Exploring the Role of Emotional Labor and Job Autonomy in the Relation Between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

Karabi Goswami
NERIM Group of Institutions, Jayanagar Chariali, Khanapara, India;
karabigoswami@rediffmail.com

Monoshree Mahanta,
Gauhati University, Gauhati, India
monoshree.mahanta@gmail.com

[Abstract] Emotional intelligence has been found to play a vital role in successful performance of individuals, which leads to organizational effectiveness. The objective of this paper is to examine whether emotional intelligence can be a predictor of job performance and which dimension of emotional intelligence impact performance the most. This paper also aims to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in the presence of two contextual factors viz., emotional labor and job autonomy, and whether the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance is stronger in case of sales jobs. The data for the study were obtained through a questionnaire survey of 400 employees working in three service sectors (insurance, banking, and telecom) in Guwahati, Assam. Emotional intelligence was measured using a standardized test consisting of 22-items. Employees' performance was measured based on supervisory ratings on a scale of 1 to 5. The results revealed that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of workplace performance with emotional competency explaining the highest variation in performance (35%). The relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance was found to be stronger for individuals whose job involves greater amounts of emotional labor and for jobs with high autonomy, and for sales jobs. These findings have great implications for policy makers and human resource managers, as they can now understand the significant role emotional intelligence can play in the performance of employees in managerial positions whose job involves high autonomy and in the case of front-line service personnel whose jobs involves high emotional labor. Hence any effort on the part of HR managers to train service personnel on emotional intelligence will help these personnel to handle emotional labor and cope with emotional stress in a much better manner, thereby leading to lower employee turnover.

[Keywords] emotional intelligence, performance, emotional labor, job autonomy, sales jobs

Introduction

Human resources are considered the most important asset for any organization and the success of an organization depends on their effective performance on their jobs. I Individual performance of employees can enhance organizational performance and lead to organizational effectiveness. Hence, organizations are trying to analyze the predictors of employees' job performance, as they have understood that low job performance can lead to low productivity and low profit. Here, emotional intelligence can play a very crucial role by predicting the performance of employees in the workplace. Emotional intelligence is defined as "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more efficient and effective in their interactions with the work environment and with their co-workers and other people with whom they have to interact in the course of their work life. An organization can reap the benefits of emotionally intelligent employees in two ways. The managers will have a workforce willing to work with passion, and employees will have managers very receptive and open to their needs (Johnson &Indvik, 1999). An analysis of job

competencies in 286 behaviors worldwide indicated that 18 of the 21 competencies in their generic model for distinguishing better performers were based on emotional intelligence (Spencer, 1993). Goleman (1998) found that EI has a positive and significant relation with performance. He also claimed that because EI affects almost every aspect of work life, employees who are high in EI are "star performers."

The various researches done in foreign and Indian organizations have indicated that different jobs require different levels of EQ. Researchers have examined the skills and aptitudes required to succeed in certain kinds of jobs. Jobs that can be done individually or by working with others in a structured way does not need much EI, but jobs that involve working with others demand active interaction with other people, working with informal teams, empathizing with, and understanding others are the ones that need EI. Especially in the service industry, there is a great need to express feelings, identify, manage, and control impulses, as employees are in constant touch with customers. The service sectors, especially insurance, telecom and so on, are becoming increasingly competitive today. Our study looks into the different dimensions of emotional intelligence and examines which dimension affects job performance the most among executives in the service sector.

Though the relation between EI and job performance has been proved in many studies, it is important to understand whether specific job characteristics strengthen the link between employee performance and EI. The identification of important moderators of relations between predictors and outcomes indicates the maturity and sophistication of a field of enquiry (Aquinis, Boik & Pierce, 2001) and is at the heart of theory in social science (Cohen, et. al., 2003). Although many studies (Wong et. al., 2004; Shaffer & Shaffer, 2005; Mishra & Mohapatra, 2010; Gunu & Oladepo, 2014) have explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance, very few studies (Jadav & Mulla, 2010; Wong et. al., 2002; Joseph & Newman, 2010) have tried to explore this relationship in the presence of moderators. Our study aims towards overcoming this research gap. Specifically, our study has examined two contextual factors: emotional labor and job autonomy as moderators in the EI - performance relationship. Emotional labor refers to the extent to which an employee is required to present an appropriate emotion in order to perform the job in an efficient and effective manner (Wong & Law, 2002). The other contextual factor considered as a moderator to enhance our understanding of the EI – job performance relationship is job autonomy. Job autonomy refers to the level of freedom an individual has over his or her job.

