Innovations

The effect of emotional intelligence on job performance ⊙⁛ A study of commercial bank employees in Amhara region, Ethiopia

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Abstract
The objective of this study was to find out how emotional intelligence affects job performance. Primary data was collected via a self-administered, closed-end questionnaire. SPSS AMOS version 26 was used to process and analyse the gathered data. A two-step approach for structural equation modelling was employed for data analysis. First, confirmatory factor analysis was used to establish the measurement model's validity. After that, structural equation modelling was used to investigate the causal linkages between the variables. Emotional intelligence has a positive and significant effect on task and contextual performance, according to the findings. As a result, bank management should consider about how emotional intelligence might help workers perform better at work.

Key words: emotional intelligence, task performance, contextual performance, counterproductive work behaviour.

1. Introduction

Salovey and Mayer (1990) and defined emotional intelligence (EI)as the part of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. According to this definition, the scope of EI consists of the verbal and nonverbal appraisal and expression of emotion, the regulation of emotion in the self and others, and the utilization of emotional content in problem solving.

Goleman (1998b) proposed that emotional intelligence is nothing but the ability to understand one's emotions and those of people around us, to motivate ourselves and to manage emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. His primary framework of EI included five components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.Bar-On (1997) opined emotional intelligence as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures".

Emotional intelligence seems to have a beneficial impact on an individual's ability to succeed at work, according to research (Goleman, 2001).In their meta-analysis, Joseph and Newman (2010) found that emotional intelligence was a stronger predictor of performance for emotional labour occupations than for other jobs.Emotional intelligence helped individuals perform better at work by enabling them to regulate their emotions and handle stress, as well as ensuring excellent performance even under pressure by responding to organisational change (Lopes, Grewal, Kadis, Gall, &Salovey, 2006).

Employees with high emotional intelligence are better able to understand their coworkers' emotions and react better than employees with poor emotional intelligence because they can quickly change from negative to good moods (Abraham, 1999). Staw et al., (1994) proposed three reasons for an emotionally intelligent person's involvement in altruistic behaviour. To begin with, being in a good mood is gratifying, and demonstrating generosity is rewarding in that it allows workers to retain this frame of mind as well. Second, individuals who are in a good mood are more likely to engage in social interactions. Third, workers who are more pleased with their jobs (have good emotional responses to them) are more inclined to participate in helpful behaviour.

Emotional intelligence is a valuable skill, particularly in the service industry (O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2010). Furthermore, according to Hsi-An and Ely (2010), correctly managed EI assists workers in using their emotions wisely, particularly in choosing suitable conflict management styles in disputes, and improves job performance.The majority of previous research has nearly entirely focused on task performance. Performance, on the other hand, is a multifaceted notion that includes both in-role (task performance) and extra-role (contextual performance and counterproductive work behaviour) behaviour. As a result, the purpose of this study is to examine how emotional intelligence affects task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behaviour.

2. Literature reviews and hypotheses

2.1 Emotional intelligence and task performance

Goleman (1998) describes emotional intelligence as the ability for identifying our own and others feelings, and managing feelings so that they are conveyed appropriately and effectively; for the successful accomplishment of ours and others goals and objectives.Because emotional intelligenceis a critical determinant of task performance in virtually all jobs (Hunter & Hunter, 1984), employees with higher levels of ability are expected to be better equipped to cope with the challenging demands they experience, and perform at higher levels than employees with lower levels of ability.Individuals with high emotional intelligence but low cognitive intelligence may use their emotional intelligence to build excellent social relationships, which can improve task performance via guidance and social support (Wong and Law, 2002).

Emotionally intelligent individuals with low cognitive intelligence may achieve high levels of task performance and organizational citizenship behaviour in most, if not all jobs by managing their emotions in ways that enhance their motivation and the quality of their decisions (Law, Wong, and Song, 2004).

In their meta-analysis O'Boyle et al., (2011) explore the relation between emotional intelligence and job performance. The results used revealed that emotional intelligence when measured by self-report emotional intelligence and mixed emotional intelligence was the most important personality variable predicting task performance ahead of any of the Big Five measures and only behind cognitive intelligence.Therefore,in this study, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive significant relationship betweenemotional intelligence and task performance.

2.2 Emotional intelligence and contextual performance

Individuals with high emotional intelligence but low cognitive intelligence may use their emotional intelligence to build excellent social relationships, which can improve task performance via guidance and social support (Wong and Law, 2002).Good social relationships may also compel employees to engage in organizational citizenship behaviour frequently to benefit close colleagues.

