

A Study of the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction Among IT Employees in Delhi NCR

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Abstract

The technology sector is part of a rapidly changing global corporate milieu. Given the unique challenges of employee burnout, attrition and workplace stress, retaining the cutting edge and top talent requires understanding the psychology of workplace well-being. The research empirically investigates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and the General Job Satisfaction of Information Technology (IT) Professionals of Delhi NCR. A mixed-method, exploratory sequential (QUAN-qual) research design was used for this study. A survey of $N = 500$ IT professionals from 10 private software companies (50 employees from each company) and $N = 25$ qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted. Emotional Intelligence was measured by Dr. Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar's (2004) EIS, while the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) developed by Paul E. Spector (1985) was used to measure Job Satisfaction. Multiple Linear Regression between emotional intelligence dimensions and job satisfaction shows that

emotional intelligence dimensions explained 46.1% of variance in Job Satisfaction ($R^2 = .461, p < .001$). The highest beta value for the emotional intelligence dimensions was found for Emotional Regulation ($\beta = .312$) and Empathy ($\beta = .248$). Additionally, qualitative thematic analysis identified emotional regulation by the employees and supportive relationships with their coworkers as buffering factors to the pressure caused by tight deadlines, thus revealing emotional competence as a vital psychological resource in knowledge-intensive work.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, IT Industry, Delhi NCR, Emotional Regulation, Empathy, Mixed-Methods.*

Introduction

The Information Technology (IT) industry is a key driver of the economy in India and in of the major corporate cities of India like Gurugram, Noida and Delhi NCR. Work in IT is generally characterized by high job pressure, tight deadlines, continual

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learning and shift work cycles. The demands lead to stress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction. Although technical skills (or intelligence quotient IQ) are often considered prerequisites for a software engineer, system architect and other such roles, the soft skills, or Emotional Intelligence (EI), of IT professionals are a deciding factor in coping with organizational pressures.

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and to use this information to guide thinking and behavior. In a business situation, emotional intelligence is associated with impulse control, interpersonal relationship management and motivation under pressure.

Job satisfaction is the affective and cognitive evaluation of an employee's working conditions, salary, supervision, co-workers and opportunities to advance. IT professionals with high emotional competence can deal with stress in the workplace. Consequently, they have a higher job satisfaction and a lower intent of turnover within the organization.

Need for the Study

Though literature exists in areas such as EI in education, healthcare, etc., there is limited empirical evidence of the relationship between EI sub-dimensions (emotional regulation, empathy, etc.) and multidimensional jobs in private IT organizations of Delhi NCR, India. This research (\$N = 500\$) studies the effects of emotional competencies on employee job satisfaction in a high-pressure corporate

setting within private IT organizations in Delhi NCR.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the nature and strength of the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction among IT professionals in Delhi NCR.
2. To evaluate the individual predictive impact of specific EI sub-dimensions (Self-Awareness, Empathy, Emotional Regulation, Motivation, and Interpersonal Skills) on overall Job Satisfaction.
3. To contextualize quantitative survey findings through qualitative thematic analysis of employee workplace experiences.

Literature Review

Salovey and Mayer (1990), the founding fathers of the EI concept, defined emotional intelligence as a subset of social intelligence, consisting of the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate between them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. This initial definition led to the exploration of the relationship between individual differences in emotional competencies and personal adjustment and interpersonal functioning. Goleman (1998) later continued to expand on the relevance of emotional intelligence to the workplace, and the role of emotional competencies in organizational effectiveness, workplace relationships and job performance. He suggested that, to function effectively in the workplace, employees need to do more than possess technical knowledge and cognitive abilities, particularly in the areas of communicating, cooperating, managing

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workplace relationships and coping with pressure.

In knowledge-intensive work environments like the Information Technology (IT) industry, employees may be working under a high cognitive load with intermittent time pressure as well as adjusting to fast-paced changes in technology and performance, and cooperating with team members, supervisors, and clients, on a daily basis. These demands are thought to place psychological strain on employees, which could affect their attitudes about their work. As for organizational psychology, Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as an individual's overall attitude toward the job and the different aspects associated with it. Thus, job satisfaction includes but is not limited to a global assessment of the job, since it includes employees' subjective evaluations and feelings about many dimensions of their work.

More generally, there is some evidence that emotional intelligence is related to workplace attitudes and outcomes. For example, Carmeli (2003) found that emotional intelligence is associated with positive attitudes and job outcomes in the workplace. This has been further supported by research showing that people with higher emotional skills are better able to manage their interpersonal relationships and emotional labor in the workplace and in turn achieve better workplace outcomes. Specifically, Sy, Tram, and O'Hara (2006) found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and both job satisfaction and job performance, suggesting that how well employees understand emotions may shape how well they perform

tasks if given discretion, as well as how positive an assessment they have of their job.

