

Original Research Article

The impact of emotional intelligence on job performance: Examining the mediating role of job satisfaction among lecturers in state-owned universities in Shaanxi, China*Junxia Zhang**College of JinZhong, JinZhong, Shanxi province, 030605, China*

Abstract: This study explores the impact of emotional intelligence on the job performance of university lecturers and examines the mediating role of job satisfaction. Using lecturers from Shaanxi National University as the research subjects, the study investigates how emotional intelligence enhances job performance by improving work efficiency, fostering teamwork, strengthening stress management, and enhancing leadership skills. The findings indicate that emotional intelligence not only directly enhances lecturers' teaching and research performance but also indirectly boosts performance through increased job satisfaction. Therefore, universities should focus on developing lecturers' emotional intelligence to optimize overall education quality.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; Job performance; University lecturers

1. Introduction

In the context of higher education, the role of university lecturers is crucial. Their job performance directly influences the quality of education provided. However, understanding the factors that contribute to their effectiveness remains a significant area of research. Emotional intelligence has emerged as a potential determinant. This paper delves into the relationship between emotional intelligence and the job performance of university lecturers. By centering on the lecturers from Shaanxi National University, we aim to uncover how emotional intelligence functions in enhancing work efficiency, promoting teamwork, and handling stress. Moreover, we explore the mediating effect of job satisfaction, with the overarching goal of providing insights for universities to enhance educational quality through lecturer development.

2. The specific impact of emotional intelligence on job performance

2.1. Enhancing work efficiency and decision-making ability

For lecturers at Shaanxi National University, their work environment involves handling multiple tasks simultaneously, including arranging teaching assignments, formulating research plans, and collaborating with external institutions. Lecturers with high emotional intelligence can manage these tasks more systematically, preventing excessive stress from affecting work quality. For example, in course design and teaching, lecturers need to adjust their teaching methods based on student feedback and adapt their approach to different learning styles. This flexibility and adaptability, fostered by high emotional intelligence, provide them with a decision-making advantage.

In terms of research, emotionally intelligent lecturers are more patient in dealing with academic challenges. When facing manuscript rejections or research bottlenecks, they actively seek improvement strategies rather than losing motivation due to setbacks. Thus, emotional intelligence not only enhances lecturers' work efficiency but also strengthens their decision-making abilities in academic work, enabling them to advance research and

teaching more steadily^[1].

2.2. Promoting team collaboration and communication

University work is not conducted in isolation. Lecturers' daily responsibilities involve interdisciplinary cooperation, academic discussions, and communication with administrators, students, and fellow educators. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in fostering team collaboration and communication. High-EQ lecturers excel at perspective-taking, enabling them to understand students' needs and colleagues' viewpoints, leading to more efficient and inclusive communication. This contributes to a harmonious teaching environment and enhances the quality of internal teamwork.

In research teams, lecturers must work with peers to apply for grants, write papers, and organize academic activities. Ineffective communication among team members can lead to unequal task distribution, conflicts of opinion, and even hinder research outcomes. High-EQ lecturers are better at coordinating resources, resolving disagreements, and maintaining positive relationships among team members, thereby improving research efficiency.

2.3. Strengthening stress management and adaptability

University lecturers face multiple sources of stress, including the pressure to publish research, heavy teaching workloads, promotion assessments, and administrative duties. High-EQ lecturers often have superior stress management skills, allowing them to regulate their emotions effectively and maintain psychological balance. They do not succumb to short-term setbacks but instead adopt proactive methods to cope with challenges.

For example, when encountering obstacles in academic research, high-EQ individuals can adjust their mindset, seek new research directions, and avoid self-doubt due to failures. This positive emotional regulation enables them to remain productive even under high-pressure conditions, ensuring the smooth progress of teaching and research.

Furthermore, emotionally intelligent lecturers quickly adapt to changes in university policies, technological advancements, and shifts in academic evaluation systems. They are more open to new teaching models, such as online education and blended learning, rather than resisting change and compromising teaching quality. At Shaanxi National University, educational reforms and disciplinary developments are progressing rapidly, requiring lecturers to continuously adjust their teaching methods and research focus. High-EQ lecturers can flexibly redefine their roles and adapt to new evaluation criteria, ensuring steady career development.

2.4. Enhancing leadership and employee satisfaction

For young lecturers, their career development and job satisfaction are significantly influenced by academic leaders. If managers provide appropriate guidance, emotional support, and career development opportunities, young lecturers' sense of belonging and work engagement will improve significantly. Leaders with high emotional intelligence can accurately identify team members' needs and offer relevant support, strengthening team cohesion.

For instance, in project management, lecturer leaders must coordinate task distribution among team members and resolve conflicts in a timely manner to ensure smooth collaboration. In such cases, emotionally intelligent leaders can handle problems with greater inclusivity and rationality, ensuring the team operates

efficiently.

