

## Relationship of Emotional Intelligence to Organizational Commitment of College Teachers in Pakistan

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### Abstract

*Problem statement:* Teaching not only involves the transmission of information/knowledge from teachers to students, but it is a job which involves multidimensional human interaction to achieve the desired goals of an educational organization. The education sector has become very diverse and demanding. Professional liabilities of teachers in Pakistan have increased day by day. These liabilities have made the work environment more difficult to adjust to, resulting into low organizational commitment in teachers. Interaction with colleagues, students and work-family pressure are all increasing the emotional labour of the teachers, and many of them are unable to strike a balance between job demands, relationships at school and family liabilities. When teachers lack commitment to their jobs, they tend to get lousy results. When they are clear about what they want and commit themselves to achieve it, they usually get there in some fashion. The organizational commitment of teachers is a significant area to be investigated in relation to emotional intelligence in the Pakistani scenario where most of the teachers do not join the teaching profession as their primary choice, but rather as a last resort. The low level of teacher commitment to their organization has resulted in a poor sense of responsibility and poor standards for education.

*Purpose of the study:* The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of college teachers in the Pakistani context. *Method:* The study was a descriptive survey in nature. Data were collected from 494

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college teachers in Pakistan. Schutte's Assessing Emotions Scale and Allen & Mayer's three components of organizational commitment measures were used to collect the data. Pearson Product Moment Formula was applied to test the hypotheses. Regression Analysis was also applied to determine the effect of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment.

*Results and Findings:* Findings of the research revealed a significant relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment. EI also displayed significant positive relationships with three components of organizational commitment which are denoted by affective, continuance and normative commitment, respectively. Emotional intelligence reflects a reasonable power of predictability toward the organizational commitment of teachers.

*Conclusions and Recommendation:* The study recommended emotional intelligence be included in the criteria for selection and recruitment of teachers, and that it be utilized as an intervention to enhance the level of organizational commitment of prospective and in-service teachers in Pakistani colleges.

**Key Words:** emotional intelligence, organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment.

## Introduction

Emotional intelligence is understood as an ability (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 1999) or a personality characteristic (Schutte & Malouff, 1999). Mayer and Salovey (1997) describe it as a facet of social intelligence, which involves the capacity to examine one's own and others' emotions and feelings, and to distinguish between the emotions and feelings for implication of the information to the direction of one's thoughts and actions. Mayer & Salovey (1999) remodeled their definition and described it as the ability to recognize emotions, to access and produce emotions so as to help out thoughts, to appreciate emotions and emotional knowledge and to thoughtfully adjust emotions so as to encourage emotional and rational growth.

The concept of organizational commitment is comprised of three facets which include affective, continuance and normative commitment. Affective commitment involves the affirmative feelings of belongingness and attachment to the affairs of an employing organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984, p. 375). Normative commitment is described as an understanding of the obligation to remain in an organization (Allen & Meyer, 1996, p. 253). Continuance commitment means the degree of commitment employees feel toward the employing organization when they consider the penalty of quitting the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984, p. 375). Affective commitment compels the employees to persist with the employing organization due to their personal fulfillment and accomplishments as a result of their emotional attachment to the organization. Employees having strong continuance commitment continue

with the employer because they feel that it is essential to remain in the organization. Employees are forced to persist in the organization due to normative commitment because they feel a compulsion to stay (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Emotionally intelligent persons are those individuals who focus on resolution but not on reasoning, because they possess optimistic and positive traits which enable them to do so (Abraham, 1999). Jobs in all organizations are always full of difficulties and day-to-day challenges resulting in dissatisfaction of employees. In the face of these hardships and challenges, the individuals having higher levels of emotional intelligence do not like to blame their organization for their feelings of dissatisfaction and imbalance. Thus, they will also try to employ their emotional intelligence and will come to know the means to avoid the negative emotions and feelings. In this regard, their emotional intelligence in searching out novel ways to lessen feelings of imbalance and frustration will result in higher levels of affective commitment to the organization with reduced levels of continuance commitment (Abraham, 2003).

If the organization provides a good working environment, good pay and allowances and satisfaction with the organization, and the employee feels it is dangerous to leave the organization because he will lose all allied benefits, his continuance commitment to the organization will obviously increase (Allen & Meyer, 1990). In totality, the results of various studies have proven that affective commitment and normative commitment are increased by interpersonal skills of emotional intelligence and are also effective components of normative commitment. Organizational commitment showed correlation with interpersonal skills of emotional intelligence. This suggestion can be made on the basis of results of the study that employees' organizational commitment and job satisfaction in relation to interpersonal skills of emotional intelligence may play a significant role in functional improvement of an organization. Results also suggest such interpersonal skills as an important part of an organizational training of managers and supervisors in order to enhance empathy toward their subordinates. These factors enhance an intact, safe and productive organizational atmosphere. In the succeeding paragraphs, an overview of some studies is offered in support of the hypothesis of the present study.

