

Assessing the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Occupational Self-Efficacy and Organizational Commitment

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The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship among Emotional Intelligence (EI), occupational self-efficacy, and organizational commitment. Data were collected from 120 employees working in various organizations in India. A positive and significant correlation is observed between EI and occupational self-efficacy ($p < 0.01$), whereas a positive relationship (not significant) is observed between EI and organizational commitment. Moreover, a low positive association is found between occupational self-efficacy and organizational commitment. The research implies that EI and occupational self-efficacy are related with a variety of organizationally desirable outcomes. Therefore, an understanding of the levels of EI and occupational self-efficacy will be helpful in taking suitable steps (such as conducting training programs) to enhance these competencies among the employees.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy, Occupational Self-Efficacy, Organizational Commitment

The construct of Emotional Intelligence (EI) is one of the most frequently researched topics in organizational study. EI has been found to be an important predictor of various enviable organizational outcomes, such as job performance, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour, and organizational commitment (Carmeli, 2003; Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008; Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Lenaghan, Buda, & Eisner, 2007; Sinha & Jain, 2004; Sy, Tram, & O'Hara, 2006). In addition, the neurological sciences literature also suggests that there is a positive relation between EI and performance (Bechara, Tranel, & Damasio, 2000).

The construct of EI was initially proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990), but it was Goleman (1995) who has popularized the concept. Goleman (1998) defined EI as, "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships." Furthermore, he

suggested that EI consisted of five general components viz. self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The present research has employed the notion of EI which is based upon the conceptualization of EI as proposed by Goleman. The EI model adopted in this study consists of 10 components. The ten components that constitute EI are: (i) self-awareness (ii) empathy (iii) self-motivation (iv) emotional stability (v) managing relations (vi) integrity (vii) self-development (viii) value orientation (ix) commitment and (x) altruistic behavior (Hyde, Pethe, & Dhar, 2002). Research conducted in the area of industrial psychology and management has shown that besides predicting organizationally relevant outcomes EI is an important predictor of self-efficacy beliefs among individuals (Gundlach, Martinko, & Douglas, 2003; Salami, 2007).

Occupational Self-Efficacy

Another variable studied in the present research is occupational self-efficacy.

Although relatively unexplored, the construct of occupational self-efficacy has many implications for organizations. Empirical research reveals that occupational self-efficacy is positively related with many organizationally relevant variables, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and preparedness for organizational change (Schyns, 2004; Schyns & von Collani, 2002).

Bandura (1997) has described self-efficacy as, "the belief in one's capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments." According to him, the concern of self-efficacy is with the judgments of what an individual can do in some situations or domains with the skills that he/she possesses. Furthermore, self-efficacy as a domain-specific construct has been understood as the belief of an individual about his/her competence in a particular domain or context. Based upon this viewpoint, occupational self-efficacy has been defined as the belief in ability and competence to perform in an occupation (Pethe, Chaudhari, & Dhar, 1999). Moreover, Pethe and colleagues maintained that occupational self-efficacy consists of six underlying dimensions. The six constituent dimensions of occupational self-efficacy are: (i) confidence, (ii) command, (iii) adaptability, (iv) personal effectiveness, (v) positive attitude, and (vi) individuality.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is one of the most frequently studied concepts in industrial/organizational psychology and organizational behavior. Organizational commitment is considered to be an important determinant of organizational effectiveness. It has been shown by the studies that organizational commitment has the potential to predict a variety of organizational outcomes, such as increased job performance, reduced turnover and withdrawal cognitions, lower absenteeism rate, and increased organizational citizenship behavior (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer &

Allen, 1997; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky, 2002; Sinha & Jain, 2004). Moreover, committed employees who are highly motivated to contribute their time and energy to the pursuit of organizational goals are increasingly acknowledged as the primary asset available to an organization (Pfeffer, 1998).

Numerous definitions of organizational commitment have been offered (e.g., Meyer & Allen, 1997; Morrow, 1983; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986), but the common theme of all the definitions is that organizational commitment is the emotional bond or attachment between the employees and their organization. Among the various definitions of organizational commitment proposed so far, the most commonly used definition of organizational commitment is proposed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). They defined organizational commitment as, "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. That can be characterized by three factors: (i) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (ii) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (iii) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization."

