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## Article

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Global Business & Finance Review (GBFR)

## Provided in Cooperation with:

People & Global Business Association (P&GBA), Seoul

*Suggested Citation:* Lim, JiEun (2017) : The effects of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction and customer orientation of hotel employees: Moderating effect of value sharing, Global Business & Finance Review (GBFR), ISSN 2384-1648, People & Global Business Association (P&GBA), Seoul, Vol. 22, Iss. 1, pp. 80-90,  
<https://doi.org/10.17549/gbfr.2017.22.1.80>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/224364>

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## The Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction and Customer Orientation of Hotel Employees: Moderating Effect of Value Sharing

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI), job satisfaction, and customer orientation on hotel employees. Moreover, this study was designed to test the moderating effect of employees' value sharing to provide practical resources for a hotel. In this study, 4 hypotheses based on literature reviews were introduced. A sample of 300 hotel employees was surveyed and a total of 241 usable questionnaires were analyzed. Then the data was analyzed utilized multiple regression analysis through the use of the SPSS program. The results are as follows: First, EI had partial effects on job satisfaction. Second, EI was a significantly positive effect on employees' customer orientation. Third, employees' job satisfaction had a significantly positive effect on customer orientation. Lastly, employees' value sharing had partial moderating effects between EI and customer orientation. The results of this study may contribute to the better understanding of EI with value sharing of employees to increasing the customer orientation in the hotel.

*Key words: Emotional Intelligence; Job Satisfaction; Customer Orientation; Value Sharing; Moderating Effect*

### 1. Introduction

The hotel industry is dependent on human resources who direct contact with the customer. As technology has rapidly changed the way hotels do business, they have been affected by shifts in emphasis on employee's emotional intelligence (EI). It has increased interest in EI because this can determine the capability, which may affect the quality of service

in relation to customer perception, allowing colleagues to work with seamless communication in stressful encounters. Due to increased competition in the hospitality industry, organizations place great emphasis on "service with a smile" to maximize service quality and customer satisfaction (Kim et al., 2012). EI particularly influences employee performance in the case of employees who are required to exhibit a high level of emotional engagement (Glomb et al., 2004).

EI is an individual competence to perceive, understand, facilitate, and manage emotions to understand the feelings of others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). EI also has been used as an important index in relationships with others to control an individual's emotional state (Wong & Law, 2002). It is an

Received : Mar. 31, 2016; Revised : Jan. 19, 2017; Accepted : Feb. 3, 2017

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important aspect of competency reflected in individuals' enhanced capabilities in dealing with emotional issues (Kim et al., 2012) in service encounters. EI is a psychological resource of employees, so EI has a positive impact on the lives and happiness of employees and a buffer action against the negative impact of helplessness, stress, and anxiety. Goleman (1998) found that emotional intelligence was twice as important as technical skills and IQ, at all levels. Indeed, EI has become an increasingly popular topic within the fields of psychology and management (Mayer et al., 2008).

Until now, research on EI has usually focused on the influence of EI on service performance (Prentice & King, 2010; Lee et al, 2013), the relationship between EI and emotional labor (Jung & Yoon, 2014), meta-analysis on EI, job performance, and other individual differences (Joseph & Newman, 2010), as well as organizational effectiveness (Kim et al; Park et al, 2012). Previous studies have identified these important constructs and despite its practical and academic expansion, some important questions about EI remain. Few empirical studies have been undertaken which might provide the moderating role of value sharing on the relationship between EI and customer orientation of employees. Although EI is a wildly popular tool in organizations, organizational science has yet to answer many theoretical, measurement, and validity questions surrounding the construct (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Thus, the principal objective of this study is to not only explore the sub-factors of EI that significantly affect employees' job satisfaction and customer orientation, but it also attempts to establish the moderating effects of value sharing between EI and customer orientation.

## II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

### A. Emotional Intelligence as a Determinant of Job Satisfaction and Customer Orientation

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability

to understand and respond to emotions in daily life (Gunderman, 2011), the ability to perceive and understand emotional information, and the capability to generate and regulate emotions that promote emotional and intellectual growth (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). EI is now widely recognized as an essential attribute of a successful leader and a critical element in creating a culture of safety (Tyler, 2015).