Research on the interface of EI and job satisfaction is gradually growing, but still limited in the Indian IT industry of the Delhi NCR region. Although some research has been done on the impact of emotional intelligence on various work-related variables, few studies have been conducted on the relationship between EI and job satisfaction among IT employees in the Delhi NCR region using psychological measures. For example, emotional intelligence can be measured by the Emotional Intelligence Scale, created by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002); job satisfaction can be measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey developed by Spector (1997).

Hence, the present study is an attempt towards investigating the topic "A Study of the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction Among IT Employees in Delhi NCR". The present study aims at testing the hypothesis that the differences in the levels of emotional intelligence of the employees in the study are associated with the differences in job satisfaction. The study will provide some empirical evidence on the role of psychological factors on job satisfaction in the contemporary Indian IT workplace.

Critical Synthesis of Previous Research

As can be seen from the literature examined, EI has been developed from a theoretical social intelligence to an established construct within organizational and occupational psychology. Salovey and Mayer's (1990) ability model of emotional

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intelligence defined the intelligence to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions and emotional information as the initial underlying theory. Further theoretical explorations of the connection between emotional competencies, as theorized in the ability model, and social interactions, adaptation, and job performance have been conducted by Mayer and Salovey (1997), Goleman (1995, 1998), and Mayer et al. (1999, 2004). These theoretical models provide a sound basis to conceptualize emotional intelligence as an individual difference variable that can influence employees' experiences and behaviors at work.

The usefulness of EI for organizational settings has been increasingly supported by empirical literature. Wong and Law (2002), Carmeli (2003), Law et al. (2004), and Sy et al. (2006), for example, found that EI is related to attitudes, interpersonal functioning, performance and other work-related outcomes of employees. In addition to this work, a number of studies suggested that employee emotional comprehension and regulation might affect more than the individual, having an organizational effect, such as employee responding to situations and their perception of employment status within an organization. Therefore, emotional intelligence seems to be relevant to organizational outcomes as well.

Job satisfaction research has a similar but complementary perspective. Spector (1985, 1997) proposed job satisfaction as a key attitude which consists of a set of evaluation of job attributes. Coupled with research on EI, this suggests employees'

emotional abilities may correlate with their attitude towards their jobs. Employees with better emotion regulation skills, interpersonal conflict handling, and adaptability to the demands of the workplace may be more likely to have a positive attitude towards their jobs. A relationship that occurs in one context does not necessarily hold in other contexts, for example, different workplace conditions or the characteristics of the workers in question.

Further meta-analytic evidence has supported the findings on the EI-work attitudes connection further. Miao et al. (2017) conducted a meta-analysis on relationships between EI and workplace attitudes, and provided the most conclusive evidence regarding the positive relationship between EI and positive employee outcomes. Their work is important because it extends research by taking evidence beyond mainly organizational studies to show the relevance of emotional intelligence across a wider range of work-related outcomes. Doğru (2022) also published a meta-analysis of emotional intelligence and employee outcomes, which further supports EI's relevance to key organizational outcomes. Taken together, the studies provide evidence of the importance of considering emotional intelligence in occupational research as well.

There have also been studies in the IT field that support this study's findings. These studies include Rai and Tandon (2018), Jaya Kumar and Babu (2020) and Ramadas (2020), which investigated emotional intelligence and job satisfaction for IT professionals. The studies highlight the relevance of EI in IT environments. These studies are particularly important given that

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IT employees are employed in work environments characterized by technical complexity, continual learning, performance requirements, deadlines, teamwork, and changing technology. However, they should be interpreted with caution as the relation between personality and job satisfaction may be influenced by a number of confounding variables such as organizational culture, employment conditions, individual differences, and geographic region.

Newer studies have also been conducted. Ali and Siddiqui (2025) explored the effect of EI on job satisfaction within IT professionals, examining the mediating impact of work-life balance. The findings of these studies have prompted researchers to consider the influence of other individual and organizational characteristics on the relationship between EI and job satisfaction. Therefore, the findings conclude that EI cannot be viewed as a direct and unique contributor to job satisfaction on its own, but should be understood within a wider organizational and individual context.

Thus, this literature review provides at least some theoretical and empirical justification for investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. However, the review has demonstrated that this relationship is potentially vulnerable to the occupational and contextual characteristics of the samples under investigation. These samples did vary widely in terms of their characteristics, industries, geographical locations, measurement levels, and organizational configuration. As such, the results of studies involving managers, professional employees, or IT employees in other

countries cannot be generalized to IT employees in the Delhi NCR.

