From Campus to Career: A Conceptual Paper on Emotional Intelligence and Graduates' Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the subtle connections that occur between university graduates' emotional intelligence and organizational commitment as they move from Campus to Career, intending to reduce the problem of high turnover rates prevalent among Chinese university graduates. The rising turnover rate among college graduates as a population poses a great challenge to society, companies, government departments, and educational institutions. While existing organizational behavior studies have mainly examined the impact on organizational commitment from the perspectives of economic and social factors, this study uniquely explores the impact on organizational commitment from the domain of psychological factors, i.e., from the perspective of emotional intelligence. In China, the emotional intelligence of fresh graduates is a key factor affecting employment stability. Therefore, this study highlights the key role of emotional intelligence in influencing graduates' organizational commitment. By shedding light on this critical relationship, this study aims to provide insights that can be

used to reduce graduate turnover, increase organizational commitment, and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the characteristics that influence graduate organizational commitment in societies, firms, government departments, and educational institutions.

Keywords: Graduates，emotional intelligence, organizational commitment, conceptual analysis

1. Introduction

At present, Chinese college students in the class of 2021 also experienced a turnover rate of about 38 percent of people within six months, meaning that almost four out of 10 graduates chose to change jobs within the first six months, according to Mycos Research Institute (2022). Correspondingly, as many as 34 percent of the graduates of the class of 2022 have left their jobs within six months of graduation due to the failure of the jobs, they entered that did not meet their career expectations, the high turnover rate is for post-90s college graduates who have been working for a short time. The phenomenon that the time cycle is getting shorter and shorter deserves attention (Lie Pin Big Data Research Institute, 2022).

Now, the new phenomenon in which college graduates born in the 1990s who have been out of work for a long time generally change jobs more often, and shorter and shorter tenure deserves special attention by every organization (Yang & Shen, 2015). According to Modecki, Zimmer-Gembeck and Guerra (2017), a person's success in life depends on his or her ability to control and regulate emotions and handle related information appropriately. Ali (2020) states that if a person can handle emotions well, trust, loyalty, commitment, productivity, and innovation can be formed among individuals, groups, and organisations. In fast-paced modern life, people with high EI generally have strong strengths. Social skills and strong will help in facing challenges better, facing obstacles and solving problems in their career development.

Combined with a specific reality, individuals with high EI have strong self-awareness, self-awareness, willpower and the ability to withstand pressure and the desire to achieve. When faced with obstacles, they do not think of giving up, but instead, focus on how to solve the obstacle and overcome the obstacle. The level of emotional intelligence directly determines the level of achievement in work, and an index of personality attractiveness in communication, all of which highlight the importance of emotional intelligence. Employee EI is positively correlated with organizational commitment. Increasing graduate EI will help increase organizational loyalty (Ren, 2022).

2. Definition and Concept of Emotional Intelligence

The Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EI) is a measure of the evaluation indicator of the level of emotional intelligence. The concept of emotional intelligence refers to the quality of human emotions and their ability to adapt to society. In the 1930s, in the psychologist's intelligence test, Alexander found that the subject's emotions greatly influenced the test results and had put forward "Non-intellectual Factors" which attracted the attention of psychologists. Emotional intelligence was first proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1990). Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (1999) proposed a four-branch model of emotional intelligence which divides emotional intelligence into perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and controlling emotions. Accordingly, Goleman (2004) has referred to emotional intelligence in five dimensions: Self-cognition, self-management, self-motivation, empathy, and relationship processing.

Baron (1997), the developer of Baron's EI scale, has described emotional intelligence as "A set of influential non-cognitive abilities and skills that develop as individuals deal with environmental changes and stressors". The study also presents five dimensions of the emotional intelligence model, namely internal, and interpersonal components. component, adaptation component, stress management component general mood component, and fifteen related abilities. Baron's (Baron, 2011) study also confirmed that emotional intelligence is a combination of social and emotional cognition and an individual's ability to actively respond to changes in their environment and surroundings.

