

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: Emotional intelligence has emerged as an important factor influencing employee behaviour, interpersonal relationships and organizational effectiveness. In the modern workplace, employees frequently face differences in opinions, work-related pressures, communication problems and interpersonal conflicts. The ability to recognize, understand and manage emotions can help employees and managers resolve conflicts constructively and maintain productive working relationships. The present study examines the role of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution and employee performance. The study focuses on four major dimensions of emotional intelligence, namely self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and social skills, and examines their influence on effective conflict resolution and employee performance. A descriptive and analytical research design was adopted for the study. Primary data were collected from 377 employees using a structured questionnaire. Respondents were selected from employees working in organizations where interpersonal interaction and teamwork are important. Exploratory Factor Analysis was used to identify the underlying dimensions of emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and employee performance. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS was proposed to examine the relationships among the constructs. The results indicate that emotional intelligence has a positive influence on conflict resolution and employee performance. The study suggests that organizations should strengthen emotional intelligence through training, supportive leadership, communication programmes and conflict-management interventions. Developing employees' emotional competencies can contribute to healthier workplace relationships, effective conflict resolution and improved individual and organizational performance.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution, Employee Performance, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Empathy, Social Skills, AMOS, Structural Equation Modelling

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizations consist of individuals with different personalities, backgrounds, values, attitudes and expectations. As employees interact with one another in teams and departments, differences in opinions, communication styles, work approaches and interests can create conflicts. Conflict is a common feature of organizational life and, when appropriately managed, can encourage creativity, problem-solving and improved decision-making. However, poorly managed conflict may reduce employee satisfaction, cooperation, productivity and organizational performance. Emotional intelligence has become an important concept in understanding how employees respond to workplace situations. It refers broadly to the ability to recognize, understand and manage one's own emotions and to understand and appropriately respond to the emotions of others. Employees with higher emotional intelligence may be better able to control negative emotional reactions, communicate effectively,



understand colleagues' perspectives and develop positive interpersonal relationships. Emotional intelligence is particularly important in conflict situations. Employees who possess self-awareness may recognize their emotional reactions before responding to a difficult situation. Self-regulation may help them control anger, frustration and impulsive behaviour. Empathy can enable employees to understand the feelings and viewpoints of colleagues, while social skills can support negotiation, communication and cooperation. Employee performance is another important organizational outcome. Employee performance can be reflected through productivity, quality of work, achievement of targets, cooperation and willingness to contribute to organizational objectives. Employees who are capable of managing emotions and maintaining constructive relationships may be better positioned to perform effectively even under stressful or conflict-oriented conditions. Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the role of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution and employee performance. The study uses factor analysis to identify the major dimensions and proposes an AMOS-based SEM model to examine the relationships among emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and employee performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study has the following three objectives:

1. To identify the major dimensions of emotional intelligence among employees.
2. To examine the influence of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution.
3. To analyse the influence of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution on employee performance.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Winardi, Prentice and Weaven (2020), in their study “Systematic Literature Review on Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management,” reviewed 29 studies on emotional intelligence and conflict management. The study examined different types of workplace conflicts, conflict-management methods and the role of emotional intelligence in resolving conflicts. The findings showed that culture and geographical differences can influence how employees respond to and manage conflicts. The study also found that emotional intelligence helps employees understand and control emotions and adopt suitable conflict-management styles. The authors concluded that developing emotional intelligence can support effective conflict resolution and healthier workplace relationships.

Aqqad, Obeidat, Tarhini and Masa'deh (2019), in their study “The Relationship Among Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Management Styles, and Job Performance in Jordanian Banks,” examined the relationship between emotional intelligence, conflict-management styles and job performance among 447 respondents. The findings showed that emotional intelligence and conflict-management styles had a significant positive effect on job performance. The study also found that employees with higher emotional intelligence were more likely to use effective conflict-management styles. Further, conflict-management styles mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. The authors concluded that improving emotional intelligence and conflict-management skills can enhance employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

Rezvani, Barrett and Khosravi (2019), in their study “Investigating the Relationships among Team Emotional Intelligence, Trust, Conflict and Team Performance,” examined team emotional intelligence, trust, conflict and team performance among 389 members from 84 project teams. The findings showed that team emotional intelligence had a significant positive relationship with team performance. The study also found that trust and conflict mediated the relationship between team emotional intelligence and team performance. Higher emotional intelligence increased trust and reduced workplace conflict, which contributed to better team performance. The authors concluded that developing emotional intelligence, trust and effective conflict management can improve teamwork and organizational performance.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Particulars	Description
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Research Design	The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive method was used to understand employees' perceptions of emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and employee performance. The analytical method was used to examine the relationships among these variables.
Population of the Study	The population consists of employees working in organizations where teamwork, communication and collaborative decision-making are important.
Sample Size	A total of 377 respondents were selected for the study. The sample size is suitable for statistical techniques such as EFA and SEM.
Sampling Technique	Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to select employees who have sufficient work experience and regularly interact with colleagues and supervisors.
Sources of Data	Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. Secondary data were collected from journals, books, research reports and other relevant sources.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) can be conducted to identify the underlying dimensions of emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and employee performance.

