Emotional Intelligence on Career Satisfaction

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Abstract — **Emotional intelligence (EI) describes the ability, capacity, skill, or self-perceived ability to identify, assess, and manage the emotions of one's self, of others, and of groups. People who possess a high degree of EI know themselves very well and are also able to sense the emotions of others. They are affable, resilient, and optimistic. There are positive associations between EI and career satisfaction (CS). For example, the literature showed satisfaction with work has demonstrated a considerable impact on success in life and in overall psychological wellbeing. Controlling our emotions and expressing it adequately can make a difference in business. Therefore, this paper reviews the influence of EI on CS. Data were collected using a questionnaire conducted on online entrepreneurs. The data were analyzed using SPSS Version 23 and Structural Equation Modeling (SmartPLS).**

Keywords – *career satisfaction, emotional intelligence*

I. Introduction

Individual characteristics such as self-motivation, perseverance in the face of obstacles, impulse management, delaying the desire for instant gratification, interpersonal sensitivity, optimism, and openness to solve problems creatively are common manifestations of EI (Chipain, 2003). Although EI has become a popular tool in organizations, yet, there is still a need for increased empirical research on the construct (Field, 2010). EI and CS are two concepts of high interest in the modern work environment (Ealias & George, 2012; Sy & Cote, 2004). We often underestimate the importance of feelings and emotional processes in a workplace. Meanwhile, EI serve as a competitive edge in personal and organizational life. Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2009) claimed that EI appears important because many people fail to manage their emotions successfully. EI is an important antecedent of work related outcomes such as turnover, intention to quit, job satisfaction, and job performance. Kazimer (2016) demonstrated that EI is one of the most important traits we can have in order to run a successful business.

Being an online entrepreneur might seem like a glamorous career choice. However, this independent path can have its downsides. Working alone or representing their own brand are a major responsibility and many entrepreneurs face emotional challenges from loneliness to fear. Khurshid and Zahid (2016) reported that entrepreneur in the entrepreneurial process is faced with emotional conflicts, helpless longing and frustration and anxiety. Entrepreneurs face different sort of difficulties in stages of their business (Noori, 2015). Thus, having high EI helps them manage the situation and get better result. Moreover, EI is awareness in terms of our strengths and limitations, our impact on others and our ability to effectively engage with others. These are important aspects of a growing business and important traits of many successful entrepreneurs. Emotional sensitivity, maturity and competency are what ultimately decide our career (Rexhepi & Berisha, 2017). As yet, little attempts have been made to determine whether the EI plays a role in entrepreneurial process or not (Noori, 2015). Therefore, this study aimed at exploring EI on CS because by development of EI, entrepreneurs will benefit from its advantages.

II. Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence

Individuals have different personalities, wants, needs, and ways of showing their emotions. Navigating through this requires tact and shrewdness especially if one hopes to succeed in life. This is where EI theory helps. Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined EI as the ability to sense, understand and effectively use the power of emotions to guide, motivate and even influence others. Rangreji (2010) demonstrated that EI is a set of qualities and competencies that captures a broad collection of individual skills and dispositions, usually referred to as soft skills or inter and intra-personal skills, that are outside the traditional areas of specific knowledge, general intelligence,

and technical or professional skills. Bar-On (2011) defined EI as effectively understanding the self and others, relating well to others, and adapting to given situations and environments. EI refers to a range of emotional skills that ease the identification, processing, and regulation of emotion, which can be used to explain individual differences not otherwise accounted for by general intelligence and personality alone (Austin, Saklofske, & Egan, 2005).

