The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Work-Family Balance

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Organizations benefit when employees are adept at understanding both the emotions of self and others, and how that understanding helps to successfully manage their personal and professional commitments. Given the characteristics of emotional intelligence (EI) and those maintaining a satisfactory work family balance (WFB), a positive relationship between EI and WFB was hypothesized. This quantitative study examined survey results from 189 adults working at least 20 hours per week to reveal a positive relationship between EI and WFB, and specifically EI and job performance.

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Understanding how human beings apply social skills and emotions in various work and family situations to attain desired outcomes is of significant value to both individuals and organizations. The ability to effectively manage emotional and social skills, leading to a positive and congruent relationship between work and life spheres, may result in enhanced work performance and increased opportunities for career advancement and promotion.

Emotional intelligence (EI) describes the ability for supervising the emotions of self and others, differentiating among those emotions, and using the information to effectively control them. Broadened insight into the emotional functions of self ad others are aspects of EI that facilitate leaders to adapt effectively to change and manage the different emotional aspects of their lives. Research in the area of work-family balance (WFB) centers around optimizing satisfaction with one’s personal life while remaining productive professionally, given limited, often competing, available resources. This study focuses on the ways in which EI can help enhance one’s ability to balance the demands of work and family life.

**Emotional Intelligence**

The ability for human beings to positively interact with each other, and to understand the importance of social skills and emotions, was first recognized by Charles Darwin, and later studied by Edward Thorndike in the 1920’s. Thorndike noted that there are three primary types of intelligence: mechanical intelligence, social intelligence, and abstract intelligence. Mechanical intelligence is how well one understands machines and mechanisms; abstract intelligence is a form of intelligence well suited for the study of physical science and chemistry. Abstract intelligence would most closely relate to what an intelligence quotient (IQ) test measures. Thorndike (1920) suggests that no useful test for social intelligence exists, other than to perhaps read one’s facial expression as well as their appropriateness of selections when asked various questions regarding social situations, people, and emotions. Furthermore, one definition of social intelligence is “the ability to understand men and women, boys and girls-to act wisely in human relations” (Thorndike 1920, 228). Decades later, Darwin’s suggestion, in addition to Thorndike’s research inspired and paved the way for future studies in human relations.”

Reuven Bar-On received credit for originating the term *emotional intelligence* (EI) in his 1988 doctoral dissertation (Manhas 2013). Later, Goleman and Boyatzis (2008) showed interest in this field, determining that EI was closely related to job satisfaction and job success. Salovey and Mayer (1990) advanced the concept of EI as the ability for supervising the emotions of self and others', differentiating among those emotions, and using the information to effectively control them. Interpersonal intelligence involves “the ability to monitor others’ moods and temperaments and to enlist such knowledge into the service of predicting their future behavior” (Salovey and Mayer 1990, 189). Koubova and Buchko (2013) offer that inborn intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence, along with early emotional and social experiences play a critical role in EI development. Manhas (2013) describes EI as the capability for understanding, controlling, and expressing emotions, as well as the ability to effectively react to the emotion of people with whom we interact. Sharma (2014) notes that EI “is the innate potential to feel, use and communicate emotions of self and others recognized, remember and understand successfully to navigate in the right direction” (553). EI helps us identify our emotional state, the state of others, and assists with the regulation of our feelings and emotions to best inform our interactions with others (Kubova and Buchko 2013).

EI can be conceptualized into a mental process model that is first divided into three primary branches: appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion, and utilization of emotion (Salovey and Mayer 1990). The appraisal and expression of emotion are further broken into “self” or “other”; self is further divided into either verbal or nonverbal, and other is divided into nonverbal perception or empathy. Regulation of emotion is broken down into in self or in other. Finally, the utilization of emotion branches off into flexible planning, creative thinking, redirected attention, or motivation (Salovey and Mayer 1990). As previously noted, appraisal and expression of emotion are categorized into emotion in the self and emotion in others. Those able to quickly and accurately appraise and express the emotions of themselves and others are considered to be socially intelligent. Emotion in the self is either verbal or nonverbal. Verbal expression of emotion can be displayed through the use of language, and a lack thereof is alexithymia (Salovey and Mayer 1990). Nonverbal perception of another is the recognition of emotion through body language and facial expressions. Interestingly, with the exception of anger, women are better at recognizing emotion in facial expression than men (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Empathy allows one to have a thorough understanding of how someone else is feeling. As Salovey and Mayer (1990) note, those who surround themselves with empathetic people, coworkers, friends, and family, have a far more supportive social structure than those lacking empathy. The regulation of emotion in one’s self is partially an automatic response; though, there are also emotions which one needs to be cognizant of and control. The regulation of emotion in others is imperative, as this can help control certain situations. If one can regulate and monitor their emotions, this can change or alter how they are perceived, and this can help regulate the emotions of others. Finally, the utilization of EI is broken down into four subgroups; flexible planning, mood redirected attention, creative thinking, and motivating emotions (Salovey and Mayer 1990). Flexible planning refers to an individual’s mood swings and their ability to shift when needed to navigate a particular setting or situation. Salovey and Mayer (1990) suggest that the utilization of emotion for creative thinking enhances problem-solving, and has an impact on the use of memory and the categorization of problems. Mood redirected attention refers to the ability of one to shift or reprioritize their focus. The ability to motivate not only one’s self but others is a major component of the utilization of emotions. The capacity to identify the individuals’ emotions and the emotions of others, in addition to being able to impact, change, or influence them, poses a high EI.

