



Higher Employee Engagement through Social Intelligence: A Perspective of Indian Scenario

Tanushree Sanwal¹ · Puja Sareen¹

Accepted: 16 March 2022 / Published online: 26 March 2022

© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2022

Abstract

Recognizing that high levels of social intelligence are required for effective engagement, the authors set out to find the association between employee engagement and social intelligence. Specifically, the goal of this study was to find the explanatory value of social intelligence constructs for employee engagement in a sample of employees by conducting a statistical analysis. The final research included 150 male and 50 female professionals who were selected from FMCG sectors. A questionnaire was used to gather socio-demographic evidence; the Utrecht engagement scale and the Tromso social intelligence scale in the Indian cultural context were used to obtain professional and job information. The findings revealed that employees with high levels of social intelligence scores performed well on engagement measures, with social skills being the most significant predictor of engagement. The findings of this study have substantial practical significance for the development of training and intervention activities targeted at improving employees' performance on the job, among other things.

Keywords Employee · Engagement · Social Intelligence · Social awareness · Social skills

Introductions

The current business scenario is experiencing turbulent times due to intense global competition and covid 19. Skilled and talented employees in such times help an organization become a partner of choice among customers and counterparts. Employee engagement, motivation, satisfaction, performance, etc., has become an essential prerequisite for an organization's success and growth. Employee engagement is a comprehensive word that refers to almost every area of human resource management that we are familiar with. Employees cannot dedicate themselves to their jobs as a result of poor management of human resources. Employee engagement is the key upon which satisfaction of work, the commitment of workers, and organizational civic conduct are built. (Markos and Sridevi,

✉ Tanushree Sanwal
tanushreesanwal12@gmail.com

Puja Sareen
psareen@amity.edu

¹ Amity Business School, AUUP, Noida, India

2010). When employees are engaged, they have dedication and commitment towards their work and organizational goals. According to Robinson et al. (2004), engagement of people at work is "a positive attitude held by the employee toward the organization and its worth." An employee who is engaged is conscious of his or her surroundings and works collaboratively with his teams to improve work performance for the profit of the company as a whole. The organization must cultivate and promote the engagement of workers to do this, which needs an ongoing dialogue between the employer and the employee. Team effectiveness is seen more when employees are highly engaged (Koekemoer et al. 2021). Profession and work resources that included peer support worked as a favorable interpreter of work engagement (De Beer et al. 2012). Work engagement (which encompasses vigor, dedication, and absorption) occurs as a result of employment resources supplied or available to employees at their workplace, and it has an influence on employee results (Lesener et al. 2019; Schaufeli 2017). Employees also expect a positive working environment where meritocracy is respected, employee engagement activities are conducted, good talent is recognized, and opportunities to grow are provided.

Work Engagement in organizations was given by Kahn, (1990) as 'harnessing of employees skills and roles in their work'. Engaged employees subordinate their personal goals to work goals and invest the discretionary efforts for the achievement of organizational objectives. Engaged employees associate and direct their self-motivated efforts towards the vision & mission statement of the workplace. Strong passion for their work and deeply connects with organizational prosperity are attributes of engaged employees. Employees, who have engaged in work actively, help the organization to move in a positive direction.

In India, organizations are continuously seeking growth and progress. They are always in need of persons with a high level of intelligence and talents (Morgeson, 2005). Employees with various social and emotional competencies perform better at work. Clarity of mental process and the ability to finalize policies are partly dependent on social competence and awareness. Entrepreneurs require high social sensitivity and information processing skills to start a business. Furthermore, persons who are socially or emotionally competent have various advantages at work. These employees have great working connections with their superiors. They produce higher-quality work and are more strategically involved. They are capable of dealing with any form of problem. They demonstrate improved performance and engagement (Boyatzis et al. 2017; Perez-Fuentes, et. al., 2018; Rahim, et al., 2019; Ebrahimpoor et al., 2013). As a result, the goal of this research is to find if there is any link between the engagement of employees and their social intelligence constructs: "social awareness, social skills, social sensitivity, social information processing".

Employee Engagement

Kanungo (1986) said that the phenomenon of job involvement is psychological.

Employment engagement is considered a measure of an organization's productivity. Further, an organization with a progressive culture has always promoted engagement and commitment in employees, whereas various characteristics of culture in the organization are also significant predictors of commitment and innovation. Engagement permits an individual to achieve a flow state (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000) and meets core psychological requirements of independence and competence (Deci and Ryan 1985; Ryan and Deci, 2000); engagement also leads to subjective wellbeing (Seligman 2012). Earlier

research has found a positive association among involvement, self-efficacy, and work satisfaction (Salanova et al. 2011; Walker and Campbell 2013). Significant links have also been discovered between involvement and personal aspects like locus of control, mental health, and satisfaction in the job (Fiabane et al. 2013; Kunie et al. 2017).

There are basically three fundamental features of work engagement, “vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli et al. 2002). An excessive amount of liveliness and mental fortitude in the face of hardship, as well as effort and tenacity in one’s task, are characteristics of vigor. Dedication is described as a genuine enthusiasm for an individual’s work. It has a mental perspective, such as belief in one’s abilities, as well as an emotional component, which encompasses feelings of excitement, encouragement, pride, and task accomplishment. Absorption is generally accompanied by a pleasant experience and a desire to keep working. Researchers discovered a significant negative connection between vigor and burn-out and a large negative relationship between dedication and irrelevance to effort, showing that these dimensions are opposites (Maslach et al. 2001). However, when it comes to absorption, it is not the same as a lack of proficient efficacy, and an absence of proficient efficacy is not the same as a lack of absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2006a, b).