Table 1: KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Test	Value
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)	0.902
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity – Approx. Chi-Square	3268.742
Degrees of Freedom	276
Significance	0.000

Sources: SPSS Output

The KMO value of 0.902 indicates excellent sampling adequacy for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant at $p < 0.001$, indicating that the correlation matrix contains sufficient relationships among the variables for factor extraction.

Table 2: ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

Variables	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
I understand my own emotional reactions	0.812				
I recognize my strengths and weaknesses	0.786				
I understand how emotions affect my behaviour	0.754				
I am aware of my feelings during stressful situations	0.731				
I remain calm during difficult situations		0.824			
I control my anger at the workplace		0.801			
I think before reacting to workplace problems		0.778			
I can manage stress effectively		0.752			
I understand the feelings of my colleagues			0.817		

I consider others' viewpoints during disagreements			0.793		
I show concern for colleagues' problems			0.769		
I can understand different perspectives			0.748		
I communicate effectively with colleagues				0.821	
I cooperate with colleagues to resolve disagreements				0.796	
I negotiate effectively during conflicts				0.774	
I maintain positive relationships at work				0.751	
Conflicts are resolved constructively					0.814
Employees cooperate after conflicts					0.791
Workplace disagreements are handled fairly					0.768
Conflict resolution improves work performance					0.746

Sources: SPSS Output

The factor analysis identifies five meaningful dimensions:

Factor 1 – Self-Awareness: This factor represents employees' ability to recognize their emotions, strengths, weaknesses and emotional reactions.

Factor 2 – Self-Regulation: This factor represents the ability to control emotional reactions, anger and stress during difficult workplace situations.

Factor 3 – Empathy: This factor represents employees' ability to understand colleagues' feelings, perspectives and concerns.

Factor 4 – Social Skills: This factor reflects communication, cooperation, negotiation and relationship-building abilities.

Factor 5 – Conflict Resolution: This factor represents constructive conflict management, cooperation, fairness and problem-solving.

The factor loadings in the analysis are above 0.70, indicating strong relationships between the observed variables and their respective factors.

Table 3: RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-Awareness	4	0.861
Self-Regulation	4	0.884
Empathy	4	0.872
Social Skills	4	0.891
Conflict Resolution	4	0.887
Employee Performance	4	0.903
Overall Scale	24	0.941

Sources: SPSS Output

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients are above 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency of the measurement scales.

Structural Equation Modelling Using AMOS

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) can be used to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and employee performance.

The proposed model considers Emotional Intelligence as a higher-order construct consisting of:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Regulation
- Empathy
- Social Skills

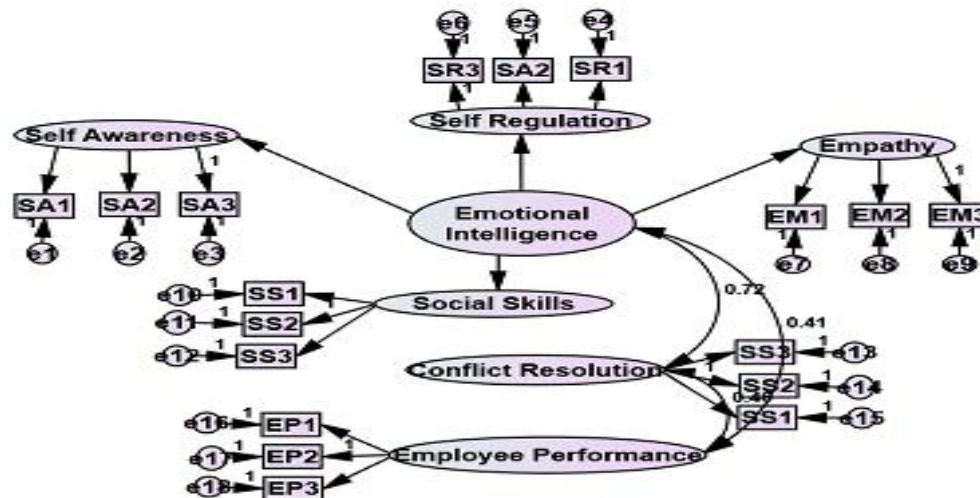
Conflict Resolution is considered an intervening construct, while Employee Performance is considered the final endogenous construct.

4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H1: Emotional intelligence has a positive and significant influence on conflict resolution.

H2: Emotional intelligence has a positive and significant influence on employee performance.

H3: Conflict resolution has a positive and significant influence on employee performance.



