



ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

The Effect of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills on Organizational Commitment: A Case Study of Civil Servants

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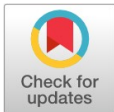
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Abstract— Organizational commitment is a crucial factor in the effectiveness and efficiency of civil servants, who often face unique challenges such as bureaucratic constraints and public scrutiny. Emotional intelligence and leadership skills foster organizational commitment among civil servants. So, the present study examined the effect of emotional intelligence and leadership skills on organizational commitment among civil servants. A cross-sectional study collected data from 302 civil servants of different districts of Punjab using convenience sampling. The Leadership Skills Questionnaire, Emotional Intelligence Scale, and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire were the measures to collect data from the participants. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 27. Correlational analysis revealed a positive and significant correlation among emotional intelligence, leadership skills, and organizational commitment. Multiple Regression analysis found that emotional intelligence and leadership skills have a significant positive effect on organizational commitment among civil servants. The civil servants who have more than five years' experience depicted more organizational commitment, higher level of emotional intelligence and leadership skills than those who have less than five years' experience. The findings suggested that fostering emotional intelligence and leadership skills among civil servants enhance organizational commitment leading to quality service delivery and effective job performance.

Index Terms— Leadership skills, Organizational commitment, Emotional intelligence, Civil servants

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Introduction

In today's competitive environment, organizations face constant challenges such as global competition, limited resources, and the need to provide high-quality products and services at lower costs (Ayodele et al., 2020). Therefore, human resources play a crucial role as the vital force within organizations, mobilizing all other elements towards achieving goals. Without efficient and effective people, organizations cannot succeed. It is essential to foster strong commitment among employees towards their work and organization to enhance effectiveness and efficiency (Visanh & Xu, 2018).

Organizational commitment is a key to success of any organization (Ashraf, 2020). Commitment towards organization is a critical factor in employee engagement and effectiveness for an organization (Berberoglu & Secim, 2015). Employees committed to organization

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show high performance as compared to less committed employees (Jafri & Lhamo, 2013). Commitment and engagement of the employees determine organizational efficiency of the organization (Bhardwaj et al., 2023).

Organizational commitment became one of the most prominent research areas explored by scholars and practitioners (Meyer et al., 1993). Organizational commitment is consistent and stable (Mowday et al., 1979). Organizational commitment has various dimensions such as normative, affective, and continuance commitment (Padave, 2023). Organizational commitment among workers is bolstered by various factors like daily stressors, rewards and value congruence (Kilaberia, 2020).

Emotional intelligence is a multidimensional ability and competence to analyze one's own emotions and compare it with the emotions of another person. It regulates one's own emotions and uses emotions for personal goals and organizational achievement (Meyer et al., 2016; Bhardwaj et al., 2023a). Emotional intelligence leads to the capacity to recognize emotions and their connections and engage in reasoning and solving problems. It encompasses the ability to perceive emotions, understand emotional states, and regulate them effectively (Meyer et al., 1999). Emotional intelligence includes accurately perceiving emotions, accessing and generating emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotional information, and adeptly managing emotions to facilitate both emotional and cognitive actions (Meyer et al., 2004).

Leadership is a process of influencing people towards achieving goals (Robbins & Coulter, 2009). Robert Katz in 1955 proposed a skills approach to leadership. He deciphered that specific skills and leadership abilities produce effective leadership. Katz found three inevitable types of skills that leaders should possess: technical skills, conceptual skills and human skills (Katz, 1955). Leadership skills develop through experience over time (Northouse, 2021). Learning experiences and mentoring enhanced leadership skills (Avolio & Hannah, 2008).

Organizational commitment is associated with emotional intelligence to enhance employees' efficiency (Kalia, 2024). Organizational commitment was empowered by emotional management and self-awareness (Kato et al., 2023). Organizational commitment has a congruent relation with emotional intelligence and work support (Chigeda et al. (2022). A positive correlation between the degree of organizational commitment and the level of empowerment among secondary school heads (Nunala & Perez, 2024). Organizational commitment is positively correlated with emotional intelligence (Afolashade et al., 2023). Organizational commitment was predicted by emotional intelligence (Tegegne & Wondimu, 2024).

Emotional intelligence was a good identifier of organizational commitment (Mohamed et al., 2020). Emotional intelligences are used as a regulating mechanism between job performance and external stimuli (Zhang & Mao, 2022). Effective nurturing of emotional intelligence serves as a dependable predictor of teachers' behavior during task execution (Ahad et al., 2021). High job performance is linked with higher emotional intelligence (Sadovyy et al., 2021).