Emotional Intelligence involves processing and manipulating emotional information it is defined as the ability to perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2016). It can be defined as "A set of abilities and skills that a person must acquire gradually and hierarchically to find emotional self-fulfillment (Papoutsi, Chaidi, Drigas, Skianis, & Karagiannidis 2022). In this research, The Emotional Intelligence Quotient refers to the evaluation indicator of the level of emotional intelligence and contains perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and controlling emotions.

According to Mayer and Salovey (1997), emotion perception is the ability to recognise emotions in faces, pictures, music, etc. Blom, Aarts and Semin (2021) think perceiving emotions contains visual information, auditory information, semantic information as well as previous knowledge of emotion concepts. In this research, perceiving emotion was generally signified by an archetypal emotional state, and attaching the appropriate label.

Using emotions is the ability to harness emotional information in one's thinking (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Using emotions buffers the negative effects of negative affectivity on depressive symptoms, as a suicide protective factor in the views of Chang, Nicolas, Rey, Extremera and Chang (2021). In this research, using emotions is a reasonable thinking judgment that needs a person with a reasonable ability to regulate emotions.

Meyer and Salovey (2008) think understanding emotions is the ability to understand emotional information and reason with emotions. Understanding emotion is the ability to recognize, label, interpret, and respond to our own and others' emotions by Aznar and Tenenbaum (2013). In this research, understanding emotions is to understand the high requirements of emotion, understand complex emotions, from the emotion produced at the same time to sort out a variety of emotions, but also the transformation of emotions have to understand the analysis.

According to Mayer and Salovey (1997), controlling emotions is the ability to manage emotions for personal and interpersonal development. This dimension is the highest dimension of Mayer and Salovey's emotional intelligence ladder, and in this research, controlling emotions means people can effectively control their emotions, which includes keeping an open mind to all kinds of emotions, and monitoring and controlling emotions so that EQ and IQ can be continuously increased.

Hastutiningtyas, Maemunah, and Lakar (2021) said adolescent development will allow

adolescents to begin to learn about themselves as they become capable of regulating and controlling their emotions, which can have detrimental effects if they are unable to do so. The interplay between emotional control and intellectual growth signifies the potential for continuous personal development in these domains. It can be defined as "A set of abilities and skills that a person must acquire gradually and hierarchically to find emotional self-fulfillment (Papoutsi, Chaidi, Drigas, Skianis, & Karagiannidis, 2022).

Blom, Aarts, and Semin (2021) think perceiving emotions contain visual information, auditory information, and semantic information as well as previous knowledge of emotion concepts. It also encompasses the cognition and expression of emotions about others, art, language, and other domains. The emotion recognition ability of emotions expressed by other people can be important for job performance, leadership, bargaining, and career success (Blickle, Kranefeld, Wihler, Kückelhaus, & Menges, 2022).

Emotional intelligence has been recognized as a core variable affecting job performance (Nightingale, Spiby, Sheen, & Slade, 2018). EI levels may vary between occupations, especially among healthcare professionals (Talman, Hupli, Rankin, Engblom, & Haavisto, 2020), with nurses having high EI (Alonazi, 2020). Research also suggests that improving emotional intelligence skills affects nurses' performance (Alonazi, 2020), and less experiencing negative emotions (Moroń, Biolik-Moroń, & Differences, 2021).

3. Definition and Concept of Organizational Commitment

The concept of organizational commitment was initially introduced by Becker (1960), an American sociologist, to describe the relationship between employees and the organizations they work for. Becker defined organizational commitment from a behavioural perspective, portraying it as a psychological phenomenon wherein employees choose to remain with an organization due to their growing unilateral commitment to it. Recognizing that psychological motivation underlies behaviour, Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) expanded on Becker's work by highlighting that organizational commitment is an attitudinal concept tied to employees' perceived benefits of staying with the organization. This led to the conceptualization of organizational commitment in an attitudinal direction.