Feldman (1999) describes the components of EI as including both core skills and higher order skills. Knowing oneself, perceiving others accurately, maintaining control, and communicating with flexibility, equate to the set of core skills. Van Doorn, Van Kleef, and Van der Pligt (2015) find indications that people leverage the emotional expressions of others as a way of ascribing meaning in ambiguous social situations. Higher order skills include taking responsibility, embracing a vision, generating choices, having courage, and demonstrating resolve. When combined, core and higher order skills may lead to highly effective leadership, potentially due to the leader’s awareness of self and others' needs in addition to the ability to respond adeptly in a wide variety of situations (Hayashi and Ewert 2006).

Not only do individuals with higher EI have more satisfying relationships, but they also have more successful careers and tend to be more effective in leadership positions (Turner 2004). People once thought that the ability to perform well in the workplace was based solely on IQ. However, research suggests that soft skills possessed by an emotionally intelligent person have a positive benefit on workplace success, happiness, as well as work-life balance. Manhas (2013) notes that EI may be two times as important as IQ for an organization’s success according to some research. Furthermore, Martinez (1997) and Turner (2004) suggest that IQ is thought to contribute to only 20 percent of one’s success, and EQ encompasses the remaining 80 percent. Teams with higher EI, or increased emotional literacy, tend to outperform teams with high IQ’s (Welch 2003). EI competencies are trainable, meaning some of these skills are learned and can be taught (Turner 2004). EI is understood to increase organizational satisfaction, commitment, and its effectiveness (Kumar 2014). Service oriented climates are another benefit of a workforce with high EI (Bardzil and Slaski 2003).

Interactions between leaders and others are integral to effective leadership. Social and emotional awareness are vital for ensuring the quality and success of these interactions (Wong and Law 2002). Estimates suggest that over half of employees attribute organizational climate to the leader, indicating a direct connection from leader to workplace culture, but corporate culture may also impact the EI levels of employees (Morehouse 2007). Furthermore, diverse career fields may have diverse effects on EI from a variety of aspects such as nurturing, mission, value, climate, and work performance need; individuals with high (or low) may be attracted to certain kinds of professions or environments. Morehouse (2007) finds non-profit health and human service leaders more emotionally intelligent than their business for profit counterparts, possibly due to a relationship between EI and career attraction and alignment of profession with EI strength areas. Individuals with high EI levels may be effective leaders due to their optimistic, enthusiastic, flexible, and trustworthy orientations (George 2000). EI is a necessary component of effective leadership (Turner, 2004). Another reason those with a high EI make good leaders is “When we consciously or unconsciously detect someone else’s emotions through their actions, our mirror neurons reproduce those emotions. Collectively, these neurons create an instant sense of shared experience” (Goleman and Boyatzis 2008, 76).

Employees possessing personality characteristics associated with EI have more positive attitudes towards change (Vakola, Tasaousis, and Niklaou 2004). Mandell and Pherwani (2003) offer that EI equates to a higher level of adaptive emotional performance predictive of a greater degree of transformational leadership. EI may lead to enhanced transformational self-efficacy and more significant transformational behavior; EI may provide the vital foundational structure necessary for transformational leadership (Fitzgerald and Schutte 2010). Increased insights into their emotional functions as well as those of others are elements of EI that enable leaders to embrace change better and more willingly integrate self-efficacy data into their value system.

Cheok and O'Higgins (2012) examined the Chinese work environment with regard to in EI and leadership styles, identifying information to enhance understanding of the interconnected influences of leadership styles, employee's outcomes, and EI of managers. In light of previous research indicating the positive effect of high EI on transformational leadership, and evidence that EI may be learned, and improved throughout life, transformational leadership training benefits from the incorporation of emotional intelligence in its curriculum and processes to benefit the organization as a whole (Cheok and O’Higgins 2012).

