companies in China. They assumed that the EI is a significant predictor of job performance beyond the effect of the general mental ability on job performance.

Hosseinian and others (2008) found that training EI is effective and essential to improve human resources.

Card, Mas, Moretti, and Saes (2010) studied the effects of relative pay on individual job satisfaction and job search intentions. A randomly chosen subset of employees of University of California was formed about a new website listing the pay of university employees. They found that workers with salaries below the median for their pay unit and occupation report lower pay and job satisfaction, while those earning above the median report no higher satisfaction. Likewise, below-median earners report a significant increase in the likelihood of looking for a new job, while above-median earners are unaffected.

Ghoniem, Khouly, Mohsen and Ibrahim (2011) examined the effect of emotional intelligence and gender on job satisfaction in three different governmental organizations in Egypt. The results have shown that emotional intelligence and gender could be used as a predictor of job satisfaction. In addition, respondents with high emotional intelligence are more satisfied with their job than a respondent with low EI.

Khurram, Sarmad, Abbas, and Amanullah Khan (2011) focused on the impact of four significant aspects of EI (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) on employee's performance among Telecom employees in Pakistan. The results revealed that a positive relationship exists between social awareness and relationship management and employee's performance while self-awareness and self-management were not found significantly related to employee's performance.

The main goals of the present study were as follow:

- To study the relationship between employees' EI and their job satisfaction.
- To investigate the relationship between employees' EI and their commitment.
- To study the effect of employees' EI on their job performance.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Population and Samples**

The cross sectional study which was done from August to December 2009, at first step, the sample was identified from statistical population. This population consisted of all employees of corporations operating in Fars Province Industries .Fars Province is located in the southwest of Iran. The Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size and a total of three hundred fifty employers were calculated and recruited based on random cluster sampling. The industries included eight groups (chemical, food, building, polymer, mining, metal, electronic, and ceramic) and sample was chosen from the workers employed in these industries based on the number of companies and employers in each industry. In order to gain the participants' cooperation, a justification meeting was held to explain the objectives of the project in each company. Questionnaires were distributed among the participants. From a sample of three hundred fifty employers, two hundred eighty nine participants were enrolled (response rate 82.5%). sixty-one (17.5%) were excluded because of incomplete questionnaires

### **Measures and Variables**

The standard instrument which was used to assess the employees' emotional intelligence was the Persian version of the Modified Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (MSEIS). MSEIS is a self-report 41-item questionnaire to assess the trait emotional intelligence. Questionnaire was adapted because of differences in culture between developed countries and developing countries like Iran. The data were acquired on five-point Likert scale. To determine the reliability, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was applied and obtained coefficient was 0.85.

In addition, we used Grikson (1987) Questionnaire to gather information about employees' job satisfaction. This instrument assesses many aspects of job satisfaction, like the labor's attitude about promotion, supervisor, work, salary and compensation. Reliability of this scale was 0.82. Alen and Mayer's questionnaire (1990) was considered in order to collect employees' commitment data. Cronbach's coefficient

alpha for this scale was 0.74. Job performance data were supplied by using the questionnaire made by researcher (2009). This scale includes many factors like intra-group corporation, transferring their experience, using others' experience, trying to introduce new ideas, participating in personnel training and using the proper way and style at work. The reliability of this scale was 0.81.

Because the questionnaires were adapted to Iranian culture, the content validity of the questionnaire was assessed by a panel of experts comprised of psychology and management academics and experts.

The first section of the survey instrument requested demographic information about participants including age, marriage and education. The basic variables include the emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, commitment and job performance. Each variable consists of many sub-variables.

- *Emotional intelligence* includes self-awareness, self-motivation, empathy and social skills.
- *Job satisfaction* comprises of the labor's attitude about promotion, supervisor, work, salary, compensation and adaptability with working situation.
- *Commitment* consists of organizational goals acceptance, attempt to reach the goals and tendency to stay in organization.
- *Job performance* includes intra-group corporation, conveying their experience, using others' experience, trying to introduce new ideas, participating in personnel training and using the proper methodology.