One of the lacunae pointed out by Rathi (2010) is that few studies were done in the service sector. In the service industry where employees have to constantly interact with customers; inability to handle emotional labor can lead to stress and lower employee productivity. Hence, we found it relevant to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance in case of sales jobs, as these jobs require high customer interactions and involve high emotional labor. Thus, our study attempts to addresses the gap in the literature and the study outcomes can aid Human Resources departments' decision-making in the areas of recruitment, training, and development, succession planning, and performance management of employees.

Literature Review

A large number of researchers have investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance. Kelley and Caplan (1993) and Goleman (1995, 1998) found that it is emotional intelligence which differentiates excellent/ star performers from low performers. Johnson and Indvik (1999) in their study found that emotional intelligence skill has greater impact on individual and group performance than the traditional measures of intelligence such as the IQ.

Goleman (2000) said in his study, "Leadership that gets results" found that leaders high in emotional intelligence are key to organizational success. Cheeriness (2000), through his study, indicated that "Job performance is determined largely by emotional intelligence competencies which enhance performance." Feyerherm and Rice (2002) examined the probable relationships among the components - emotional intelligence of a team, emotional intelligence of the team leader, and performance of the team and found that there exist positive correlations between emotional intelligence of the team and the team performance in terms of customer service. Slaski and Cartwright (2002) found significant correlation between emotional intelligence and performance of managers in the retail sector in the United Kingdo, (UK). Studies over the

years (Carmeli, 2003; Shaffer & Shaffer, 2005; Grewal&Salovey, 2006; Cote and Miners, 2006; Ernest, et. al., 2010; Prentice and King, 2011; Gunavathy & Ayswarya, 2011; Ahangar, 2012; Gondal & Hussain, 2013; Gunu & Oladepo, 2014; Collins & Mirriam, 2017) found that EI is positively related to job performance. Studies conducted in the Indian context (Jayan, 2006; Kulkarni, Janakiram & Kumar, 2009; Mishra & Mohapatra, 2010; Singh, 2010; Davar & Singh, 2014; Subhashini & Shaju, 2016), reported similar findings. High performers have significantly higher scores on emotional self-awareness, accurate self-awareness, self-confidence, adaptability, empathy, developing others, communication, and overall EQ than do low managerial performers (Jayan, 2006).

Wong and Law (2002) conducted an exploratory study on the effect of leaders' and followers' emotional intelligence on employees' performance and attitude. The results showed that there exists a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and performance and job satisfaction. The relationship between emotional intelligence and performance was found to be stronger for high emotional labor jobs than for low emotional labor jobs. Emotional labor theory suggests that a job's demands for emotional labor may serve as a moderator of the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance (Grandey, 2000; Wong & Law, 2002). Jadhav and Mulla (2010) studied the relationship between EI and performance and the moderating effect of interpersonal interactions among 101 executives of a pharmaceutical company in Mumbai, India. The results revealed that the extent of interpersonal interaction required on the job moderates the relationship between EI and job performance. The qualitative study by Rathi (2012) suggested empirical testing of the moderating effect of emotional labor on the EI – performance relationship. EI positively predicts performance for high-emotional labor jobs and negatively predicts performance for low-emotional labor jobs (Joseph & Newman, 2010).

Job autonomy refers to the level of freedom an individual has over his or her job. Job autonomy increases as one moves up in the organization hierarchy. This means increased responsibility for one's action and for others', too. Increased responsibility for people frequently means that one has to spend more time interacting with others, attending meetings, listening as well as handling grievances, etc. In other words, job complexity also increases. Carmona-Fuentes, Vargas-Hernández, and Rosas-Reyes (2016) concluded from their study that there is a strong relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance and emotional intelligence becomes more necessary as the complexity of the work increases. The extent of interpersonal interaction required on the job moderates the relationship between EI and job performance (Jadav & Mulla, 2010). It is possible that emotional intelligence will have more predictive power in the high-relationship, high-autonomy occupations given that they are more ambiguously structured (Weiss & Adler, 1984).