Emotional intelligence is a positive reinforcement in civil servants to accomplish their goals and objectives (Lee, 2018). For leaders, emotional intelligence is a mandatory element (Njotoprajitno et al., 2020). Emotional intelligence moderated between organization productivity and leadership style (Liu et al., 2023). Goleman explored the application of EI in the workplace, including its role in fostering organizational commitment and improving employee performance. Effective leadership is influenced by emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2015). Emotional intelligence and workplace stress moderated the relationship between abusive supervision and job performance (Anjum et al., 2023). High emotional intelligence gives fruitful results to organizations (Barreiro & Treglown, 2020). Higher emotional intelligence is directly proportional to leadership self-efficacy (Mullen et al., 2019).

Organizational commitment and leadership styles are found in significant relationships with each other (Borde et al., 2024). Servant leadership improved organizational behavior mediated by emotional intelligence (Albdareen, 2024). A positive correlation was found between organizational commitment and effective leadership (Yetim, 2016). Principals' organizational commitment in schools aligns with servant, transformational, and ethical leadership behaviors, which are key identifiers of organizational commitment (Cansoy, 2019). Optimism among employees moderates the indirect relationship between job fatigue and leadership empowerment. While resilient leadership mitigates distress and boosts empowered leadership may ensure physical, mental, emotional and social well-being among participants (Abbas et al., 2023).

Transformational leadership has been found correlated with and has an impact on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (Djalali et al., 2017). Organizational commitment was achieved by leadership styles and leadership styles have positive impact on the organizational commitment (Seyyed et al., 2012). Transformational leadership was found to be the most popular style and had the highest organizational commitment in the form of emotional commitment (Sabah, 2015). There was a significant relationship found between leadership skills and organizational commitment among participants (Assiri, 2014). Emotional intelligence played a role of moderator between leadership and organizational commitment among participants (Horrabadi et al., 2011). Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in influencing employee commitment. Leaders who exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence contribute positively to their employees' commitment to the organization (Bhalero & Kumar, 2016).

Moreover, leadership has a significant impact on hospital staff and the hospital environment. Therefore, leadership style was recommended for better organizational commitment (Hussain, 2021). Fostering organizational commitment among civil servants necessitates the establishment of a positive working environment and the cultivation of emotional intelligence skills, and the adoption of effective

leadership styles (Jimoh & Owodunni, 2023). Transformational leaders play an active role in providing strategic leadership (Yue et al., 2019). Effective leadership was associated with high engagement level, conflict resolution and high emotional intelligence (Kour & Ansari, 2024).

Several investigations have explored the correlation between demographic factors and organizational commitment. Serinikli (2019) identified a high level of organizational commitment among senior employees. The study findings indicated that age and work experience show significant associations with employees' normative commitment. Employees with more years of work experience differ significantly from those with less experience in continuance and overall commitment (Jain & Lamichhane, 2021).

Numerous studies have identified various predictors of commitment (Ashraf, 2020; Visanh & Xu, 2018) found significant predictors of commitment by examining demographic variables age, gender and tenure. Higher organizational commitment is determined by secured job, high degree and job satisfaction. Employees with 5 years of work experience and lower-level job positions were found to have low organizational commitment (Timalsina et al., 2018). Avci and Erdem (2017) demonstrated that tenure significantly influences the organizational commitment of employees, the findings also supported by Jena (2015). Marcoux et al. (2018) revealed that greater work experience and tenure correlated with higher levels of organizational commitment.

Rationale of the study

Organizational commitment is a vital aspect of public sector effectiveness, particularly among civil servants who face significant bureaucratic and public challenges. Organizational commitment improves public service quality and organizational performance. Existing literature shed light on the importance of organizational commitment among employees. Previous studies also evinced the significant role of emotional intelligence and leadership, leadership styles and leadership behavior in uplifting organizational commitment among participants. Emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership skills are known to influence workplace dynamics and employee engagement, yet there is a scarcity of research examining these factors within the context of civil servants in Pakistan. The literature lacks particular study on the effect of leadership skills on organizational commitment among civil servants in Pakistan. This study addresses this gap by investigating how emotional intelligence and leadership skills affect organizational commitment among civil servants using robust data collection methods and established measurement tools.

Objectives of the study

To evaluate the relationship between emotional intelligence, leadership skills, and organizational commitment among civil servants.