People who possess high EI are more healthier, less depressed, more productive at work, and have better relationships (Ealias & George, 2012). McLaughlin (2012) indicated that EI has implications for entrepreneurial situations and social interactions such as negotiation, obtaining and organizing resources, identifying and exploiting opportunities, managing stress, obtaining and maintaining customers, and providing leadership. Goleman and Boyatzis (2017) argued that EI plays an important role in the workplace which is more obvious in favorable performance compared with other cognitive abilities such as intelligence or technical skills. Kotsou, Mikolajczak, Heeren, Gregoire, and Leys (2019) found that EI competencies often benefits psychological health. Oriarewo, Ofobruku, and Tor (2019) reported that entrepreneur's EI may influence the internal processes associated with coping with emotions to solve the range of problems in the venture.

Career Satisfaction

Spurk, Abele, and Volmer (2014) stated that CS is one central indicator of subjective career success and can be seen as a crucial component of career success in actual labor market generations. CS is an attitude of an individual over a period of their job so the factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction changes over the period (Ealias & George, 2012). Oh (2013) indicated that CS has become an important issue in the workplace because individual success results in organizational success that leads to more committed and motivated employees. Arif and Al-Jubari (2015) mentioned that satisfaction with work may contribute to the intention to be entrepreneurs. Noori (2015) noted that being happy with work can facilitate creativity at work. Leavell (2013) argued that CS has demonstrated a considerable effect on individuals' overall life satisfaction and well-being.

Emotional Intelligence and Career Satisfaction

A good knowledge about others emotions and an ability to manage them can help a person to gain success and satisfaction in their work (Ealias & George, 2012). People who have higher level of EI, emotional stability, negative mood regulation capacity, empathy, positive affectivity, pleasant feelings, happiness balance and psychological flourishing also have a high level of satisfaction with their work (Colomeischi, 2014). Psychological studies have shown that understanding and controlling emotions play significant role in gratifying individual life and work environment (Ealias & George, 2012). Employees who enjoy a high level of EI tend to experience more positive moods and emotions and be more satisfied with their job, because they are more skillful at appraising, regulating and directing their own emotions (Trivellas, Gerogiannis, & Svarna, 2013). Coetzee and Beukes (2010) found that individuals who are able to manage and utilize their own emotions are more likely to report greater confidence in their ability to achieve their career goals and succeed in the business world. Hassan and Omar (2016) suggested that individual with high EI will have a tendency to start a business in the future. Khurshid and Zahid (2016) indicated that entrepreneurs are people who have well-developed emotional skills, happy with their lives, their thinking habits are efficient and productive and efficient people, who do not have mastery over their emotional life, involved in internal conflicts from focusing and clear thinking at work. Agnes, Carles, Cristina, Ana, and Norma (2018) noted that being emotionally efficient, leads to a higher satisfaction. This consequently may encourage CS through positive emotion and thinking.

III. Research Methodology

This research was conducted in quantitative manner with concentration on survey method to enable it to be more conclusive and exclusive.

Sample and procedure

The survey was carried through online survey. Data were collected through an online survey format, using existing, validated instruments. The online survey method provided economy of design and the ability to have rapid turnaround in data collection. The unit of analysis of this study is online entrepreneur.

Measurement

The instrument use for data collection was a survey questionnaire. The instruments used in this study a well-established scales derived from prior studies. It were adapted and modified from the past researcher.

Emotional intelligence

EI was assessed with 15 items. In total, 15 items asked respondents to report perceptions of emotional intelligence. Example of the items is "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time". Responses were measured on a 1 to 7 scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree), and yielded a coefficient alpha of 0.929.

Career satisfaction

CS was assessed with the scale fromGreenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990). The scale consists of five statements such as "Overall, I am satisfied with my job." answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and yielded a coefficient alpha of 0.914. Spurk, Abele, and Volmer (2011) provided support for the unidimensionality and construct validity of the scale in terms of significant correlations with salary and occupational status.

