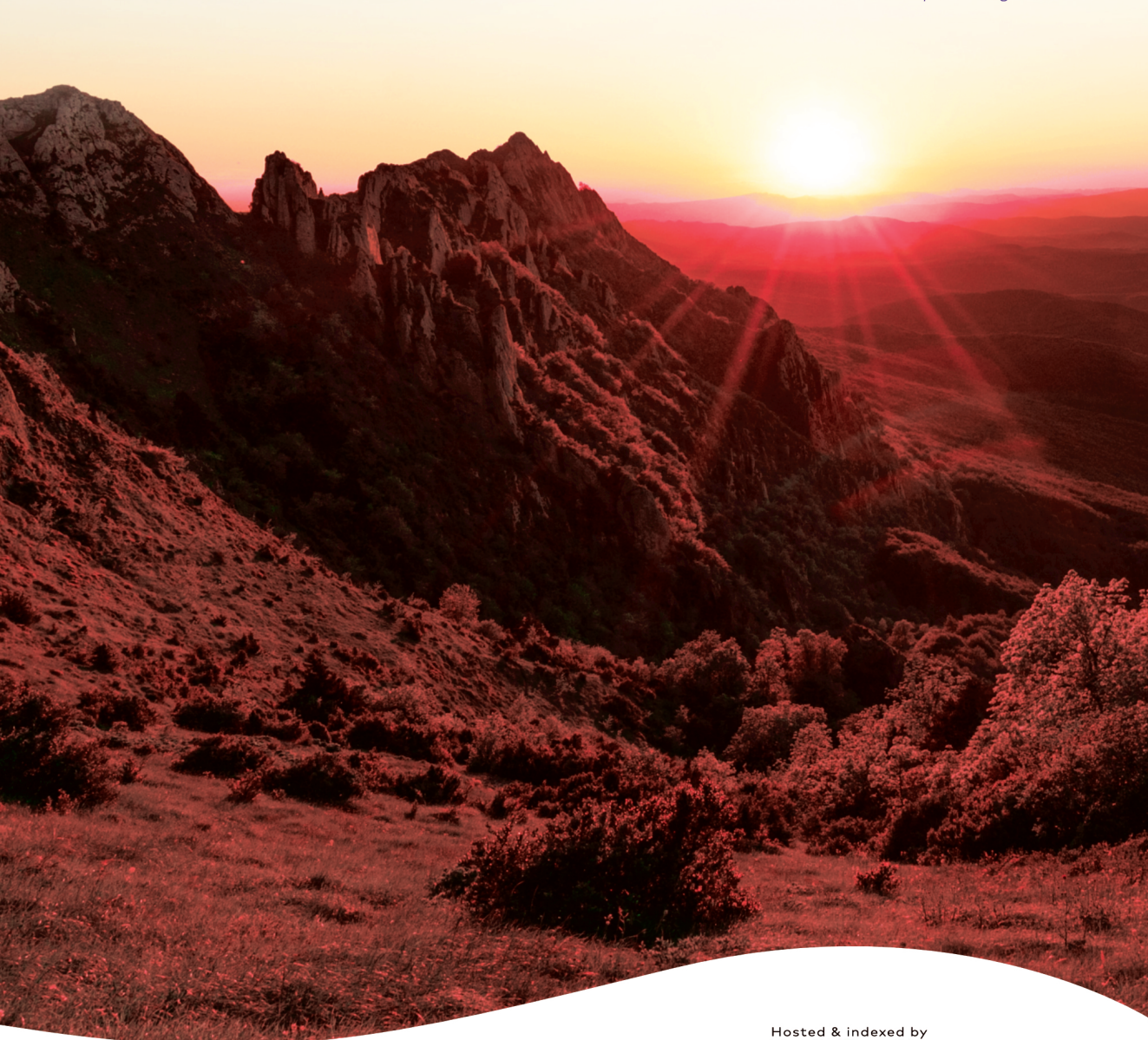


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The effects of emotional intelligence on job performance and employee satisfaction: The case of a hotel in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This study assesses the effect of emotional intelligence on job performance and employee satisfaction among front-line staff at Hotel A. A quantitative, descriptive cross-sectional design was employed, involving a stratified sample of 64 front-line officers. Data were collected and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), with both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques applied. The reliability of the research instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. Findings indicated an overall effect of emotional intelligence on both job performance and employee satisfaction. However, the predictive power of emotional intelligence on these two outcome variables was found to be weak, suggesting that emotional intelligence alone is not a strong determinant of either job performance or employee satisfaction. The null hypotheses were rejected, with the results supporting the alternative hypotheses at a 95% confidence level, indicating that job performance and employee satisfaction are statistically significant factors associated with emotional intelligence. The study recommends that Hotel A implement continuous professional development initiatives, including refresher courses focused on emotional intelligence and its relationship with job performance and satisfaction. Furthermore, it is advised that the organisation addresses additional performance-related factors, such as setting clear performance targets, ensuring adequate resource allocation, enhancing internal communication, and fostering a supportive workplace culture. Recognition, feedback, and reward systems should also be strengthened to bolster employee satisfaction and engagement.

Key Words: Brief index affective job satisfaction contextual performance, employee satisfaction, emotional intelligence, job performance, task performance,

Introduction

The hospitality industry in Zimbabwe is experiencing significant growth, with an increase in GDP from US\$16 billion in 2018 to US\$ 44 billion in 2025 (Murwira Herald 2025). Despite employing an estimated 1.2 million individuals, the sector continues to underperform relative to regional benchmarks. This underperformance is compounded by a rapidly evolving operational environment and shifting customer expectations, both of which have intensified challenges related to service delivery and operational efficiency (Bhasera and Mwenje 2021). For Hotel A, delivering high-quality service has become a critical differentiator in sustaining competitive advantage.