Secondary literature evaluating sex or gender differences in engagement has yielded mixed results, ranging from those confirming considerable differences (Fong and Ng 2012; Lovakov et al. 2017; Mukkavilli et al. 2017; Schaufeli and Bakker 2004; Martos et al. 2018) to those finding no differences (Liu et al. 2018) or differences with a modest impact size (Lovakov et al. 2017). Where gender variations in engagement have been discovered, the results are not convincing. Schaufeli and Bakker 2004, discovered that males had enhanced general engagement, dedication, and absorption than females but Mukkavilli et al. 2017, discovered women had higher levels of overall engagement, absorption, and dedication than men. Women scored much higher than men, according to many studies.

An engaged employee should be considered as an asset to the company as they deliver constructive results. According to Harter et al. (2002), an engaged person stays longer in the organization and is self-motivated. He has a good image and prolonged association with the organization, which helps to create a strong bonding with others. There are many benefits of employee engagement that can be seen in any organization, including an extended employer-employee relationship, business growth on an upward trajectory, enhanced company’s image as a decent employer/workplace, cohesive work environment, committed employees, and enhanced belief and trust in the organization. Staff engagement is required for greater productivity and turnover. It boosts client satisfaction and helps build loyalty and safety along with productivity and profitability (Harter et al. 2002). Industries that promote effective engagement in employees yield high profits, increased morale, and retention in employees (Smythe 2007). Therefore, nurturing and developing an engaged culture with two-way communication is essential. In turn, an employee’s commitment and loyalty can only be achieved through good leadership, inclusivity, effective training, good communication, and proper recognition (Gilbert 1996). An organization that focuses or prioritizes employee engagement directly impacts higher levels of employee performance and impressive business results. Engaged employees show many skills in an organization. Their performance levels are better and their emotional connection is well established with the company. Employees have a better relationship with their clients and customers. These employees give priority to organizational goals and align self-goals with those of the organization. Engaged workers are more passionate and loyal about their jobs and have high social and emotional competencies (Pittenger 2015). They develop a sense of loyalty towards their work and can well survive in globalization and competition. The culture of the organization becomes lively with engaged and energetic employees. Many employees

also turn as brand ambassadors for their company. Hence, organizations must adopt various measures to engage their employees effectively.

Ways to Enhance Engagement in Employees

Many measures may be adopted by organizations to increase employee engagement. Employees are more engaged in a business with a high level of leadership substance and an ethical work culture (Evangeline and Ragavan 2016). Constant reinforcement of employee-focused policies helps employees become more involved when higher authorities and competent leaders provide continual support with resources and assistance in completing duties (Carasco-Saul et al. 2015). Employee engagement also improves if firms empower employees and provide them with appropriate recognition and rewards. For effective engagement, organizations must also work to create a link between their leaders and their staff (Osborne and Hammoud 2017). Many measurable characteristics can be identified to improve performance. These measurements will logically assist people in being more focused inside the organization, resulting in positive results. Further, organizations must provide training in a variety of areas to increase employee engagement (Salanova et al. 2005; Ahmed et al. 2015; Nawaz et al. 2014).

Social Intelligence in Organizations

Social Intelligence is a buzzword but is a requirement of many organizations. Vernon (1933) said, “social intelligence is the person’s ability to get along with people in general, social technique or case in society, knowledge of social matters of a group, as well as insight into the temporary moods or underlying personality traits of strangers”. Social intelligence is characterized by the capability of people to identify the dominance of social myths prevalent in the society and an ability to come out of these misbeliefs, myths, and caprices, disseminated by influential people of a social ideologue, through their social conditioning. More recently, however, Karl Albrecht (2006) defines social intelligence as enhanced social skills where people cooperate and get along well with others. Social Intelligence is attributed by:

- the mix of compassion to the benefits of others, also known as the “social radar,”
- an attitude of kindness or contemplation
- humane skills for interrelating effectively with individuals in any social strata.

Social intelligence is a methodology for explaining, judging, and growing social intelligence on a personal level that is extremely accessible and inclusive. Social intelligence spans the entire spectrum of human relationships and aids in developing mutually productive relationships. A person working in an organization must be sensitive, tactful, and aware of his or her social surroundings. Other aspects of social intelligence, such as cooperation and confidence, must also be present. This would assist the teams in the organization in raising finances, dealing with crises, and developing schemes and awareness activities. Cooperation, self-assurance, compassion, and tactfulness are all qualities to look for in a team member. These components also help bring people together in varied situations (Chadha and Ganesan 1986). Social competency is also a key component of social