IV. Results

A total of 100 respondents contributed to the study. The total sample composed of 37 men (37%) and 63 women (63%). The participants were less than 25 of age (52%), between 25 to 35 years old (37%), between 36 to 45 years old (9%), and more than 45 years old (2%). As for their education level, 56% respondents has diploma, 28% has bachelor degree, 14% has master's degree, and 2% has doctorate degree. As for marital status, the respondents, 68% were single and 32% were married. 30% of the respondents had children and 70% not had children. 77% of the respondents have working experience and 23% of the respondents does not have working experience. For respondents work experience, 81 percent between 1 to 5 years, followed by 14 percent between 6 to 10 years, 3 percent with 11 to 15 years and 2 percent with more than 15 years. All the respondents (100%) were chose to pursue online business as a career. 77% respondents have worked for online business less than 2 years, 18% respondents worked for online business between 3-5 years and 5% respondents worked for online business between 6-10 years.

The study relied on PLS-SEM to test measurement and structural model by using the SmartPLS 3 Software. According to Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2014) PLS is a second-generation multivariate technique which can simultaneously evaluate the measurement model (the relationships between constructs and their corresponding indicators) and the structural model with the aim of minimizing the error variance. PLS-SEM was preferred because of its many advantages in comparison with other first generation techniques. Some of its major advantages are as follows; PLS makes fewer demands regarding the sample size compared to other methods, PLS does not require normally distributed input data, PLS can be applied to complex structural equation models with a large number of constructs and PLS can handle multiple dependent and independent variables in a single model (Hair et al., 2014).

The data was first screened to identify missing data, to identify outliers and influential points, to assess normality and to check for common method variance. The measurement model was assessed first prior to the structural model assessment. Henseler, Hubona, and Ray (2016) suggested that a PLS model should be developed in two stages: the measurement model and the structural model. Each construct in the model were inspected for its validity and reliability. Construct validity was assessed to ensure the measurements are valid. In convergent validity, the factor loadings and the average variance extracted (AVE) were checked (Hair et al., 2014).

Convergent validity is achieved when the factor loadings are above 0.70 and the AVE is above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014; Marcoulides & Chin, 2013). AVE value of a latent variable should be higher than 0.50, in order to explain more than half of the variance of its indicators on average. As for discriminant validity, a construct should be clearly distinct from other constructs which have been theoretically shown to be different. Construct reliability and AVE of the reflective constructs are shown in Table 1. Results from the outer loadings showed no indicators found to be below 0.40. The construct reliability was assessed by calculating Cronbach's α coefficients for each of the multi item constructs. All the scales were above the suggested value of 0.70. Thus, it is concluded that the measures utilized in the study are valid and internally consistent.

Table 1: Factor Loadings, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Constructs	Items	Outer Loadings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
EI	EI1	0.741	0.938	0.505
	EI2	0.732		
	EI3	0.745		
	EI4	0.667		
	EI5	0.589		
	EI6	0.543		
	EI7	0.704		
	EI8	0.756		
	EI9	0.784		
	EI10	0.755		
	EI11	0.826		
	EI12	0.685		
	EI13	0.775		
	EI14	0.577		
	EI15	0.712		
CS	CS1	0.840	0.936	0.744
	CS2	0.893		
	CS3	0.882		
	CS4	0.879		
	CS5	0.817		

Inspection on AVE showed all constructs were above 0.50. The constructs were also checked on discriminant validity, the square root of the AVE each construct and all other construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2014). The Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) approach is to determine the discriminant validity of the constructs (Henseler et.al, 2016). HTMT value should not be greater than the HTMT value of 0.85 in order to achieve discriminant validity (Kline, 2016). The value for EI is 0.457. It is, therefore, passed HTMT measures indicating that each construct in the model measures a unique subject and captures phenomena not presented by other constructs in the model. After running the PLS algorithm in SmartPLS to assess the measurement model, the variable scores were used to compute the mean scores and the standard deviation scores. The mean scores reported for EI (*M*=0.457, *SD*=0.068).

Multicollinearity refers to the extent to which a variable can be explained by the other variables in the analysis (Hair et al., 2014). It is difficult to ascertain the effect of any single variable, the variance inflation factors (VIF) were used to examine multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2014). The VIF values were below the standard criteria (EI = 1.000) indicating no multicollinearity issue. The next analysis done was to assess the structural model. Structural model was assessed to test the relationships between EI and CS.