Service providers who are employees in service encounters in hotel setting can make a meaningful moment of truth by displaying friendly emotions when communicating with customers. So EI is required for employees in a hotel, who should motivate and control one's feelings and attitudes in order to produce the best moment for customer satisfaction. Ashkanasy & Daus (2005) conceptualized that EI is particularly effective for the customer service provider who works in a place where emotions are prevalent and demand of emotional labor is high. Furthermore they identified that EI research is grounded in recent scientific advances in the study of emotion; specifically regarding the role emotion plays in organizational behavior. Goldstein et al. (2002) provide that EI draws upon the attention that it taps into a substantial portion of job performance, which is not explained by traditional intelligence. It has been claimed, for example, that individuals with high levels of EI are more committed and loyal to an organization (Adeyemo, 2007) and use emotions to engage in adaptive behaviors (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Work itself in a hotel is emotional labor with expressing of an employee's emotions and recognizing emotions in others as important to fostering positive interactions with customers. In particular, Kim et al (2012) proposed that employees' service performance involve behaviors that serve and help customers and also employees' positive emotional displays are typically central to the customer service experience, associated with favorable customer evaluations as well. In this way, EI can mitigate the downside of emotional work that is performed by frontline employees and may affect performance during encounters with customers (Prentice & King, 2010). Hence EI can affect employee performance.

Recent studies revealed that EI is positively related to performance. Goleman (1995) has suggested that EI can positively affect relationships with others and overall job performance. He popularized this concept and proposed that EI can be categorized as self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and handling relationships. He also suggested that EI can be defined as competency in managing one's emotions, which can positively affect relationships with others and job performance. EI is a psychological resource of employees, with Jeon & Lee (2011) concluding that EI has a positive impact on the job satisfaction of employees and organizational effectiveness as well. Wong & Law (2002), who viewed EI as consisting of self-emotion appraisal, others' emotional appraisal, use of emotion, and the regulation of emotion, suggested that EI is a core variable that affects the performance of leaders. More recently, Higgs (2004), Anari (2012), Psilopanagioti et al. (2012), and Hanzae & Mirvaisi (2013) confirmed a positive association between employee EI and job performance. Psilopanagioti et al. (2012) suggested that EI (self emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, regulation of emotion, use of emotion) appears to play a critical role in job satisfaction about human interaction. In 2012 Anari, revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between EI and job satisfaction. Especially, Hanzae & Mirvaisi (2013) insisted that EI has a maximum role in providing attractive and conducive working environments, which would motivate employees and enhance their job satisfaction with their career and organizations. On the other hand, Pettijohn et al. (2010) found that EI was significantly and positively related to customer orientation and a characteristic described as being amenable to training and development efforts. Further, the literature suggested that salesperson's empathy and affective reactions could establish a deeper engagement with customer. Other scholars have subsequently confirmed these findings, with Kim & Lee (2015) suggesting that EI as an individual characteristic was the second strongest factor associated with customer orientation. And customer orientation most strongly correlated

with personal traits with emotional intelligence, age and clinical experience. Based upon the above discussions and research, the following hypotheses were developed.

**Hypothesis 1:** EI is positively related to the job satisfaction of employees.

**Hypothesis 2:** EI is positively related to the customer orientation of employees.

## B. Job Satisfaction as a Determinant of Customer Orientation

Hotels are labor intensive and hospitality oriented in order to provide personal service to customers (Hanzae & Mirvaisi, 2013), so employees in an organization are very important to hotel management. The service employee's customer orientation is central to a company's ability to be truly market oriented, which is essential for a positive image, trust building, and continuing profitability (Gountas et al., 2014-b). Customer orientation is the level of employee behavior through personal interaction with customer needs (Henning-Thurau, 2004). According to Pilling & Eroglu (1994), the employee's role in determining customer satisfaction is attributed to the fact that employees create customer expectations, providing customer service and solutions. They also indicated that all these factors combine to influence the degree of satisfaction experienced by the customer. Over the long term, customer satisfaction and retention are critical determinants of success and the employee's degree of customer orientation has been described as being a critical determinant of the customer's satisfaction (Pettijohn et al., 2007).