intelligence, which is essential for advancement and improvement in various disciplines. In general, we consider social intelligence to be a multi-dimensional construct. Social intelligence and emotional intelligence are now considered to be the same attribute that is intertwined. Albrecht (2006), Rahim (2014), and Boyatzis et al. (2015) are just a few examples. In general, social intelligence entails social awareness and knowledge of others and understanding and effectively engaging with them. (Kong et al., 2012; Marlowe, 1986; Boal and Hooijberg, 2000). These social intelligence parameters can help employees achieve an enhanced level of motivation and performance in organizations. Studies in literature and secondary data have consistently demonstrated a link between social intelligence and an employee's behavior or performance in an organization. (Ebrahimipoor et al., 2013; Rasuli et al. 2013; Rahim 2014). Social intelligence grows as a result of our interactions with people, as we have a greater understanding of their moods and can communicate with them more effectively (Gardner 1985). Learning from our errors and successes in social situations might help us improve social intelligence. It is generally referred to as "common sense" or "TACT." We can use social intelligence to better understand and act on others. Understanding others and being a good listener are both aided by social intelligence. People with higher social intelligence are more likely to encourage others rather than criticize them. Socially savvy people are acutely aware of their judgments and reactions. When it comes to interpersonal skills, according to Albrecht (2006), behavior can have a harmful or nourishing effect on others. So, if we believe that "social intelligence" is a personality trait, we are mistaken. According to Gardner (1985), social intelligence is one of a cluster of "intelligence" as mentioned in theory in the "multiple intelligence". When working relationships are formed, it is critical.

Vernon (1933) described social intelligence as a human's "capacity to get along with others in general, social technique or case in society, understanding of group social affairs, as well as insight into strangers transient emotions or underlying personality features." Social intelligence is a human skill to grasp and interpret global. Traditional wisdom, not only the contemporary or modern concept of "smartness," defines social intelligence. According to academics, social intelligence encompasses not just tacit knowledge but also interpersonal abilities (Zaccaro et al. 1991; Albrecht 2006; Sterelny 2007). Social intelligence enables people to comprehend life better, make it more fruitful, and also ease the process of retirement (Sanwal and Sareen 2021). In general, people from industrialized and planned societies have a high level of social intelligence than those residing in detrimental conditions (Sanwal 2009). Social sensitivity as a parameter of social intelligence assists people in identifying social myths, superstitions, and prejudices in society and removing them from their lives. Those with social intelligence may dispel these myths through right judgment and ideologue. A humane attitude of kindness and introspection and humane abilities for engaging with people is seen in social intelligence. The Social Intelligence Model, which is extremely approachable and inclusive, gives a superb model for unfolding and, comprehending social intelligence at the individual level.

To make the argument thorough, there are several models of social intelligence. According to Chadha and Ganesan, 1986, social intelligence encompasses all of mankind's interactions with other humans and the rest of the world. A socially intelligent person has a lot of patience, is cooperative, and is confident. He is sensitive to personal and interpersonal difficulties, and he is well-versed in social situations. He also has considerable tact in dealing with varied situations, a greater sense of humor, and a shaky recall. The term "social intelligence" refers to the complete range of human interactions with one another and with the rest of the world. It aids in the maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships. The components also assist in challenging and crises by assisting.

Socially intelligent individuals require social information processing skills, social awareness, and social desirability, according to Ebrahimpoor et al., 2013. Social skills can assist a person in determining a person's potency, power, and weakness. Positive criticism and feedback from various sources are worked on by those in the company who have this skill. People who process social information are better able to deal with and regulate stress. Social awareness denotes a worker's awareness of the difficulties, crises, and needs of others (Zaccaro et al. 1991). Persons who are socially aware can deal with conflict and establish positive relationships with others. Social desirability refers to how to deal with crises related to emotions.

Self-awareness, or the aptitude to know oneself and, by extension, others, is a component of social intelligence. According to Honeywill, 2015, it is the art of reading people, developing empathy, and assisting others. The ability to read others is sometimes referred to as social comprehension. Social intelligence is the capability to distinguish, comprehend, and perform on the thoughts of others (Sternberg 1985). Another important aspect of social intelligence is handling disagreement and accepting favorable criticism from higher authorities, allowing for further development and a strong connection with management. Social Intelligence allows a person to be more focused and goal-oriented in the workplace. It enables employees to cope tactfully with various historical and current events. Those with social intelligence can also improve their performance by streamlining and evaluating diverse activities. Crossman and Abou-Zaki (2003) discovered that people with high social intelligence were more dedicated and fulfilled. By successfully implementing benefit and financial programs, social intelligence also assists a person in growing and working in teams.

Indian organizational setup, consisting of various management levels, is marred by the ineffective application of social skills while dealing with employees (Riggio and Reichard 2008). These social skills fundamentally consist of various major factors, as follows:

- a) clarity in thought process along with social sensitivity
- b) experience and ability to finalize policies based on individual personalities
- c) the content of social skills such as cooperation, confidence, and sensitivity for higher engagement.
- d) Proper social awareness

Above stated all factors play a vital role and are interrelated also. As a matter of fact, any/all performance issues result from poor social competencies, social skills, and social awareness, as the cause (Ebrahimpoor et al., 2013). Thus, the social skills cannot be rendered negligible attention to garner employees' commitment and engagement in the organization (Pittenger 2015). An engaged workforce with enhanced social skills helps in decent talent holding. Also, an effectively engaged workforce is more capable and works for continuous improvement (Osborne and Hammoud 2017).

Social Intelligence and Employee Engagement

In any organization, social intelligence is critical. Employee engagement refers to a highly energized workforce, ardently linked, cerebrally concentrated, and mentally aligned. It can be achieved more effectively through improved social intelligence abilities. The key building blocks of technological innovation are heavily influenced by social intelligence,

social awareness, social recognition, and social desirability. Innovative environs can only be attained by implementing the process of employee engagement.

