

Employee job performance: The interplay of leaders' emotion management ability and employee perception of job characteristics

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Abstract

Aim: The current study aimed to examine the relationship between a Leader's emotional management capacity and Employee job performance with the mediating effect of an Employee's perception of job characteristics.

Method/design: The research was based on a primary quantitative methodology in which responses were gathered from 100 participants through a 5-point Likert scale. Statistical tests of correlation analysis and mediation (regression) analysis were conducted.

Findings: Statistical tests showed that the relationship between a leader's emotional management skills and employee work performance is positive but only moderate, according to the correlation study. In contrast, there is a strong link between employee perceptions of job characteristics and performance. The second hypothesis that employee perception of job characteristics significantly and positively mediates the association between leaders' emotional management capacity and employee job performance was confirmed by further mediation research.

Future implications: Future research could investigate the subfactors of employees' perception of job characteristics. Moreover, the current research will also guide future researchers in conducting a more context-based study on specific organisations or types.

Keywords: *Emotional management, job performance, job characteristics, leadership*

Introduction

Research has identified the significance of emotions and mood in leadership effectiveness (James, Crawford, and Oplatka, 2018). Emotions and mood can influence the way employees to think, act and feel. According to the study by Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2018), the performance of employees in an organisation depends upon many factors, including the workplace environment,

training, and development, employee engagement, workload, and the culture within the organisation and leadership. However, leadership plays an vital role in job performance regardless of the leadership style (Lai et al., 2020). The relationship between employee job performance and emotions and leaders' moods has been discussed in the last few years, but the results are unclear (Little, Gooty, and Williams, 2016).

According to Ashkanasy, Humphrey, and Huy (2017), the study recognised the importance of managing leaders' emotions, and scholars and experts of human behaviour and emotions acknowledge that it plays an essential role in the organisation's audience who follows the leader. After many years of research on emotions and moods, the emotional management ability of the leader has little research and its impact on the employees on making a positive environment.

Many researchers argued about the employee perception of job characteristics and the relationship with job performance (Oldham and Fried, 2016; Burgard and Görlitz, 2014). The job characteristic model has identified 5 characteristics: task identity, autonomy, skill variety, task identification, and feedback (Ali et al., 2014). Three critical psychological states precede the job characteristics: knowledge of results, experienced meaningfulness, and professional responsibility (Choudhary et al., 2017). The psychological states are accountable for the internal work motivation, performance, and work satisfaction. The study identifies the connection between employee job perception and job performance and different outcomes. The research is conducted to understand better the effects of a leader's emotions and mood on the employee's job performance and the different variables involved. These variables may have a direct or indirect relation with the leader's mood and emotion and the employees' job performance.

Following are the objectives of the research:

- To identify the affects of the emotion management ability of the leader on employee job performance.
- To understand the relationship between employee perceptions of job that intervene in the job performance and leader emotional management.

- To analyse and recommend the strategies to improve the leaders' emotional management ability.

Literature review

Hackman and Oldham (1975) identified the characteristic job model that determined the main 5 job characteristics: task identity, autonomy, task identification, feedback, and skill variety. The skill variety, according to Hackman and Oldham (1975), is defined as the number of skills and talent a job requires to carry out work activities. According to Judge and Zapata (2015), pragmatic studies have found that job satisfaction and job performance can be predicted by skill variety. Judge and Zapata (2015) also stated that employees with more than one skill are more committed to the job. Task identity is the need of a job to complete a task with visible results (Parker, Morgeson, and Johns, 2017). The study stated that task identity often appears as the visible factor in employee job performance (Siengthai and Pila-Ngarm, 2016). Task significance is defined as the job's effect on the human life and work of others, including the internal and external environment of the organisation. According to Anderson and Stritch (2016), experts examined the connection between employee job performance and task significance. The increase in performance of employees has been seen in the studies. The extent to which a job gives the freedom to select the scheduling work and method to perform the task and independence to an employee is known as autonomy (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Autonomy is related to the commitment to work and improves job performance (Fabi, Lacoursière, and Raymond, 2015). Feedback, defined by Hackman and Oldham (1975), is the information employee receives about the quality of work and error. According to Kulkarni, Bernstein, and Klemmer (2015), the most effective way to improve the employee's performance is to give constant feedback. According to Judge et al. (2017), Study shows that if the organisation has more scores on the job characteristics, then employees perform better and have a high motivation to do work.

