A Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance and Life Satisfaction in IT Sector in India

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Abstract : The role of emotional intelligence towards achieving happiness in life is well recognized by researchers. Emotional intelligence has also been found to play a key role in the job performance of an employee. This study combines these two issues and attempts to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on job performance and life satisfaction (LS) in the information technology (IT) sector in India. Adopting a quantitative research strategy, responses of selected IT sector employees were analyzed. Study findings indicate that there is a positive and significant relation among the three elements.It is recommended that the importance of emotional intelligence of IT sector employees should be recognized by the employers so that the industry could benefit from better employee performance and satisfaction in their lives can be achieved in the process.

IndexTerms - **Emotional intelligence, Job performance, Life satisfaction, Information technology.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Satisfaction in the life of a person is a subjective concept. Historically, it has been linked with "happiness" (Ardahan, 2012). Few would argue that life satisfaction of a working person to a large extent depends on job satisfaction which in turn depends on job performance. The better an employee does at his job, job satisfaction rises leading to higher life satisfaction. Among many factors that affect job performance, emotional intelligence has been identified by researchers as one of the important determinants(Côté & Miners, 2006), (Druskat, Sala, & Mount, 2013). This study attempts to empirically investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, job performance and life satisfaction in the context of IT sector employees in India. The choice of IT sector comes from its growing importance in employment creation among Indian youth for the past several years and poor work life balance, thereby making it a suitable fit for the analysis of the aforementioned aspects since work life balance is affected by emotional intelligence. To support the study objective, a quantitative (survey) research strategy was adopted whereby responses from IT sector employees across Delhi-NCR was collected and statistically analyzed.

a. Importance of Life Satisfaction among Employees

Life satisfaction is a multi dimensional concept and researchers attributed it to various factors(Mafini & Dlodlo, 2014). In general, it is associated with the hedonism doctrine of maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain proposed by Greek philosophers (Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005). Existing literature used life satisfaction as an indicator of well being of a person (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). It was found to be associated with positive attributes of life such as self esteem (Ye, Yu, & Li, 2012). Diener, Inglehart, & Tay(2013)related life satisfaction to global measures of people's satisfaction with entire lives of them and found life satisfaction to have been affected by personal factors of marriage and work, and also by environmental and societal factors. In this study, the conceptual framework of Jain(2015)and (Mohamad & Jais, 2016) were followed as it connected a number of salient features of emotional intelligence with life satisfactionand emotional intelligence with job performance respectively.

b. Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

Job performance is the evaluation of how well an assigned job is executed by employees in an organization. Emotional intelligence has been defined as intelligence involving recognition of emotion, reasoning with it and processing emotional information in general ability to solve problems (Mayer & Geher, 1996). It is an important dimension of anyone's personality. In the literature, job performance and dimensions of an employee's personality have often been investigated through 'Five-Factor' model where five factors referred to five different personality dimensions.Barrick & Mount(1991) examined the relation of five factors given by extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experiencewith job performance criteria given by job proficiency, training proficiency and personnel data.Emotional stability was found to affect job performance but the outcome depended on types of occupations. It therefore, provides the motivation for this study which attempts to examine the interrelationship of emotional intelligence and job performance in the information technology (IT) sector.

c.   Work-life Balance in the IT Industry of India

Work-life balance (WLB) is defined as practices to cater to the needs of employees in maintaining a balance between work lives and family lives (Purohit, 2013).As observed by researchers in the current Indian context, WLB for the ITindustry employeeesis critical due to changes in the working schedule and adoption of western organizational practices by many IT companies (Tewathia, 2014), (Deivasigamani & Shankar, 2014). Employees are often put to long working hours during the week and work during the weekends. Stress at work and lack of WLB affect their family lives. Empirical findings showed evidence of poor WLB and its adverse effects in cities like New Delhi (Tewathia, 2014) and for women IT professionals in Mumbai(Das & Mishra, 2016). Their life satisfaction is negatively affected in the process.

II. AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the present study is to empirically examine the relation between emotional intelligence, job performance and life satisfaction of IT sector employees in India.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. A brief and comprehensive review of a few recent empirical studies investigating the connection between emotional intelligence, job performance and life satisfaction is presented in the next section. It will be followed by the methodology adopted in this study. Discussion of the quantitative analysis will be presented next. Conclusions are provided at the end based on the findings of the analysis.

Empirical Review

Law, Wong, Huang, & Li(2008) examined the effect of emotional intelligence (EI) on job performance and life satisfaction (LS) of a group of scientists in China working in research and development (R&D) in their study titled *"The effects of emotional intelligence on job performance and life satisfaction for the research and development scientists in China"*. With a sample of 102 employees working in research laboratory of a Chinese computer company, they conducted a descriptive and inferential analysis of correlation and multiple regression to test the impact of EI on job performance and life satisfaction. The empirical results were indicative of the predictive power of EI on both the dependent variables in the sample.

The relationship between EI and LS in the general community of Ankara, Turkey was investigated in the study titled *"A study about relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction"* by Ozyer, Azizogly, & Fahreeva(2011). A sample of 114 respondents was collected and analyzed to find any existing relationship between EI and LS and also effect of demographic profile of the participants on EI and LS. A positive and significant correlation between EI and LS was found in the sample with two different measures of EI being used. Among the demographic characteristics, only gender affected EI significantly with female EI being higher than that in male respondents. The study did not find any evidence of effect of demographics on LS.

Ardahan(2012) studied the existence of relationship between EI and LS between two groups, one which participated in outdoor sports and the other that didn't participate in his paper *"Life satisfaction and emotional intelligence of participants/non participants in outdoor sports: Turkey case"*. The reason for choosing outdoor sports as the criteria of sample selection was the opportunity it creates to interact with nature and the role it plays to improve physical health and emotional interests. Responses were gathered through electronic questionnaire from 1181 outdoor sports participants and 538 non participants. Descriptive statistics and nonparametric tests of Pearson's correlation and Mann-Whitney U test were performed to show that participation in outdoor sports had a positive impact on LS. Higher EI was found to be associated with higher LS.

Dabke's(2014) study titled *"Can life satisfaction be predicted by emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and personality type?"*, examined the role of EI, personality type and job satisfaction toward the determination of LSin a sample consisting of 200 middle and senior level executives working as team leaders in various public and private sector companies in India. Six factors were taken as independent variables with four common factors of EI with the "Five Factor" model mentioned before.Only the openness factor was replaced with neuroticism. Job satisfaction was treated as the sixth independent variable with LS being the dependent variable. Correlation and regression analysis revealed that job satisfaction and LS were positively and significantly correlated. However, EI and LS did not exhibit any significant correlation. Job satisfaction and personality type of extraversion had a positive impact on LS.

Another study in the Indian context *"Emotional Intelligence and its relationship with life satisfaction"*aimed to explore the relationship between EI and LS in the western part of suburban Mumbai(Jain, 2015). It specifically looked at a sample of 54 female working in different areas. The argument put forward for the sample selection was multiple responsibilities handled by women leading to more stress and imbalance in lifestyle. Correlation results showed positive and moderate association between EI and LS leading to the conclusion that satisfaction in life of female participants could be achieved by managing emotions.

The significance of emotional intelligence on the performance of teachers was established by Mohamad & Jais(2016)in their study titled *"Emotional intelligence and Job Performance: A Study Among Malaysian Teachers"*. In a sample of 212 teachers working in secondary schools in Malaysia, reliability and correlation analysis were performed to show that job performance was significantly related with emotional intelligence and its four aspects of self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation and social skills.

In a more recent study *"The effect of emotional intelligence on employee's job performance: the moderating role of perceived organizational support"*, Akhtar, Ghufran, Husnain, & Shahid(2017) analyzed the relationship between EI and job performance from the organizational support perspective. A questionnaire survey method was adopted for analysis where 316 employees working in the banking sector in Islamabad, Pakistan were included. The study findings were similar to those of (Law et al.,

2008). EI had impacted job performance positively and significantly. The positive relationship was stronger with a high perceived organizational support.

III. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative survey was conducted by using a structured and close ended questionnaire to analyze the responses of 184 employees working in various IT companies in and across Delhi National capital Region (NCR). The data was analyzed to capture the relationship between the three elements; i.e. emotional intelligence, job performance and life satisfaction. For the purpose of the study, a population of 200 employees was targeted. These employees consisted of those working in different verticals and hierarchies of 4 IT mid-sized (employee strength 100-500) IT companies based in Delhi-NCR. Out of 200 questionnaires distributed, 184 respondents turned in their responses which were complete and therefore used for the statistical analysis.The analysis was done using the SPSS software. The following null hypotheses were tested.

H_01: There is no relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance.
H_02: There is no relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction.
The results are interpreted in the next section.

IV.   DISCUSSION OF RESULTS
a) Demographic Profile

The table below represents the demographicsof the participants based on the data collected on their gender, age, educational qualification, monthly salary and their current position and duration of service in their present organization. Among 184 participants, 64.1% of them were

	Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	118	64.1
	Female	66	35.9
Age	Less than 30	52	28.3
	31-40	69	37.5
	41-50	37	20.1
	Above 50	26	14.1
Educational Qualification	Bachelors	98	53.3
	Masters	71	38.6
	PhD	15	8.2
Monthly salary (in Rs.)	Below 30000	28	15.2
	30001-50000	53	28.8
	50001-75000	47	25.5
	75001-100000	39	21.2
	Above 100000	17	9.2
Current Position	Senior Manager	25	13.6
	Assistant Manager	51	27.7

	Supervisor	28	15.2
	Software Developer	44	23.9
	Executive	21	11.4
	Others	15	8.2
Duration of Service	Less than 2 years	32	17.4
	2-5 years	72	39.1
	6-10 years	58	31.5
	Above 10 years	22	12.0

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of the Demographic Profile

male and 35.9% were female. Frequency distribution of age showed that greatest percentage of them was aged between 31 to 40 years, followed by those aged less than 30 and between 41 to 50 years. The pool of respondents was well qualified with 47% of them having at least a master's degree. Distribution according to monthly salary indicated that 85% of them were earning more than Rs. 30,000 per month with percentage of respondents earning between Rs. 30,000 and 50,000 being the highest. More than 50% of the respondents were working as either assistant manager (27.7%) or software developer (23.9%). Majority of the participants (82.6%) were associated with their current organization for more than 2 years. Among them, 39.1% of them had spent 2 to 5 years in their present company, followed by 31.5% of participants having spent 6 to 10 years.

b) Inferential Analysis

Correlation Analysis

The table below presents the Pearson's correlation coefficient between two variables.It measured the degree of linear association. A positive value indicated that a rise in the value of one variable was associated with a rise in the value of the other variable, a negative value indicated the opposite. For the purpose of testing the null hypotheses mentioned before, job performance and life satisfaction were taken as dependent variables and a set of aspects of emotional intelligence was taken as independent variables. A set of job related factors such as work-life balance, promotion, supervision and relationships at work were taken as control following (Mafini & Dlodlo, 2014).

	Job Performance	**Life Satisfaction**
Job Performance	1	0.791[**]
Life Satisfaction	0.791[**]	1
Self-awareness	0.715[**]	0.586[**]
Self-regulations	0.607[**]	0.505[**]
Self-motivation	0.728[**]	0.557[**]
Social Skill	0.553[**]	0.469[**]
Work-life Balance	0.555[**]	0.465[**]
Promotion	0.724[**]	0.560[**]
Supervision	0.674[**]	0.495[**]
Relationships at work	0.711[**]	0.548[**]

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

Table 2: Correlation between Variables

The results demonstrate that job performance and life satisfaction were positively and significantly correlated with all the factors. This implies that all the factors considered in the study had a strong degree of linear association with the explained variables. The highest value of correlation coefficient of job performance was found to be that of the self-motivation factor (0.728). Life satisfaction had the highest degree of association with self-awareness (coefficient value of 0.585). Based on the values of all the coefficients (a p-value less than 0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. In other words, the correlation analysis established the relationship of emotional intelligence with job performance and life satisfaction. These findings are similar with those demonstrated by(Ardahan, 2012), (Mohamad & Jais, 2016).