- To examine the effect of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment among civil servants.
- To analyze the effect of leadership skills on organizational commitment among civil servants.
- To identify the difference in demographic variables (job experience) in terms of emotional intelligence, leadership skills, and organizational commitment among civil servants.

Research Hypotheses (RH)

- There is a significant effect of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment among civil servants
- There is a significant effect of leadership skills on organizational commitment among civil servants
- There is a significant effect of job experience on leadership skills, emotional intelligence and organizational commitment.

Theoretical framework

This study was based upon the Goleman Model of Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 2013). The model deciphers that emotional intelligence leads to effective managerial performance and leadership skills. Goleman defines emotional intelligence as "the ability to recognize, identify, manage and regulate one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others." He further developed a performance-based model of emotional intelligence (EI) to evaluate different levels of emotional intelligence among employees (Goleman, 2013). The current study was designed on the conceptual model of emotional intelligence and leadership skills influencing organizational commitment. The study is also based upon integration of emotional intelligence theory that postulates that leaders who regulate one's own emotions and uses emotions fulfill personal goals and improve organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2016).

Conceptual framework

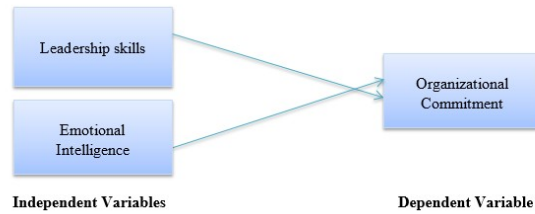


Fig. 1 The proposed model of study is based upon the Goleman Model of Emotional Intelligence. (Goleman, 2013).

Method

Sample

All civil servants working in government sectors in various districts of Pakistan were part of the study. The study collected responses from 302 participants of civil servants including male (n=150), and female (n=152). The data were collected through convenience sampling.

Instruments

Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)

This Emotional Intelligence Scale is used to get responses of emotional intelligence. It is a 16 item likert scale and has good reliability of 0.88 (Wong & Law, 2002).

Leadership skills questionnaire

The Leadership Skills Questionnaire is used to measure leadership skills. It is a five point liker scale having reliability of 0.95 (Northouse, 2016).

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)

Organizational Commitment scale is used to collect responses about organizational commitment. It is a 5 point Likert Scale with reliability of 0.86 (Mowday et al., 1979).

Procedure

A cross-sectional study was conducted to collect data through questionnaires. Participants were briefed about the purpose and nature of the study. They were affirmed that the collected information will be used only for research purposes. Data were collected from 17th March 2024 to 25th June 25, 2024.

Ethical considerations

An informed consent form was given to the participants and the concerned organizations for formal permission. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of the given data, and their right to privacy was maintained. Permission was taken from the participants to publish these findings.

Results and Findings

SPSS version 27 was used to analyze the collected data. Correlational analysis, multiple regression and independent t tests were performed to analyze the data.

Table I
Demographic characteristics of participants

Title	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	151	50.0%
	Male	151	50.0%
Age	25-35Y	182	60.2%
	36-45Y	104	34.4%
	46-55Y	16	5.22%
Designation	Assistant commissioner	155	46.7%
	Deputy commissioner	71	23.5%
	Assistant director	46	15.2%
	Section officer	20	6.62%
Division	DG Khan	45	14.9%
	Karachi	51	16.8%
	Multan	33	10.9%
	Faisalabad	18	5.90%
	Bahawalpur	72	23.8%
	Islamabad	49	16.2%
	Lahore	23	7.62%
	Rawalpindi	11	3.60%
Work experience	1-5Y	188	62.2%
	6-10Y	99	32.7%
	11-15Y	15	4.90%

Table 1 presents the interviewees' gender, age group, designation, location, and work experience. The male and female representations are equal: 151 males (50%) and 151 females (50%). The age group of 25–35 years accounts for the majority of respondents, comprising 182 individuals, or approximately 60.2%. Next in line are those aged between 36 and 45 years, comprising 104 individuals, or 34.4%, followed by the older group of 16 individuals, or 5.2%. In terms of designation, Deputy Commissioners rank first with a total of 155 (46.7%); Assistant Commissioners are second with 71 (23.5%), followed by Assistant Directors (46 individuals), meaning 15.2%; and finally Section Officers (only 20), which represents 6.62%. Out of various regions, the majority of respondents hail from Bahawalpur district, with a total of 72 individuals, accounting for approximately 23.8%; Karachi comes in second with 51 respondents, comprising approximately 16.8%; Islamabad follows with 49 informants, representing approximately 16.2%; DG Khan accounts for 45 out of 332 participants, accounting for 10.9 percent; Multan stands at 33, representing 10.9 percent; Faisalabad comprises 18 individuals, representing 5.9 percent; and Lahore concludes with 11 subjects, representing only 3%. Regarding their length of service, the majority, 188, or 62%, have worked for 1–5 years; many employees, representing a total of 99, or 32%, have spent their careers in the 6–10 years range; and finally, approximately 15 or 4.9% have experience exceeding ten but below fifteen years.