Secondary data and literature have shown that social intelligence is a crucial factor of human performance and effective leadership can lead to successful employee engagement (Riggio and Reichard 2008). Organizations cannot exist without social awareness and recognition. With the inclusion of social intelligence skills, an employee's engagement level is likely to be higher (Brunetto et al. 2012). Moreover, engagement is higher among employees when they have cooperation, confidence, sensitivity, high memory, all parameters of social intelligence. Social Intelligence is swiftly becoming important and gaining popularity in the job and influencing organizations in many ways. In direct relation to Social Intelligence, higher employee engagement highlights the significance of social intelligence for a successful business (Katou et al. 2021; Pittenger 2015; Dazel 2013). The present study is conducted to find out the relevance of social intelligence in the active engagement of the employees.

Hypothesis (i) Despite the lack of conclusive evidence from the literature review, the authors are likely to find gender differences in social intelligence and engagement. The study was started with the following hypotheses: -

“H1: There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of social skills.

H2: There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of social awareness.

H3: There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of social information processing.

H4: There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of social sensitivity.

H5: There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of absorption.

H6: There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of dedication.

H7: There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of vigor”.

(ii) The authors predicted that there would be substantial positive correlations among social intelligence and employee engagement; and (iii) the social intelligence dimensions of social awareness, social information processing, social skills, and social sensitivity factor would have a high predictive value for engagement of employees.

Method and Materials

Participants

The initial sample consisted of 221 individuals working in various FMCG sectors in Delhi/NCR (India). The authors detected 21 samples that were eliminated because they did not finish the entire questionnaire (9 individuals) or because it was discovered that they had done it casually (12 subjects). Since the major variable in the present study was engagement, the employees were chosen based on their current working environment (permanent contracts). All the samples were graduates and had

a minimum of three years of work experience. The final sample consisted of 200 working professionals from the middle level of management. The participants' average age was 34 years old ($SD = 4.26$), with a range of 30 to 40 years old. More than a quarter (25 percent, $n = 50$) were women, while the remaining 75 percent ($n = 150$) were men. The sample was composed of males and females in proportion to gender statistics available and working in the FMCG sector (Time of India, 2020).

Instruments

An ad-hoc online questionnaire was administered to obtain socio-demographic data (age, sex). The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) given by Schaufeli et al. (2002) was taken to assess workplace engagement. It is a self-reporting scale and it uses seventeen items with a 7-point Likert-type answer scale. It generates data on three dimensions of engagement: vigor (e.g., "I feel bursting with energy at work"), dedication (e.g., "I find the work that I perform full of meaning and purpose"), and absorption (e.g., "Time flies when I'm working"). This scale offers an overall engagement score as well as individual scores for each of the dimensions. Furthermore, with Chronbach's alpha of 0.82 in the vigor dimension, 0.81 in the dedication dimension, and 0.83 in the absorption dimension, this scale has shown satisfactory reliability and validity (Schaufeli et al. 2002). The Tromso Social intelligence scale developed by Silvera et al. (2001) and adapted by Goswami (2019) was taken to measure social intelligence in employees. (social skills, social awareness, social sensitivity, and social information processing). It was structured as four factors: social skills (e.g., "I fit in easily in social situations."); social awareness (e.g., "I do not feel that it is difficult to understand others' choices"); social information processing (e.g., "I can predict other peoples' behaviour"); and social sensitivity (e.g., "I know how my actions will make others feel"). Cronbach's alpha for each of the scales was: 0.77 for social skills; 0.75 for social awareness; 0.80 for social information processing; and 0.75 for social sensitivity. When conducting surveys, researchers use their judgment to select participants.

Procedure

Preceding data collection, the authors guaranteed participants that all applicable data security, confidentiality, and ethics requirements would be followed in the study's management of the data. The questionnaire was sent over a digital platform, allowing people to fill it out online. To screen for unintentional or irrelevant replies, the study contained a series of control questions, and such responses were deleted.

Results

Descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis are presented in 'Tables 1, 2, and 3' respectively. Figures 1, and 2 show the comparative mean of various constructs of social intelligence and employee engagement in males and females.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

Dimensions	Group n(males) = 150 n(females) = 50	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Hypothesis
Constructs of Social Intelligence	Male	4.3134	0.66467	1.753*	H1 Accepted
	Female	4.1704	0.94353		
	Male	3.8581	1.21437	2.291*	H2 Rejected
	Female	3.3998	1.46411		
Social information processing	Male	4.2859	0.64734	-1.800*	H3 Accepted
	Female	4.4132	0.54333		
Social sensitivity	Male	4.0517	0.82705	-2.302*	H4 Rejected
	Female	4.2534	0.75057		
Constructs of Employee Engagement	Male	4.0891	0.90950	-2.427*	H5 Rejected
	Female	4.7330	0.41221		
Dedication	Male	4.2992	0.67269	-2.304*	H6 Rejected
	Female	4.5436	0.43352		
Vigor	Male	3.8166	1.12422	2.264*	H7 Rejected
	Female	3.2604	1.47493		

P < 0.05*

Table 2 Correlation between Social Intelligence constructs and Employee Engagement constructs

Constructs of Employee Engagement	Absorption	Dedication	Vigor
Constructs of Social Intelligence			
Social skills	0.518**	0.682**	0.272**
Social awareness ss	0.549**	0.342**	0.668**
Social information processing	0.665**	0.797**	0.362**
Social sensitivity	0.457**	0.522**	0.437**