Customer perceptions of service quality are primarily shaped by their interactions with frontline employees, the individuals who represent the first and often most enduring point of contact. As such, the behaviour and professionalism of frontline staff significantly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty. Mugwati et al. (2016) contend that substandard service delivery in Zimbabwean hotels is largely attributable to a lack of investment in employee training and development, resulting in a failure to achieve organisational objectives related to service excellence. In contrast, emotionally intelligent employees have been shown to positively impact service quality and organisational performance (Vratskikh et al., 2016).

Bhebhe (2020) noted that disengaged frontline staff in hotel settings often exhibit negative behaviours, such as unnecessary service delays during check-in procedures or failing to provide requested information. Although multiple factors may contribute to employee disengagement, the resulting behaviours, characterised by low self-awareness and poor self-management, should not adversely affect the customer experience. A nonchalant or indifferent attitude undermines service delivery, customer satisfaction, and ultimately, brand reputation. Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical moderating variable that influences both job performance and employee satisfaction (Wong et al., 2013; Singal et al., 2014). According to Boyatzis et al. (2012), employees with high EI are generally more effective and efficient in executing their tasks compared to those with lower emotional intelligence levels. Therefore, it is imperative for hotel employees to cultivate emotional intelligence competencies in order to optimise service outcomes. As Ismail et al. (2019) assert, frontline hotel staff are pivotal to the consistent delivery of quality service.

Feedback sourced from TripAdvisor reviews of Hotel A between 2018 and 2020 underscores the practical relevance of this inquiry. Customer complaints included service delays, lack of assistance with luggage, slow and inefficient check-in processes, and unprofessional conduct by staff. Specific examples cited included a barman described as rude, moody chefs failing to display menu prices, and substandard breakfasts that prompted some guests to dine at a neighbouring hotel offering similar pricing but better service. These concerns align with internal documentation, including the *Hotel A Calling* magazine (December 2019), which reported a decline in catering demand, and the *Business Review Minutes* (December 2020), which noted overall business decline across Zimbabwean hotels. Collectively, these data suggest that low levels of self-awareness and self-regulation among Hotel A's frontline employees may be contributing to reduced job performance and customer satisfaction.