One of the early studies conducted on the relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment was by Abraham (2000). He explored the idea that individuals possessing higher emotional intelligence were more committed to their organizations. It was significant to note that their commitment to the employing organization was higher in the absence of some sort of control, dictating a stronger and internalized form of commitment which can be said to be of the affective type. It is worthwhile to note that Abraham (2000) further hypothesized that the social skills facets of emotional intelligence may exercise a strong control on organizational commitment by helping form strong working relationships among the colleagues. This strong relationship between colleagues at organization may enhance emotionally intelligent workers' affective attachment to their organization. This form of commitment associated with emotional intelligence is said to be affective commitment, which employers value most.

Abraham (2004) found that emotional intelligence positively affects organizational commitment. Nikolaou & Tsaousis (2002) explored the idea that emotional intelligence had a stronger association with organizational commitment. In another study, Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2002) explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. They concluded that employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence felt respected and more valued in their positions in the organization, with less agony, resulting in increased feelings of loyalty and commitment to their organizations. Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2005) further explored the positive association between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of employees. In the case of commitment, there was significant correlation found between Use of Emotions and commitment of employees to the organization ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), whereas on the whole, emotional intelligence was strongly linked with organizational commitment.

Jordan, Ashkanasy and Hartel (2002) found that organizational commitment was mediated by emotional intelligence, therefore high affective commitment was shown by those individuals with higher emotional intelligence while facing stress and instability. Cherniss (2001) stressed that emotional intelligence plays a key role in contributing to organizational effectiveness by enhancing commitment, improving morale, and upgrading health of persons.

Naderi and Sodani (2010) conducted an experimental research study to investigate the effects of interpersonal skills training on the Emotional Intelligence (EI) and organizational commitment of male employees in Iranian context. The hypothesis was supported, demonstrating positive influence of training in interpersonal skills of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment of employees.

Salami (2008) conducted a study to investigate the relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment of industrial workers in Nigeria. Results demonstrated that emotional intelligence significantly predicted organizational commitment of the employees. Findings suggested organizational managers and academics should look into the factor of emotional intelligence while planning programmes of staff development for the enhancement of the organizational commitment of workers.

Carmeli (2003) conducted a study to determine the organizational commitment of senior finance managers employed by the local Israeli government. It was revealed that those who scored higher in emotional intelligence were more committed to their employing organizations. Carmeli discussed the primary reason for finance managers' attachment to their organizations was due to their emotionally intelligence. Managers had the ability to place themselves in positive emotional states, which resultantly contributed to their sense of commitment to their organization. He similarly hypothesized that on the emergency of challenges and obstacles in the course of routine work in organizations, emotionally intelligent managers were not convinced that the fault, difficulties or the challenges were created by the employing organization; rather, they focused on the solutions to those issues with a positive attitude. In Carmeli's understanding, this positive attitude

reduced the unpleasant effects of stress on personal commitment to the organization. Carmeli's inference has clearly supported Emotional Self-Management over other facets of emotional intelligence in predicting affective organizational commitment.

A study was conducted by Guleryuz et al. (2008) to explore the intervening effect of job satisfaction in correlation to emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of nurses.

The study also found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment, which reinforced previous studies (Gardner, 2003) that reported that individuals who score high in emotional intelligence are more committed to their organisations. However, this significant relationship could only be demonstrated when 'job satisfaction' was introduced into the model. Guleryuz et al. (2008) call for further work to be done on the relationship between EI and organizational commitment, suggesting that their study fills an important gap in the nursing literature. Having demonstrated a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment, there is scope for further examination of the impact on organizational commitment and persistence in the profession. The following paper examines the impact of 'trait' EI on teamwork. Teams are a fundamental component of nursing structures and practices. The ability to function within a team is essential in the profession, and a study which is able to relate EI to effective teamwork would provide helpful information. Personal barriers to teamwork would appear to mitigate against important aspects of successful clinical practice performance.