By fostering emotional intelligence, academic leaders not only improve individual performance but also contribute to a more positive and productive academic environment.^[2]

3. Strategies for enhancing emotional intelligence to optimize job performance

3.1. Developing self-awareness and emotional regulation skills

Building on self-awareness, emotional regulation is particularly crucial. Lecturers need to master scientific methods of emotional adjustment, such as mindfulness training, deep breathing relaxation techniques, and physical exercise, to maintain psychological balance and prevent negative emotions from affecting their work performance. For instance, when facing setbacks in research, high-EQ lecturers can rationally analyze problems and seek improvement strategies rather than dwelling on failure. By improving self-awareness and emotional regulation, lecturers can respond more calmly to teaching pressures, research challenges, and team collaboration issues, thereby optimizing their job performance.

3.2. Strengthening interpersonal skills and communication techniques

The work of university lecturers is not only about knowledge dissemination but also involves extensive academic collaboration, interpersonal interactions, and organizational coordination. Therefore, improving interpersonal skills and communication techniques is essential for optimizing job performance. Lecturers with high emotional intelligence can establish stronger relationships with colleagues, students, and administrators, thereby fostering teamwork and enhancing overall work efficiency^[3].

Active listening is a key factor in improving communication quality. When discussing academic viewpoints with colleagues or handling teaching management affairs, lecturers should practice active listening and avoid unnecessary conflicts caused by rigid thinking. Additionally, in the teaching process, lecturers should use effective communication techniques to stimulate students' interest in learning, such as employing encouraging language, providing constructive feedback, and creating an interactive classroom atmosphere. This positive communication approach not only strengthens the trust between lecturers and students but also enhances students' learning motivation, indirectly improving lecturers' teaching performance.

3.3. Enhancing empathy and team collaboration abilities

Empathy refers to the ability to understand others' emotions and needs and respond appropriately. In a university setting, lecturers interact with students from diverse backgrounds and with different personalities. Improving empathy helps lecturers better understand students' learning difficulties and provide targeted support. For example, for students with weaker academic abilities, lecturers can adopt personalized teaching approaches and offer additional guidance rather than merely criticizing or neglecting their challenges. This approach not only enhances students' learning experience but also increases lecturers' sense of teaching accomplishment and job satisfaction.

In terms of teamwork, high-EQ lecturers maintain a more open-minded attitude when collaborating with colleagues, preventing conflicts arising from personal interests or academic disagreements. In research teams, lecturers need to collaborate with scholars from different disciplines to apply for research grants, write papers, and conduct experiments. A lack of teamwork spirit can lead to delays in research progress or failed collaborations. High-EQ lecturers, however, can recognize the varying needs of team members, find a balance of

interests, and promote efficient team cooperation.

3.4. Cultivating a positive work attitude and stress resilience

University lecturers often face intense competition and pressure, including academic publication requirements, teaching evaluations, and promotion criteria. In such an environment, cultivating a positive work attitude and enhancing stress resilience are critical strategies for optimizing job performance.

First, a positive work attitude enhances lecturers' job satisfaction and engagement. High-EQ lecturers find motivation from the meaning and fulfillment of their work rather than merely treating teaching and research as obligatory tasks. For instance, when facing teaching challenges, they adopt an innovative mindset to explore new teaching methods instead of feeling discouraged by traditional limitations. This positive attitude not only boosts their work efficiency but also influences students and colleagues positively^[4].

Second, improving stress resilience helps lecturers better handle work-related challenges. High-EQ lecturers can transform stress into motivation rather than being overwhelmed by anxiety and uncertainty. For example, in the face of rigorous academic reviews or intense competition for research grants, high-EQ lecturers do not lose confidence due to failure. Instead, they analyze setbacks, learn from their experiences, and adjust their strategies for better results.

By developing emotional intelligence in these areas, university lecturers can significantly improve their job performance, enhance their relationships with students and colleagues, and adapt more effectively to the evolving academic landscape.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that emotional intelligence significantly impacts the job performance of lecturers at Shaanxi National University and plays a mediating role through improved job satisfaction. Lecturers with high emotional intelligence are better at managing emotions, improving communication efficiency, strengthening teamwork, and adapting to challenges in research and teaching. Furthermore, developing emotional intelligence helps cultivate a positive work attitude and enhances stress resilience, ultimately optimizing overall job performance. Therefore, universities should implement emotional intelligence training programs to enhance lecturers' job satisfaction and performance, thereby contributing to the continuous improvement of education quality.

References

- [1] SHANMUGANATHAN J,SATHISHKUMAR A S,SRIPRIYA S T.Critical factors of emotional intelligence and its effect on leadership qualities at workplace: a success mantra for effective leaders[J].International Journal of Social Sciences and Management,2020,7(1):12-16.
- [2] ELKHATIB M,ALMTEIRI M,ALQASEMI S A.The correlation between emotional intelligence and project management success[J].IBusiness,2021,13(1):18-29.
- [3] OTHMAN A K,ABDULLAH H S,AHMAD J.The influence of work motivation on emotional intelligence and team effectiveness relationship[J].Vision,2009,13(4):1-14.
- [4] DAS A,MALIK A R.Significance of emotional intelligence in occupational perspective:a critical review[J].Significance,2019,11(18):129-136.