

Emotional intelligence and employee engagement: Basis for a proposed faculty engagement enhancement

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement among the faculty members in performing their tasks and became the basis in proposing an innovative enhancement program for employee engagement. Emotional intelligence is the awareness on how a person balance his emotion and maximize his happiness by knowing what makes he feels good and bad. While employee engagement is characterized by a person's energy, involvement and efficacy. Descriptive design was utilized to cast light on the present situation on emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The respondents were the 305 full time and part-time faculty in one university. Questionnaire was the data gathering instrument utilized in the study and Frequency, percentage, weighted mean, ranking and Spearman rho were the statistical tools used. Results showed that the faculty members revealed strong agreement on their emotional intelligence. Among the indicators, self-emotion appraisal and use of emotion respectively indicated a strongly agreement while they agreed in terms of other emotion's appraisal and regulation of emotion. The respondents showed agreement on their employee engagement. Among the indicators of employee engagement, it is the dedication which the respondents strongly demonstrated while vigor and absorption were equally displayed by the respondents. There is a strong direct correlation between emotional intelligence and employee engagement which means that employee engagement was affected by the emotional intelligence. It implies that the better the emotional intelligence of the respondents, the more that they are engaged to work. A faculty enhancement program on employee engagement was proposed.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, employee engagement

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1. Introduction

In today's diverse and competitive market world, employees are committed to their work in order to succeed. Employee motivation and dedication dictate an organization's success, which is accomplished by a combination of emotional intelligence and high employee engagement. Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to recognize, use, respect, and control emotions in a constructive way to reduce stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, solve issues, and handle conflict. Employee engagement is influenced by one's capacity to manage one's own emotions as well as positively modify the emotions of others. Emotionally intelligent employees feel that they are a part of their company and are more driven to work there. Their positive energy contributes to the company's growth and productivity (Shukla, 2021).

Emotional intelligence is an important field for society's advancement since it teaches us about the importance of emotions in our daily lives. Emotional intelligence proponents' states that people who understand their emotions can live their lives more easily and cheerfully, and that such people are happier than others. Emotional intelligence is viewed as an essential professional domains of education by many educators. If a teacher understands how to use emotional intelligence, it can lead to a valuable life. Teachers understand the distinction between cognitive and emotional intelligence in order to achieve academic intelligence, but they focus on their students' emotional literacy, which will be evident when teachers also assess their own emotional literacy (Zeidner,et.al., 2011).

Working on classroom emotions has become increasingly important in recent years for students' emotional well-being and academic success. Successful instructors are expected to have a high level of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence predicts positive and successful outcomes in all areas of life, and as a result, it dominates all educational fields. Teachers are taught emotional intelligence in order to manage their own emotions while assisting students. As a result, emotional intelligence has become increasingly crucial for both instructors and students. (Singh, 2015).

In the educational setting and in teaching, emotional intelligence plays an important role huge role in better understanding their students. Teachers can create a pedagogical strategy to understand their students' needs and set goals for them. Empathy is the key principle or concept for teaching in emotional intelligence, and it is critical for teachers to communicate with students in order to understand their backgrounds and cultures. Teachers use motivation and social skills connected to emotional intelligence to determine their goals when teaching various courses in the classroom. Emotional intelligence can help students and teachers improve their social and personal life skills, as well as their academic performance.

Engagement in the teaching profession essentially is a synonym for teacher commitment, dedication, and involvement in their workspace. Highly engaged teachers are curious about the 'not so explicit side' of student personalities (and not just in grades). Students' preferences, interests, feelings, needs and difficulties in the overall development will catch the attention of a highly engaged teacher and she will instinctively respond to them. Professional engagement at intellectual level matters. Engaged teachers of the new millennium deliberately indulge in seeking newer avenues for experimentation and professional expansion. In this era of knowledge explosion and technological revolution, passionate teachers are conscious of strengthening and updating their knowledge on a daily basis. They keep a tab on current trends in education, research and related sciences and often redefine the boundaries of their roles as teachers. If teachers are provided with the right environment to engage, they can support their colleagues, raise the profile of the school, and deliver high quality teaching (Rapeal, 2022).