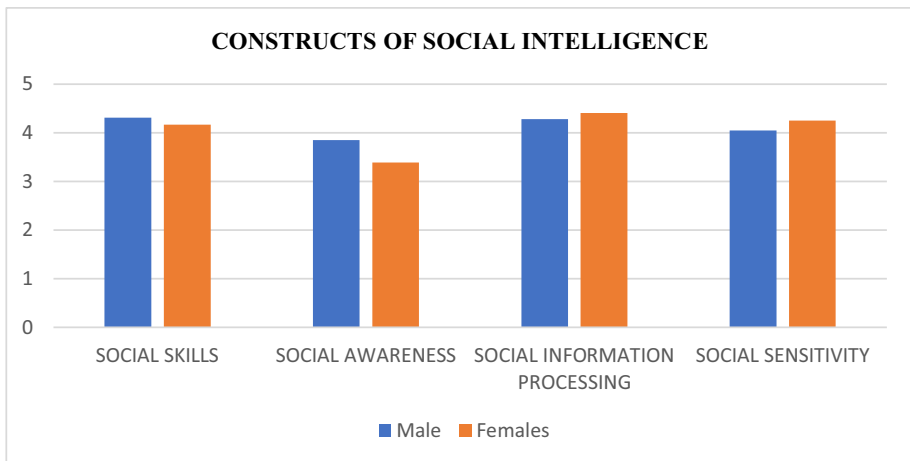
**P < 0.01

Table 3 Regression Analysis (R Square) of Social Intelligence and Employee Engagement constructs

Constructs of Employee Engagement	Absorption	Dedication	Vigor
Constructs of Social Intelligence			
Social skills	0.698	0.789	0.345
Social awareness ss	0.423	0.764	0.318
Social information processing	0.614	0.612	0.264
Social sensitivity	0.523	0.701	0.302

a. Predictors: (Constant): Social intelligence

b. Dependent Variable: Absorption, Dedication, Vigor

**Fig. 1** Comparative Mean of Social Intelligence Constructs in Employees

Conclusion

The descriptive statistics for the samples are presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Table 1 represents the descriptive statistics for the sample according to gender. It shows statistically significant differences, in some of the social intelligence components: social awareness: $t = 2.291$, $p < 0.05$; and social sensitivity: $t = -2.302$; $p < 0.05$.

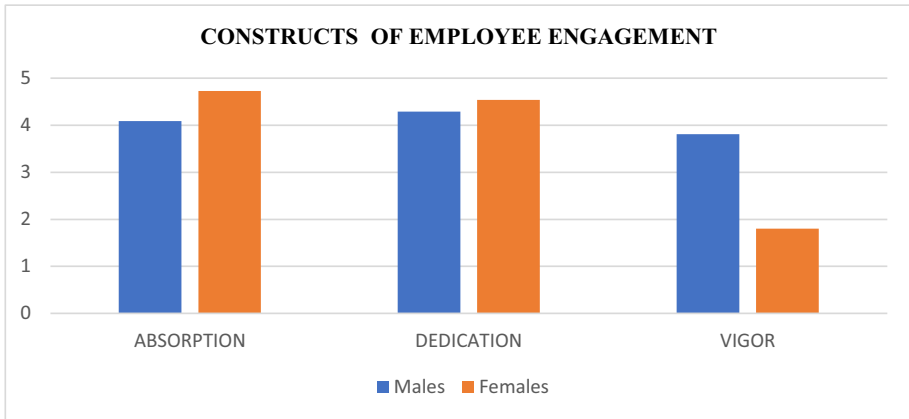


Fig. 2 Comparative Mean of Employee Engagement Constructs in Employees

There were significant differences between the males and females in the engagement dimensions: absorption: $t = -2.427$; $p < 0.05$, dedication: $t = -2.304$; $p < 0.05$, and vigor: $t = 2.264$; $p < 0.05$) with females who had higher score than men, in social sensitivity, absorption and dedication. A favorable association exists among the different components of social intelligence and employee engagement, as seen by the findings presented above. The study of correlation in Table 2 showed that each of the dimensions of engagement was positively connected with the various social intelligence components, with distinct correlation indices, and $p < 0.01$ in all cases. Table 2 shows a correlation of 0.518, 0.682, and 0.272 between social skills and absorption, dedication, and vigor respectively. This means when an employee has enhanced social skills his absorption power, dedication and vigor will also increase. Table 2 also shows a correlation of 0.549, 0.342, and 0.668 between social awareness and absorption, dedication, and vigor respectively. This also emphasizes that social awareness has a positive role in engaging employees. It also shows a correlation of 0.665, 0.797, and 0.362 between social information processing and absorption, dedication, and vigor respectively. This again reflects a strong association between information processing skills and employee engagement. Further, Table 2 shows a correlation of 0.457, 0.522, and 0.437 between social sensitivity and absorption, dedication, and vigor respectively, again empowering the role of social intelligence in engaging employees effectively. Further regression analysis and the score of R square have made the results more conclusive. In Table 3, the R square value of 0.698, 0.789, and 0.345 of absorption, dedication, and vigor with social skills, R square value of 0.423, 0.764, 0.318 of absorption, dedication, and vigor with social awareness, R square value of 0.614, 0.612, 0.264 of absorption, dedication, and vigor with social information processing and R square value of 0.523, 0.701, 0.302 of absorption, dedication, and vigor with social sensitivity depicts that social intelligence as an independent variable is responsible for enhanced employee engagement.