Deeter-Schmelz and Sojka (2003) in an exploratory qualitative study highlighted a possible link between salesperson performance and EI. Wong et. al. (2004) reported that the overall emotional and social intelligence predict sales performance. Rozell, Pettijohn, and Parker (2006) found a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and sales force performance. Jennings and Palmer (2007) examined front line sales managers and sales representatives of a pharmaceutical company in Australia found that emotional intelligence development training can result in improvements in sales revenue of salespersons. The conceptual framework derived for the study is depicted in Figure 1, highlighting the moderators in the EI – job performance relationship.

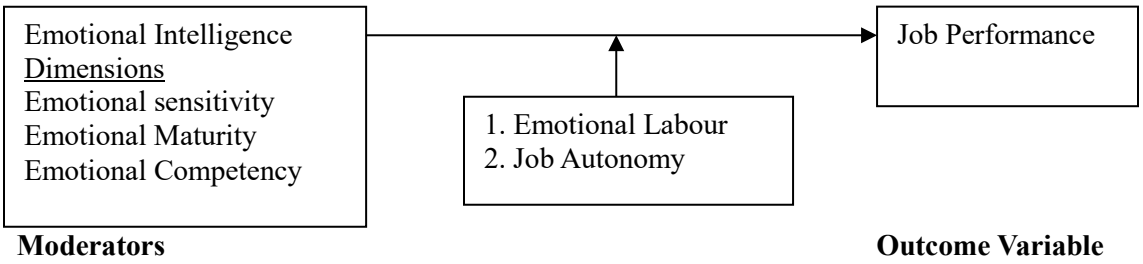

Figure. 1. Conceptual Model

Methodology

This empirical study was carried out in Guwahati, a fast-growing Tier II city and a business hub of North-East India. The objectives of the study are to analyze whether emotional intelligence is a predictor of workplace performance and which dimension of emotional intelligence affects job performance the most; This study also aims to understand the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance with emotional labor and job autonomy as moderators.

Sample

Judgement and convenience sampling has been used in this study. The sample size of 400 was comprised of executives, assistant managers, and managers working in the telecom, insurance, and banking sectors. The sample was comprised of 61% males and 39% females; 45% were unmarried individuals, and 55% were married individuals; 46% were below 30 years, 40% were in the age-group below 40 years; 10% were in the 40 to 50 years, and 4% were above 50 years; 41% had experience below 5 years, 34% has 5 to 10 years of experience, 13% has 10 to 15 years of experience, and, 12% had more than 15 years of experience. The primary data was collected through a questionnaire that was distributed to the respondents through the HR contact personnel in each of the service organizations considered for the study.

Measures

The construct emotional intelligence (EI) was measured with the help of the EI tool developed by DrDalip Singh and Dr N K Chaddha (2003), which is standardized for the Indian population. The three dimensions of EI viz., emotional sensitivity, emotional maturity, and emotional competency were measured using this 22-item tool Each item has four responses that are scored as 5, 10, 15 and 20; 5 is the lowest score and 20 is the highest. On this scale, EI is represented as Emotional Quotient (EQ) and both the terms are used interchangeably. Table 1 shows how the scores for each dimension are used to classify the EI level into "Extremely High," "High," "Moderate," "Low," and "Poor."