Teachers confront many significant challenges nowadays. From the change of curricula, learning styles, managing shift of education policies, adopting new technology in teaching work from home, attending to students with special needs and administrative work among others. Many teachers also experience unsupportive work environment which leads to burnout, hitting their limits in dealing with work's daily challenges. This usually occurs when teachers experience prolonged exposure to poorly managed emotional and interpersonal work stress. Some teachers do not give attention to emotional intelligence due to stress. This situation leads to teacher's disengagement. They do not know how to make the students attentive in the class and they do not call the students in their names which makes the students dispirited. The feelings of the students are not enhanced if the opportunities or interactive emotional learning environment is lacking. The importance of employee engagement cannot be overstated. More than just job happiness is required for employee loyalty. Although happy employees might deliver satisfactory results, they are less likely to go above and above when they are sincerely involved in their jobs. True engagement generates an emotional environment, and motivated employees are enthusiastic about their work and committed to the mission and goals of the institution.

Despite some previous researches which focused on emotional intelligence and employee engagement, some gaps remain in relating the two variables among teaching force in higher learning. Most studies explored on emotional intelligence and engagement among employees, however, the present study delves on the correlation between the two variables among teachers in one higher education institution. It is essential to conduct an Emotional Intelligence and Employee Engagement analysis of faculty members in order to ensure that the university understudy has a healthy and engaged workforce. As members of the teaching profession, the authors believe that this study is imperative as it will be a springboard for teachers to manage their emotions in order to achieve high work engagement.

Objectives of the Study - the study aimed to determine the emotional intelligence and employee engagement among the faculty members in performing their tasks in the university which will be the basis in proposing an innovative enhancement program for employee engagement. Specifically, it described the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age employment status, civil status and years in service , determine the emotional intelligence of the faculty in terms of self-emotion appraisal, others-emotion appraisal, use of emotion and regulation of emotion, assessed the employee engagement in terms of vigor, dedication and absorption, tested the significant relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement and proposed a Faculty enhancement program on employee engagement.

2. Methods

Research Design - The descriptive method was used to gather data on emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The present study utilized descriptive method as it aimed to cast light on the present situation of the respondent's work emotional intelligence and employee engagement through processing of data that enabled to describe the characteristics and behavior of sample population in the present situation.

Respondents of the Study - From the total of 500 faculty members and using an effect size of 0.25 in a power probability of 0.95 using G*Power 3.1.9, the respondents of the study were 305. The respondents included Regular and Non-Regular, Faculty members of the Lyceum of the Philippines University - Batangas. Faculty respondents from 12 academic departments were chosen thru stratified sampling regardless of employment status.

Data Gathering Instrument - The questionnaire was the primary tool for gathering data. It is, in essence, a sequence of standardized questions, sometimes referred to as items, that follow a predetermined format in order to collect individual data on one or more specific themes. The instrument was composed of three parts. Part I include the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, employment status. Part II determined the Emotional Intelligence of the respondents patterned from Wong and Law (2002) and part three determined the Employee Engagement and was assessed using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli &

Salanova, et al., 2002). The items of the UWES are classified into three which are dedication, vigor and absorption. In research, reliability is a notion that describes how repeatable or replicable a study is. In general, a study is deemed reputable if it can be replicated with the same results. Studies can be consistent across time and across samples. The questions under Emotional Intelligence and Employee Engagement were validated using internal reliability analysis. The summary of the reliability test for the seven indicators is shown in Table 1.

Table 1*Reliability Test*

Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Remarks
Self-Emotion Appraisal	0.967	Excellent
Other Emotion Appraisal	0.933	Excellent
Use of Emotion	0.944	Excellent
Regulation of Emotion	0.939	Excellent
Vigor	0.920	Excellent
Dedication	0.941	Excellent
Absorption	0.872	Good

Data Gathering Procedure - An official letter was sent to the Director of Human Resource and Development Office of the university understudy to determine the exact number of faculty members to accurately compute for the sample size and obtain approval for the data collection. After approval was granted, questionnaires were distributed online to target participants. Employees who agreed to take part in the study were assured that their responses would be treated with confidentiality.