Job satisfaction has been defined in many ways. Job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state that results from the job experience (Locke, 1976) and a set of feelings people have about their jobs (Gountas et al., 2014-a). Spector (1985) suggested that job satisfaction can be defined as a cluster of evaluative feelings about the job and he designed job satisfaction dimensions for human

service, public, and nonprofit sector organizations. This dimensions range from concepts such as pay, promotion, supervision, benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-workers, the nature of work, and communication. As previously mentioned, job satisfaction is a variable that has received considerable attention in management literature (Pettijohn et al., 2007). Spector (1985) indicated that Locke (1976) has calculated at least 3,350 articles had been written on the topic by 1972. Considerable research has examined the relationship between job satisfaction and performance (Aronson et al., 2005). However, findings are inconsistent (Gountas et al., 2014-a), although there are two main arguments for such a link (George, 1991). Some researchers (Donavan et al., 2004; Menguc et al., 2016) developed and tested a model that explains how service-worker customer orientation affects several important job responses including perceived job fit and job satisfaction, while others did not support this relationship. In essence, research indicated that customer orientation is an antecedent to job satisfaction (Donavan et al. 2004) and job satisfaction also partially mediates the relationships between personal resources and customer orientation (Gountas et al., 2014-a). From this perspective, Wagenheim & Anderson (2008) suggested that employees who are more satisfied with the relationship they enjoy with co-workers have a higher customer orientation. Recently, Wu et al. (2013) has studied that job satisfaction can inspire employees to become more customer oriented in order to increase productivity. Consistent with the weight of the evidence, the following hypothesis was proposed.

**Hypothesis 3:** Job satisfaction is positively related to the customer orientation of employees.

### C. Moderating effect of value sharing

Implementation of the marketing concept in service firms is accomplished through individual service employees and their interactions with customers

(Donavan et al., 2004). As boundary spanners, service employees are crucial to customer satisfaction and their perceptions of service quality (Hennig-Thurau & Thurau, 2003). Service employees take the customer's perspective during interactions visually, cognitively, and emotionally and all of these three facets enable the employee to understand the consumer's needs. (Hennig-Thurau, 2004) Undoubtedly, successful behaviors towards customers necessarily starts with a motivation to behave in a customer-oriented manner, and this is affected by conditions such as role conflict or ambiguity, job satisfaction, management commitment, and organizational commitment (Gountas et al., 2014-b).

However, customer orientation is often affected by organizational culture, which is a key influence on behavioral outcomes, influencing the service provider's affect and performance behavior (Hennig-Thurau & Thurau, 2003). All members of an organization participate in a corporate culture, where actions promote cultural values (Dempsey, 2015). Organizational values are critical in the functioning of organizations, the degree to which individual members perceive that their organizational values are shared by other members is likely to be a significant determinant of the level of task and relationship conflict experienced by team members (Lankau et al., 2007). In a recent study, Verquer et al. (2003) studied that organizational value congruity had found significant relationships between fit and employees' attitudes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Organizational value congruity, in other words - value sharing, can underpin organizational culture (Dempsey, 2015), which refers to the taken for granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, and definitions that characterize organizations and their members (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Previous studies on organizational value congruity have been conducted in a variety of ways, including person-organization fit. Hoffman & Woehr (2006) suggested that value congruence was the most frequently assessed dimension of person-organization fit and a strong person-organization fit can lead to numerous positive

outcomes, such as reduced turnover and increased citizenship behaviors. When individual employees' values match those of their organization, they are likely to report higher levels of satisfaction and commitment and lower levels of turnover intent (Amos & Weathington, 2008). According to Andrews et al. (2011), the construct of person-organization fit has been demonstrated to affect a variety of individual and organizational outcomes. Furthermore, Seong et al. (2012) have found that person-organization fit is likely to be important in complex relationships and mediates work status and organizational commitment, as workers are more likely to make a stronger commitment to the organization. Yoon & Park (2012) studied that high degree of shared value in organizational culture has significant moderating influence on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Yang & Park (2013) suggested that shared values can moderate the relationships between learning about an organization and organizational commitment. Also, Kim et al. (2014) identified the moderating role of person-organization value congruence climate within nursing units. When the shared value climate was high, tenure at the unit and customer identification behavior was weaker. Thus, it can be deduced that those with a higher self control of EI are more likely to have higher customer orientation behavior through better value sharing. The above research findings lead to the following hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 4:** Value sharing positively moderates the relationship between EI and customer orientation.