Table 1
Interpretation of EI Scores and Its Components

EI Dimensions					
Sensitivity (Range Of Score:25–100)	93-100	86-92	66-85	36-65	< 35
Maturity (Range Of Score:35–140)	133-140	113-132	88-112	53-87	< 52
Competency (Range Of Score:50–200)	168-200	141-168	97-140	71-96	< 70
Total Eq	379-440	308-379	261-307	159-260	< 158
Interpretation	Extremely High	High EQ	Moderate EQ	Low EQ	Very Poor EQ

Source: (Singh, 2003)

The supervisor's ratings, captured through a five-point semantic differential scale (1 = poor performance and 5 = excellent performance), have been used as the performance scores for each respondent. There is a paucity of research on EI that uses actual job performance (e.g., supervisor ratings of job performance) as a criterion (Joseph & Newman, 2010). The extent of customer interactions involved in a job has been used as a surrogate measure of *emotional labor.* Accordingly, jobs involving high personal interactions have been classified as jobs being high on emotional labor, and jobs involving less personal interactions have been classified as jobs being low on emotional labor. Thus, the moderator emotional labor is a categorical variable. Jobs with low emotional labor have been coded as 2, and jobs high on emotional labor have been coded as 1. Similarly, *job autonomy* has been categorized into two classes - high and low, depending on how much independence the job incumbent gets in doing the job. The extent of job autonomy has been decided upon on the basis of the discussion with the senior HR personnel of the various

organizations from which primary data has been collected. As stated earlier, jobs with low job autonomy have been coded as 2, and jobs with high job autonomy have been coded as 1. *Scale Reliability* was measured through Cronbach's Alpha. Table 2 shows the alpha values for the measures used in the study.

Table 2
Scale Reliability

EI Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional Sensitivity (ES)	.778
Emotional Maturity (EM)	.713
Emotional Competency (EC)	.735
Total EI	.840
Job Performance	

As seen in Table 2, the reliability for the EI scale is .840 with the three individual EI dimensions (emotional sensitivity, emotional maturity, and emotional competency) having reliability of .778, .713 and .735, respectively. The Cronbach's Alpha of each scale has been found to be greater than 0.60 (Nunnaly, 1978), so the scale items were used to proceed with the analysis. The descriptive statistics for overall Emotional Intelligence, as well as its three dimensions, are given in Table 3.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for EI,Dimensions of EI and Job Performance

EI Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Emotional Sensitivity	17.45	2.50
Emotional Maturity	16.05	1.71
Emotional Competency	16.94	1.68
EI Total (N=400)	16.77	1.48

Table 3 indicates that the mean overall emotional intelligence represented by (EI Total), emotional sensitivity, and emotional competency of the respondents are high. However, emotional maturity is found to be moderate. Again, in order to assess the EI level, the respondents have been classified into four categories, as shown in Table 4 (refer to Table 1 for the classification scheme).

Table 4
Classification of Respondents under four EI Groups

EI dimensions	Extremely High EI	High EI	Moderate EI	Low EI
Sensitivity	190	53	122	35
Maturity	11	211	165	13
Competency	169	200	29	0
EI Total	169 (42.25%)	200 (50%)	29 (7.25%)	2 (.5%)

Table 4 depicts the number of respondents falling in each of the EI classes viz., "extremely high," "high," "moderate," and "low" for overall EI, as well as the three dimensions. From the table, it is found that the majority (92.25%) of the respondents fall into the "extremely high" (42.25%) and "high" (50%) categories. This indicates that the average EI level of the respondents is high.

Hypothesis Testing

This study proposes the following hypotheses:

H0-1: Emotional intelligence is not a significant predictor of job performance of employees.

H0-2: The relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance will not be stronger for individuals whose job involves greater amounts of emotional labor.

H0-3: The relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance will not be stronger for employees who have job autonomy.

H0-4: The relationship between emotional intelligence and performance will not be stronger in case of sales jobs.

Analysis of Hypotheses

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

The relationship between EI and job performance has been studied through regression analysis with emotional intelligence as the independent variable and performance as the dependent variable. Table 5 shows the regression output for each of the independent variable (overall EI, ES, EM, and EC) and job performance.