The concept of motivation and means-end chains are used in making the job characteristic model. The model is mostly accepted for the way jobs are being designed and affects employees' feelings, beliefs, and attitudes which are directly linked with the performance. According to Hackman and Oldham (1980), the research shows that the three psychological states are positively affected by the job characteristics model because each characteristic increases the experienced meaningfulness of work. Feedback also provides the outcomes and the effectiveness of methods

to achieve the goal (Ghaffari et al., 2017). Those employees having a high perception of the characteristic job model have reported that they also have high work motivation and job satisfaction leading to good performance (Khan, Roy, and Hossain, 2019). Another study also highlighted that those job designs giving employees freedom and control give the organization several opportunities to develop their skills (Goleman, 2017). A significant relationship exists between the employee's job performance and skill variety, feedback, and autonomy. Feedback, task variety, and autonomy develop a strong relationship with job satisfaction, job performance, high motivation to work, and the leader's emotion management ability. However, in some specific situations, task significance and identity also develop a good connection with all the factors that improve the employees performance.

H1: Employee perception of job characteristics positively mediates the relationship between a leader's emotional management capacity and employee's job performance

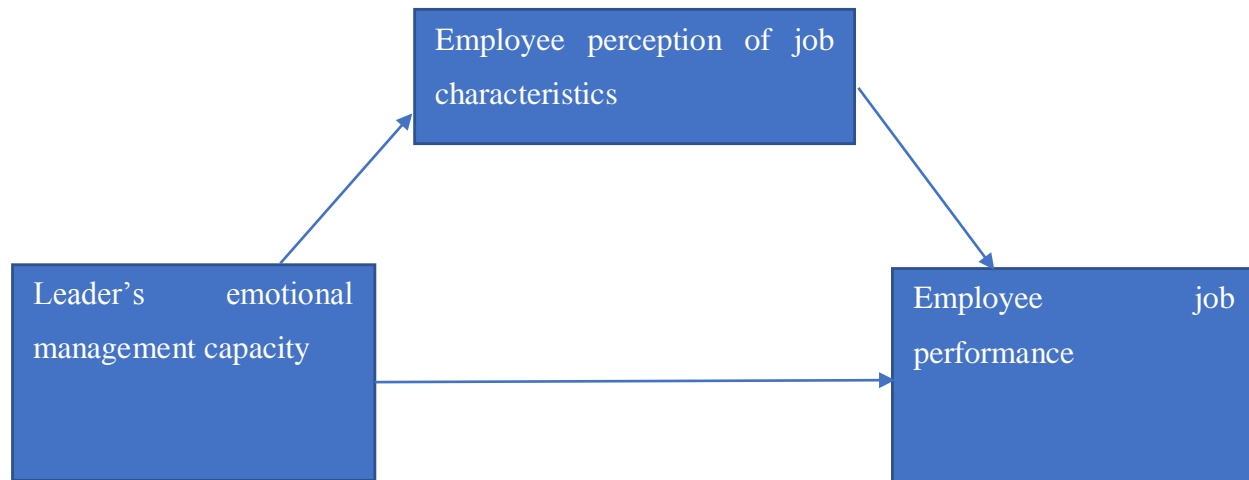
Emotion management ability is defined as the skill or ability to challenge and deal with emotions which may be either positive or negative (Gunnarsdóttir, 2016; Robinson, 2018). Elfenbein and MacCann (2017) found that the definition of emotion management ability relates to the four pillars of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, relationship management, self-management, and social management. A person with high emotional intelligence knows their emotions, feelings, and the potential effect of those emotions on others. Arora (2017) emphasises that emotion management ability is crucial for leaders. The emotion management ability of the leader affects many aspects of the corporate, like conflict management, pessimism on change, and effectiveness of leadership. EMA of leader also affects the job performance. In a leadership environment, the leader may have to control and modify their emotional experiences and expressions, which can significantly impact the followers and employees. According to Gooty et al. (2014), in day-to-day tasks, a leader's emotion can help in boosting an employee's performance. The vast majority of fields require effective leadership, including organisational problems, individual conflicts, and ethical problems that require a suitable emotional response (Berkovich

and Eyal, 2018). In a study, Sharma, Agrawal, and Khandelwal (2019) argued that behaviour and judgements are led by the person's emotions most of the time. The research on Leadership emotion management and its impact on the follower and employee's job performance is developing through considerable research. The results of a leader's emotion in the effectiveness of leadership lead to the study of other concepts like the impact of a leader's emotion on an employee's job performance, emotional intelligence, and emotional labour.