Discussion

In the present research, we can see the relevance of social intelligence. It plays a mammoth task in increasing the performance of employees by engaging them effectively. Various constructs of social intelligence or social competencies are today a prerequisite of enhanced productivity in an organization. Globalization of business and trade liberalization have created enormous opportunities as well as obstacles in the present era. And, to meet these obstacles, an employee must fully engage with his or her organization. Today engagement of employees has become a must-have for businesses looking to thrive in the new economy. Employee engagement requires a commitment to long-term goals and a willingness to grow, and social intelligence plays a critical part in this. Social intelligence is a never-ending and dynamic process. It is a process in which different constructs like social skills and awareness, which are related, collaborate to produce a desired result or purpose. As a result, we may conclude that excellent social skills or competencies are a requirement for employee engagement, which leads to technological innovation, a greater turnover rate, and improved relationships between employees, employers, and consumers. Effective social skills can involve one's spirit, mind, heart, and body. It assists us in fully igniting our potential and agility at work. Conclusively, we can advocate that effective social intelligence skills will boost engagement, absorption, dedication, and vigor among employees which will also increase organizational revenues and productivity (Mowday et al. 1982), (Angle and Perry 1981) or elevate trust, inclusivity, and work satisfaction, (Loui 1995) in employees. Employee engagement will also increase job involvement (Wiener and Vardi 1980), motivate the workforce, and enhance organizational support (Kwon and Banks 2004). Social intelligence, besides engaging employees, enhances confidence levels among employees, increases customer-focused approach and team efforts with absolute harmony in a cohesive environment. Zero prejudices and biases in organizations with a higher innovative bent of mind and culture (Mohanty 1999 and Coleman 1996) are also seen in organizations with highly engaged employees. Engagement is a realistic and scientific approach in managing synergies more skillfully. Employee engagement is defined as a commitment to the organization's goals and a desire to learn. In this regard, social intelligence abilities and competencies play a crucial role. It's a combination of self-knowledge and social awareness and the ability to manage complicated social change in any setting. Thus, we can conclude that effective social skills are an essential requirement for any organization that needs engaged employees for higher profit, growth, and innovation. This will also increase higher employee morale, less absenteeism, enhanced customer relationships, and better employee-employee and employer-employee relationships.

Researchers consider social intelligence, wisdom, and competency essential for work interaction. These social competencies positively influence engagement in the workplace in varied cultures. Further, these social skills are also necessary for successful and effective leadership (Riggio and Reichard 2008; Bayron-Rivera, 2021). Hence, organizations can build some training interventions for employees to boost social intelligence skills, which can enhance employee engagement and boost the leadership skills of a manager (Ahmed et al. 2015). They must develop some training programs to enhance their people's social intelligence for enhanced engagement, performance, and effective leadership.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

For the research's convenience, accessibility, and simplicity of sampling, we must accept the results' outer validity and be vigilant because the study's exclusive framework is being carried out in India, which has a diverse population. As of the present lockdown scenario, it is difficult to evaluate if a sample is archetypal, and gathering a representative sample would have been extremely difficult owing to the lack of a sampling frame. Furthermore, as a result of India's inequities, this sample excludes labor or poor employees who travel to the workplace and do not work from home, as well as those who live in rural regions without access to the internet. However, because of the lockdown conditions, acquiring such samples was nearly impossible, and the authors were forced to settle for people who desired to join free to complete their research.

The researchers had hoped for a bigger sample size, which is another flaw that should be addressed in the future. Increasing the amount of data available for modeling is always a positive thing. Nonetheless, the observed total score-based technique produced statistically significant findings in the same way, showing that the more complex measurement model had no effect on the outcomes. Furthermore, as a consequence of their pragmatic approach, the researchers developed or altered measures that functioned admirably. Nonetheless, the scales used and their validity should be further investigated in future studies, as previously stated.

Additionally, this study emphasized the significance of adjusting for any bias in item response by taking into account both optimism and pessimism ratings, as well as the potential influence this may have at the item level. The inclusion of equivalent control variables in social science research may be recommended to guarantee that the structural model's modeling of variable interactions is accurate.

Future studies may take a more person-centered approach, allowing profile categories to be created based on hidden variable items or factor scores. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, research on the psychological impacts of the COVID-19 epidemic and the long-term effects of the pandemic on both working and non-working populations should be undertaken as soon as possible to avert any potential long-term consequences.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest There is no conflict of Interest.

Ethical Statement The authors ensure that: -

- There is no funding for the research.
- The research is conducted in a responsible and ethically accountable way.
- Obtained informed consent from potential research participants.
- Minimised the risk of harm to participants.
- Protected their anonymity and confidentiality.
- Avoided using deceptive practices.
- Gave participants the right to withdraw from the research.