Table 5
Regression Output for EI and Performance

Model	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig.	R square
Overall EI	0.687	18.83	.000	0.47
Emotional Sensitivity	0.478	10.86	.000	0.23
Emotional Maturity	0.545	12.97	.000	0.29
Emotional Competency	0.587	14.48	.000	0.34

Regression output (Table 5) shows that the relationship between EI and performance is positive and significant ($\beta = .687$, $p<.001$). It is also seen that out of the three dimensions of emotional intelligence, Emotional competency (EC) is more significantly correlated to performance ($r = .587$) compared to ES ($r = .478$) and EM ($r = .545$). Further, the R^2 value indicates that among the three dimensions of EI, emotional competency explains the highest variation in performance, which is 34% as compared to emotional maturity (29%) and emotional sensitivity (23%). Total EI explains 47% of the variation in performance. To have a better understanding of this relationship, a contingency table (Table 6) for EI and performance is given below:

Table 6.
Two-way Classification of EI and Job Performance.

	Job Performance			
EI Levels	High	Average	Low	Total
Extremely High	159 (94%)	9 (5%)	1 (1%)	169
High	138 (69%)	61 (30.5%)	1 (.50%)	200
Moderate	0	21 (72%)	8 (28%)	29
Low	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2
Total	297	92	11	400

In the above classification (Table 6), those respondents with supervisor ratings of 4 or 5 have been categorized as high performers, respondents with rating of 3 as medium performers, and respondents with ratings of 1 or 2 as low performers. It is seen that a majority (94%) of the respondents with "Extremely High" EI and 69% of the respondents with "High" EI are high performers. This classification and the findings from the regression analysis lead us to conclude that EI and all its three dimensions are significant predictors of job performance, and emotional competency is responsible for the highest variation in performance. Hence, the first null hypothesis stating that emotional intelligence is not a strong predictor of job performance of employees is rejected.

Emotional Intelligence Levels across Emotional Labor & Job Autonomy Groups

Further, the mean EI levels are presented according to the two job characteristics, emotional labor and job autonomy, in Table 7 and Table 8.

Table 7:
Mean EI Level for High and Low Emotional Labor Groups

Job Characteristic	N	Mean
High Emotional Labor (EL) Jobs	264	16.7
Low Emotional Labor (EL) Jobs	136	16.96

Table 8:
Mean EI Level for High and Low Job Autonomy Groups

Job Characteristic	N	Mean
High Autonomy Jobs	245	16.93
Low Autonomy Jobs	155	16.52

It can be observed from Tables 7 and 8 that the mean EI for respondents with high EL jobs is low compared to the mean EI of respondents with low EL jobs. However, in case of high-autonomy jobs, the mean EI is high compared to the EI of low-autonomy jobs.

Role of Contextual Factors in the Relationship between EI and Job Performance

As stated earlier, the two contextual factors, Emotional Labor and Job Autonomy are used as moderators in the relationship between EI and performance. In general, jobs involving Emotional Labor are those jobs in which employees constantly deal with customers, like frontline personnel and customer service employees. According to most theories of Emotional Labor, it is required of the employees to display emotions that are sanctioned specifically by organizations for appropriate work situations (Hochschild, 1983). Employees with their emotion management skills can help in creating a climate that provides satisfaction to the customers. Mostly, organizations focus on enhancing the technical skill of their employees when they are facing any performance-related issues, but emotional intelligence may be the key to enhancing employee as well as organizational performance. By enhancing EI in their frontline personnel, service organizations may be able to meet the challenge of high employee attrition. I It would be interesting to find out whether Emotional Labor moderates the relation between emotional intelligence and performance; if it does enhance the relation between EI and performance, then it will provide an impetus to the service organizations to incorporate EI modules into their training programs.

The relationship between EI and performance in the presence of these two contextual factors has been tested using Regression Analysis. We tested the EI-Performance relationship once in the presence of jobs involving high EL and again in the presence of jobs low in Emotional Labor. The relationship between EI and performance has been studied twice, once for jobs high on Emotional Labor and again for jobs having less Emotional Labor.

Testing the Moderator Effect of Emotional Labor

At first, the strength of the relationship between EI (independent variable) and performance (dependent variable) using Emotional Labor (EL) as the moderator has been examined. Then, the same exercise was conducted using job autonomy as the moderator. The results are given in Tables 9 and 11. Moreover, the finding of the relationship between EI and Performance in the case of sales jobs is presented in Table 10.