Salami (2007) conducted a study to explore the relationships of self-efficacy and emotional intelligence to work-related attitudes. These work-related attitudes included organizational commitment of secondary school teachers in southwestern Nigeria. Findings of the study concurred with the hypothesis that emotionally intelligent teachers possess a higher level of organizational commitment ( $r = 0.25$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Adeyemu (2007) examined the correlation of job satisfaction with organizational commitment, while emotional intelligence was applied as a moderating variable. It was found that emotional intelligence had significant influence on organizational commitment ( $b = 0.136$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). When the interaction terms were added to the regression equations, there was significant increase in the variance of organizational commitment, thus providing evidence about the moderating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship of job satisfaction to organizational commitment. From research evidence, Adeyemu concluded that emotional intelligence skills and competencies are useful, valuable tools in understanding, supporting, maintaining and enhancing high levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Petrides and Furnham (2006) investigated the relationship between the trait or emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. In their study, they examined the links between the trait of emotional intelligence and four job-related variables, including organizational commitment. Higher emotional intelligence was associated with lower degrees of stress and higher degrees of organizational commitment.

Iranian employees were studied with respect to the association of their emotional intelligence with organizational commitment and performance by Rangriz and Mehrabi in 2010. The results of the study revealed significant correlation between Emotional intelligence of the employees and their organization commitment  $r=0.394$ ,  $p<0.01$ .

Jordanoglou (2007) conducted a study to underpin the relationship among emotional intelligence, leadership, job satisfaction and commitment of primary teachers in Greece with the assumption that teachers are organizers in class. Findings of his research revealed that emotional intelligence had a positive influence on leadership effectiveness and was also found strongly linked to job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teachers, as established by self-reported scales of emotional intelligence. The results of the study further suggested that although cognitive abilities and professional competence were to be taken into account in the selection of the teachers, emotional competencies must also be included in the selection standards for educators to ensure adequate levels of performance of teachers.

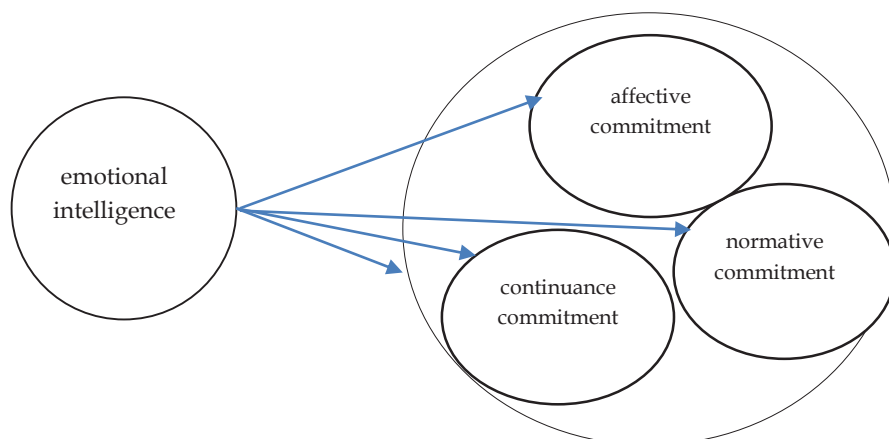
Sinha and Jain (2004) explored the relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment in an Indian context. The results of their study showed that those persons who scored higher on the facet of Reality Awareness of Emotional Intelligence (Reality Awareness was extracted by factor analysis of Bar-On's (2000) EQ-i scale) also scored slightly higher on the affective and normative facets of organizational commitment. By exploring the relationship of all the three facets of organizational commitment and a major facet of emotional intelligence, it can be suggested that understanding emotions in employees in an organizational context may be the most important predictor of organizational commitment. It is obvious that the number of studies finding a linkage between emotional intelligence and the three facets of organizational commitment is narrow, and while examination of such relations of the degree of emotional intelligence abilities is restricted to this specific research, other research studies' findings suggest a positive relationship. The present study, therefore, was designed to explore the relative significance of aspects of emotional intelligence in the prediction of organizational commitment in an educational organizational scenario. The major objective of the study was to determine whether teachers with emotional intelligence were committed to their employing organizations.

Teaching is a very demanding profession, and it involves immense emotional labour and exhaustion on the part of teachers. It poses troubles to teachers in the shape of heavy professional burdens and tests their ability to overcome the mischievous students. Because of all these things, teachers may feel frustration and dissatisfaction with both teaching and their educational organization. The capacity to deal with the odd situations faced by teachers during the teaching and learning process rests with emotionally intelligent teachers. Emotional intelligence makes them capable of overcoming these kinds of hurdles with an optimistic mind-set. They are expected to know how to get rid of odd emotions and use emotions in new situations to restrain the feelings of nuisance. However, a very small number of

studies conducted to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment have found positive connections in the field of education, as well as overall organizational contexts. Therefore, little has been explored about the relationship of EI and the three forms of commitment

Keeping in mind the above discussion, the present study has been designed to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of college teachers in a Pakistani context. Below is the figure which depicts the conceptual framework of the study and the constructs as designed in the present study.