### III. Method

#### A. Research Setting and Sample

To verify the sets of hypotheses, this study conducted a quota sampling survey that targeted front line employees who are working in a deluxe hotel in Seoul. The employees of hotel were segmented

into exclusive sub-groups and selected the units from each segment based on a specified proportion. The questionnaire survey was conducted from 2016 January 4 to February 5. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed and 241 usable questionnaires were analyzed. To improve response rate, the purpose of survey was fully explained in advance. Then the data was analyzed using multiple regression analysis using the SPSS application. Among the participants, men accounted for the largest part, at 71.4% and 28.6% were women. The age of contributors included those in their 30s (48.5%), 20s (27.4%), and those remaining in their 40s or above (24.1%). In terms of respondents' educational backgrounds, the group included those from undergraduate school (44.4%), community college (42.3%), and graduate school (13.2%). Working experience as a hotelier accounted for more than 7 years (55.2%), 2~6 years (38.2%), less than 1 year (6.6%).

#### B. Measures

The factors of this study was based on the previous research and used a 5 point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to measure each factor. The conceptual grounding was used in the items' development. For Emotional Intelligence (EI), in this research 12 items from Goleman (2001), Chung (2014), Jeong & Han (2010) were modified to fit this study. Items include, for example, "I can manage my emotions well", "I can control my anger and can solve problem rationally", "I recognize my own emotional states", "I understand my emotions", "I understand other's emotions". For job satisfaction, Items from Smith et al. (1969), Spector (1985), and Park (2012) were used. This scale measures 4 aspects of job satisfaction, which were chosen from a review of the research. Sample items include, "I am satisfied with the wage levels" and "I am satisfied with the supervision". For customer orientation, 3 items from Donovan et al. (2004) and Pettijohn et al. (2007) were modified to fit this study. Items include, for example, "Every customer's problem is important

to me”, “I thrive on giving individual attention to each customer”, “I have the customer’s best interest in mind”. For value sharing, 4 items from Amos & Weathington (2008) and Yoon & Park (2013) were used. Items include, for example, “To what extent are the values of the hotel similar to your own values?” and “To what extent are the visions of the hotel similar to your own vision of future?”

### C. Verification of Reliability and Validity

The items from the previous research was verified through the Principal Components Method and factor analysis with the Varimax Method. The criteria for determining the number of factors is defined as a 1.0 Eigen Value. Emotional intelligence (EI) was extracted as 4 factors. Job satisfaction, customer orientation, and value sharing were extracted as 1 factor individually. Each factor has a loading value in excess of 0.6. This means that the intended variables are actually measured. The reliability of variables is judged by internal consistency as assessed by

Cronbach’s Alpha. Overall values of items exceeded the standards (over 0.7), so it is generally accepted to have a reliability. The results of the reliability and validity tests are presented in Table 1.

### D. Correlation among factors

The Pearson Correlation Test results among factors before hypothesis testing are shown in Table 2. The multi-collinearity was determined based on the Tolerance. The minimum tolerance of 0.573(over 0.1) show that the statistical significance of the variable was not compromised by multi-collinearity.