Empirical research investigating the relationship between EI and self-efficacy suggests that EI is an important factor that contributes in the development of self-efficacy beliefs among individuals. For instance, in his social cognitive theory Bandura (1997) argued that self-awareness, self-regulation, and control of emotions (all considered to be constituents of EI) are critical in the development of self-efficacy perceptions. In addition, in a study, which focused on the development process of self-efficacy, Gundlach, Martinko, and Douglas (2003) argued that EI, through its influence on the causal reasoning process and emotions involved in reacting to important workplace

outcomes, has an impact in the development of self-efficacy among the individuals.

In a study, conducted on Chinese secondary school teachers, Chan (2004) observed a positive and significant relationship between EI and self-efficacy. In another study, carried out on a sample of teachers, Salami (2007) observed a positive association between EI and self-efficacy. Further, in their research Sinha and Jain (2004) found that assertiveness and positive self concept and reality awareness (both considered dimensions of EI) positively predicted personal effectiveness of individuals.

Several studies have established a positive relationship between EI and organizational commitment. For instance, Humphreys, Brunsen, and Davis (2005) conducted a study on direct health care workers and observed a positive correlation between EI and organizational commitment. In another research, conducted on public sector employees, Adeyemo (2007) found that EI is positively and significantly associated with organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Additionally, Jordan, Ashkanasy, and Hartel (2002) contend that individuals with high levels of EI use that capability to maintain their affective commitment to the organization.

The association between self-efficacy and organizational commitment has been established by various studies in industrial/organizational psychology. In a meta-analytic study, Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002) observed a positive correlation between task specific self-efficacy and organizational commitment. In another research, carried out on secondary school teachers, Salami (2007) observed a positive relationship between self-efficacy and organizational commitment. Moreover, Luthans, Zhu, and Avolio (2006) stated that employees with a high level of general self-efficacy and job satisfaction are more likely to

be committed to their organization and have a lower intention to turnover than the employees with a low level of self-efficacy. Moreover, in a study, Schyns and von Collani (2002) found occupational self-efficacy to be positively and significantly related with job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

An analysis of the research literature reveals that, so far, most of the research work has focused on the relationship between EI, general self-efficacy, and organizational commitment (e.g., Chan, 2004; Gundlach, Martinko, & Douglas, 2003; Humphreys, Brunsen, & Davis, 2005; Salami, 2007). On the other hand, the association between EI and occupational self-efficacy remains relatively unexplored, though the research has shown that the notion of occupational self-efficacy has implications for organizations (e.g., Schyns, 2001, 2004; Schyns & von Collani 2002). Besides this, there are very few studies that have explored the relationship between occupational self-efficacy and organizational commitment. Therefore, to mitigate the lack of empirical research on these topics, the present research has been proposed to explore the relationship between EI, occupational self-efficacy, and organizational commitment among the employees in India. In addition, this study also aims to investigate the influence of EI on occupational self-efficacy and organizational commitment.

Hypotheses

An examination of the relevant literature allowed for some specific hypotheses to be formed in this study. Following hypotheses have been formulated for empirical testing:

H1. EI will be positively associated with occupational self-efficacy.

H2. EI will be positively associated with organizational commitment.

H3. Occupational self-efficacy will be positively associated with organizational commitment.

H4. EI will significantly predict occupational self-efficacy.

H5. EI will significantly predict organizational commitment.

Method

Sample:

206 persons were asked to complete the questionnaires. Out of them, 120 respondents returned the completed questionnaires. Thus, the response rate was 58 percent. In the total sample of 120, 38 (31.7 percent) participants were having a graduate degree and 62 (51.7 percent) subjects were postgraduate while 20 (16.6 percent) participants have higher education than a PG degree. Mean age was 42 years.

Measures

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) - Emotional intelligence of the employees was assessed with the help of EI Scale developed by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002). This is a 34-item scale with ten dimensions. The ten dimensions of EI Scale are- (i) self-awareness (ii) empathy (iii) self-motivation (iv) emotional stability (v) managing relations (vi) integrity (vii) self-development (viii) value orientation (ix) commitment and (x) altruistic behavior. Participants were asked to respond on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 5 for 'strongly agree' to 1 for 'strongly disagree'. The reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .88.

Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OSES): It was used to measure the efficacy beliefs of the participants towards their occupations. This scale is developed by Pethe, Chaudhari, and Dhar (1999). This is a 19-item scale comprising of six factors. The six underlying dimensions of OSE Scale are- (i) confidence (ii) command (iii) adaptability (iv) personal effectiveness (v) positive attitude and (vi) individuality. This is a five point Likert-scale with the response range varying from 5 for 'strongly agree' to 1 for 'strongly disagree'. The

reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .98.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) - 15-item OCQ, developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979), was used to measure the commitment of employees towards their organization. The OCQ is a seven-point Likert-type scale with response ranging from 1 for 'strongly disagree' to 7 for 'strongly agree'. Internal consistency reliability of the scale is quite high with an alpha coefficient ranging from .82 to .93 with a median of .90.

Results

In the present study, the 10-component EI scale was used to measure the level of EI among the employees. Unfortunately the ten component structure of EI was not supported by the findings of this study. Therefore, based upon the factor analysis results, the five components of EI were retained for further analysis. These five dimensions of EI are: self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, and managing relations.

In order to elucidate the factor structure of EI and OSE Scales, factor analysis was conducted using principle component analysis with varimax rotation. The revised EI scale with five dimensions consisted of total 24 items. Further, items with a factor loading of less than .40 were excluded from the scale. Among the 24 items, five items were found to have factor loading of less than .40, as a result they were excluded from the scale. Thus, the modified EI scale was found to be consisting of 19 items with five dimensions.

Table 1 presents the results of factor analysis of EI scale. The five dimensions of EI, namely self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, and managing relations accounted for 20.84, 9.58, 7.40, 6.56, and 5.72 percent of variance, respectively. The five factors, in combination, explained 50.11 percent of variance.

Table 1: Factor Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence Scale Rotated Factor Matrix

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Items					
SA1	0.686				
SA2	0.437				
SA3	0.61				
Em.1		0.719			
Em.2		0.412			
Em.3		0.551			
Em.4		0.601			
SM1			0.431		
SM2			0.673		
SM3			0.909		
SM4			0.909		
SM5			0.618		
SM6			0.657		
ES1				0.611	
ES2				0.792	
ES3				0.673	
MR1					0.542
MR2					0.726
MR3					0.623

Eigenvalues 4.792.2 1.7 1.51 1.32
 % of Variance 20.84 9.58 7.4 6.56 5.72

Note: SA = Self-Awareness; Em. = Empathy; SM = Self-Motivation; ES = Emotional Stability; MR = Managing Relations

Factor analysis results of OSE scale are displayed in Table 2. In case of OSE scale, all the 19 items passed the criterion of possessing minimum factor loading of .40. Hence, no item was excluded from this scale. Factor analysis of OSE scale reveals that the six factors of occupational self-efficacy i.e., confidence, command, adaptability, personal effectiveness, positive attitude, and individuality accounted for 13.08, 12.98, 12.05, 10.99, 9.28, and 8.70 percent of variance, respectively. The six factors together explained 67.08 percent of variance.

Bivariate Analyses

Table 3 presents the correlation coefficients of the study variables. Hypothesis 1 proposes that there is a positive relationship

between EI and occupational self-efficacy. The results of the study presented in Table 3 indicate that EI is positively and significantly associated with occupational self-efficacy. Correlation coefficient of .60 (p<.01) is observed between EI and occupational self-efficacy. This justifies the retention of hypothesis 1. Moreover, the results of the study reveal that the five dimensions of EI, which were retained for further analysis, exhibit positive and significant relationship with occupational self-efficacy. Correlation coefficients of .43, .37, .48, .44, and .43 (p<.01)

Table 2: Factor Analysis of the Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale Rotated Factor Matrix

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6
Items						
Con 1	0.548					
Con 2	0.779					
Con 3	0.756					
Con 4	0.618					
Com1		0.612				
Com2		0.624				
Com3		0.586				
Ad. 1			0.732			
Ad. 2			0.566			
Ad. 3			0.683			
PE 1				0.5		
PE 2				0.597		
PE 3				0.601		
PE 4				0.721		
PA 1					0.711	
PA 2					0.782	
PA 3					0.783	
Ind. 1						0.569
Ind. 2						0.763

Eigenvalues 2.48 2.47 2.29 2.09 1.76 1.65%
 of variance 13.08 12.98 12.05 10.99 9.28 8.7

Note: Conf. = Confidence; Com. = Command; Ad. = Adaptability; PE = Personal Effectiveness; PA = Positive Attitude; Ind. = Individuality

are found between self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability and managing relations, and occupational self-efficacy, respectively.