### Objectives of the Study



**Figure 1.** Relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment

Following were the objectives of the present study:

1. To identify the significance of emotional intelligence in the educational setting.
2. To investigate the relationship between college teachers' emotional intelligence and their organizational commitment.

### Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypothesis was formulated based on the objectives of the study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between college teachers' emotional intelligence and their organizational commitment.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between college teachers' emotional intelligence and three components of organizational commitment; i.e., affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

## Methodology

### *Research Design*

This study was a descriptive survey in nature. No manipulation was involved, and the facts were reported as they were determined as a result of the study.

### *Population and Sample of the Study*

All male and female college teachers teaching intermediate, graduate and post-graduate classes in Government Colleges of the Punjab Province of Pakistan were taken as the population of the present study. Convenient sampling method was used to select the teachers. The sample of the study comprised 494 college teachers teaching intermediate, graduate and post-graduate classes in Government Colleges of 10 different district level cities of the Punjab Province. Out of 494 teachers, 256 were male teachers (51.82%) and 238 were female teachers (48.18 %) who responded as participants of the study. Six hundred sets of questionnaires were distributed to conveniently selected teachers from 30 Government Colleges in 10 cities. Twenty teachers were selected from each college, and where the number of teachers in the college was less than 20, all the teachers were selected for data collection. Out of 600 distributed questionnaires 540 were collected back, and out of these 540 questionnaires 494 were answered completely.

### *Research Instruments*

The following instruments were adopted with permission from their respective authors/developers and were applied for measuring emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of college teachers

*Assessing Emotions Scale:* Assessing Emotions Scale (AES) developed by Schutte et al. (2007) was applied to measure emotional intelligence. This scale is self-reported measure of emotional intelligence. AES consists of 33 items structured on a Likert scale with five options ranging from Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 5. The AES has displayed high internal consistency as reported by Schutte et al. (1998), Cronbach's Alpha=0.90. Theoretically interrelated psychological constructs including Alexithymia, mood repair, optimism, and impulse control also proved to have significant relationships with this measure of emotional intelligence. The Assessing Emotions Scales is a widely used research instrument in various organizational studies in many countries with different cultures, but it is found to be a reliable and usable research tool. If we review the literature, it is found that a major portion of studies conducted on emotional intelligence uses AES as a data collection instrument. The language of the tool was easy, as it was comprehended by Pakistani college teachers when it was given for testing. This instrument was adopted for the study because permission from Dr. Nicola Schutte (author of AES) was sought and very kindly granted.



*Organizational Commitment Scale:* Meyer and Allen (1991; 1997) presented the Three Component Model (TCM) of organizational commitment. They recognized affective, continuance, and normative commitment as unique components of organizational commitment. According to the Three Component Model, affective commitment refers to an emotional connection to the organization; continuance commitment refers to the perceived cost of leaving the organization; and the normative commitment stems from a perceived obligation to remain with the organization. Based on the Three Component Model, Allen and Meyer developed an eighteen-item organizational commitment Scale as part of the TCM Employee Commitment Survey measures. The researcher adopted this eighteen-item measure of organizational commitment. The TCM Questionnaire provides the 'commitment profile' of individuals in total and on normative, continuance and affective bases separately. Coefficient alphas for the scale as obtained by Allen and Meyer were 0.87 and 0.84. Permission was obtained from the authors to use the Organizational Commitment Scale for the present study.

*Procedure of Data Collection:* The researchers personally visited all 30 colleges situated in 10 different cities of the Punjab Province. Consent was sought from each principal. Purpose of the study was narrated to the subjects and to the administration of the college. The researchers got completed all research instruments from each teachers personally.

#### *Data Analysis*

To determine the relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Formula was applied. Regression Analysis was applied to determine the magnitude of effect of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment and its three components. Table 1 contains the results as obtained after testing the hypotheses of the present study.

## **Results**

As shown in Table 1, there exists a moderately positive and significant correlation between emotional intelligence and overall organizational commitment of teachers. It is also reflected that relationship of emotional intelligence is significant and moderately positive for affective and normative components of organizational commitment, but this relationship was weaker with continuance commitment.