Yang and Zhu (2016) found the emotional intelligence of employees to positively moderate the impact of charismatic leadership behavior on job satisfaction, but to negatively moderate the impact of charismatic leadership behavior on organizational citizenship behavior. Higher employee emotional intelligence results in greater employee job satisfaction; while, lower employee emotional intelligence leads to stronger organizational citizenship behavior (Yang and Zhu 2016).

Schutte et al. (2001) studied the relationship between high EI and interpersonal relations, determining that individuals with high EI display higher self-control and social skills, more helpful responses, greater social dexterity, closer relationships, and enhanced marital satisfaction. Ciarrochi and Chanya (2001) found that individuals with high levels of EI achieved higher scores regarding social engagement, self-assessment, and self-control. Higher EI tends to result in closer and more affectionate spousal relationships and greater marital satisfaction. Eslami, Hasanzadeh, and Jamshidi (2014) investigated the linkage between EI health and marital satisfaction, finding a direct positive relationship in line with previous research. Akintayo (2010) offers that EI strongly affects the ability of workers to efficiently and effectively balance their work and family lives, which supports the findings of Bar-on and Parker (2000), Adewoyin (2008), George (2009), and Akinjide (2009) who observed that work-family role conflict tends to be moderated based on the level of individual worker's EI.

Individuals with high EI tend to be less likely to engage in self-destructive or harmful behaviors such as excessive drinking, drug abuse, or violent actions regarding others (Manhas 2013). They are also, conversely, more apt to take part in sentimental activities and positive social interactions, while effortlessly conveying motivational goals. Job satisfaction has been positively correlated to organizational commitment, while negatively associate with job stress (Cheok and O’Higgins,2012). EI has been identified as a significant predictor of vital organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction and quality of work life (Manhas 2013), indicating the crucial role of EI in organizational success.

Organizational success is also dependent upon employee motivation, which affects employee performance. Managers cannot use one method to motivate every employee, as each person is unique. One aspect that managers must consider is the differing needs of the employee based on age. Many workplaces have employees from four different generations, each having different values, needs, and attitudes. Managers with high emotional intelligence can recognize social cues, are more empathetic, and can identify employees’ needs (Njoroge and Yazdanifard 2014). Njoroge and Yazdanifard (2014) explain that emotional intelligence aids managers in assisting multigenerational teams to value and understand each other. The diverse workplace results in more creativity, enhanced teamwork, and ultimately a successful company.

Emotional intelligence has a positive correlation with workplace and life satisfaction (Hafiz and Chouhan 2015). While studying the impact of EI on life satisfaction among university employees, Hafiz and Chouhan (2015) found out that individuals with low EI are less satisfied with their lives than those with high EI. The inability of people with low EI to empathize with others leads to insensitive behaviors that also diminish the well-being of others. EI cores such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and social adaptation are essential in ensuring the satisfaction of employees and the welfare of their subordinates and colleagues.

**Work-Family Balance**

Work-family balance (WFB), also referred to as work-life balance (WLB), has increasingly become one of the most researched areas of management (Koubva and Buchko 2013). Work-family balance refers to the congenial connection between the workplace and personal spheres (Koubva and Buchko 2013). Each author has a slightly different definition of the concept. Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) defined work–family balance as an “accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his/her role-related partners in the work and family domains” (458). Pesonen (2015) defines WFB as the proper distribution of time, energy, and commitment among different life domains. According to Rani (2013), WFB is achieved when an individual attains equality or near-equality in their family roles and work roles. Haar et al. (2014) extend their definition of WFB by including increased synergy and reduced confrontation between the family roles and work roles. While the definitions might vary, the common denominator in the definition of WFB is the positive and harmonious existence between work and life domains (Lambert et al. 2006; Rani 2013; Valcour 2007; Voydanoff 2005).

In the scholarly domain, the interest in work-family balance centers on the best ways to ensure satisfaction with one’s personal life while remaining productive in the workplace, given the limited, and often competing, resources at their disposal (Koubva and Buchko 2013; Valcour 2007). The social cognitive theory (Bandura 1977) provides a foundational framework to understand how the self-efficacy beliefs are instrumental to the perceived ability to apply skills, affect the behaviors or actions necessary for an individual to manage WLB.