Table 9
EI-Performance Relationship with High & Low Emotional Labor (EL) Jobs

Job Type	Standardized Beta	R Square	T	Sig.
High EL	.815	0.66	22.73	.000
Low EL	.433	0.19	5.56	.000

From the above table, it can be observed that the relationship between EI and job performance is significant in both the regressions viz., for high Emotional Labor jobs ($\beta = 0.815$; $p < 0.001$) and Low Emotional Labor jobs ($\beta = 0.433$; $p < 0.01$). However, EI explains significantly more (R square = .664) of the variation in job performance for jobs having high Emotional Labor than for jobs having Low Emotional Labor where EI explains only 19% of the variation in performance. Thus, it can be concluded that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance will be stronger for individuals whose job involves greater amount of Emotional Labor. This proves the second null hypothesis that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance will not be stronger for individuals whose job involves greater amount of Emotional Labor is rejected.

To avoid any ambiguity regarding jobs involving Emotional Labor, the specific sales jobs have been selected, and a regression has been conducted to probe the relationship between EI and performance once again to address the fourth hypothesis. Sales jobs are considered to be high in Emotional Labor as sales people are in constant touch with customers, and it is important for them to regulate their emotions so as to display those emotions that are favorable for customers. The finding is presented in Table 10.

Table 10
Relationship between EI and Performance in Sales Jobs

	Standardized Beta	R Square	t	Sig.
EI for Sales Jobs	.818	.669	17.85	.000
EI (all jobs)	0.687	0.23	18.83	.000

Dependent variable: Performance

From Table 10, it can be observed that the relationship between EI and job performance is significant ($p< 0.001$) and positive (beta = 0.818) for sales jobs; EI explains around 67% of the variation in performance. When job performance was regressed on EI considering all jobs, the explanatory power of EI was only 23% as revealed by the R square value in Table 10. So, the fourth null hypothesis stating, "The relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance is not stronger for sales jobs" is rejected. The third set of regression analysis numbers was done considering EI as the independent variable and performance as the dependent variable separately for jobs with High Autonomy and jobs with Low Autonomy. The results

are given together in Table 11.

Table 11
Relationship between Performance and EI for High & Low Autonomy Jobs

Job Type	Standardized Beta	R Square	t	Sig.
High Autonomy Jobs	.742	.551	17.259	.000
Low Autonomy Jobs	.559	.313	8.346	.000

Dependent Variable Performance

From Table 11, it can be observed that the relationship between EI and job performance is positive and significant in both the regressions. $\beta = 0.742$ in High Autonomy jobs and $\beta = 0.559$ in Low Autonomy jobs. EI explains more (55%) of the variation in job performance for jobs having high autonomy than for jobs having low autonomy, where EI explains 31% of variation in performance. Thus, we conclude that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance will be stronger for individuals whose job involves greater amount of job autonomy. So, the third null hypothesis, stating "The relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance will not be stronger for employees who have job autonomy" is rejected.

Conclusions and Contribution

The positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and performance is a good implication for human resource managers. Higher employee performance has been linked to higher productivity for an organization. Previously many studies (Carmeli, 2003; Deeter-Schmelz & Sojka, 2003; Jayan (2006); Lopes, Grewal & Salovey, 2006; Cote & Miners, 2006; Rathi & Rastogi, 2008; Kulkarni, Janakiram & Kumar, 2009; Jadhav & Mulla, 2010; Ernest, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver & Story, 2010; Mishra & Mohapatra, 2010; Kavita Singh, 2010; Gunavathy & Ayswarya, 2011 ; Ahangar 2012; Davar & Singh (2014), Gunu & Oladepo (2014), Okpara & Edwin, 2014;Bahramian , Siadat, & Sharifi, 2015; Collins & Mirriam, 2017) have established this relationship.

From this study, it has been also found that all the three dimensions of emotional intelligence, emotional sensitivity, emotional maturity and emotional competency, are positively related to performance but emotional competency is more significantly related to performance, and it also explains the highest variation in performance (34%) compared to the other two dimensions. This implies that employees with better skills and competencies in handling and regulating their own and other emotions are better performers. Researchers have also said that individuals with high emotional competencies can better manage their interactions, which leads to higher success in their workplaces. This finding has been also confirmed by Cote & Miners (2006); Goleman, (1995); Lam & Kirby, (2002); Mishra & Mohapatra (2010).