The mean values, standard deviation and correlation were used to analyze the data.

### **Findings**

The range of participants' age was from 20 to 56. About 85% of them were married and 20% of participants graduated from university. In order to analyze the data, we applied SPSS software .Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of variables score like EI, job satisfaction, commitment and job performance.



**Table 1. Mean and standard deviation**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Emotional Intelligence	138.72	19.22
Job Satisfaction	188	23.72
Commitment	69.88	37.24
Job Performance	52.7	9.63

The correlations between EI's score and job satisfaction are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. The correlations between the score of EI and job satisfaction.**

	<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>		
Pearson Correlation	** 0.184	1
Sig (2 - tailed)	0.002	-
N	289	289
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>		
Pearson Correlation	1	** 0.184
Sig (2 - tailed)	-	0.002
N	289	289

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The result showed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction and employees with high EI seek the jobs that need high ability.

The employees with higher EI have skills to recognize and control the emotion. Comparing to low EI, the high EI make it possible for employees to recognize the stressful situation in workplace. EI makes it easy for them to follow stress factors and, as a consequence, manage environmental situation.

Adaptability with working situation is one of the job satisfaction factors .People with high EI have the higher level of self-confidence and ability to tackle the problems and they have positive attitude by expanding positive emotion among group members which can facilitate members' participation and decrease conflict and increase job satisfaction.

In addition, the results have shown a significant relationship between self-awareness and attitude about promotion, supervisor, work and earning. The employees with high self-awareness have positive attitude about work situations.

These research findings are consistent with Wong & Law (2002), Goleman (1995), Copper & Sawaf (1997), and Shimazu, Shimazu & Odahara's (2004) results.

Employees with high EI are more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction because they are more adept at appraising and regulating their own emotions than employees with low EI. For example, employees with high EI may be better at identifying feelings of frustration and stress, and subsequently, regulating those emotions to reduce stress. Employees with high EI are more resilient because they are able to understand the causes of stress and develop strategies and perseverance to deal with the negative consequences of stress (Copper & Sawaf, 1997). Conversely, employees with low EI are likely to be less aware of their emotions and possess fewer abilities to cope with their emotions when faced with difficult situations, thereby, exacerbating their level of stress and decreasing their level of job satisfaction.

Furthermore, employees with high EI are likely to experience high levels of job satisfaction because they can utilize their ability to appraise and manage emotions in others. This skill becomes significant in group settings where employees with high EI can use their skills to foster positive interactions that help to boost their own morale, as well as the morale of the group, and contribute positively to the experience of job satisfaction (Shimazu & Odahara, 2004).

EI test is considered as a very proper tool in recruitment phase to recognize the ability of work force in corresponding with environmental condition and job satisfaction .In addition, because EI contains the sort of skills which could be educable, flexible and variable in the course of time, attending work shop will reinforce the employee's EI.

Table 3 shows relationships between employees' education and age with their EI and job satisfaction.

**Table 3 - Relationship between education and age with EI and job satisfaction**

	<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Age</b>
<b>Age</b>				
Pearson Correlation	-0.088	**-.0191	-0.017	1
Sig (2-tailed)	0.134	0.001	0.769	-
N	289	289	289	289
<b>Education</b>				
Pearson Correlation	*0.124	*0.120	1	-0.017
Sig (2-tailed)	0.035	0.042	-	0.769
N	289	289	289	289

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 3, there is a negative and significant relationship between EI and age of employees. On the other hand, there is a positive and significant relationship between EI and employees' education, and also there is a positive and significant relationship between education and job satisfaction. So applying work force with higher education, due to their awareness of social situation and ability to regulate emotions in themselves and in others, can increase job satisfaction and decrease job leaving.

Table 4 shows the relationship between EI and commitment.