This study is, therefore, motivated by the need to examine the role of emotional intelligence in influencing job performance and employee satisfaction among frontline employees at Hotel A. Furthermore, the study identifies additional factors that may affect these two outcome variables.

Hypotheses

- H₀:** *Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction do not significantly affect Emotional Intelligence*
- H₁:** *Emotional Intelligence is significantly affected by both Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction*
- H₂:** *Job Performance significantly affects Emotional Intelligence*
- H₃:** *Employee Satisfaction significantly affects Emotional Intelligence*

Literature Review

The mixed intelligence model

Punial et al. (2015) identify two principal proponents of the mixed intelligence model: Bar-On (1997) and Goleman (2002). According to Bar-On (2006), emotional intelligence consists of five core dimensions: intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. Individuals exhibiting these traits typically demonstrate competencies such as assertiveness, independence, self-actualisation, empathy, social responsibility, and effective interpersonal relationships. They are also adept at managing

change, solving problems, and regulating stress (Chirasha et al., 2017). As noted by O'Boyle et al. (2011), such traits correlate with improved workplace performance. Importantly, Bar-On's model emphasises potential rather than outcomes, positing that emotional intelligence contributes to success but is not its sole determinant.

Goleman's model, by contrast, encompasses five domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Like Bar-On's, it integrates cognitive and personality dimensions, but with a greater focus on tangible performance outcomes (Danquah, 2014). Goleman contends that emotional intelligence is a measurable and outcome-driven competency that strongly influences workplace success. Bar-On's model, which guides the current study, views emotional intelligence as comprising behavioural traits that influence, but do not exclusively determine, job performance and employee satisfaction.

Determination of emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence can be assessed using multi-rater feedback (360-degree assessments) or self-report instruments (Kafetsios et al., 2011). The multi-rater method contrasts individuals' self-perceptions with the perspectives of peers, subordinates, or supervisors, offering a holistic view of emotional competency (Danquah, 2014). Self-report measures, in contrast, involve individual reflections on how accurately certain statements describe their emotional behaviour. These tools are commonly used in workplace contexts to inform training and development interventions (O'Connor et al., 2019). The current study employed self-rating instruments to identify potential areas for training in emotional intelligence among hotel front-line employees.

Determining job performance

Motowidlo and Kell (2015) define job performance as the total value of discrete behavioural episodes an employee contributes to an organisation over time. This behavioural orientation acknowledges the dynamic and context-sensitive nature of performance.

Campbell's performance dimension model

Adopted from Campbell et al. (1990), this model outlines eight dimensions of job performance: job-specific task proficiency, non-task proficiency, written and oral communication, effort demonstration, personal discipline, peer and team facilitation, supervision, and management/administration. Villagrasa et al. (2019) describe job-specific task proficiency as encompassing role-specific

behaviours, such as making reservations, cleaning rooms, or serving meals in a hotel context.

Non-task proficiency involves discretionary behaviours that, while not formally required, contribute to service quality, such as assisting guests with technology or offering a warm greeting (Abuhashesh et al., 2019). Communication proficiency is vital across organisational levels, and discipline entails adherence to rules and regulations, promoting professionalism and service consistency. For example, at Hotel A, personal discipline would compel the hotel's taxi driver to prioritise guest safety, thereby enhancing satisfaction.

Facilitating peer performance entails supporting team members, sharing expertise, and encouraging collaboration, vital practices in service settings (Koopmans et al., 2011). Though supervision and management are typically associated with leadership, front-line hotel employees often perform supervisory tasks in real time, especially in high-pressure scenarios. Hence, all eight dimensions are relevant to this study.