Carlson, Grzywacz, and Zivnuska (2009) conducted a study to determine whether WFB is distinct from work–family conﬂict (WFC) and work–family enrichment (WFE). WFC and WFE reﬂect the positive or negative impact on different roles while WFB reﬂects how someone can participate and enjoy multiple roles in the work and family areas. The study found that WFB resulted in additional responses of multiple family and work outcomes, in addition to what is explained by WFC and WFE. WFB contributed to the work outcomes of organizational commitment and job satisfaction, and the family outcomes of family satisfaction, family performance, and family functioning. The study outcome suggests that employer’s effort to assist employees in meeting their role-related responsibilities could result in strengthened families. Carlson, Grzywacz, and Zivnuska (2009) surveyed full-time individuals they recruited from the Study Response Service. The conclusion was that WFB is conceptually different from other work–family variables and WFB is not determined by work affecting family life or vice versa but instead by an individual’s ability to meet responsibilities both at work and with family.

The purpose of the Kamel and Ali (2016) study was to determine the relationship between WFB and organizational commitment, job involvement, intention to leave, and life satisfaction among employees working in the three telecommunication companies in Egypt. The authors analyzed the definitions of WFB from multiple sources and concluded that the concept encompasses three primary components: “Time balance (equal amount of time dedicated to work and family roles); involvement balance (equal level of psychological involvement in work and family roles); satisfaction balance (equal level of satisfaction with work and family roles)” (Kamel and Ali 2016, 33). The study found a positive and significant relationship between WFB and organizational commitment, job involvement, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and life satisfaction, and a negative relationship between WFB and the intention to leave. The study also found a relationship between WFB and gender, marital status, and the presence of young children. Females and married employees with young children tend to view the family role as a critical aspect of their social identity and therefore are more probable to have a negative attitude toward their work if it threatens the family role. There is a positive relationship between WFB and OCB (Carlson, Kacmar, Grzywacz, Tepper, and Whitten 2013). Increasing OCB within a corporation may enhance productivity and organizational commitment; it is clearly in an organization’s best interest to promote WFB.

Anila and Krishnaveni (2016) surveyed female employees working in the public sectors in Kerala to study the relationship between family environment, work environment, and WLB. The authors chose only to survey women since they tend to have more responsibilities at home. The study found a significant relationship between family environment, work environment, and WLB. The results also show that age, dependents, educational qualification, experience, managerial level, and income do significantly influence the family environment, work environment, and WLB.

Milkie et al. (2010) studied if time with children and perceived child well-being affect the perception of WFB. Examples of quality time with children include playing and reading together, eating family meals, and working on homework or projects. Since mothers are most often responsible for children’s well-being and spend more time with the children, WFB tends to matter more to mothers. The researchers used data from the 2000-2001 National Survey of Parents (NSP) for the study. The results showed that time spent on interactive activities like playing, teaching, and helping children correlated with a greater perception of WFB; however, time spent on routine care did not. The results apply for mothers; the fathers did not have a correlation of interactive time and WFB. The study also found that parent’s satisfaction with children's well-being is a predictor of WFB for both mothers and fathers.

According to Keene and Quadagno (2004), WFB can be predicted by the ability of individuals to manage three factors; “job characteristics, family characteristics, and spillover between work and family” (2). The job characteristics include the number of work hours, scheduling flexibility, work demands, the level of autonomy, and human resource policies. The family characteristics that were used by the researchers to predict WFB include household division of labor, the number of children, and spouse’s employment. Spillover, as a WFB predictor, refers to the “reciprocal tension between the roles” associated with the workplace and home/family (Keene and Quadagno 2004, 3).

Keene and Quadagno (2004) found out that greater demands in the workplace and family negatively impacts the perceived WFB. Work spillover to the family and more requirements in the workplace are the strongest predictors of work-family imbalance. The researchers, however, failed to find a family characteristic that significantly impacts on WFB. Anila and Krishnaveni (2016) also found that family environment and working environment are significant predictors of WLB. Milkie et al. (2010) found that parent’s satisfaction with time spent with children and the children's well-being are predictors of WFB.

According to Koubova and Buchko (2013), family and personal life are the most critical components of an individual’s WFB. Through working on their personal and family issues and achieving emotional stability in this aspect, one can perform better on their workplace demands and responsibilities thus achieving high WFB. Koubova and Buchko (2013) argue that this causal effect is due to the strong emotional attachment to family and personal issues over the workplace. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) studied the term work-family enrichment, where positive experiences in one realm directly impact the other. For example, a skill or trait that improves performance at work will also directly impact the individual with their family life.

Valcour (2007) found work hours to be a significant predictor of WFB. In the study, Valcour discovered that employees with little control over their work hours had a declining WFB and job satisfaction as the work hours increased. Employees with more control over their work hours did not show any significant variation in the WFB as the work hours increased. Lambert et al. (2006) identified low permeability between work and life as one of the significant predictors of poor WFB. Individuals operating in inflexible and deeply segmented work and family situations are likely to experience low WFB (Pesonen 2015; Rani 2013).