**Table 4 - Relationship between EI and Commitment**

	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>		
Pearson Correlation	0.077	1
Sig (2-tailed)	0.191	-
N	289	289
<b>Commitment</b>		
Pearson Correlation	1	0.077
Sig (2-tailed)	-	0.191
N	289	289

According to Table 4, there is not a significant relationship between EI and commitment as a whole, because employees with high EI have many job opportunities and they are able to choose the best one. In

addition, the comparison of the factors showed that there is a positive significant between self-motivation and attempt to reach the goals, but there is not any relationship between other factors of EI and tendency to stay in organization. So delegating the responsibility proper to one's ability can increase commitment by enhancing job satisfaction.

Table 5 demonstrates relationship between education, age and commitment.

**Table 5 - Relationship between education and age with commitment**

	<b>Commitment</b>
<b>Age</b>	
Pearson Correlation	-0.113
Sig (2 - tailed)	0.055
N	289
<b>Education</b>	
Pearson Correlation	-0.086
Sig (2 - tailed)	0.251
N	289

On the whole, there is no significant relationship between work force education and age with commitment, but there is a positive relationship between age and tendency to stay in organization. Also, it found out that 38-year-old employees and older do not seek new job.

Table 6 shows the relationship between EI and job performance.

**Table 6 - Relationship between EI and job performance**

	<b>Job Performance</b>	<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>		
Pearson Correlation	**0.283	1
Sig (2-tailed)	0.000	-
N	289	289
<b>Job Performance</b>		
Pearson Correlation	1	**0.283
Sig (2-tailed))	-	0.000
N	289	289

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results of Table 6 indicate the significant relationship between EI and job performance, especially the positive and significant relationships are among self-motivation, self-awareness, self-regulation and intra-group corporation, using others' experience, trying to introduce new ideas and using the proper way and style. The research findings are consistent with Wong and Law (2002), Goleman (1995) and Salovey and Mayer (1997) results. This issue demonstrates that employees with higher EI are more skillful to facilitate their job performance and it seems that they are aware about the influence of emotion on behavior and outcomes. Under such circumstances, they can regulate their emotion consistent with work responsibility.

EI plays very significant role in achievement of organizations objectives. People with high EI tend to progress and due to higher level of self-confidence, not only have they efficiency, but also they can reduce conflict among work force. Table 7 shows the relationship between age, education and job performance.

**Table 7 - Relationship between education and age with job performance**

	<b>Job Performance</b>
<b>Age</b>	
Pearson Correlation	*0.122
Sig (2-tailed))	0.034
N	289
<b>Education</b>	
Pearson Correlation	*0.126
Sig (2-tailed))	0.040
N	289

Well-experienced employees are more successful in their job and usually find out the best methodology in their work life. They try to convey their experiences to others. Also, higher education affects on job performance, particularly educated employees tend to participate in personnel training and intra-group corporation.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Emotional Intelligence is defined as "the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate between them,

and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions".

This kind of ability includes interaction between feelings and recognition that conduct people to adopt with life situation. The results of this study show a significant relationship between EI and job satisfaction and job performance, so employees with higher EI and skills in emotions control, have more job satisfaction and desirable job performance, because they are more adept at appraising and regulating their own emotions and aware about the influence of emotions on behavior and outcomes. These research findings are consistent with Wong & Law (2002), Goleman (1995), Sy, Tram and O'Hara (2006), and Law & Wong (2008) results.

The mean of EI score is 138.72, that according to the defined scale of EI questionnaire is greater than moderate. This result indicates that industries are successful in selecting work force with high EI.

In addition, the results have shown that there is not a significant relationship between EI and commitment as a whole. Because employees with high EI have many job opportunities and they are able to choose the best one. This finding is the same as Goleman (1995) result.

It is highly recommended that industries in recruitment phase evaluate one's ability to control their feelings and recognize others' feelings through applying EI test. Furthermore, they should consider these test scores as significant factors to make decision in recruitment phase. It is suggested that, at the same time, employees should attend to EI workshop run by the specialists and counselors. In general, EI contains the sort of skills which are educable, flexible and variable in the course of time. This course of action, as a consequence, will increase employees' ability to adopt with work place and facilitate proper work relationship which leads to improving efficiency and job performance.

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