

# PRELIMINARY STUDY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION ON JOB PERFORMANCE: A STUDY ON MALAYSIAN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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## ABSTRACT

*Employees job performance of frontline employees in hotel industry are becoming more important as they provide a benchmark for the hotel industry to excel in terms of the quality of services provided. This study aims to examine the effect of emotional intelligence and communication satisfaction on job performance using causal steps approach. A structured questionnaires consisting of job performance (18 items), emotional intelligence (21 items) and communication satisfaction (17 items) were adapted from previous research. 102 respondents from the frontline employees were chosen from selected star rating hotel in Malaysia. The results indicate that emotional intelligence and communication satisfaction are significant and positively correlated with job performance. The partial mediator occurs from the model and these results could be used by the hotel industry to perform transfer of training to increase frontline employee's performances.*

**KEYWORDS:** *emotional intelligence, communication satisfaction, job performance, mediation, hotel industry*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is important as one of the key areas in the twelve National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) under the Malaysian Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) also listed in Southeast Asia's most travelled destination. The Asean countries like Philippine and Thailand which has provided a lot of packages and offers to tourists make the aggressive competitive. Thus, to increase tourist preferences towards Malaysian hotel industry, the study of job performance of the frontline employees is a priority as a "face" of the hotel. The important roles of the frontline employee not only care of customer needs but as well as maintaining the long term relationship in the hotel industry

(Kusulvan, 2003). The most of service failure on hospitality and other related industry because of communication and emotions (William and Buswell, 2003). Here, in view of the significant role played by frontline employees in helping the hotel industry contribute to tourism establish as one of the 12 National Key Economic Areas (NKEA), by improving the job performance and quality of staff quality. The relationship between the customer and the frontline employees reflected in the name of the hotel with the frontline employee performance. It's throughout the hospitality industry despite the setting of the hotel such as reception and restaurant where frontline employees are entrusted with the care of a customer's want and needs. With regards of this concern, this study aims to examine the effect of emotional intelligence and communication satisfaction on job performance of the frontline employees in the hotel industry.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Performance defined as completion in productivity of system in the form of goods or services provides employees with specific expectations, mission and vision (Swanson, 1999). The attitude and behaviour of employee are explained in a form of productivity and the results that are expected for sufficient job performance. The changed of social atmosphere include emotional and communication of the organization enhancing the overall employee job performance (Chiang and Hsie, 2012). It's different with performance management which performance management defined as the use of performance measurement information to effect positive change in organizational culture and processes (Association, 1999). Furthermore, in the past research there are high correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance especially in comparing job performance rating (Bradberry, 2002). Commonly, communication is not only delivered verbally but also included with non-verbal such as; facial expression and body movement (Hendon and Herbig, 1996). In fact, communication relates to both the customer and employees as unit performance a "glaring omission" in organizational communication research (Porter, Mowday and Boulian (1974).

Emotional intelligence states one of the important elements to service employee's job performance (Li *et al.*, 2012). Recent research show the positive relationships between job performance and emotional intelligence (Song *et al.*, 2010, Day and Carroll 2004, Gray, 2004 and Carmeli 2003) but most of researcher found the task performance given higher influence toward emotional intelligence (Schawrz, 1990, Gray,

2004) rather than contextual performance. Concoran and Tomey 2013 report in their research of job performance among teachers, emotional intelligence influence job performance in attitudes, motivation, and behavior. However in this research emotional intelligent will be examine in context of general individual job performance.

Communication satisfaction considered as important influence to the job performance. In spite of its importance, Cameron and McCollum (1993) found that employees tended to communicate when they need information on going issues in organization. Employees would be more satisfied to communicate among their level rather than the organization as a whole (Tuzun, 2013).The relationship between organization communication and commitment or any relationship exist between these two variable is more implied than demonstrated (Putti *et al.*, 1990). As example Pettit, Goris and Vaught, 1997 in a field study of job performance among hospital nurses found positive relationship between job performance and communication which alone in their study comprises of 302 employees in two companies found low positive relationship between job performance and communication.

Therefore the 4 hypothesis used to examine the relationship of the models that is:

- H1: There is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance
- H2: There is a positive relationship between Emotional intelligence and Communication Satisfaction
- H3: There is a positive relationship between Communication Satisfaction and Job Performance
- H4: Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance is mediated by Communication Satisfaction

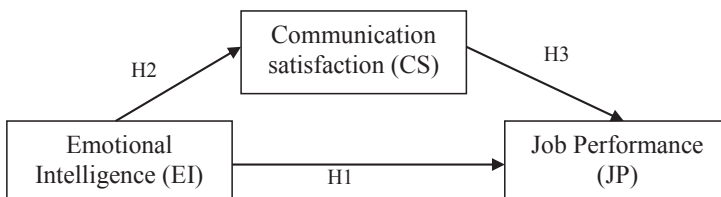


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research will be focussed on the hotel industry in Malaysia from 1-5 stars. Primary data will be used based on the previous work and the unit of analysis in this study is individual level of frontline employees. The probability sampling is use as a sampling technique in which simple random sampling is chosen. The purpose of simple random used is to get information from sample with it has the least bias and one of the most generalize method (Sekaran, 2003). In term of sample size, the sample size is 120 with 90 percent response rate. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 22th used to analyse reliability, correlations and regression model use Barron and Kenny (1986) of the data set to test the hypothesised relationship among dependent, independent and mediator variables (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

The items of individual questions guided in this research proposed by theoretical concept and constructs have been well established and tested in past research (Churchill and Iacobucci, 2005). Likert Scale is a measure of attitude designed to allow respondent to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree towards an attitudinal object which 7-point Likert Scales format implemented. The adapted of the measurement job performance which contains 18 items, 21 items will be used to measure emotional intelligence variable and 21 items to measure communication satisfaction.