A classic definition of organizational commitment, as stated by Buchanan (1974), emphasizes that employees who identify with the goals and values of the organization, demonstrate full commitment to their work, and display loyalty towards their organizational membership. In line with this, Robbins, Wang, and Yuan (2016) describe organizational commitment as "the extent to which an employee identifies with a specific organization, its goals, and desires to maintain membership within the organization."

The concept of "manager-perceived employee organizational commitment" has gained prominence alongside the expansion of research on employee organizational commitment (Shore Barksdale & Shore, 1995; Weer & Greenhaus, 2017). The key distinction between the two lies in their measurement: employee organizational commitment is assessed through self-assessment scales completed by employees themselves, whereas manager-perceived

employee organizational commitment is derived from the evaluations made by managers regarding their employees' commitment.

Organizational commitment is individuals' psychological attachment to their organizations marked by trust and acceptance of organizational values and characteristics, as well as intense motivation and desire to reach the vision and mission for organizational existence (Utami, Widiatna, Ayuningrum, Putri, Herlyna, & Adisel,2021). Allen and Meyer(1990) proposed a three-component model, which is divided into affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. According to Ling and Wang. (2000), a structural model of organizational commitment in China has been identified that includes five factors, normative commitment, affective commitment, ideal commitment, opportunity commitment and economic commitment. This study identifies organizational commitment as an important employee attitudinal variable and categorizes organizational commitment into affective, continuance and normative commitment.

Allen and Meyer (1990) described affective commitment as an affective or emotional attachment to the organization such that the strongly committed individual identifies with, is involved in, and enjoys membership in the organization. The affective commitment of employees describes the emotional motivation of the social relationship between employees and the organization (Kaur & Paruthi, 2019). Udin, Dananjoyo, Shaikh, and Vio Linarta (2022) said that affective commitment was also positively and significantly related to employee performance. According to Astuty and Udin (2020), affective commitment is marked by the identification of employees with high loyalty to the organization.

Individuals with high levels of continuance commitment stayed longer in the organisation than those with low levels of continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Faisal-E-Alam and Nahar (2022) suggested that employee satisfaction in the workplace significantly predicts employee continuance commitment. Chigeda, Ndofirepi, and Steyn (2022) found that emotional intelligence has a positive relationship with sustained commitment has a positive and significant relationship. Chelliah, Sundarapandiyan, and Vinoth (2015) found that work engagement affects continuance commitment.

4. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment in Previous Research

According to Tyng, Amin, Saad, and Malik, (2017), a person's success in life depends on his or her ability to control and regulate emotions and handle related information appropriately. Ali (2020) states that if a person can handle emotions well, trust, loyalty, commitment, productivity, and innovation can be formed among individuals, groups, and organisations. In fast-paced modern life, people with high EI generally have strong strengths. Social skills and strong will help in facing challenges better, facing obstacles and solving problems in their career development.

Combined with a specific reality, individuals with high EI have strong self-awareness, self-awareness, willpower and the ability to withstand pressure and the desire to achieve.

When faced with obstacles, they do not think of giving up, but instead, focus on how to solve the obstacle and overcome the obstacle. The level of emotional intelligence directly determines the level of achievement in work, and an index of personality attractiveness in communication, all of which highlight the importance of emotional intelligence. Employee EI is positively correlated with organizational commitment. Increasing graduate EI will help increase organizational loyalty (Ren, 2022).

EI increases job satisfaction by helping employees reduce negative feelings, by increasing positive feelings and/or by improving work performance. (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2018). Therefore, it is speculated that employee EI is positively correlated with organizational commitment and that increased graduate EI will help increase organizational loyalty.

According to Tyng, Amin, Saad, and Malik, (2017), an individual's success in life hinges on their ability to control and regulate emotions while appropriately handling related information. Effective emotional management fosters trust, loyalty, commitment, productivity, and innovation within individuals, groups, and organizations (Demir & Tatar, 2022).