The dynamic organisation wants the leader to fulfil multiple requirements and also put forth influence on employees. According to Tucker, Jimmieson, and Bordia (2018), the complexity and organisation's dynamic nature lead to the assumption that leaders have to manage their emotions to maintain a good relationship with employees that assist in the performance of a job. According to Connelly et al. (2013), the study has presented a framework for the leaders that identify many emotional domains, including motivation, resolution of conflict, risk-taking and feedback. Leaders must identify the emotions from the domains and know how these emotions can affect their decision-making and behaviour, which may impact employee performance. To compete in the market and for the organization's effectiveness, the job performance of an employee is essential. The study by Vasquez, Niven, and Madrid (2020) found that the employee's and followers' self-esteem are encouraged by the leader's passion, zeal, and zest. Will and motivation for the work are the two factors that directly affect employees' performance. The study found that Leaders can impact their followers' job performance by influencing the impact of stressful tasks (Mohamad and Jais, 2016). A leader with emotion management ability can improve the employee's job performance.

H2: A leader's emotional management capacity has a substantial and positive impact on employee job performance

Conceptual framework



Research methodology

Research philosophy is the fundamental philosophy that shapes the decision-making of the researcher throughout the research process. According to Saunders explication (2015), research methodology could be formally categorised as interpretivism, positivism, realism, and pragmatism. The current research is based on the philosophy of positivism because of its emphasis on an empirically reliable set of information. The researcher could distinguish objective information in the literature from personal information thanks to positivist philosophy. Only those components were employed to build the literature analysis component, which could be backed up with quantitative data. Although many qualitative studies were included in the literature evaluation, their objective was to lay the framework for hypothesis building. Furthermore, positivist philosophy assisted the researcher in eliminating biases from the data gathered by focusing on objective data that was double-checked for credibility and reliability.

There are two basic research designs: qualitative and quantitative (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). The researcher in this study used a quantitative research approach to determine the truth, relying on quantitative data. The quantitative approach began by establishing a foundation of

material in the literature, which was then used to create questionnaires for this study. The quantitative approach also allowed for analysis using mathematical/statistical methods, which was critical in assuring high data and outcome validity. Quantitative research aids in the reduction of systemic biases.

The strategy used to conduct a study is referred to as the research approach. It is divided into inductive and deductive techniques (Armat et al., 2018). The inductive technique is better for qualitative research, whereas the deductive approach is better for quantitative investigations. The current study used a quantitative methodology. The researcher took a deductive method in this case. Hypotheses were established using a deductive technique in light of current literature and the research's goals and objectives.

This study used a primary data source based on survey questionnaires. The primary source allowed the researcher to remove mistakes due to misfit models and inherent biases because the study was extremely contextual and geographically confined. The methods and sources utilised to harvest relevant data for the study are referred to as data sampling. In the current study, the researcher chose convenience sampling as the data collection method. Participants were chosen for the study based on their ease of accessibility and participation, with due consideration given to internal biases. On a 5-point Likert scale, participants' responses were gathered. The SPSS statistical package was then analyzed in which tests for descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and mediation (regression) analysis were conducted.

Results and analysis

Descriptive analysis

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the variables

	Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
Leader's emotional management capacity	100	0.25	3.5	146.5	1.465	0.51373	0.677	0.241	1.468	0.478
Employee perception of job characteristics	100	0	3.75	145.7	1.457	0.86314	0.358	0.241	-0.226	0.478
Employee job performance	100	0	3.75	142	1.42	1.00056	0.394	0.241	-0.816	0.478
Valid N (listwise)	100									

Descriptive statistics are the statistical calculations used to summarise and describe the characteristics of the sample data set. These include the individual arithmetical mean of the variables, standard deviations, skewness of the data, etc. As shown in the above table, the mean of the variable 'leader's emotional management capacity' is 1.465, indicating that most of the respondents agreed with the assertions of these variables in the questionnaire. The mean of employee perception is found to be around 1.457, indicating that most respondents agreed with the assertions made in this variable. A similar result was obtained for employee job performance, with a mean of 1.42, again indicating the average agreement of the respondents. The Standard deviation is an essential aspect of understanding the behaviour of a variable from the average statistical value. The standard deviation for a leader's emotional management capacity was 0.513, for employee perception of job characteristics was 0.863, and that of employee job performance was 1.000. These indicate that most values tend towards the value of 1, thus showing a general inclination towards agreement.

Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis is conducted to assess the statistical association of variables under study. In the current case, the correlation test was done upon the variables of the leader's emotional management capacity, employee perception of job characteristics, and employee job performance. At this point, the originally mediating variable of employee perception of job characteristics was treated as another singular variable in correlation analysis for brevity. The following table explicates the outcomes of the test. As shown, the correlation between leaders' emotional management capacity and employee job performance was found to be moderate and positive, with a Pearson coefficient of 0.689. Meanwhile, the correlation between employee perception of job characteristics and employee job performance was found to be positive and strong, with a Pearson coefficient of 0.872. It is indicative of the potential trend that the mediating variable of employee perception of job characteristics may be critical in determining the association between a leader's emotional management capacity and job performance aspects.

Table 2. Correlation results among the variables



		Correlations		
		Leader's emotional management capacity	Employee perception of job characteristics	Employee job performance
Leader's emotional management capacity	Pearson Correlation	1	.654**	.689**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0
	N	100	100	100
Employee perception of job characteristics	Pearson Correlation	.654**	1	.872**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0
	N	100	100	100
Employee job performance	Pearson Correlation	.489**	.872**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	
	N	100	100	100

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to gauge the statistical causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables with and without the mediating role of employee perception of job characteristics. For this, a mediation-oriented analysis was done, whose results are explicated in the following tables.

Model: 4

Y: Employee job performance

X: Leader's emotional management capacity

M: Employee perception of job characteristics

Sample size: 100

Outcome variable: Employee perception of job characteristics

Table 2. Summary of the model.

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
0.6544	0.4282	0.4303	73.3918	1.000	98.000	0.000

The model summary shown above describes the statistical fitness of the conceptual model between independent and dependent variables. With a moderate R-value, it can be asserted that the model moderately predicts the relationship between the two variables.

Table 3. Analysis of the model

	Model					
	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-.1532	.1991	-.7694	.4435	-.5484	.2420
VAR00016	1.0995	.1283	8.5669	.0000	.8448	1.3541

The above shows the significance of the variable. Since there is no zero between the LLCI and ULCI, it can be asserted that the significance of a leader's emotional management capacity to employee perception of job characteristics is low.

Table 4. Standardized coefficients

Variable	Coefficient
Employee perception of job characteristics	0.6544

Afterwards, regression analysis was conducted on the outcome variable of employee job performance.

OUTCOME
VARIABLE:
Employee job
performance

Table 5. Summary of the model

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
0.8791	0.7729	0.2321	165.0269	2.000	97.000	0.000

As shown in the model summary above, with a high R-value, the proposed model efficaciously predicts the relationship of the variables.

Table 6. Analysis of the model

	Coeff	Se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	0.1949	0.1467	1.329	0.187	0.0962	0.486
Leader's emotional management capacity	0.2775	0.1246	-2.2267	0.0283	0.5249	0.0302

Employee perception of job characteristics	1.1195	0.0742	15.0911	0.000	0.9723	1.2667
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The table above indicates that there is a non-value between the LLCI and ULCI of a Leader's emotional management; thus, it is insignificant to an employee's job performance as a direct variable. Similarly, there is a non-zero value between LLCI and ULCI for Employee perception of job characteristics, showing that it also has an insignificant standalone impact on employee job performance.

Table 7. Standardized coefficients

Variable	Coefficient
Leader's emotional management capacity	-0.1425
Employee perception of job characteristics	0.9657

OUTCOME
VARIABLE:
Employee job
performance

Table 8. Summary of the model

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
0.8895	0.8396	0.769	30.8756	1.000	98.000	0.000

The model summary above shows the fitness of the model to explicate employee job performance. With a high R-value, the model significantly predicts the relationship of the variable.

Table 9. Analysis of the model

	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	0.0234	0.2662	0.0879	0.9301	0.5049	0.5517

Leader's emotional management capacity	0.9533	0.1716	5.5566	0.000	0.6128	1.2938
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The table is indicative that Leader's emotional management capacity is insignificant in



explicating the impact on employee job performance.