References

- Ahmed, U., Phulpoto, W., Umrani, W. A., & Abbas, S. I. (2015). *Diving Deep in Employee Training to Understand Employee Engagement*. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2151-6219.1000199>
- Albrecht, K. (2006). *Social intelligence: The new science of success*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Angle, H., & Perry, J. (1981). An empirical assessment of organizational commitment and organizational effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 26, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392596>
- Avasthi, S., Chauhan, R., & Acharjya, D. P. (2021). Techniques, Applications, and Issues in Mining Large-Scale Text Databases. In *Advances in Information Communication Technology and Computing* (pp. 385–396). Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-5421-6_39.
- Bayron-Rivera, G. (2021). Perceptions of Emotional and Social Intelligence Competencies Among Leaders Within Collective Impact Initiatives in Puerto Rico (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).
- Boal, K. B., & Hooijberg, R. (2000). Strategic leadership research: Moving on. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 11(4), 515–549. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843\(00\)00057-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(00)00057-6)
- Boyatzis, R. E., Gaskin, J., & Wei, H. (2015). Emotional and social intelligence and behavior. In *Handbook of intelligence* (pp. 243–262). Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-1562-0_17
- Boyatzis, R., Rochford, K., & Cavanagh, K. V. (2017). Emotional intelligence competencies in engineer's effectiveness and engagement. *Career Development International*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-08-2016-0136>
- Brunetto, Y., Teo, S. T., Shacklock, K., & Farr-Wharton, R. (2012). Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, well-being, and engagement: Explaining organisational commitment and turnover intentions in policing. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 22(4), 428–441. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2012.00198.x>
- Carasco-Saul, M., Kim, W., & Kim, T. (2015). Leadership and employee engagement: Proposing research agendas through a review of the literature. *Human Resource Development Review*, 14(1), 38–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484314560406>
- Chadha, N. K., & Ganesan, U. (1986). Publication manual for social intelligence scale. *National Psychological Corporation*, 4, 230.
- Coleman, H. J. (1996). Why employee empowerment is not just a fad. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 17(4), 29–36. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437739610120574>
- Crossman, A., & Abou-Zaki, B. (2003). Job satisfaction and employee performance of Lebanese banking staff. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940310473118>
- Daziel, J. (2013). Examining the effects of leader social intelligence on employee engagement.
- De Beer, L., Rothmann, S., Jr., & Pienaar, J. (2012). A confirmatory investigation of a job demands-resources model using a categorical estimator. *Psychological Reports*, 111(2), 528–544. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940310473118>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*. Plenum.
- Ebrahimipoor, H., Zahed A, Elyasi A (2013) “The study of relationship between Social Intelligence and Organizational Performance (Case Study: Ardabil Regional Water Company’s Managers). *International Journal of Organizational Leadership*, 2(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.33844/ijol.2013.60352>
- Evangeline, E. T., & Ragavan, V. G. (2016). Organisational culture and motivation as instigators for employee engagement. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 9(2), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.17485/ijst/2016/v9i2/86340>
- Fiabane, E., Giorgi, I., Sguazzin, C., & Argentero, P. (2013). Work engagement and occupational stress in nurses and other healthcare workers: The role of organizational and personal factors. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 22, 2614–2624. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.12084>
- Fong, T. C., & Ng, S. (2012). Measuring Engagement at Work: Validation of the Chinese version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 2012(19), 391–397. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12529-011-9173-6>
- Gardner, H. (1985). *The Mind’s New Science: A History of the Cognitive Revolution*. Basic Books.
- Gilbert, J. (1996). “Job for life” into “A life of jobs”: The new employment contract. *The TQM Magazine*, 8(2), 36–42. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09544789610114849>
- Goswami, M. (2019). Assessing the Factor Structure of Tromso Social Intelligence Scale in Indian Cultural Context. In *Proceedings of International Conference on Advancements in Computing & Management (ICACM)*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3446597>
- Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.2.268>

- Honeywill, R. (2015). *Social intelligence is also being able to make important social decisions which can change your life The Man Problem: Destructive masculinity in Western culture*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692–724. <https://doi.org/10.5465/256287>
- Kanungo, R. N. (1986). Productivity, Satisfaction, and Involvement: A Brief Note on Some Conceptual Issues. *International Journal of Manpower*, 7(5), 8–12. <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb045088>
- Katou, A. A., Budhwar, P. S., & Patel, C. (2021). A trilogy of organizational ambidexterity: Leader's social intelligence, employee work engagement, and environmental changes. *Journal of Business Research*, 128, 688–700. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.01.043>
- Koekemoer, L., Beer, L. T. D., Govender, K., & Brouwers, M. (2021). Leadership behaviour, team effectiveness, technological flexibility, work engagement and performance during COVID-19 lockdown: An exploratory study. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 47(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v47i0.1829>
- Kong, E., Chadee, D., & Raman, R. (2012). Social intelligence and top management team: An exploratory study of external knowledge acquisition for strategic change in global IT service providers in India. *International Journal of Learning and Change*, 6(1–2), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJLC.2012.045853>
- Kunie, K., Kawakami, N., Shimazu, A., Yonekura, Y., & Miyamoto, Y. (2017). The relationship between work engagement and psychological distress of hospital nurses and the perceived communication behaviors of their nurse managers: A cross-sectional survey. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 71, 115–124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2017.03.011>
- Kwon, I. G., & Banks, D. W. (2004). Factors related to the Organizational and Professional Commitment of Internal Auditors. *Management Auditing Journal*, 19, 606–622. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02686900410537748>
- Lesener, T., Gusy, B., & Wolter, C. (2019). The job demands-resources model: A meta-analytic review of longitudinal studies. *Work & Stress*, 33(1), 76–103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2018.1529065>
- Liu, H., Yansane, A. I., Zhang, Y., Fu, H., Hong, N., & Kalenderian, E. (2018). Burnout and study engagement among medical students at Sun Yat-sen University, China: A cross-sectional study. *Medicine*, 97, e0326. <https://doi.org/10.1097/MD.00000000000010326>
- Loui, K. (1995). Understanding employee commitment in the public organization: A study of the juvenile detention center. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 18(8), 1269–1295. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900699508525052>
- Lovakov, A. V.; Agadullina, E.R.; Schaufeli, W.B. (2017). Psychometric properties of the Russian version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9). *Psychology in Russia: State of the Art*, 10: 145–162. <https://doi.org/10.11621/psr.2017.0111>
- Marlowe, H. A. (1986). Social intelligence: Evidence for multidimensionality and construct independence. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 78(1), 52. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.78.1.52>
- Martos, Á., del Carmen Pérez-Fuentes, M., del Mar Molero, M., Gázquez, J. J., del Mar Simón, M., & Belen Barragan, A. (2018). Burnout and engagement in students of health sciences. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 8(1), 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.30552/ejihpe.v8i1.223>
- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 397–422. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397>
- Mohanty, R. P. (1999). Value innovation perspective in Indian organizations. *Participation and Empowerment: An International Journal*, 7(4), 88–103. <https://doi.org/10.1108/14634449910283561>
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W., & Steers, R. M. (1982). *Organizational linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. Academic Press.
- Mukkavilli, M., Kulkarni, S., Doshi, D., Reddy, S., Reddy, P., & Reddy, S. (2017). Assessment of work engagement among dentists in Hyderabad. *Work*, 58, 333–340. <https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-172630>
- Nawaz, M. S., Hassan, M., Hassan, S., Shaukat, S., & Asadullah, M. A. (2014). Impact of employee training and empowerment on employee creativity through employee engagement: Empirical evidence from the manufacturing sector of Pakistan. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 19(4), 593–601. <https://doi.org/10.5829/idosi.mejsr.2014.19.4.13618>
- Osborne, S., & Hammoud, M. S. (2017). Effective employee engagement in the workplace. *International Journal of Applied Management and Technology*, 16(1), 4. <https://doi.org/10.5590/IJAMT.2017.16.1.04>
- Pittenger, L. M. (2015). Emotional and social competencies and perceptions of the interpersonal environment of an organization as related to the engagement of IT professionals. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 623. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00623>
- Rahim, M. (2014). A structural equations model of leaders' social intelligence and creative performance. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 23(1), 44–56. <https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12045>
- Rasuli, F., Ebrahimpour, H., & Hassanzadeh, M. (2013). Social intelligence and business performance of managers at agriculture banks in Ardabil province. *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics, and Management Studies*, 2(2), 96–104. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940810850808>