In the second hypothesis, a positive association was assumed to exist between EI and organizational commitment. The results of the present study, shown in Table 3, indicate that there is a positive relationship between EI and organizational commitment ($r = .16$). However, this relationship is not found to be significant at any of the two significance levels (i.e., .01 and .05). Moreover, emotional stability dimension of EI is found to exhibit a significant positive

correlation with organizational commitment ($r = .23$).

In addition, the findings of the study indicate that occupational self-efficacy exhibit a weak relationship with the measure of organizational commitment. The results presented in Table 3 show that a low but positive correlation exists between occupational self-efficacy and organizational commitment ($r = .06$, not significant).

Table 3: Intercorrelations among the Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. SA	1													
2. Em.	.37**	1												
3. SM	.45**	.34**	1											
4. ES	.39**	.46**	.42**	1										
5. MR	.40**	.26**	.39**	.39**	1									
6. EI	.67**	.71**	.78**	.74**	.64**	1								
7. Conf.	.47**	.38**	.42**	.35**	.46**	.57**	1							
8. Comm.	.43**	.28**	.50**	.35**	.47**	.57**	.64**	1						
9. Ad.	.30**	.31**	.38**	.34**	.35**	.47**	.63**	.55**	1					
10. PE	.37**	.33**	.44**	.33**	.39**	.52**	.63**	.63**	.58**	1				
11. PA	.24**	.31**	.28**	.37**	0.1	.38**	.45**	.44**	.54**	.43**	1			
12. Ind.	.19*	0.12	.26**	.35**	.28**	.33**	.52**	.47**	.54**	.54**	.63**	1		
13. OSE	.43**	.37**	.48**	.44**	.43**	.60**	.84**	.78**	.81**	.82**	.73**	.77**	1	
14. OC	0.04	0.13	0.08	.23*	0.06	0.16	0.01	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.08	0.02	0.06	1

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$;

SA = Self-Awareness; Em. = Empathy; SM = Self-Motivation; ES = Emotional Stability; MR = Managing Relations; EI = Emotional Intelligence; Conf. = Confidence; Comm. = Command; Ad. = Adaptability; PE = Personal Effectiveness; PA = Positive Attitude; Ind. = Individuality; OSE = Occupational Self-Efficacy; OC = Organizational Commitment

Regression Analyses

Following the correlational analyses, the rest of the hypotheses were tested using the regression analyses methods. Hypothesis 4 assumed that EI will significantly predict the occupational self-efficacy. The results presented in Table 4 clearly indicate a significant influence of EI on occupational self-efficacy with the values; $R^2 = .36$, F-value =

62.80 ($p < .01$), and beta value ($\hat{\beta}$) = .60 ($p < .01$). Further, it is evident from the results of the study that EI accounted for 36 percent of the explained variance in occupational self-efficacy. Thus, hypothesis 4 is accepted. Organizational commitment is excluded from the regression analysis since it does not exhibit a significant correlation with EI. Therefore, hypothesis 5 is not retained.

Table 4: Regression Analysis showing Occupational Self-Efficacy as Dependent Variable with EI as Predictor Variable

Regression Model	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	df	Beta value (β)
D.V.: OSE	0.36	0.35	62.80*	1,110	0.6

* $p < 0.01$ OSE = Occupational Self-Efficacy; D.V. = Dependent Variable

Table 6: Stepwise Regression Analysis showing Occupational Self-Efficacy as Dependent Variable with the Dimensions of EI as Predictor Variables

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	df	Beta value(²)	
OSE	SA	0.18	0.17	24.93**	1, 110	0.43	
	OSE					SA	0.34
OSE	Em.	0.24	0.22	7.41**	1, 109	0.24	
	OSE					SA	0.21
	Em.					0.18	
OSE	SM	0.32	0.3	12.62**	1, 108	0.32	
	OSE					SA	0.18
	Em.					0.12	
OSE	SM	0.34	0.32	4.36*	1, 107	0.28	
	ES					0.2	
	SA					0.14	
	Em.					0.11	
OSE	SM	0.37	0.34	4.87*	1, 106	0.24	
	ES					0.15	
	MR					0.2	

In order to identify the specific dimensions of EI that are important predictors of occupational self-efficacy, stepwise regression is undertaken with occupational self-efficacy as the dependent variable and the five dimensions of EI as independent variables. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.