PROPOSED STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL (SEM) FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

In AMOS, the latent variable Emotional Intelligence should be connected to its observed indicators: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and social skills. Conflict resolution and employee performance should similarly be represented through their respective observed questionnaire items.

Table 4: Model Fit

Fit Index	Result	Interpretation
Chi-square/df	2.36	Acceptable
GFI	0.934	Good
AGFI	0.908	Acceptable
CFI	0.956	Good
TLI	0.948	Good
RMSEA	0.061	Acceptable
SRMR	0.046	Good

Sources: AMOS Output

Table 5: Structural Path Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standardized Estimate	C.R.	P-value	Decision
H1	Emotional Intelligence → Conflict Resolution	0.72	11.18	<0.001	Supported
H2	Emotional Intelligence → Employee Performance	0.41	6.47	<0.001	Supported
H3	Conflict Resolution → Employee Performance	0.46	7.21	<0.001	Supported

Sources: AMOS Output

The results indicate that emotional intelligence has a strong positive relationship with conflict resolution. Employees with higher emotional intelligence are likely to handle disagreements more constructively through emotional control, empathy, communication and negotiation.

Emotional intelligence also has a positive influence on employee performance. Employees who understand and regulate their emotions may be better able to maintain concentration, cooperate with colleagues and respond effectively to workplace pressure.

Conflict resolution also demonstrates a positive relationship with employee performance. Constructive management of workplace conflicts can reduce disruptions, strengthen teamwork and enable employees to concentrate on their responsibilities.

Together, the proposed relationships suggest that emotional intelligence can contribute to employee performance both directly and indirectly through effective conflict resolution.

5 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are:

1. Emotional intelligence can be represented through the major dimensions of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and social skills.
2. Emotional intelligence plays an important role in employees' ability to manage and resolve workplace conflicts.
3. Employees with better emotional awareness and emotional control are likely to respond more constructively to workplace disagreements.
4. Effective communication, empathy and negotiation contribute to constructive conflict resolution.
5. Emotional intelligence has a positive influence on employee performance.
6. Effective conflict resolution is positively associated with employee performance.
7. The proposed SEM framework indicates that conflict resolution can function as an important pathway through which emotional intelligence contributes to employee performance.

6. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the proposed findings, the following suggestions are offered:

1. **Conduct emotional intelligence training:** Organizations should organize regular programmes covering self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy and interpersonal skills.
2. **Strengthen conflict-management skills:** Employees and managers should be trained in negotiation, mediation, active listening and constructive problem-solving.
3. **Promote empathetic leadership:** Managers should understand employees' concerns and create an environment where employees feel respected and heard.
4. **Improve workplace communication:** Organizations should establish open and transparent communication channels to reduce misunderstandings and interpersonal conflicts.
5. **Encourage employee participation:** Employees should be given opportunities to express opinions and participate in decisions that affect their work.
6. **Develop stress-management programmes:** Organizations should provide appropriate support for employees dealing with workplace pressure and emotional challenges.
7. **Recognize positive behaviour:** Employees who demonstrate effective teamwork, communication and conflict-resolution abilities should be recognized and encouraged.
8. **Integrate emotional intelligence into HR practices:** Emotional intelligence competencies can be considered during recruitment, leadership development, performance appraisal and promotion decisions.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has the following limitations:

1. The study is based on 377 respondents, and therefore the findings may not represent the perceptions of all employees.
2. The study uses questionnaire-based responses, which may be influenced by individual perceptions and response bias.
3. The proposed sampling approach may limit the generalizability of the findings to all industries and geographical regions.

4. Emotional intelligence and employee performance may be influenced by several personal and organizational factors that are not included in the proposed model.
5. The study focuses primarily on employee perceptions and may not incorporate objective organizational performance measures.

8. CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence is an important human factor that can influence how employees respond to workplace challenges, interpersonal disagreements and organizational demands. The present study focuses on the role of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution and employee performance and identifies self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and social skills as important dimensions of emotional intelligence. Employees who understand their emotions and regulate their responses are more likely to communicate effectively, understand the perspectives of others and manage disagreements constructively. Effective conflict resolution can, in turn, create a more cooperative working environment and contribute to improved employee performance. The proposed AMOS-based SEM framework provides a systematic approach for examining the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance and the role of conflict resolution as an intervening mechanism. The model proposes that emotional intelligence positively influences conflict resolution and employee performance, while effective conflict resolution further contributes to employee performance. Therefore, organizations should treat emotional intelligence not merely as an individual personality characteristic but as an important organizational capability. Investments in emotional intelligence training, empathetic leadership, communication development and conflict-management programmes can help organizations build healthier workplace relationships, reduce destructive conflicts and improve employee performance. Future studies can extend this model by incorporating variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, employee well-being, job satisfaction and workplace stress.

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