According to Marks and MacDermid (1996), the proponents of the role balance theory are individuals who “maintain more balance across their entire systems of roles and activities” and tend to perform well on self-esteem and well-being indicators (p.417). Koubova and Buchko (2013) and Wadsworth and Facer (2016), who argue that pre-productive family and personal life helps individuals achieve WLB, support this view.

Koubova and Buchko (2013) found out that high levels of WFB have a positive effect on the performance of employees. The authors identified a high level of WFB to related to the ability of individuals to maintain healthy relationships thus improving their concentration and performance in the workplace and at home. Lambert et al. (2006) also identified high WFB as favorable to organizations since employees with such balance have greater satisfaction and organizational commitment than those with low WFB.

Carlson, Grzywacz, and Zivnuska (2009) found organizational commitment, job satisfaction, family satisfaction, family performance, and family functioning to be outcomes of WFB. Kamel and Ali (2016) add that WFB leads to psychological well-being, increased morale at work, and company loyalty. These findings are aligned with those identified in the studies by Lambert et al. (2006) on the impact of WFB on the workplace and Koubova and Buchko (2013) and Wadsworth and Facer (2016) on well-being.

**Emotional intelligence and Work-Family balance**

Characteristics of emotionally intelligent individuals contribute to harmony within the work-family dynamic. EI promotes positive interpersonal relationships through the ability to regulate emotions in one’s self and others, through appraisal or awareness of the emotions in one’s self and others, and through the proper utilization of emotion (Salovey and Mayer 1990). Work-family balance is the reduction of confrontation between one’s personal and professional life, and increased satisfaction within the family and improvements within its functioning (Haar, et. al. 2014; Carlson, Grzywacz, and Zivnuska 2009).

There is a positive relationship between social intelligence and the perception of one's social relationships (Lopes, Salovey, and Straus 2003). Emotionally intelligent individuals exhibit positive personality, which aligns with elements that lay the groundwork for increased work-family balance. Research reveals a direct link between EI and WFB, showing, for example, that individuals with high EI tend to be emotionally in tune with their emotions and able to regulate them in a manner that facilitates well-being and a balanced approach to their various work and family roles (Waite and Gallagher 2000; Carmeli 2003; Vasumathi, Sagaya, and Subashini 2015).

**H1: There is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and work-family balance.**

**Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance**

Managers are responsible for ensuring that the productivity of their employees is maximized through improving various aspects of job performance. The enhancement of teamwork, creativity, and interpersonal skills brought on by increased EI contribute to a positive working environment (Cheok and O’Higgins 2012; Patra 2004). Employees with greater EI are more likely to have increased job satisfaction, in addition to increased organizational commitment (Kumar 2014). Therefore, a highly emotionally intelligent employee will have increased performance over those lacking EI (Wong and Law 2002). Other than understanding the impact of EI on the performance of employees, researchers have sought to understand the impact of EI on job performance of managers and executives.

Babu (2013) also found out that executives with high EI had better complete job performance than those with low EI. The study also identified emotional sensitivity and emotional maturity skills as the positive EI dimensions with respect to job performance. According to Shooshtarian, Ameli, and Aminilari (2013), managers with high emotional and social intelligence can understand others, understand themselves, and cope with decision-making pressures thus improving their overall performance.

**H2: There is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance.**

**Methodology**

**Data Collection**

Undergraduate students attending business administration courses at a large southeastern university recruited the participants (N = 189) for this study. The students received nominal course credit for their involvement in the data-collection process. The students were provided with a briefing detailing data-collection methods and ethical concerns regarding research. An e-mail invitation was forwarded to each student that they could then further distribute to adults with whom they were personally acquainted who worked a minimum of 20 hours per week. The adults who received the recruitment e-mails were encouraged to click on an Internet link that took them to an online survey. Given the manner in which the working adults were recruited, there was no way to calculate a response rate for the survey. All measures were presented in an online survey that was part of a larger study. This data-collection procedure is similar to those used in recent work-family and human resource management research (e.g., Casper, Wayne, and Manegold 2013; Clayton, Thomas, Singh, & Winkel, 2015).