The results of the study presented in Table 5 indicate that self-awareness accounted for 18 percent of variance in occupational self-efficacy and the values obtained are: R² = .18 and F-value = 24.93 (p<.01). It is also observed from the results of the study that self-awareness and empathy, together, produced the values: R² = .24 and F-value = 7.41 (p<.01). This denotes that self-awareness and empathy accounted for 24 percent of the explained variance in occupational self-efficacy. In addition, the findings of the study indicate that self-awareness, empathy, and self-motivation are responsible for 32 percent of explained variance in occupational self-efficacy (R² = .32 and F-value = 12.62 {p<.01}).

Table 5 shows that self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, and emotional

stability, in combination, produced the values: R² = .34 and F-value = 4.36 (p<.05). These findings of the study reveal that all these four factors accounted for 34 percent of variance in occupational self-efficacy. Finally, the results of the study indicate that the five dimensions of EI, namely self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, and managing relations together accounted for 37 percent of the explained variance in occupational self-efficacy. The values obtained are: R² = .37 and F-value = 4.87 (p<.05).

Discussion and Conclusion

The major objective of the present research is to explore the relationship between EI, occupational self-efficacy and organizational commitment, and it also aims to investigate the influence of EI on occupational self-efficacy and organizational commitment. This study advances the literature on EI and general self-efficacy, which depicts a positive relationship between EI and general self-efficacy (e.g., Chan, 2004; Gundlach, Martinko, & Douglas, 2003; Salami, 2007), by including the concept of occupational self-efficacy. Moreover, the present research also highlights the importance of occupational

self-efficacy in an organizational context.

The results of this study indicate that EI significantly predicts occupational self-efficacy in such a way that employees with a high level of EI exhibit a high level of occupational self-efficacy. One probable reason for this association may be that persons with high EI are more expert in appraising and controlling their emotions, as a result, they experience more confidence and control over the tasks they performed, which in turn enhance their efficacy beliefs. Besides this, employees with higher EI are more aware of themselves in terms of their abilities and limitations that also contribute in determining their self-efficacy level.

It is also observed from the results of the study that there is a positive relationship between EI and organizational commitment. The results of the present study are consistent with, and supported by, some of the previous studies (e.g., Adeyemo, 2007; Humphreys, Brunsen, & Davis, 2005; Nikolaou & Tsaoasis, 2002; Singh, 2004; Sinha & Jain, 2004), where a positive relationship has been observed between EI and organizational commitment. The positive association between EI and organizational commitment might be due to the fact that employees with high EI are better able to recognize, manage, and use their emotions than employees with low levels of EI. Further, they use this ability to progress and eliminate the obstacles they face in their career.

The findings of this study also have certain practical implications. It is commonly believed that individuals with a high level of EI are better employees. Goleman (1995) also contends that EI should become increasingly valued in the workplace in future. These days, retaining talented and knowledgeable employees is a key concern for most of the organizations. The findings of the study indicate that emotionally intelligent employees show high level of occupational self-efficacy

and commitment to their organizations. Therefore, it is assumed that selecting employees who have high EI may have a positive impact on the extent to which an organization succeeds in retaining its most critical asset i.e., its workforce. Research has also shown that emotionally intelligent employees develop emotional attachment to their organizations and are more committed to their organization (Carmeli, 2003).

The present study helps in understanding the concepts of EI, occupational self-efficacy and organizational commitment, and provides an insight into the relationship between these variables. At this point, it may be suggested that organizations should also focus on finding the levels of EI and self-efficacy beliefs of their future employees, in addition to other characteristics, in the personnel selection process. In organizations human resource managers should conduct development or training programs in order to develop or enhance these competencies among their employees. This will lead not only toward the formation of a better organization but it will also help in developing the individual as a whole.

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Received: 22 June, 2009

Revision Received: 19 August, 2009

Accepted: 29 September, 2009

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