**Table 1.***Mean, Standard Deviations and Inter-correlation Matrix of all the Variables*

<i>Variables</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
emotional intelligence	1.00				
organizational commitment	.489**	1.00			
affective commitment	.473**	.710**	1.00		
continuance commitment	.135**	.602**	.013**	1.00	
normative commitment	.410**	.781**	.431**	.249**	1.00
Mean	126.28	91.62	32.04	28.35	31.23
SD	16.25	13.74	7.07	6.67	6.02

N = 494, SD = Standard Deviation, \*p&lt;0.05

To determine the potential for emotional intelligence as a predictor of teachers' organizational commitment and its three components, i.e., affective, continuance and normative commitment, Regression Analysis was applied. The results are given in the succeeding table.

**Table 2.***Regression Analysis for Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Organizational Commitment and Its Components*

<i>Model</i>	<b>B</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Sig</b>	<b>Model R Square</b>
Effect of emotional intelligence on total organizational commitment	.413	12.421	.000	.239
Effect of emotional intelligence on affective commitment	.206	11.901	.000	.224
Effect of emotional intelligence on continuance commitment	.055	3.020	.003	.018
Effect of emotional intelligence on normative commitment	.152	9.976	.000	.168

Table 2 demonstrates that a higher than 23% variance is explained by the regression model, which shows that emotional intelligence affects organizational commitment. It is also statistically found in this study that emotional intelligence had effected the affective commitment of teachers by showing more than 22% variance in its scores. A variance of only 1.8% was found through regression model, demonstrating that emotional intelligence does not affect continuance commitment, as emotional

intelligence also had a weak correlation with it as shown in Table 1. A reasonable magnitude of variance is made by emotional intelligence in the scores of normative commitment, which is more than 16% as shown in the Table 2 for regression analysis.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

It is evident from the findings of this research that there is a significant relationship between college teachers' emotional intelligence and their organizational commitment. The teachers who had higher levels of emotional intelligence displayed higher degrees of organizational commitment to the college where they were teaching, therefore the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between college teachers' emotional intelligence and organizational commitment was rejected. These findings are supported by Abraham, 1999, 2000, 2004; Salami, 2007, 2008; Carmeli, 2003; Sinha & Jain, 2004; Tsaousis, 2002; Nikalaou & Tsaousis, 2002, 2005; Jordan, Ashkansay & Hartel, 2002; Cherniss, 2001; Naderi & Sodani, 2010; Guleryuz et al., 2008; Gardner, 2003; Adeyemu, 2007; Petrides & Furnham, 2006; Iordanglou, 2007; Rangriz & Mehrabi, 2010. They have all studied the relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment and other work attitudes. The positive and statistically significant relationship of emotional intelligence to organizational commitment proves this notion that teachers who possess a higher degree of emotional intelligence tend to be more committed, develop good working relationships, are tolerant when facing emotional labour or emotional pressure and can handle the odd feelings and emotions without losing their tempers. They may deal with work-family conflicts in a befitting manner.

The findings of this research prove that there is a significant relationship between college teachers' emotional intelligence and three components of organizational commitment. The teachers who had higher levels of emotional intelligence displayed higher degrees of affective and normative commitment to the organization where they were employed; therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between college teachers' emotional intelligence and three components of organizational commitment was rejected. These findings are supported by Carmeli, 2003; Naderi & Sodani, 2010; these studies have identified the relationship of emotional intelligence with affective, continuance and normative components of organizational commitment. The results of this study show a positive and statistically significant relationship of emotional intelligence to the components of organizational commitment, hence proving this notion that teachers who possess higher degrees of emotional intelligence are affectively attached to the employing organization, develop good working relationships, are tolerant when facing emotional labour or emotional pressure and can handle the odd feelings and emotions without losing temperament. Emotionally Intelligent personnel show a moderate degree of continuance commitment and tend to remain with the organization. Continuance commitment is the attachment of an employee to the employing organization in which he/she cares about his investments and achievements and hopes to carry these achievements to fruition until the time of retirement or leaving the organization. In

other words, he is self-centred and carries on with the same organization for his/her own material gain. Normative commitment to the employing organization may also be positively affected by emotional intelligence, with people feeling obliged and morally bound to their organization.

Keeping in mind the results of the present study, it is recommended that emotional intelligence should be included in the selection and recruiting standards for teachers in Pakistan at all levels. In this way, we may get teachers of higher emotional intelligence levels, resultantly with higher commitment to their teaching organization and the teaching profession. As emotional intelligence demonstrates effects up to reasonable extent, to enhance the organizational commitment of prospective and in-service teachers, emotional intelligence may be taught to them, as it will definitely contribute to a conducive environment in teaching organizations.

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