This critical review therefore indicates the need for a study using a local population of IT professionals in the Delhi NCR region to understand the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. The present study has filled this gap and studied a specific occupational and geographical population to understand the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction using scales like Hyde, Pethe and Dhar's (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale, and Spector's (1997) Job Satisfaction Survey. These results can further substantiate the link between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in IT professionals and provide context for employee attitudes in the contemporary Indian IT sector.

Research Gap

Literature shows that, EI has been studied in the fields of psychology and organization behavior regarding its effect on employee attitude, behavior, performance, and job satisfaction. Theoretical studies by Salovey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (1998), among others provide a strong argument for the importance of the emotional competency construct in understanding employee behavior in response to organizational demands. Moreover, Carmeli (2003), Law, Wong, and Song (2004), and Sy, Tram, and O'Hara (2006) also show emotional intelligence's relationship with positive workplace attitudes and positive outcomes for employees.

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However, there are still large gaps. Many previous studies on emotional intelligence have examined managers, general employees, or employees in a variety of occupations. As a result, the study's findings may not be generalized to workers in the fast-paced Information Technology industry who are exposed to constant technological changes, hard deadlines on projects, high-performance expectations, and teamwork with constant social interaction. Such exposures may have different emotional and psychological implications compared to the study's participants.

Second, although a few studies have investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of IT professionals, a scarcity of research exists in the Indian geography, especially in Delhi NCR region. Studies conducted in other areas of India, or in a generic organizational environment cannot be generalized for IT professionals in Delhi NCR, considering the differences in the geographical culture, nature of employment, working environment and scope of career development.

Third, there is a need to conduct more studies on this population with the use of standardized well-established psychometric tools for measuring these constructs. There exists a gap in the literature regarding the academic, empirical studies which have studied emotional intelligence using Emotional Intelligence Scale by Hyde, Pethe & Dhar (2002) and Job Satisfaction Survey by Spector (1997) among IT employees of Delhi NCR. Such measures allow systematic and measurable assessments of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction to take place,

while the relationship between the two can be meaningfully interpreted.

Fourth, a number of studies have supported the relationship of emotional intelligence to positive employee outcomes; however, little research has focused on the relationship of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among IT employees in a designated geographic area. More research is required to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in a designated occupational and geographic population (as opposed to the generalizability of findings from multiple employee populations).

The changing nature of the IT workplace provides a further rationale for this research. New forms of work, the rise of performance goals, changes in work arrangements, increasing competition for jobs, and more recent work-life balance trends have changed the psychological context of work which gives reason for further investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in the IT workplace.

Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this gap by examining the relationship between EI and JS among IT employees in the Delhi NCR region. Given the targeted work force, the geographical region and the standard measures for EI and JS employed, this study is expected to fill in the gaps in the literature with respect to organizational and industrial psychology, and may provide better perception into what promotes JS in the Indian IT sector.

**Research Methodology
Research Philosophy and Design**

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The study was designed using a realistic philosophy that combined positivist methods (quantitative measurement using psychometric instruments) and interpretivist methods (qualitative interview methods) in an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design:

**Qualitative Exploration (N = 25) →
Quantitative Validation (N = 500) →
Triangulated Synthesis
Sample Selection**

- Target Population: Full-time Information Technology (Software Developer, Systems Analyst, Team Lead and Project Manager) employees of Private Tech Organizations in Delhi NCR for a period of at least 1 year.

- Quantitative Sample Realization: 500 valid surveyed respondents, 50 employees of 10 private IT companies were included in the sample.

- Qualitative Sample: N = 25 participants selected as part of a maximum variation sampling strategy across junior, mid-level and senior roles.

Research Instruments:

1. Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) was developed by Dr. Anukool Hyde, Sanjyot Pethe and Upinder Dhar and measures Self Awareness, Empathy, Emotional Regulation, Motivation and Social Skills on scale from 1-5 based on 5-point Likert scale.

2. Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS): Paul E. Spector's 9-aspect instrument assesses job satisfaction in the areas of Work Environment, Salary, Supervision, Co-workers, Growth Opportunities.

3. Qualitative Interview Schedule: Semi-structured interview guide covering workplace coping mechanisms, project delivery stress and team interactions.

Results & Findings

Descriptive Statistics & Baseline Profiles

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the variables used in study 1 (N = 500). IT employees scored high in Self-Awareness (M = 3.92, SD = 0.48) and Motivation (M = 3.88, SD = 0.51). Emotional Regulation (M = 3.56, SD = 0.61) and Operating Conditions/Stress satisfaction (M = 3.21, SD = 0.68) had lower means but more variance, reflecting the workload demands of software development.