The coefficient of determination (R^2 value) and path coefficients (beta values) were parameters to determine how well the data supported the hypothesized relationships (Hair et al., 2014). A bootstrapping process with 500 iterations was performed to generate t-values and standard errors to confirm the statistical significance (Hair et al., 2014). R^2 measures the predictive accuracy of the model and represents the percentage of variance in the dependent variable as explained by the independent variable in the model (Hair et al., 2014). As shown in Figure 1, precarious work behavior explain about 19% of the variance in CS (R^2=0.192).
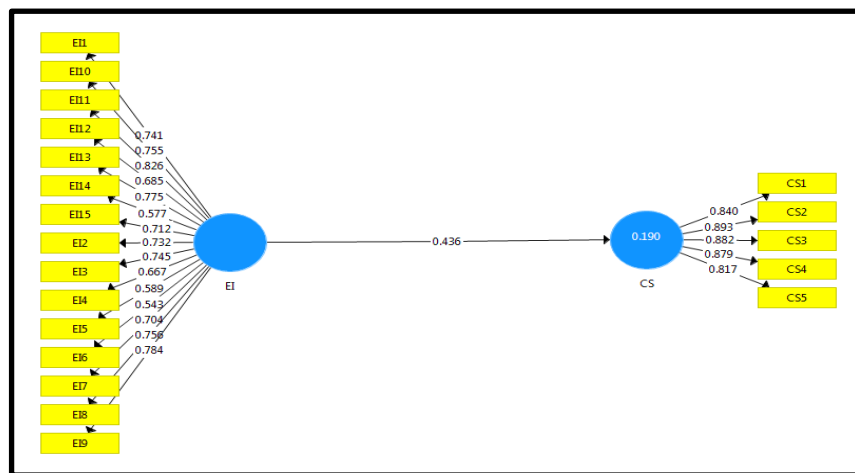
Figure 1: Measurement Model of EI on CS

Path coefficients (*B*) indicate the degree of change in the dependent variable for independent variable (Hair et al., 2014). As shown in Table 2, the path coefficients for EI and CS was significant.

Table 2: Hypothesis Testing

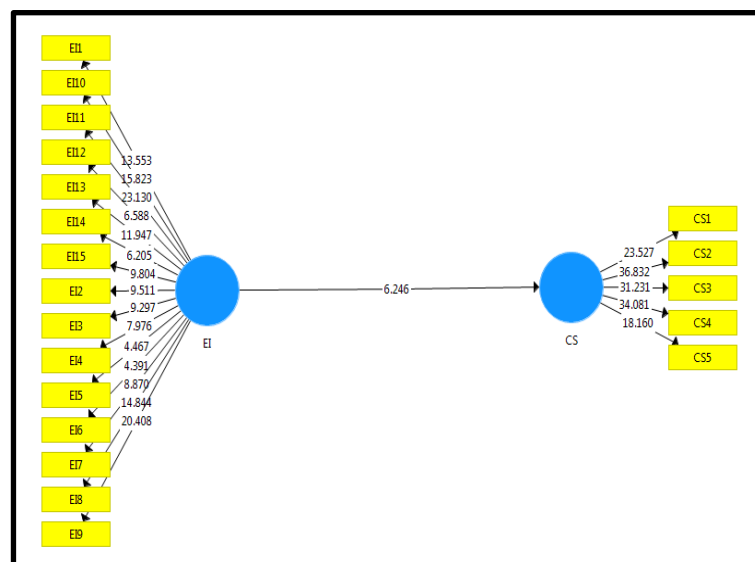| Path	*B*	t	Decision
PWB ⟶ CS	0.436	6.417	Supported

Figure 2: Structural Model of EI on CS

The predictive relevance (Q^2) and effect size (f^2) are also reported in Table 3. The guidelines of Cohen (1988) were used to assess the f^2, whereby 0.02, 0.15, 0.35 indicate small, medium and large effects respectively. The f^2 values show that has a medium effect in producing R^2 for career satisfaction. In addition, the predictive relevance of the model is examined using the blindfolding procedure, if Q^2 value is larger than 0, the model has predictive relevance for CS. The Q^2 value for career satisfaction is 0.123 which is larger than 0 indicating the model has sufficient predictive relevance.