**Measures**

**Independent Variable.** The independent variable (IV) is EI. Different researchers and scholars have come up with various scales for measuring emotional intelligence. EI is measured in this study using an adjusted Wong and Law (2002) scale. The scale is based on the four EI dimensions developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) and Salovey and Mayer (1990). EI is measured using a seven-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from “*strongly disagree*” to “*strongly agree*” for 12 of 16 items from the Wong and Law (2002) self-report EI scale. Respondents were asked to self-report the degree to which they agreed with each of the survey items. The Wong and Law self-report EI scale measures four levels of four EI dimensions: self-emotion appraisal (SEA 1 - 4), others’ emotion appraisal (OEA 1 – 4), regulation of emotion (ROE 1 – 4), and uses of emotion (UOE 1 – 4) for a total of 16 items. For this study, only SEA 1 – 4, OEA 1 – 4, and ROE 1 – 4 were used for the EI measure consisting of 12 items. The UOE level was not used due to limited relevancy for this specific study. The Chronbach’s alpha for this scale was .84.

**Dependent Variables**. The dependent variables (DV) are WFB and job performance. For this study, WFB is measured using the *satisfaction with work-family balance scale* (Valcour 2007). The Valcour (2007) scale used a seven-point Likert response format ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* with five items. An example item is: *the way you divide your time between work and personal or family life*. The reliability estimate (coefficient alpha) for the five-item scale was .91. The first two items address time and attention (or energy), the two most critical personal resources for meeting work and family demands (Valcour 2007). The last three items address respondent self-evaluation of the degree to which they view themselves as successful at integrating the demands of work and personal/family roles (Valcour 2007).

Job performance is measured using a rating scale consisting of 1) poor, 2) fail, 3) good, 4) very good, and 5) excellent, for three items from Schat and Frone (2011). One example of the job performance survey items is: *considering all of your job duties and responsibilities, how would your supervisor or boss rate your overall PERFORMANCE at work during the past three months?* The Chronbach’s alpha for this scale was .91.

**Control Variable.** Sex was included as a control variable in the regression equations due to its potential relationship with the dependent variables. Sex was coded as a dummy variable (male = 0 and female = 1). The study controlled for sex because previous research (e.g., Allen, 2001) has shown it to potentially influence WFB.

**Data Analysis**

**Descriptive Statistics.** There was a total of 189 participants, though not all provided demographic information. While 21.7 percent of respondents chose not to disclose their gender, 32.8 percent males and 45.5 percent females accounted for the remainder (N = 143).  The mean age of the 143 participants that disclosed that information was 39.4 years with a standard deviation of 13.27 years. Of the 189 participants, while 21 percent did not provide their occupation, those that did included 21 percent in management positions, 34 percent in professional positions, 11 percent in technical positions, and 13 percent in administrative positions.

Educational levels for the participants varied from high school/GED to doctoral degrees. A high school diploma or GED was held by 24 percent of the participants, 32 percent had bachelor’s degrees, 20 percent had a master’s or professional degree, three percent of the subjects held a doctoral degree, and 21 percent chose not respond to that question.

Of the 189 individuals surveyed, 76 percent (N = 143) provided the average number of hours per week that they work, while 24 percent elected not to respond. Of the 76 percent that provided data on their average weekly work hours, four percent worked less than 20 hours per week (a minimum of 20 hours per week was required for the study), resulting in a total for the study of 72 percent (N = 140). Respondents working between 20 and 29 hours per week equated to eight percent, those working between 30 and 39 hours per week equated to 15 percent, those working 40 to 49 hours per week equated to 55 percent, those working 50 to 59 hours per week equated to 13 percent, and those working 60 or more hours per week equated to six percent.

**Correlations.**

Both Pearson and Spearman correlations were calculated to examine the composite IV and DVs, and demographic variables. Pearson correlations were found (*r* (148) = .167, *p* < .05), indicating that EI and WLB Satisfaction have a significant relationship, and (*r* (147) = .295, *p* < .001), indicating that EI and Job Performance also have a significant relationship (see Table 1). Spearman rho correlation coefficients were calculated for EI and SatWLB (*r* (148) = .227, *p* = .005), and EI and Job Performances (*r* (147) = .252, *p* < .005), indicating signficant relatioships for both EI and WLB Satisfaction, and EI and Job Performance.

Table 1.