Data Analysis - The data gathered were tallied, tabulated, encoded and analyzed accordingly using the following statistical methods/tools: Frequency distribution, and percentage was used to determine the profile of the Faculty members in terms of age, sex, civil status, employment status and years in teaching profession. Weighted Mean and Ranking were used to determine the emotional intelligence of faculty members in terms of Self-Emotions Appraisal, Others-Emotions Appraisal, Emotion, and Regulation of Emotion; assessed employee engagement of teachers in terms of vigor, dedication and absorption. Likert Scale was used to interpret the responses using the following verbal Interpretation: For Emotional intelligence, strongly agree (4) would mean highly observed; agree means moderately observed (3), disagree (2) would mean partially observed and strongly disagree (1) would mean not at all observed. Lastly, for employee engagement, strongly agree (4) would mean highly engaged; agree would mean moderately engaged (3); disagree (2) would mean partially engaged and strongly disagree (1) would mean not at all engaged.

Ethical Considerations - The researchers considered the ethical factors when conducting the study such as the informed consent and disclosure of information. The researchers provided a communication for the respondents before they answer the questionnaire seeking permission if they could participate in the study. The participants have every right to refuse to participate or answer the questions that make them feel uncomfortable to do so. To disclose the information, no name or personal identification is required to be written in the questionnaire. No video or audio recording will be done to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents who answered the questionnaire.

3. Results and discussion

Table 2 shows the summary on emotional intelligence. The composite mean reveals that the respondents strongly agreed on the presented indicators of emotional intelligence (3.51). Among the indicators of emotional intelligence, self-emotion appraisal ranked first with mean score of 3.67, followed by use of emotion (3.58). Based on the results, the respondents have high perception on their ability to recognize their own emotions. They understand their own emotions and they are certain on what they feel especially when they are happy or sad. With regards to the use of emotion, the respondents feel the desire to motivate themselves and set goals to attain positive results. The respondents feel positive about themselves and usually encourage oneself to try their best to be competent. They believe that they have the ability to use their emotions to improve their performance. The

findings show similarity on the study of Yoke and Panatik (2015) as the ability to appraise self-emotion may assist teachers to monitor self-emotional states and others' feelings. Accordingly, teachers will take the appropriate actions to adjust factors that influence their emotions which enable them to perform better in their job.

Table 2

Summary Table on Emotional Intelligence

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Self-Emotion Appraisal	3.67	Strongly Agree	1
2. Other Emotion Appraisal	3.39	Agree	3.5
3. Use of Emotion	3.58	Strongly Agree	2
4. Regulation of Emotion	3.39	Agree	3.5
Composite Mean	3.51	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

While items like other emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion rated the least with mean value of 3.39. The respondents agreed that they have the ability to understand the emotions of others and they are sensitive on their feelings and emotions. They are concerned with their ability to understand the emotions of others around them. Another least rated is the regulation of emotion where they agreed that they have the ability to control their own emotions. These two items which were rated the least by the respondents revealed that at times when they are busy performing their tasks as teachers, they fail to understand the feelings and emotions of other people like their students and colleagues. The stressful task of the teachers affects their emotions as they became insensitive to the feelings of others in their workplace. In this situation where the teachers' tasks are piled up, they usually are unable to control their temper and cannot handle their difficulties. They are not already capable of controlling their own emotions in the height of stressful work. The teachers also don't remain calm when there is too much stress on their work which affects their work performance.

The findings of the present study opposed the study of Psilopanagioti et al. (2012) where the study found out that awareness of the factors that elicit particular emotions, positive or negative, permits employees to act in the most appropriate way to enhance job satisfaction. Further, the results also find inconsistency with the findings of Shamsuddin et al. (2013) where the findings revealed that people with the ability in appraising others' emotion and regulate own emotion, had high level of faith and courage that influence them to make realistic action and lead to high performances.