Table 3: R^2, f^2 and Q^2

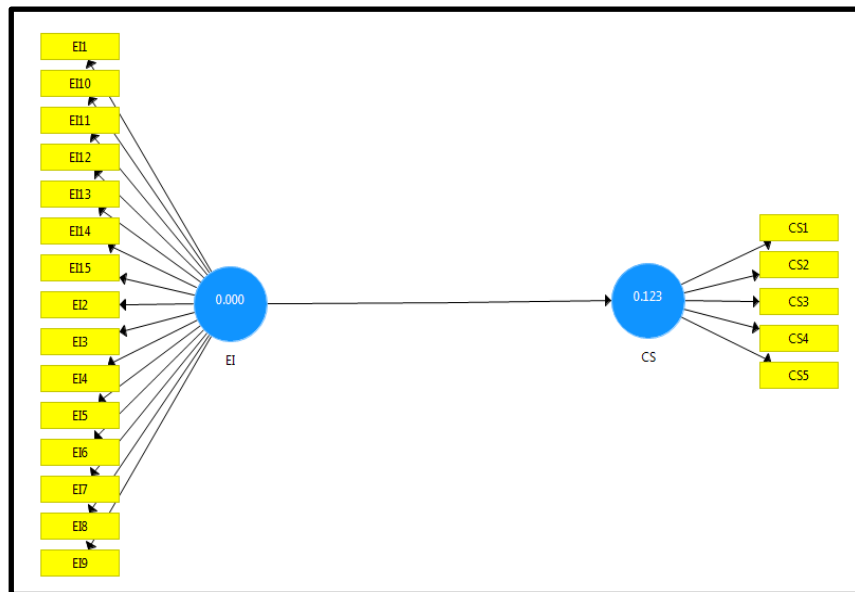| Path	R^2	Q^2	f^2
Emotional intelligence	0.190		0.235
Career satisfaction		0.123	

Figure 3: Bindfolding of EI on CS

V. Discussion

This study makes a contribution to the larger literature by examining whether EI is related to CS. The results of this study indicate that the online entrepreneur with higher EI have higher CS. The findings suggest that ability to understand own emotions could imply entrepreneur with high EI through navigating their positive emotions. If emotion is properly used and managed, the use of emotion can lead to a state of well-being (Humphrey, Ashforth, & Diefendorff, 2015). Individuals high on EI are versed at using and managing their emotions to achieve better workplace outcomes. For example, in order to run a business, entrepreneurs need a wide skill set to attract and satisfy customers. Courage, determination, persistence and strategic thinking are characteristics that determine the success entrepreneurs.

Emotionally intelligent people tend to be more successful. Higher EI helps us to be stronger internal motivators, which can reduce procrastination, increase self-confidence, and improve our ability to focus on a goal. It also allows us to create better networks of support, delay gratification and see the long-term directly affects our ability to succeed. Miao, Qian, and Ma (2017) indicated that individual may utilize their EI to enhance their CS because EI helps one to experience more positive feelings, to reduce negative feelings and to accomplish performance goals. EI skills help people make stress more manageable by enabling them to spot and tackle tough situations before things escalate. EI plays an important role in helping the employees to cope with vibrant change in the business environment (Rangarajan & Jayamala, 2014).