### 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1-4 show analysis of reliability, correlation and regression model for the independent, dependent and mediator variable of the model. It can be seen the significant result of each variables of the model.

Table 1: Reliability test

Variables	Chronbach Alphas	No. of Items
Job performance	0.969	18
Emotional Intelligence	0.946	21
Communication Satisfaction	0.957	17

From the table above, there are 3 variable in this study included job performance, emotional intelligence and communication satisfaction. The chronbach alpha of job performance is 0.969. Thus the reliability test for individual job performance considers is good and accepted as the alpha value is 0.969 (Sekaran, 2003). Emotional Intelligence chronbach alpha is 0.946 shows the reliability test considers is good as

the alpha value is 0.946. In the other hand, communication satisfaction with chronbach alpha is 0.957 considers is good.

Table 2: Correlations

Variables	Job Performance	Emotional Intelligence	Communication Satisfaction
Job performance	1	0.868**	0.744**
Emotional Intelligence		1	0.755**
Communication Satisfaction			1

Pearson Correlation Coefficient is used to determine the relationship between dependent variables, independent and mediator variables. The p value which is less than 0.05 was considered as significance. The table above shows all variables of emotional intelligence and communication satisfaction leadership have positive relationship with individual job performance. The result of emotional intelligence and communication satisfaction are significant where the emotional intelligence ( $r = 0.868$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ) and communication satisfaction ( $r = 0.744$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ). Hence the result of correlation analysis initial support hypothesis 1,2,3. (refer table 3)

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	Relationship	$\beta$	Sig.
H1	Emotional Intelligence- Job Performance -	0.868	0.00
H2	Emotional Intelligence - Communication Satisfaction	0.755	0.00
H 3	Communication Satisfaction - Job Performance	0.206	0.00
H 4	Emotional Intelligence – Job Performance (with Communication Satisfaction)	0.713	0.00

Based on steps suggested from Baron and Kenny (1986) in establishing mediation is used. In brief, we can see that the emotional intelligence is significantly related to the job performance ( $\beta = 0.868$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), which indicates Step 1 was fulfilled. In step 2, the  $\beta$  values indicate the relative influence of the dependent variables that is, communication satisfaction has the influence on emotional intelligence ( $\beta = 0.755$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by step 3 job performance indicate communication satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.206$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and last step job performance indicate with emotional

intelligence and communication satisfaction to examine the mediator effect ( $\beta = -0.713$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The job performance ( $\beta = 0.713$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) was still significant but the beta value has decreased as such the conclusion that we can draw is that a partial mediation has taken place.

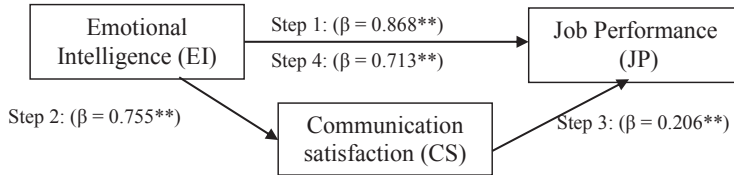


Figure 2: Graphical result of regression analysis

Figure 2 presents the results in a graphical form and Table 4 gives the summarize in a form of table with can be conclude job performance is significant related to emotional intelligence as well as communication satisfaction. When emotional intelligence (independent variable) and communication satisfaction (mediator) is regressed against dependent variable (job performance), mediator is significant. Since in Step 3, the beta value of emotional intelligence reduces ( $\beta = 0.206$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but is still significant thus we conclude that partial mediation has occurred. Therefore hypothesis 4 supported.

Table 4: summary of regression analysis

	Dependent Variable = Job Performance	
	Without mediator	With mediator
Emotional Intelligence	0.868**	0.713**
Communication Satisfaction		0.206**

## 5.0 FUTURE RECOMMENDATION

In the other hand partial mediator occur because of the combination between 1 to 5 stars hotel which have different requirement of the frontline employees. The results might be change if we separated according to stars where different stars have different requirement. As an example the luxury hotels such as 4 to 5 stars hotel might be will produce the higher correlation compare to 1 to 3 stars since they have a different type of customer, environment and have a proper training. Another option is we can collect the data using the longitudinal where we can collect the data more than once, its is because as human we have a different situation with emotional will be change with the time and the situation. The results of times series in longitudinal might have a same results or might be not. The longitudinal will enhance the validity of the models.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

Exploring the partial mediator effect influencing job performance model is important for hotel management as the findings can be used to improve frontline employees job performance model. The partial mediator occurred in the model when it practically use in certain elements and not the entire communication satisfaction in the model, it may be verbally , non verbally or other element in communication. The model can be adapted into HRM Practices especially in transfer of trainig by designing the training module using communication satisfaction as an added values. In fact, communication relates to both individual and unit performance a “glaring omission” in organizational communication research.

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