Table II
Psychometrics Properties, Descriptive Statistics, and Reliability of Variables

Variables	K	M	SD	Alpha	Skewness
EI	16	27	4.03	.95	.34
LS	18	14	1.89	.87	.36
OC	15	15	1.78	.86	.30

The psychometric properties, descriptive statistics and reliability of the assessed variables are shown in Table 2. For Emotional Intelligence, $M=27$, $SD=4.03$, skewness=0.34 and alpha $\alpha = 0.951$. Leadership Skills have a $M=14$, $SD=1.89$, skewness of 0.36 and $\alpha = 0.870$ is what we have for Leadership Skills while Organizational Commitment has a $M= 15.6$, $SD=1.78$, Skewness= .30 and $\alpha =.863$

Table III
Correlational Matrix of the Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Skills, and Organizational Com-mitment

Scale	EIS	LS	OC
EI	----		
LS	.675**	----	
OC	.582**	.840**	----

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$

Table 3 presented the correlational matrix for Emotional Intelligence (EI), Leadership Skills (LS), and Organizational Commitment (OC). The correlation between EI and LS is significant, with a coefficient of 0.675**. Similarly, EI significantly correlates with OC, showing a coefficient of 0.582**. The correlation between LS and OC is the strongest, with a coefficient of 0.840**. These correlations are statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Table IV
Regression Analysis Summary for Emotional Intelligence, Leadership skills, and Organizational Commitment

Variables	Organizational Commitment				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
EI	.69	0.04	0.63	8.52	0.001
LS	.58	0.07	0.78	10.67	0.000

Table 04 shows that regression analysis has predicted organizational commitment (OC) using emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership skills (LS), among other variables, as summarized in Table 4. In EI, the unstandardized regression coefficient (*B*) equals 0.69, with a standard error (*SE*) of 0.042, a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.63, a *t* value of 8.52, and a *p*-value of 0.001. In LS's case, the unstandardized regression coefficient is 0.58, its standard error is 0.073, its standardized coefficient is 0.78, its *t*-value is 10.67, and $p = 0.000$. The results show that EI and LS are significant predictors of OC, but LS predicts more effectively than EI.

Table V
Independent sample *t*- tests

Variables	Job experience <5years (<i>n</i> =168)	Job experience >5years (<i>n</i> =134)	95%CI		
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t</i>	LL	UL
EI	63.3(14.1)	84(27.2)	8.08	18.5	32.5
LS	59(9.4)	73(11.5)	5.23	6.7	15.8
OC	58(9.7)	64(11.2)	6.45	8.81	17.4

Table 5 presented the results of independent *t*-tests, examining differences in emotional intelligence, leadership skills, and organizational commitment between individuals with less than five years of work experience and those with more than five years. Emotional intelligence had a mean score *M (SD)* of 63.3 (14.1) for people who worked less than five years, and 84 (27.2) for those who have been working for more than five years. The *t*-value is 8.08, with a confidence interval (CI) of 95% ranging from 18.1 to 32.5. Concerning leadership skills, less experienced individuals scored an average of 59.2 (9.4), compared to more experienced ones that averaged 73 (11.6), with a *t*-value of 5.23 and a confidence interval of 95%. CI=6.70-15.8. According to the data presented in Table 5, when we consider organizational commitment as our third variable, we see that people with low experience had a mean score of 58.4 (9.6). On the other hand, the same variable displays a mean score of 64 (11.2), a *t*-value of 6.45, and a confidence interval (CI) ranging from 8.81 to 17.4. Emotional Intelligence was among participants having more than one year experience than those who have less than five-year experience ($n = 168, M=63.3, SD= 14, t=8.08$). Moreover, leadership skills were found high among participants who have more than five-year experience ($n = 168, M=73, SD=11, t=6.4$).