- Riggio, R. E., & Reichard, R. J. (2008). The emotional and social intelligences of effective leadership: An emotional and social skill approach. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940810850808>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. *American Psychologist*, 55, 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Salanova, M., Agut, S., & Peiró, J. M. (2005). Linking organizational resources and work engagement to employee performance and customer loyalty: The mediation of service climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(6), 1217. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.90.6.1217>
- Salanova, M., Lorente, M. L., Chambel, M. J., & Martínez, I. M. (2011). Linking transformational leadership to nurses' extra-role performance: The mediating role of self-efficacy and work engagement. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 67, 2256–2266. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2011.05652.x>
- Sanwal, T. (2009). Comparative Study of Social Intelligence Children from Planned Housing and Slums in Kolkata. *Indian Journal of Social Work*, 70(4), 633–645.
- Sanwal, T., & Sareen, P. (2021). The Relevance of Social Intelligence for Effective Optimization of Retirement and Successful Ageing. *Ageing International*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12126-021-09469-z>
- Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006a). The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire: A cross-national study. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(4), 701–716. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405282471>
- Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006b). Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9 (UWES-9) [Database record]. *APA PsycTests*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t05561-000>
- Schaufeli, W. B., Salanova, M., González-Romá, V., & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3(1), 71–92. <https://doi.org/10.1023/1015630930326>
- Schaufeli, W. B. (2017). Applying the job demands-resources model. *Organizational Dynamics*, 2(46), 120–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2017.04.008>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). *Test Manual for the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale*. Utrecht University.
- Seligman, M., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive Psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist*, 55, 5–14. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.5>
- Seligman, M.E. Flourish. (2012). *A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Silvera, D., Martinussen, M., & Dahl, T. I. (2001). The Tromsø Social Intelligence Scale, a self-report measure of social intelligence. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 42(4), 313–319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9450.00242>
- Smythe, J. (2007). Employee engagement-its real essence...and how it helped to transform a top-four UK bank. *Human Resource Management International Digest*, 15(7), 11–13. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09670730710830405>
- Sterelny, K. (2007). Social intelligence, human intelligence, and niche construction. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society b: Biological Sciences*, 362(1480), 719–730. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2006.2006>
- Sternberg, R. J. (1985). *Beyond IQ: A Triarchic Theory of Human Intelligence*. Cambridge University Press.
- Time of India, * March, 2020. Available at, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/women-in-india-inc-19-in-2016-26-now/articleshow/74533423.cms>
- Vernon, P. E. (1933). Some characteristics of the good judge of personality. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 4, 42–57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.1933.9921556>
- Walker, A., & Campbell, K. (2013). Work readiness of graduate nurses and the impact on job satisfaction, work engagement, and intention to remain. *Nurse Education Today*, 33, 1490–1495. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2013.05.008>
- Wiener, Y., & Vardi, Y. (1980). Relationships between job, organization, and career commitments and work outcomes: An integrative approach. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 26, 81–96. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(80\)90048-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(80)90048-3)
- Zaccaro, S. J., Gilbert, J. A., Thor, K. K., & Mumford, M. D. (1991). Leadership and social intelligence: Linking social perceptiveness and behavioral flexibility to leader effectiveness. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 2(4), 317–342. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843\(91\)90018-W](https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(91)90018-W)