In a study conducted by Busso (2003), individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence showed a higher level of contextual performance. People with high emotional intelligence tend to

be better corporate citizens and tend to have better ethical attitudes towards their organizations and work (Deshpande et al., 2005).

In their study Prentice, Chen, & King (2013) found that EI was positively related to organizational citizenship behaviour among customer service employees. At the other end of the employment spectrum, executives high on EI are also more likely to perform altruistic organizational citizenship behaviour (Cha, Cichy, &Kim, 2009). Hence,in this study, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive significant relationship betweenemotional intelligence and contextual performance.

2.3 Emotional intelligence and counterproductive work behaviour

In their study Petrides, Frederickson, and Furnham (2004), found that individuals with high emotional intelligence engage in less deviant behaviours than those with low emotional intelligence.Martin, Knopoff and Beckham (1998) believed that employees' emotional intelligence plays a role in preventing negative behaviours. In addition, Mayer et al., (2000) showed that if employees' emotional intelligence improved, deviant behaviour connected to organizational duties would be significantly reduced, indicating negative correlations between emotional intelligence and deviant behaviour among employees.Petrides, Frederickson and Furnham (2004) proposed that people with high levels of EI engage less deviant behaviours than those with low EI. Similarly, Eisenberg (2000) stated that low trait of EI may be a main reason for deviant behaviour.

Harvey and Dasborough (2006) also provided support for this rationale as they stated that emotionally intelligent employees are better able to control negative emotion "to ensure that it does not negatively impact work performance". When employee emotional intelligence is improved, deviant behaviour related to organizational tasks would reduce accordingly (Mayer et al., 2000).Farrastama et al., (2019) in their study revealed that emotional intelligence has a negative and not significant effect on counterproductive work behaviour.Therefore,in this study, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3: There is a negative significant relationship betweenemotional intelligence and counterproductive work behaviour.

3. Data and Method
3.1 Sample and data collection
The target population of this study are employees of public and private commercial banks in three major cities in Amhara national regional state, i.e.Bahir Dar, Dessie and Gonder. The total numbers of employees in both public and private commercial banks are 2,980. From these 675samples were selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to sampledemployees. Out of which 537 questionnaires were collected and included in the analysis. This accounts for 79.55 percentresponse rate.The rest 20.45 percent accounts for unreturned questionnaires. However, after removing questionnaires with missing values, the actual sample size used for analysis in this study was518 respondents (76.74%).

3.2 Measures

Emotional intelligence: The research used a 16-item scale created by Wong and Law(2002) to assess emotional intelligence. The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (Wong & Law, 2002) is a 16-item self-report questionnaire with a 7-point Likert-type response scale. However, to make consistent with other measurement items used in this study the 7-point Likert scale modified into a 5-point Likert scale. These five items will be rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1

(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item includes "I always know whether or not I am happy."

Job performance:A comprehensive individual worker performance questionnaire developed by Koopmans (2014) with three aspects was used to assess the job performance of individual workers. These are task performance, contextual performance and counterproductive work behaviour. There are 18 items in the individual worker performance questionnaire. The response formats in task performance and contextual performance are seldom – sometimes – regularly – often – always. For task performance an example item is "I managed to plan my work so that it was done on time."An example item for contextual performance is "I actively participated in work meetings." The reaction formats in counterproductive work behaviour are never – rarely – sometimes – routinely – often. For counterproductive behaviour, a sample item includes "I complained about unimportant matters at work."

4. Results

4.1 Sample characteristics
Majority of the sample respondents (84.0percent) were male whereas only (16.0percent) of the respondents were female. Concerning age of respondents,(39.2percent) of the respondents were 25-34 years old. (33.2 percent) of the respondents were between 18-24 years old. 135 (26.1percent) of the respondents were at the age of 35-44 years old. 4(0.8 percent) of respondents were within the age range of 45-54 and respondents' aged above 55 comprises about 4 (0.8percent) of the total respondents.

4.2Psychometric properties of the scales

Confirmatory factor analysis was employed in this study to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs and scales used.To do this, a measurement model was estimated, consisting of four latent factors.The model fit indices of $\chi 2$ /df=2.026 (p<0.001), incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.954, Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) =0.950, comparative fit index (CFI) =0.954and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) =0.045 indicated a good fit.The model estimated shows a good fit with the data, as all the fit indices outlined above fall within the acceptable cut-off limits (Schreiber, 2008).

4.3Reliability and Validity Measures

Table 4.1features the mean values, standard deviations, convergent and discriminant validities of the measuresused in this study. To determine the reliability of the four constructs their composite reliabilities (CR) were extracted. These ranged from 0.879 to 0.981, exceeding the prescribed criterion of 0.6 and above (Bagozzi and Yi, 2012).