*Pearson Correlation Table.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | EI | SatWLB | Age | Sex | Race | Education Level | Occupation | JobPerf |
| EI | Pearson Correlation | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sig. (2-tailed) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| N | 154 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SatWLB | Pearson Correlation | .167\* | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .041 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| N | 150 | 150 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Age | Pearson Correlation | -.044 | .094 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .599 | .263 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| N | 143 | 143 | 143 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex | Pearson Correlation | .188\* | -.036 | -.146 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .022 | .663 | .082 |  |  |  |  |  |
| N | 148 | 148 | 142 | 148 |  |  |  |  |
| Race | Pearson Correlation | .028 | -.262\*\* | -.229\*\* | .019 | 1 |  |  |  |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .733 | .001 | .006 | .822 |  |  |  |  |
| N | 149 | 149 | 143 | 148 | 149 |  |  |  |
| Education Level | Pearson Correlation | .190\* | .052 | .030 | -.042 | .031 | 1 |  |  |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .020 | .529 | .725 | .609 | .703 |  |  |  |
| N | 149 | 149 | 143 | 148 | 149 | 149 |  |  |
| Occupation | Pearson Correlation | -.072 | -.002 | -.194\* | .049 | .157 | -.195\* | 1 |  |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .386 | .984 | .020 | .558 | .056 | .018 |  |  |
| N | 148 | 148 | 142 | 148 | 148 | 148 | 148 |  |
| JobPerf | Pearson Correlation | .295\*\* | .268\*\* | .175\* | .020 | -.044 | .148 | .035 | 1 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .001 | .036 | .809 | .594 | .072 | .671 |  |
| N | 149 | 149 | 143 | 148 | 149 | 149 | 148 | 149 |
| \*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). | | | | | | | | | |
| \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). | | | | | | | | | |

**Regression.** A simple linear regression analysis was used to predict satisfaction with work-family balance based on emotional intelligence, controlling for sex. The regression analysis predicted a significant relationship between the satisfaction with work-family balance and EI (*p*=0.041). A significant regression equation was found (*F* (1,148) = 4.247, p < .05), with an R2 of .021. The output predicted satisfaction with work-family balance is equal to 3.602 + 0.324 (EI). Satisfaction with work-family balance is, therefore, predicted to increase as emotional intelligence increases (see Table 2).

Table 2.

*Simple Linear Regression for EI and WFB.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| B | Std. Error | Beta |
| 3.602 | .911 |  | 3.956 | .000 |
| .324 | .157 | .167 | 2.061 | .041 |
| a. Dependent Variable: WFB | | | | | |

As a *post hoc* analysis, we used a multiple linear regression analysis to predict the satisfaction with work-family balance based on the three facets of EI (SEA, OEA, and ROE). The regression analysis predicted a significant relationship between the satisfaction with work-family balance and OEA (*p*=0.029) while the equation with SEA (*p*=0.924) and ROE (*p*=0.301) was not significant. The stepwise multiple regression found a significant regression equation for OEA with an R2 of .032. The output predicted satisfaction with work-family balance is equal to 4.003 + 0.261 (OEA) (see Table 3). The satisfaction with work-family balance is, therefore, predicted to increase as the OEA increases while there was no significant relationship with SEA and ROE, or the control variable sex.

Table 3.

*Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for SatWFB and EI (SEA, OEA, and ROE).*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | 1 | (Constant) | 4.003 | .669 |  | 5.982 | .000 | | OEA | .261 | .118 | .179 | 2.211 | .029 | | a. Dependent Variable: WFB | | | | | | | |

A simple linear regression analysis was used to predict job performance based on the emotional intelligence variable (see Table 4). The regression analysis predicted a significant relationship between job performance and emotional intelligence (*p*< .001). A significant regression equation was found (*F* (1,147) = 13.969, p < .001), with an R2 of .087. The output predicted job performance is equal to 2.218 + 0.350 (Emotional Intelligence). Job performance is, therefore, predicted to increase as the emotional intelligence increases. With regard to the control variable, a significant relationship between job performance and sex was not found (p>.05), indicating that sex does not affect job performance.

Table 4.

*Simple Linear Regression for EI and JobPerf.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| B | Std. Error | Beta |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.218 | .542 |  | 4.089 | .000 |
| EI | .350 | .094 | .295 | 3.738 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Performance | | | | | | |

As a *post hoc* analysis, we used a multiple linear regression analysis to predict job performance based on the three facets of EI (SEA, OEA, and ROE). The regression analysis predicted a significant relationship between job performance and SEA (*p*=0.000) while the equation with OEA (*p*=0.855) and ROE (*p*=0.694) was not significant. The stepwise multiple regression found no significant regression for the control variable sex, but a significant regression equation for SEA with an R2 of .099. A Simple linear regression analysis to predict job performance based on the SEA variable revealed that SEA explains 10 percent of the variation in job performance (R2 = .099). When the additional variable of OEA and ROE are added, the R2 increases to 11 percent (R2 = .105). The output predicted job performance is equal to 2.230 + 0.337 (SEA). Satisfaction with work-family balance is, therefore, predicted to increase as the SEA increases while there was no significant relationship with OEA and ROE (see Table 5).