### E. Analysis of Hypotheses

To analyze the relationships among dimensions and to identify the moderating effects of value sharing between EI and customer orientation, four hypotheses were examined with multiple regression analysis. First, the results in Table 3 show that of the sub-factors

**Table 1.** The result of exploratory factor analysis

Constructs	Dimensions	Item Numbers (factor loading)	Eigen Value	% of variance	Cronbach’s Alpha
Emotional Intelligence	Self-control	4(.834, .824, .761, .648)	5.537	34.609	.835
	Self-management	4(.816, .792, .789, .745)	2.635	16.471	.859
	Empathy	4(.822, .796, .710, .707)	1.680	10.498	.834
	Self-awareness	4(.841, .815, .802, .800)	1.117	6.984	.832
Job satisfaction		4(.848, .845, .842, .804)	2.789	69.719	.855
Customer orientation		3(.893, .891, .800)	2.232	74.399	.823
Value sharing		4(.878, .866, .857, .842)	2.963	74.084	.881

**Table 2.** Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-control	1						
Self-management	.468**	1					
Empathy	.421**	.607	1				
Self-awareness	.087	.106	.048	1			
Job satisfaction	.443**	.718**	.721**	.134*	1		
Customer orientation	.421**	.555**	.590**	.181**	.716**	1	
Value sharing	.428**	.676**	.622**	.106	.752**	.739**	1

\* P<.05, \*\* P<.01

**Table 3.** Result of Multiple Regression

	Job satisfaction	Customer orientation
Self-control	.057(1.275)	.134(2.388)*
Self-management	.418(8.224)**	.252(3.923)**
Empathy	.440(8.914)**	.374(5.976)**
Self-awareness	.064(1.640)	.124(2.536)*
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.645	.430
F (Sig.)	109.950 (.000)	46.287 (.000)
Job satisfaction		.716(15.862)**
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>		.511
F (Sig.)		251.615 (.000)

\* P&lt;.05, \*\* P&lt;.01, ( ) = t value

of EI, only self-management and empathy have statistical significances with job satisfaction ( $\beta=0.418$ ;  $0.440$ ). Moreover, empathy has a stronger relationship than self-management with job satisfaction at the 0.01 level of significance. Second, all sub-factors of EI exert a positive effect on customer orientation at the 0.05 level of significance ( $\beta=0.134$ ,  $0.252$ ,  $0.374$ ,  $0.124$ ). Especially empathy is the most important factor with customer orientation. Third, job satisfaction has a positive relationship with customer orientation at the 0.01 level of significance as well ( $\beta=0.716$ ). Thus, H1, H2, and H3 were supported. All research hypotheses were chosen, and demonstrate statistical significance.

The final hypothesis is that the effect of EI on customer orientation may be moderated by value sharing. As shown in Table 4, Value sharing significantly moderates the relationship between only

self-control of EI and customer orientation ( $\beta=0.586$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Thus, H4 was partially supported. Based on this results, when employees have higher value sharing in a hotel, EI has a stronger impact on their customer orientation attitude. Therefore, we can find that only self-control of EI has strong impact on customer orientation attitude in workplace with value sharing.

## IV. Conclusions

### A. Discussion

This study has examined whether EI is positively related to job satisfaction and customer orientation behavior of employees in a hotel and attempted to establish the moderating effects of value sharing

**Table 4.** Moderating effect of value sharing

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t
Gender	.066	.890	.069	1.023	.037	.745	.034	.679
Age	.154	2.083*	.123	1.818	.014	.287	.007	.135
Self-control (SC)			.414	7.054**	.129	2.690*	-.250	-1.312
Value sharing(VS)					.683	14.136**	.378	2.422
SC*VS							.586	2.052*
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.010		.178		.553		.559	
F	2.184		18.338**		75.247**		61.858**	

\* P&lt;.05, \*\* P&lt;.01

between EI and customer orientation. This study revealed the following characteristics:

First, Among four dimensions of EI, only self-management and empathy were statistically significant on job satisfaction. In research, Psilopanagioti et al. (2012), self-awareness of the factors that elicit particular emotions permits physicians to act in the most appropriate way to enhance job satisfaction. However, the results of this study showed different results from that of a previous study. This result indicated that an employee who has only the ability to understand emotions and self-control cannot deal with the hotel service industry. In other words, self-awareness is to manage one's internal state but it cannot cope with conflict, stress, and emotional labor. This means that employees with higher levels of self-management and empathy may satisfy the role of their job more easily, a job which is very demanding from customer. In other words, employees who are sensitive to the moods and feelings of others and can do their best to achieve the goals and they tend to be more satisfied with the job. Moreover, empathy provides the highest correlations with employee job satisfaction. Thus, it requires a variety of programs for understanding other people's emotions and organizational culture, which can allow one to motivate themselves. With regard to support at in-hotel programs, club activities such as mirror and role playing with members can improve interpersonal connections and aware another's emotional state with verbal and physical expression.