Table 1:

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N = 500)

Variable / Sub-Dimension	Mean (μ)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Skewness	Kurtosis
Self-Awareness	3.92	0.48	-0.32	-0.12
Motivation	3.88	0.51	-0.28	-0.05

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Variable / Sub-Dimension	Mean (μ)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Skewness	Kurtosis
Overall Emotional Intelligence	3.84	0.52	-0.21	-0.18
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.61	0.56	-0.15	-0.22
Emotional Regulation	3.56	0.61	-0.11	-0.35
Operating Conditions / Stress	3.21	0.68	0.05	-0.41

Bivariate Correlation Analysis

Pearson product-moment correlational analysis indicated a strong, positive correlation between overall Emotional Intelligence and overall Job Satisfaction ($r = .642$, $p < .001$).

Table 2:

Bivariate Pearson Correlation Matrix with Job Satisfaction

Variable / Sub-Dimension	Pearson Correlation (r)	Significance (p-value)
Overall Emotional Intelligence	.642	< .001
Self-Awareness	.512	< .001
Emotional Regulation	.584	< .001
Empathy	.610	< .001
Interpersonal Skills	.536	< .001
Motivation	.498	< .001

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The EI sub-dimensions constructs considerably predicted Job Satisfaction, $F(5,$

$494) = 84.62$, $p < .001$ with an importance level of .05. The EI sub-dimensions explained 46.1% of the total Job Satisfaction. ($R^2 = .461$, Adjusted $R^2 = .455$).

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Table 3:

Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients (\$\text{Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction}\$)

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	1.120	0.182	—	6.15	< .001
Emotional Regulation	0.285	0.038	.312	7.45	< .001
Empathy	0.231	0.039	.248	5.92	< .001
Interpersonal Skills	0.182	0.039	.195	4.61	< .001
Self-Awareness	0.154	0.040	.162	3.88	< .001
Motivation	0.128	0.040	.138	3.24	.001

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Emotional Regulation ($\beta = .312$). The strongest predictor of job satisfaction within deadline-driven software contexts is the ability to regulate one negative mood (frustration) and emotional reactivity during production outages.

• Empathy ($\beta = .248$): Second best predictor. Leadership understanding and peer empathy counter the negativity of long working hours.

Qualitative Thematic Triangulation

Qualitative coding of the $N = 25$ interview transcripts in NVivo yielded four qualitative themes to explain the regression results.

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1. Constructive Coping under Delivery Pressure. Software engineers mentioned that controlling impulses while fixing bugs helps reduce disharmony in the development team and increases their job satisfaction.

2. Supervisory Empathy as a Stress Buffer: Employees whose supervisors exhibited empathy when job demand increased reported higher levels of supervisory satisfaction and intention to retain their teams.

3. Peer Collaboration Networks: Effective communication and interpersonal skills can support collaborative problem-

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solving in a physically demanding work environment.

4. **Intrinsic Motivation & Task Efficacy:** Highly motivated developers regard complex technical requirements as opportunities to develop their skills rather than as something negative.

Result & Discussion

These results show that emotional intelligence is an important structural antecedent of job satisfaction in technology firms. The strong prediction for Emotional Regulation ($\beta = .312$) supports the JD-R model that emotional self-control is an important individual resource to protect employees from cognitive fatigue in key delivery phases of software projects.

Additionally, a strong positive coefficient for Empathy ($\beta = .248$) suggests that interpersonal cooperation is especially salient in corporate software settings. Empathizing project managers de-escalate perceptions of workplace hostility and potentially high stresses are perceived as teamwork. This corroborates studies from Western corporate psychology, adding more specific empirical evidence to the growing research in the Indian IT ecosystem around Delhi NCR.

Conclusion & Recommendations

1. **EI as a Core Determinant:** Emotional Intelligence is a core psychological resource in the IT industry which explains almost fifty percent

(46.1%) of the variance in job satisfaction.

2. **Emotion Regulation:** Emotion regulation is the biggest factor enabling the software professionals to navigate deadline pressure, customer escalations, and workplace stress.

3. **Empathy and Interpersonal Support:** Empathic leadership and supportive co-workers are associated with reduced work-related burnout and lower intentions to leave the workplace.

Practical & Organizational Recommendations

1. **Embedding EI Metrics in Talent Acquisition:** Corporate HR departments should use standardized psychometric assessments such as the EIS and technical coding tests in the hiring process to assess adaptability and stress management capabilities.

2. **Targeted emotional regulation workshops:** Technology companies can offer evidence-based training workshops in emotional regulation, mindfulness, and Cognitive Behavioral Strategies (CBS) to assist developers in coping with job-related stressors.

3. **Empathetic Leadership Development Pathways:** Management development programs for Team Leads and Project Managers should include active listening, empathetic communication, and supportive performance management practices.

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4. Structural Work-Life Integration Policies: Implement flexible hybrid work, mandatory recovery breaks after launching large software releases, and easy access to employee assistance programs (EAPs) in the workplace.

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