Table 3

Summary Table on Employee Engagement

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Vigor	3.39	Agree	2
2. Dedication	3.58	Strongly Agree	1
3. Absorption	3.38	Agree	3
Composite Mean	3.45	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 illustrates the summary of responses on employee engagement which earned the composite means of 3.45 and indicates that the respondents agreed on the employee engagement' indicators. Among the three factors, the most observable was dedication which obtained the highest mean score of 3.58 while vigor and absorption obtained the same assessment of agree with mean values of 3.39 and 3.38 respectively. This indicates that employees are said to be demonstrating dedication especially when they are enthusiastic and feel pride for their work. Employees also exemplifies in their workplace by giving their extra time and efforts to a cause or tasks. They show dedication by being committed to the mission of the University and lives the values that have been created by the culture of the team.

An employee who is dedicated is the one having pride, enthusiasm and inspiration. This proves to be in parallel with the findings of Sun, and Bunchapattanasakda (2019) wherein the management of PT Garuda

Indonesia Cargo revealed that dedication has a positive effect on the employee performance, the higher the level of employee dedication, the higher the level of performance and engagement as well. The study also mentioned that employee engagement has a positive relationship with commitment and positive behavior and pointed out that is equated to dedication to profession including hard work, dedication to the company, established self-confidence and loyalty to the boss.

When work can bring money combined with professional skills or personal development and other skills employees will generate the sense of engagement thereby strengthening employee dedication to work. In contrast to the findings of the foregoing research where dedication is the highest and absorption with the lowest mean, the contribution of faculty absorption is high in comparison to dedication and vigor for employee engagement. The study has confirmed that the employees working for the University under investigation are found to be immersed in work, happily performing at work and forget everything when they are at work. On the contrary, it was mentioned in the study of Jaya, and Ariyanto (2021) that from many researches, dedication among the three dimensions has a weak significant positive effect on employee engagement, while absorption and vigor on performance has a very weak significant positive effect, it is similarly proven by the finding of foregoing research, absorption being the lowest. This further implies that the differences in the related studies lies or depends on how the organization implement practices and policies to encourage and enhance employee engagement.

Table 4*Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Engagement*

Self-Emotion Appraisal	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Vigor	.604**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dedication	.619**	0.000	Highly Significant
Absorption	.502**	0.000	Highly Significant
Others-Emotion appraisal			
Vigor	.494**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dedication	.524**	0.000	Highly Significant
Absorption	.496**	0.000	Highly Significant
Use of Emotion			
Vigor	.563**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dedication	.535**	0.000	Highly Significant
Absorption	.496**	0.000	Highly Significant
Regulation of Emotion			
Vigor	.567**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dedication	.641**	0.000	Highly Significant
Absorption	.502**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 4 illustrates the association between emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The computed rho-values indicates a strong direct correlation and the resulted p-values were all less than 0.01 alpha level. This means that there was a highly significant relationship exists and means that employee engagement was affected by the emotional intelligence. Also it implies that the better the emotional intelligence of the respondents, the more that they are engaged to work. Among the three variables presented, vigor posted the highest Rho – values in all aspects of emotional Intelligence in relations to Employee Engagement, followed by dedication and last by absorption. It further proves that the respondents are majority with high level of energy while working. The employees are persistent even there are difficulties. In addition, the employees are dedicated as they are heavily involved in their work and already experiencing pride, they are inspired and feeling a sense of importance in the organization.

In a correlation study made by Suehs (2015) which determined the potential relationship between the emotional intelligence of 24 frontline managers and supervisors and employee engagement with a total of 585 employees a moderate correlation was found. It suggested to the organizations would benefit by strengthening the emotional intelligence competencies of its management members and to develop organizational policies and practices to guide frontline managers and supervisors as they interact with staff. These interactions should reflect

the mission, visions, and values of the organization, provide the basis for using emotionally intelligent competencies, and develop stronger relationships among the employees by doing so, it reinforces the appropriate leadership philosophy and style as frontline management leads staff to accomplish organizational goals and strategic objectives. The same findings in an extensive research of Swarnalatha and Prasanna, (2013) which shown employee engagement influences organizational effectiveness and high levels of employee engagement yield improved organizational performance and stakeholder value and confirmed in the study that when teachers feel vigorous and dedicated they are more satisfied with their job and feel more positive emotions, thereby showing more positive appraisals of their own lives (Upadyaya et al., 2016). In line with COR theory (Hobfoll, 2001), teachers with low engagement might feel less attached to their organizations, which may influence their levels of job satisfaction.