In the North-East, very few studies have been done to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance in business organizations. So, this research gap has been addressed through the current study. Our finding is very crucial for organizations in general and service organizations in particular, as it can help them understand the reason for differences in employee performance, and they can try to enhance EI of low performers. Human resource managers now can try to enhance the performance of their employees especially in the service sectors through EI training for average and low performers. During selection, also, they can conduct some tests consisting of questions related to emotional intelligence and test the EI level of new entrants to avoid the risk of issues in performance later.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and performance for sales jobs was found to be stronger for sales jobs. Sales jobs are considered have high emotional content as confirmed by Daus et al (2004), so this finding implies that EI is an important factor to be considered by organizations while hiring people into sales jobs if they expect high performance from them. Another option is to train the employees in EI skills and competencies if their performance is not up to the desired standards. The relationship

between EI and performance in the case of sales jobs has also been confirmed by Deeter-Schmelz and Sojka in (2003); their study established the existence of a correlation between sales performance and emotional intelligence. Elizabeth J. Rozell, Charles E. Pettijohn, and R. Stephen Parker (2006) conducted a study entitled "Emotional Intelligence and dispositional affectivity as predictors of performance in Salespeople." The study was carried out by correlating emotional intelligence and the performance of the sales force. The study concluded that there exists a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and the performance of the sales force. Kidwell, Hardesty, Murtha, and Sheng (2011) and Rozell, Pettijohn, and Parker (2006) also confirmed this finding.

Further, the relationship between EI and job performance has been found to be stronger for jobs with high Emotional Labor than for jobs involving low Emotional Labor. In other words, EI has a larger influence on job performance when the job involves high emotional labor. Daus et al. (2004) demonstrated a positive relationship between EI and employee performance in the case of jobs involving high emotional content. Thus, EI has a significant role in the performance of front-line service personnel whose jobs involve a very high level of customer interaction. Hence, any effort on the part of HR managers to train service personnel on emotional intelligence will help these personnel to handle Emotional Labor and cope with emotional stress in a much better manner, thereby leading to lower employee turnover. It was also found that the relationship between EI and job performance is stronger for the personnel who have more job autonomy. Thus, the contextual factors moderating the relationship between EI and job performance have been identified as Emotional Labor and Job Autonomy. Generally, the managers or leaders whose span of control is higher have more autonomy in an organization.

Goleman (2000) in the study "Leadership that gets results" observes that leaders high in emotional intelligence are key to organizational success; leaders must have the capacity to sense employees' feelings about their work environments, to intervene when problems arise, to manage their own emotions in order to gain the trust of the employees, and to understand the political and social conventions within an organization. Schutteet et al. (1998) found that higher emotional intelligence of service providers leads to greater customer satisfaction, which confirms the findings of this study that in jobs which involve greater interaction with customers, if employees have high EI, then they will be able to handle customers better and can also help in customer retention in the long run, which is very important for any service organization with so much competition in the market.

The importance of Emotional Labor in job performance is even greater now that the service sector of the economy has grown while the manufacturing sector has declined (Bono & Vey, 2007). Emotional Labor may be stressful for some employees, especially those lacking in autonomy (Grandey, Fisk, & Steiner, 2005), and the ability to regulate one's emotions may help employees cope with this stress. So, these findings also help further prove the relevance of the current study and the appropriateness of the contextual factors selected. If employees have low emotional intelligence skills, then Emotional Labor will lead to stress and anxiety and, ultimately, burnout, which may have other drastic consequences like low productivity and absenteeism, which may prove to be detrimental for an organization.

Future Research

The study findings are limited to service organizations. Future studies can include other sectors and conduct a comparative study between service organizations and manufacturing organizations. This study has used a self-report measure of emotional intelligence. Alternative measures for EI could be used in future works. Future studies can try to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance using other variables as moderators.

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