The level of emotional intelligence directly impacts one's work performance and serves as a measure of personal attractiveness in communication, emphasizing the significance of emotional intelligence. Employee EI demonstrates a positive correlation with organizational commitment, and enhancing the emotional intelligence of graduates can contribute to increased organizational loyalty (Ren, 2022).

Ahad, Mustafa, Mohamad, Abdullah, and Nordin, (2021) reached a similar conclusion, establishing a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and emotional intelligence. This finding indicates that a positive emotional intelligence profile can foster strong organizational commitment (Ahad et al., 2021). Tyng et al. (2017) discovered that effective emotional control serves as a motivator for individuals to develop a deep commitment to the organization (Tyng et al., 2017). Lokman Mohd Tahir, Khadijah Daud, and Rozita Rahmat (2011) also noted that well-regulated emotions contribute to a stronger commitment to the organization (Lokman et al., 2011).

By examining the impact of EI training on staff and residents in aged care facilities, Karimi, Leggat, Bartram and Rada (2020) demonstrate the benefits of EI training for higher quality care delivery, EI training can improve the practical process of work experience for elderly caregivers, as well as the quality of care for residents. Employees with higher emotional intelligence exhibit greater job satisfaction, stronger organizational commitment, and reduced turnover intentions. Emotional intelligence contributes to job satisfaction by helping employees mitigate negative emotions, enhance positive emotions, and improve overall job performance (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2017).

This suggests a positive correlation between employee emotional intelligence and organizational commitment, implying that increasing the emotional intelligence of graduates can foster higher levels of organizational loyalty. In studying the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment, most scholars around the world have

used emotional intelligence as a dependent variable, and few scholars have studied the mediating role of emotional intelligence between work attitudes and organizational commitment (Ahad et al., 2021).

Johar, Ibrahim, and Isa (2020) proposed that the dimensions of emotional intelligence of affective thinking, regulation and management of emotions positively affect normative commitment. Souisa (2022) found that emotional intelligence has a significant effect on emotional commitment and continuance commitment significantly and emotional intelligence had no significant effect on normative commitment.

5. Implications for Practice

According to this study, the problem of employee turnover has become an important topic in some organization management. Studying the relationship and influence mechanism of graduates' emotional intelligence and organizational commitment, helping to improve the management and incentive theory for graduates, and improving the theory of organizational commitment.

Emotional intelligence is a crucial factor that plays a dominant role in our ability to navigate and thrive amidst the evolving challenges of the world. It encompasses the understanding of our own emotions and those of others, and only individuals who possess this capability and are willing to innovate can truly succeed. Effective problem-solving is closely linked to emotional control, as an individual who struggles to manage their emotions may find it challenging to resolve complex issues. In the context of this generation, emotional intelligence, along with work attitudes and organizational commitment, hold significant importance in determining one's abilities and potential for success.

Furthermore, school leaders must see that the high turnover rate of graduates is also related to the education of schools. For colleges and universities, how to change their undergraduate emotional intelligence to improve future career adaptability, reduce the turnover rate, and improve the career adaptability of students. Therefore, it has important practical significance. Therefore, the education of students' emotional intelligence and organizational commitment has also become a focus of colleges and universities.

6. Conclusion

In today's fast-paced world, individuals with high emotional intelligence (EI) possess significant strengths. Their strong social skills and resilience enable them to navigate challenges, overcome obstacles, and solve problems in their career development. When faced with setbacks, they maintain a mindset focused on finding solutions rather than giving up. Moreover, individuals with high EI exhibit self-awareness, willpower, the ability to handle pressure, and a strong drive to achieve.

If a person can handle emotions well, trust, loyalty, commitment, productivity, and innovation can be formed among individuals, groups, and organisations. In fast-paced modern life, people with high EI generally have strong strengths. Social skills and strong will help in

facing challenges better, facing obstacles and solving problems in their career development. Employee EI is positively correlated with organizational commitment. Increasing graduate EI will help increase organizational commitment.

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