Table 10. Standardized coefficients

Variable	Coefficient
Leader's emotional management capacity	0.4895

Table 11. Cumulative impact of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
0.9533	0.1716	5.5566	0.000	0.6128	1.2938	0.4895

Table 12. Direct impact of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
-0.2775	0.1246	-2.2267	0.0283	-0.5249	-0.0302	-0.1425

Table 13. Indirect impact of X on Y

Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
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Employee perception of job characteristics	1.2308	0.1698	0.9053	1.5747
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Table 15. Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Employee perception of job characteristics	0.632	0.0792	0.4622	0.7775

Discussion and hypothesis assessment summary

The hypothesis formulated and the tests conducted for verification provided instrumental information regarding the relationship among the independent and dependent variables for the current study, namely the Leader's emotional management capacity and Employee job performance with the mediating effect of Employee perception of job characteristics. Within the domain of a Leader's emotional management abilities, the initial literature review indicated that emotional management is increasingly becoming a vital skill set required for efficacious leadership in both private and public sector organisations (Batool, 2013). Through its influence on interpersonal relationships among the workers, leaders' ability to efficaciously manage their emotions shape the manner in which relationship among workers and between the workers and the leaders are formed (Lam et al., 2012). The current research substantiated this assertion by showing that Leaders' emotional management capacity has a significant impact on employees' perception of the job. This is owing to the fact that, firstly, leaders' management of their emotions determines the general emotional dimension of the workplace. Secondly, when a leader is able to consciously bring positive emotions, perceived stress on the workers is reduced (Lam et al., 2012). However, the statistical test conducted in the current research indicated that while Leaders' emotional management capacity has a moderate statistical association with Employee job performance, it lacks a significant direct causal relationship with the latter.

Feedback, as explicated by the research of Wang et al. (2015), is the information employee receives about the quality of work and error. According to Kulkarni, Bernstein, and Klemmer (2015), the most effective way to improve the employee's performance is to give constant feedback. Therefore, leaders' emotional management influences the chain of feedback by regulating the channels of communication between the employees and the leader. According to Judge et al. (2017), their study shows that if the organisation has more scores on the job characteristics, then employees perform better and have a high motivation to do work. The concept of motivation and means-end chains are used in making the job characteristic model.

The current research was mainly focused on deciphering the impact of a leader's emotional management capacity on Employee job performance with the mediating effect of Employee's perception of job characteristics. In this respect, the role of employees was hypothesised as a determining factor that shapes the final outcome of job performance. Mediation analysis conducted verified the second hypothesis showing that a Leader's emotional management capacity has a causal relationship with Employee job performance when the mediating effect of the Employee's perception of job characteristics is accounted for in the equation between the two. The way an employee perceives their job characteristics has been in the literature to influence not only their general level of understanding of the requirements but also the general motivation for work as well (Lambart et al., 2012). Well-defined job characteristics mitigate intermittent confusion, thus reducing the issue of work lagging. Whereas blurred job characteristics or misperception by the employee negatively impacts the communication among the workers and leaders. Employees that have a positive opinion of the job characteristic model report strong work motivation and job satisfaction, which leads to good performance (Khan, Roy, and Hossain, 2019).

S. No.	Developed and tested hypothesis	Status
1	A leader's emotional management capacity positively and significantly impacts Employee's job performance.	Rejected

2	Employee perception of job characteristics positively mediates the relationship between Leader's emotional management capacity and Employee job performance.	Accepted
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Conclusion

The current research was aimed at deciphering the impact of Leaders' emotional management capacity on Employee job performance. For this, the initial guidance from the literature revealed that a role of employee's perception of job characteristics could be vital in explicating this relationship. In order to examine the connection and achieve the study objectives, the researcher adopted a primary quantitative research methodology which was predicated on a 5-point Likert-scale based survey questionnaire. A total of 100 participants were selected via convenience sampling, which held professional experience in the field. Statistical correlation and mediation tests were conducted. The correlation analysis showed the statistical association between Leader's emotional management capacity and Employee job performance is positive but only moderate. While the association between Employee perception of job characteristics and Employee performance is high. Further mediation analysis verified the second hypothesis that Employee perception of job characteristics significantly and positively mediates the relationship between leaders' emotional management ability and employee job performance.

Future implications

The current research was focused on examining the mediating role of Employee's perception of job characteristics in the relationship between Leaders' emotional management capacity and Employee job performance. Future studies could focus on decomposing these factors into in-depth subfactors; for example, as described in the literature, job characteristics include aspects such as task description and communication.

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