Emotions are more important in our life. EI is very crucial since it gives the ability to identify, understand, and manage one's emotions in positive ways to communicate effectively, show empathy towards others, and defuse conflict. How we and other people feel, understand, and react to those feelings determines many outcomes in our lives, especially when it comes to business. In terms of entrepreneurship, having high EI is extremely beneficial. Entrepreneurs with high EI can better work with and understand their colleagues and customers, and cultivate better relationships with them as a result of their heightened sensitivity to the emotional states of those around them. If entrepreneurs can cultivate their EI, they will be able to regulate their own emotions better. Rexhepi and Berisha (2017) claimed that entrepreneurs with a high ability to identify, understand, and manage

emotional responses of themselves and others, can obtain competitive advantages by managing these relationships.

However, there will be many roadblocks on the path to success, and entrepreneurs will have to deal with everything from angry customers or difficult clients to disappointing launches and difficult conversations. We cannot control everything that happens, but if entrepreneurs have high EI, they can get better at acknowledging their emotions in difficult situations without stuffing them down or erupting at an inappropriate time. For example, when entrepreneurs have a frustrating customers, they have to deal may be with annoyances customers. This is when the entrepreneurs need to control their emotions and avoid taking them out on others and worsening the situation. This will inherently make them as stronger entrepreneur, whom they will be easier to do business with, and not run the risk of losing customers or alienating those they work with based on an angry outburst or harsh word. In addition, being able to control emotions is a key when communicating with investors and other important allies to the business.

With high EI comes a better understanding of the needs, feelings, and overall situation of others. Emotionally intelligent entrepreneurs are able to manage their emotions, and not let their emotions get the better of them. If they become angry or upset, they do not take their emotions out on others; rather, they deal with the issue calmly, and find a way to control and mitigate their own anger. As such, an entrepreneur with high EI can better create a product or service to fit the needs of their target customer. If entrepreneurs are able to empathize with their customers, they can improve their product to better suit their customer needs. For example, let us consider an entrepreneur who offers web design services, and helps customers create websites for their businesses and personal use. These customers are probably feeling confused by their lack of knowledge on web design, overwhelmed by the options available to them, and eager to delegate a task to an expert. By tapping into these emotions, this entrepreneur can curate a service that helps alleviate customer confusion, and makes them feel like they are in good hands. Similarly, emotionally intelligent entrepreneurs know how to channel their emotions productively. If they are disappointed with the outcome of a previous project, they can channel this disappointment into making sure they achieve a better outcome next time instead of sulking and dwelling on the past.

Although our emotional pattern begins to develop at an early age, the truth is that we can always cultivate our emotional skills to have better performance in the professional career (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). Gaining awareness of emotions and learning to cultivate them in a constructive way is, without a doubt, a strategic skill for the entrepreneur.

VI. Limitations and Future Research

There are a few limitations and constraints for this research. The limitation for this research includes; the research is limited to online entrepreneurs. This study also limited to the variables; EI and CS. Therefore, future research should address the possible limitations of the current study.

VI. Conclusion

This study has some important implications for the human resources function. This study provides knowledge to obtain a more complete understanding of CS that increasingly unfolds at the intersection of EI. EI have gained has interested scholars, particularly in psychology and management in recent years. Individual who have high EI tend to satisfy in their career. EI is becoming increasingly vital to humans' success in the increasingly digital future of work. Emotionally intelligent people are considerate which they are good at putting themselves in someone else's shoes and seeing challenges from different perspectives. Entrepreneurs can get many benefits from being emotionally nimble such as they can build their reputable brands, by having good communication, negotiating, collaborating and networking with their customers. This is important for entrepreneur success in their career. Archana and Kumari (2018) claimed that successful entrepreneurs are often individuals with high level of EI. Entrepreneurs needs to have high levels of EI whereby they can recognize the emotional needs of their customers as well as to understand their own emotional needs and how to manage those needs to best effect. For instance, entrepreneurs can show care to their customers. They should use listening skills to show great empathy for their customers. Entrepreneurs will benefit from upgrading their EI level. Therefore, it is suggested that entrepreneurs should seek to develop their own emotional competencies because doing so could help them gain CS.

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