Discussion

This study examined the effect of emotional intelligence and leadership skills on organizational commitment among civil servants. A cross-sectional study using a survey method adopted to collect data from participants. Statistical analysis was performed, and the quantitative results were generated. The findings found significant and approved hypotheses. The first hypothesis was there was a positive significant correlation between emotional intelligence, leadership skills and organizational commitment. The results were found congruent with previous studies that emotional intelligence is an important characteristic of civil servants (Njotoprajitno et al., 2020). Organizational commitment was linked with emotional intelligence to enhance employees' efficiency (Kalia, 2024). Organizational commitment was enhanced by emotional intelligence (Kato et al, 2023). Emotional intelligence has a significant relationship with organizational commitment and work support Chigeda et al. (2022). Organizational commitment is positively correlated with emotional intelligence (Afolashade et al., 2023). Organizational commitment was predicted by emotional intelligence (Tegegne & Wondimu, 2024). Emotional intelligence was observed to have a significant impact on organizational commitment and promoted organizational commitment and leadership skills (Jimoh & Owodunni, 2023). Emotional intelligence moderated between work support and work stress affecting organizational commitment (Varshney & Varshney, 2020). The importance of high emotional intelligence has been highlighted in enabling civil servants to fulfill their roles effectively (Lee, 2018). The second hypothesis was that leadership skills have a positive significant impact on organizational

commitment. In organizational leadership, commitment is positively associated with effective leadership (Setyaningrum, 2020). Organizational commitment and leadership styles are found in significant relationships with each other (Borde et al., 2024). Servant leadership improved organizational behavior mediated by emotional intelligence (Albdareen, 2024). Transformational leadership, servant leadership, and ethical leadership behaviors have significant correlation with organizational commitment (Al-Yami, 2018). The features are possessed by leaders who have high emotional intelligence development (Goleman, 2015). Effective leadership has a significant positive correlation organizational commitment (Yetim, 2016). The third hypothesis examined the effect of job experience of more than five years compared to those with less than five years of experience. It was found that civil servants have more experience demonstrating higher emotional intelligence, leadership qualities, and organizational commitment as compared to the study participants with less than five years of experience. These findings were supported by previous studies by Serinikli (2016) also revealed senior employees having more work experience have higher levels of organizational commitment. Work experience showed significant correlation with employees' normative commitment. Employees with more years of work experience showed more commitment than those with less experience in terms of their overall commitment (Jain & Lamichhane, 2021). Numerous studies have identified gender, age and work experience as predictors of commitment (Ashraf, 2020; Visanh & Xu, 2018). The participants with 5 years of work experience were found to have lower levels of organizational commitment than those who have more than 5-year experience (Timalsina et al., 2018). Tenure and work experience significantly influenced the effective commitment of security employees (Avci & Erdem, 2017; Jena, 2015). Greater work experience among employees was found to be linked with higher levels of organizational commitment (Marcoux et al., 2018)

Limitations

The study adopted a cross-sectional design, and the sample size was small. The data were collected from civil servants working in government offices. The study uses foreign instruments to measure study variables. Non-random sampling was adopted for analysis, but the extraneous variables could affect the study.

Future directions

Future studies can use longitudinal studies, take samples from private and banking sectors, develop Indigenous measures to collect participant data and use random sampling to avoid the effect of extraneous variables. Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in empowering organizational commitment. Therefore, organizations should invest in emotional intelligence training programs for civil servants. Future researchers can evaluate the effect of leadership behavior, traits, and emotional intelligence on organizational commitment.

Practical implications

This study contributed to the existing body of literature by providing a nuanced understanding of the role of EI and leadership skills in public sector commitment. It also sets the stage for future research to explore long-term impacts and the effectiveness of specific interventions to develop these crucial skills. Organizational commitment can be empowered by enhancing civil servants' leadership skills and emotional intelligence. Organizations should provide continuous learning and development opportunities for civil servants, particularly those with less than five years of experience. This can include mentorship programs, job rotations, and access to professional development courses to help employees build skills, gain new experiences, and strengthen their commitment to the organization.

Conclusion

The study examined the effect of emotional intelligence and leadership skills on the organizational commitment among civil servants of Pakistan. The analysis fulfilled the devised objectives. Emotional intelligence and leadership skills significantly positively affect organizational commitment among civil servants. The participants with more than five years of experience showed more organizational commitment, leadership skills, and emotional intelligence than participants with less than five years of experience. The study is a significant addition to organizational psychology and organizational culture literature.

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