Second, the stronger of EI that an employee has, the stronger customer orientation are, that is, as level of emotional intelligence increases, the level of an employee's customer orientation attitude increases accordingly. This result confirms that, if employees understand, control, and manage their emotions effectively, they can improve positive organizational performance, such as increased customer orientation. Therefore, this implies that a hotel needs to develop milieu to support counseling service for employees who will be able to balance emotional labor cordially in order to diminish stress and conflicts. In addition,

if there is employee who has weak EI level, the hotel should provide online and offline counseling programs to help employee improve their self management, self control, empathy, and self awareness with self development.

In summary, the finding that EI is an antecedent to job satisfaction and customer orientation gives important implications for managers in a hotel. Thus, managers should recruit employees with the EI trait in mind, and might also reconsider how this personality trait could develop over time with a social life and counseling program present. Moreover, it is necessary to recognize employees as partners and to see the subject of mutual growth.

In other words, the greater the employees' job satisfaction, the greater customer orientation behavior will be. Much research has shown that job satisfaction is significantly related to customer orientation (Wagenheim & Anderson, 2008; Wu et al., 2013; Gountas et al., 2014-a), and the result of this research further supports these previous research findings. Though this finding seems like common sense, it suggest that how employees feel about the job at a hotel can influence the level of employee behavior in personal interaction with customer needs for better service. Again, managers of a hotel need to understand that employees' customer orientation behavior is likely to be influenced by their job satisfaction level, which in turn is affected by working milieu and communication with co-workers and managers. Thus, organizations need to encourage positive working condition through pay, good opportunities for advancement in the organization, the opportunities to interact with others, and sustainable training programs for job performance. The hotel should support unofficial clubs to strengthen employees' solidarity and communication beyond specific work roles by providing opportunities for positive working relationships

Finally, the significant role of value sharing suggests that only self control of emotional intelligence and customer orientation could be moderated by value sharing. On the basis of the present study, value sharing can influence employees'

attitudes. The employees may be motivated to limit their use of self-control when they deliver service to a customer. In particular, those employees who are sensitive to the regulation and change of emotions were shown to be associated with the level of value sharing for customer orientation behavior. So, when recruiting and hiring employees, organizations may find it useful to consider what values their employees believe are important (Amos & Weathington, 2008). Moreover, to create relationship based on the values of care and trust among co-workers gives us clarity of direction to execute service with professional competence. Thus, managers need to nourish and share core values and visions from top to bottom of a hotel organization. The hotel could invite employees for cultural performances with positive contents. Additionally, managers should constantly try and experiment with new ideas to create a work culture where employees love to work, where they are able to enhance their individual visions and goals of life.

This study has academic and practical implications in that EI could be used as tool to enhance an organizational paradigm with more effective internal marketing. Furthermore, this study investigated value sharing as a moderator, specifically between EI and customer orientation behavior. From a practical perspective, this research indicates that hotels need to apply the concept of EI to organizational development for customer orientation.

## B. Limitations

This study, in terms of theory base, contributes to existing business literature of EI and value sharing by consolidating existing research and pointing to important directions for future research. EI is an attracting research concept as an individual difference variable in organizational behavior and relates to how employees motivate, understand, and control their feelings for physical and mental management to express desired emotions. As a result, conclusions from the studies provide empirical evidence for the

prediction of management success. The findings would be informative for decision makers in the service sector, however, this study has limitations and future studies should follow. First, the related shortcoming is that all sample data is derived from employees in a deluxe hotel in Seoul. Therefore, there may be a problem in generalizing these results to other settings and populations. Another limitation of this study comes from the fact that the entire sample used for this research was collected from employees only. It should be questioned whether this is also true for managers and a board of directors as well. The limitations of this study can serve as suggestions for future research. In any case, future research should use sample data from both employees and managers to validate the findings suggested this research. Additionally, future studies need to expand the range of EI into various occupational groups.

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