Table 5

Proposed Faculty Program to Enhance Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement	Strategies/ Measures	Persons Involved
On Vigor (Increasing the energy level and interest of going to work every day)	Implement a robust weekly/monthly employee recognition program to recognize a consistent” Star performer for the week / month. Intensify Reward system program to increase employee’s engagement.	HR / Offices/ Colleges
On Dedication (Perseverance when things do not go well)	Implement a WEGP or Weekly Employee Goal Plan so that employee would start practicing perseverance similar to Faculty and department heads are already doing and have it measured. Conduct a separate Employee Enrichment Activity in order to increase employees wellbeing and behavior on accomplishing assigned tasks.	HR /Offices /Colleges
On Absorption (Forgetting everything around the employee when at work)	Create an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Committee to consistently work with employees on work and personal related issues .	HR/ Offices / Colleges

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The respondents strongly agreed on emotional intelligence. Among the indicators self-emotion appraisal and use of emotion respectively indicated a strongly agree response while the participants agree in terms of emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion. Among the indicators, self-emotion appraisal comes first while other emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion equally follows. Among the indicators of employee engagement, it is the dedication which the respondents strongly demonstrated while vigor and absorption were equally displayed by the respondents. Generally, the responses strongly agreed on dedication as the highest indicative of their employee engagement while they agreed closely on vigor and absorption. There is a significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and employee engagement. A faculty enhancement program on employee engagement was proposed.

The Human Resource Management and Development Office may consider developing a program to increase self-regulation skills for employees to increase self-confidence, self-esteem and develop the ability to handle stress and frustrations. Cognitive reframing and or changing the way of thinking patterns of employees may be increased by instituting a training program for rank and file employees. Breaking the work routines of employees may also be considered. Create a central hub and support for company announcements, employee service and configure a tailored fit experience for every employee. A mobile friendly call from the Division Head may increase employee engagement, particularly absorption and vigor. The organization may implement a program to increase employee being, improve their levels of energy and mental resilience while at work. Future study may also be conducted using other variables to further confirm the result of the study.

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Appendix: Questionnaire

Emotional Intelligence

Self-Emotion Appraisal	4	3	2	1
1. I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.				
2. I have good understanding of my own emotions.				
3. I really understand what I feel.				
4. I always know whether I am happy.				
Others-Emotion appraisal	4	3	2	1
5. I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior.				
6. I am a good observer of others' emotions.				
7. I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.				
8. I have a good understanding of the emotions of people around me.				
Use of Emotion	4	3	2	1
9. I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.				
10. I always tell myself I am a competent person.				
11. I am a self-motivated person.				
12. I always encourage myself to try my best.				
Regulation of Emotion	4	3	2	1
13. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.				
14. I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions.				
15. I can always calm quickly when I am very angry.				
16. I have a good control of my own emotions.				

Employee Engagement

Vigor	4	3	2	1
1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy				
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous				
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.				
4. I can continue working for very long periods at a time				
Dedication	4	3	2	1
5. At my job, I am very resilient mentally				
6. At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.				
7. I find work that I do full of meaning and purpose.				
8. I am enthusiastic about my job.				
9. My job inspires me.				
10. I am proud of the work that I do.				
Absorption	4	3	2	1
11. To me, my job is challenging.				
12. Time flies when I'm working.				
13. When I am working, I forget everything else around me.				
14. I feel happy when I am working intensely.				
15. I am immersed in my work.				
16. I get carried away when I'm working.				
17. It is difficult to detach myself from my job.				