To test the inter-item reliability, Cronbach's α values were considered all of which exceeded the suggested criteria of 0.70. To evaluate the construct validity, the convergent and discriminant validities were each examined (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Regarding convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct was examined. As shown in Table 4.1, these were all found to be above 0.5, indicating convergent validity. With regard to discriminant validity, the AVE values for each construct are compared with the squared individual inter-construct correlations, as presented in Table 4.1 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). All of the AVE values were found to be greater than the square of each inter-construct correlation, indicating that they met the criteria for discriminant validity.

Table 4.1：Descriptive statistics, convergent and discriminant validities of the measures

Construct	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Emotional intelligence	4.033	0.620	**0.784**			

Contextual performance	3.698	0.586	0.003	**0.551**		
Task performance	3.956	0.529	0.001	0.786	**0.604**	
Counterproductive work behaviour	3.882	0.696	0.041	0.090	0.227	**0.855**

Notes: Average variances extracted (AVE) are on the diagonal (in bold); squared correlations are off-diagonal. The AVEs for each construct are far greater than the corresponding inter-construct square correlations, thereby supporting discriminant validity.

4.4 Structural Equation ModelingAnalysis and Hypotheses Testing

To examine the causal relationships between the predictor and outcome variables that are hypothesized in this research structural equation modeling was used. This was done through the estimation of separate structural models in Amos 26 to test the direct relationships. The estimates for the test of direct relationships are presented in Table 4.2.Overall, the model shows good fit, with $\chi 2 /df = 2.026$ (p<0.001), incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.954, Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.950, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.954 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.045 (Schreiber, 2008).

Table 4.2 : Summary of direct effect results of the structural model

Hypoth esis	Path description	β	C.R.	P	Decision
H1	Emotional intelligence→ Task performance	0.160***	5.008	0.001	Supported
H2	Emotional intelligence→ Contextual performance	0.116***	3.270	0.001	Supported
H3	Emotional intelligence→ Counterproductive work behaviour	-0.011	-0.241	0.810	Not supported

Source: Own survey AMOS output, 2020/21

Notes: *** denotes for significant at 1% significance level, ** denotes for significant at 5% significance level

The results obtained indicates that there is relationship between emotional intelligenceand task performance (β= 0.160, p < 0.001), the hypothesis of emotional intelligence have a positive and significant influence on task performance and thus the research hypothesis is accepted. Moreover, the obtained result shows there is significant relationship between emotional intelligenceand contextual performance(β = 0.116, p<0.001), the hypothesis of emotional intelligence have a significant and positive effect on contextual performance and hence the research hypothesis is accepted. Finally, the results obtained shows that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and counterproductive work behaviour (β = -0.011, p=0.241), the hypothesis of emotional intelligencehas a negative but insignificant effect on counterproductive work behaviour and thus the research hypothesis is rejected.

5. Discussion
This study sought to investigate the effects of emotional intelligence on task performance, contextual performance and counterproductive behaviour. The result shows that emotional intelligence and task performance have a positive and significant association. This finding is consistent with previous research (Pearce and Randel, 2004; O'Boyle et al., 2011).Individuals with high emotional intelligence but low cognitive intelligence can use their emotional intelligence to build effective social relationships, which can help them perform better at work by providing advice and social support.

In this study the results also confirmed a significant and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and contextual performance. This result is consistent with the findings of other researcher, for instance in their study (Busso, 2003), discovered that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence showed a higher level of contextual performance. The possible explanation can be in order to react to social situations appropriately; individuals often have to understand the emotions of others, as well as their attitudes, motives, and behavioural intentions, and needs conveyed by those emotions (Caruso &Salovey, 2004).

However, the relationship between emotional intelligence and counterproductive behaviour was shown to be insignificant, contrary to expectations. This shows that being able to control one's own and others' emotions is not related to engaging in counterproductive job behaviour.

Conclusion

In this survey study the data indicated that there were positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and task performance. In the current study the results also confirmed a significant and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and contextual performance. However, contrary to expectation the negative relationship between emotional intelligence and counterproductive work behaviour was not statistically significant.

This study was cross-sectional in nature; therefore, it may limit the generalizability of findings. Hence, future research should consider longitudinal research design to address this limitation.

In this study the empirical results confirmed positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and taskperformance and contextual performance. Hence, the bank management should devise mechanism to enhance employees' emotional intelligence skills and thereby improve employees' taskand contextualperformance.

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