Regression Analysis

Following correlation analysis, two linear regression analyses by the means of t-test were performed to quantify the impact of the explanatory variables on the dependent variables. Table 3 presents the regression results for job performance. It was noted that the R-square value for the model was given by 0.596 which indicated a moderate goodness of fit. Observing the values for regression coefficients, self-awareness and self-regulations were found to be significant at 5% level of significance. Self-motivation was significant at 10%. All the four factors of emotional

Factors	Standardized Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Significance
Constant		2.270	0.024
Self-awareness	0.202	1.986	0.049
Self-regulations	0.894	4.629	0.000
Self-motivation	0.482	1.937	0.054
Social Skill	0.028	0.350	0.727
Work-life Balance	-0.694	-3.529	0.001
Promotion	-0.135	-0.441	0.659
Supervision	0.084	0.772	0.441
Relationships at work	-0.007	-0.035	0.972

Table 3: Regression coefficients for Job Performance

intelligence had a positive impact on job performance. This supported the findings of the correlation analysis. Among the significant factors, the impact of self-regulations on job performance was the highest with the coefficient value given by 0.894. It implies that with a one unit rise in the value of self-awareness, the job performance of the respondents would rise by 0.894 units. The positive and significant impact of emotional intelligence helped to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative,

The second regression was run to measure the impact of the same factors on life satisfaction. Results of the t-test reflected similar outcomes. As shown in table 4, the coefficients of self-regulations and self-awareness showed significance at 5% level. All the four aspects of emotional intelligence impacted life satisfaction in a positive manner, validating the correlation analysis findings.

Factors	Standardized Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Significance
Constant		6.400	0.000
Self-awareness	0.314	2.448	0.015

Self-regulations	0.636	2.614	0.010
Self-motivation	0.195	0.621	0.535
Social Skill	0.091	0.912	0.363
Work-life Balance	-0.471	-1.902	0.059
Promotion	0.047	0.121	0.904
Supervision	-0.079	-0.576	0.565
Relationships at work	-0.043	-0.168	0.867

Table 4: Regression Coefficients for Life Satisfaction

Similar to the first regression, the effect of self-regulations was found to be maximum among all the factors. The corresponding β value implied that for the participants, satisfaction in their life would rise by 0.636 units with a one unit rise in self-regulation aspect of emotional intelligence. The null hypothesis was rejected as there was a positive and significant impact of emotional intelligence on life satisfaction of the surveyed employees.

V. CONCLUSION

The examination of the impact of emotional intelligence of people in the different strata of the society on their life satisfaction is well investigated in the existing literature. Many studies also looked at how emotional intelligence of workers affected their job performance. In this respect, the main contribution of this study is that it has brought these two issues together under investigation. Results of the quantitative analysis of correlation and regression showed evidence of positive and significant effect of emotional intelligence of selected IT sector employees in India on both their job performance and life satisfaction. The study findings were similar to those in (Law et al., 2008), (Jain, 2015). It can be stated that emotional intelligence is an important factor towards achieving improved performance at jobs in the IT sector where employees often suffer from poor work-life balance. It also plays an important role for them to be happy and content with their lives. Therefore the employers of the IT sector must recognize this and create such an environment for their employees that is conducive and supportive of their emotional intelligence quotient. However, emotional intelligence and life satisfaction have been measured in many different ways and there are factors other than emotional intelligence that might potentially affect the life satisfaction in service sector. This provides the future motivation of research in this topic.

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