Table 5.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for JobPerf and EI (SEA, OEA, and ROE).*   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | 1 | (Constant) | 2.230 | .501 |  | 4.455 | .000 | | SEA | .337 | .084 | .315 | 4.028 | .000 | | a. Dependent Variable: JobPerf | | | | | | | |

**Discussion and Conclusion**

**Study Findings and Implications**

This study sought to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI), satisfaction with work-family balance, and job performance. The first hypothesis was that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and work-family balance. The results suggest that as one’s EI increases, so does their satisfaction with work-family balance. The study findings add support to Hafiz and Chouhan (2015) who found that people with low EI are less satisfied with their lives than those with high EI. Though there was no significant relationship noted between SEA and ROE, satisfaction with WFB is predicted to increase as OEA increases. The ability to appraise the emotions of others (i.e. OEA) appears to be vital to one’s own WLB. As people are better able to leverage the emotional expressions of others as a means of understanding both work and family situations, they are predicted to enhance their WLB. The second hypothesis was that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. As EI increases, job performance is predicted to follow suit and also increase. The ability to appraise one’s own emotions (i.e. SEA) appears to be related to job performance. As people are better able to understand their own emotions within both work and family situations, they are predicted to enhance their job performance. Prior research shows that managers with high EI encourage and stimulate employees leading to motivated employees, which results in improved productivity (VanderPal 2014).

Companies may want to consider establishing EI programs to assist employees’ development of EI competencies to manage pressures of work and family life. Businesses should also develop strategies to assist employees’ need to balance work and family activities, which would ultimately benefit the organization in addition to its employees. When a worker has to choose between demands at work and home, the work suffers due to the emotional connection the employee has with family. Koubova and Buchko (2013) stated that family and personal life is the most critical element of a person’s WFB. Scrivastava and Askari (2015) further supports the concept finding that productivity increases and absenteeism decrease when employees have a balance between work and family spheres.

**Limitations and Future Research**

This cross-sectional data was collected by having undergraduate students who were attending business administration courses at a large southeastern university forward an email to adults they personally knew working at least 20 hours per week, resulting in a sample size of 189. Respondents were asked to self-report the degree to which they agreed with each of the survey items. In keeping with Goleman and Boyatzis (2008), the relationship between EI and job satisfaction and performance is understood, and this study furthered the research by identifying the predictive relationship of OEA and WFB. Further research should be conducted to explore this relationship in more detail.

In order to mitigate self-reporting bias, future research could include data gathered regarding employee EI and WFB from supervisors, subordinates, and spouses which would allow a comparison between one’s self-reported information in addition to those of co-workers and significant others. Though it appears that more men were a part of this study than women, it should be noted that nearly 22 percent of the study participants chose not to indicate their sex. Similar response rates were seen when questioning subjects on education level and occupation.

Future research should include a broader sample of working adults to include greater demographic, and occupational diversity. Research is needed to explore further the antecedents of effective WFB (in both areas of life) and how employees might more effectively manage WFB as EI increases. As organizations seek to leverage a more diversified, geographically dispersed workforce, satisfaction with work–family balance and the ability to effectively manage WFB demands may prove increasingly vital to organizational success. While the study uses a scale that ensures reliability and validity, future research should consider other acceptable EI measures and compare outcomes.

**Conclusion**

Research regarding how human beings may positively interact with each other, and how they apply social skills and emotions in various situations to achieve desired outcomes is of great value to individuals and organizations. Understanding the way in which EI promotes positive interpersonal relationships through the ability to regulate emotions in one’s self and others, through effective use of emotion, and through awareness of the emotions of one’s self and others, helps reduce conflict between work and family and is vital for enhancing organizational success. Numerous research articles focus on the conflict between time spent at work and time with family. This study does not make the conflict the focal point but instead, focuses on how EI can help improve one’s ability to balance the demands of work and home life.

The study also analyzed the effect that WFB has on job performance. Previous research has indicated a relationship between EI and WFB, and while the results of our study did not find a high correlation between EI, WFB and job performance, the study did find that satisfaction with WFB is predicted to increase as OEA increases.

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**Appendix**

*Cronbach’s Alpha for Independent and Dependent Variable scales.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variable Scale | Chronbach’s Alpha | Number of items |
| Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEA OEA ROE) | .837 | 12 |
| Work-Family Balance | .909 | 5 |
| Job Performance | .907 | 3 |

*Note.* The 12-item self-report EI scale consisting of SEA, OEA, and ROE is based on three of the four EI dimensions developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997). The five-item Work-Family Balance scale is from Valcour (2007), and the three-item Job Performance scale is from Schat and Frone (2011).