Task and contextual performance

Task performance comprises efficiency and effectiveness in executing core duties. Koopmans et al. (2011:p 859) classify it as "in-role prescribed behaviour," referring to specific job-related outputs in terms of both quality and quantity. It is closely linked to cognitive capabilities such as intelligence and creativity (Villagrasa et al., 2019), and is essential in service roles where technical execution directly influences customer satisfaction.

Contextual performance refers to behaviours beyond formal role requirements, such as coaching, assisting co-workers, and fostering social capital within the organisation (Koopmans et al., 2011). Driven by motivation and personality traits, these actions are not always formally rewarded, yet significantly impact organisational climate. In hotel settings, such behaviours enhance the collective performance of service teams and improve guest experiences. Both task and contextual performance are thus critical indicators of overall job performance.

Determining employee satisfaction

This study employed the Brief Index of Affective Job Satisfaction (BIAJS), comprising four items that assess employees' intrinsic feelings toward their job, including enjoyment, enthusiasm, perceived fit, and overall satisfaction. Tabassum et al. (2016) validated the BIAJS instrument, confirming its reliability across diverse job levels, sectors, and national contexts.

Strategies for enhancing job performance and employee satisfaction

According to Richardson (2016), job performance is influenced by individual effort and the work environment. To enhance the physical and psychological work environment, organisations must invest in supervisory support, adequate resource allocation, and equitable reward systems. Performance can also be improved through goal clarity and structured feedback mechanisms (Villagrasa et al., 2019).

Employee satisfaction strategies include investment in training and development, fostering positive employee relations, promoting teamwork, and cultivating a culture of recognition (Vratskikh et al., 2016). Chaudhry and Bhaskar (2016) emphasise that development programmes enhance retention and satisfaction. In the hospitality sector, interprofessional teamwork improves collaboration, decision-making, and service delivery (Kormer et al., 2015). Benefits include reduced costs, enhanced employee morale, and improved customer service.

Organisational rewards that link performance to outcomes increase motivation and commitment (Abuhashesh et al., 2019). Communication also plays a crucial role in shaping organisational culture, understanding employee needs, and fostering mutual respect and satisfaction (Abubaha, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

According to Alrawahi et al. (2020), Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory posits that employee motivation and satisfaction are influenced by two distinct categories of factors: motivators and hygiene factors. Motivators refer to intrinsic elements such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and personal growth, factors that encourage employees to exert effort and derive satisfaction from their work (Tripathy, 2018). These motivators enhance employee engagement by fostering a sense of purpose and progress. They are comparable to the higher-order needs in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, including self-actualisation and esteem (Alrawahi et al., 2020).

Hygiene factors, in contrast, relate to the extrinsic work environment and include salary, working conditions, organisational policies, and administrative practices. While hygiene factors do not inherently motivate employees, their absence often leads to dissatisfaction (Tripathy, 2018). In service industries such as hospitality, these factors play a critical role in shaping the working environment for frontline employees. Herzberg emphasised that improving

hygiene factors prevents dissatisfaction, but lasting motivation stems from intrinsic motivators.

Emotional intelligence plays a mediating role by enabling employees to harness intrinsic motivators, such as internal drive, goal-setting, and self-regulation, to enhance job performance and satisfaction. When employees are emotionally intelligent, they are better able to align their work experiences with personal values and goals, thus deriving satisfaction from motivators while managing the emotional effects of hygiene-related dissatisfiers. The relevance of Herzberg's theory to this study lies in its guidance to management: addressing both motivational and hygiene factors is essential for improving performance and satisfaction. An informed managerial approach that recognises the different sources of employee dissatisfaction, especially those unrelated to the core job, can help foster a more supportive, motivating workplace culture (Alrawahi et al., 2020).

Affective Events Theory (AET)

Dugguh and Dennis (2014) expound on Affective Events Theory (AET), developed by Howard et al. (1996), which explains how workplace events trigger emotional reactions that influence employees' attitudes and behaviours. The theory suggests that daily workplace events, both positive and negative, interact with individual traits such as emotional intelligence to shape employees' moods, affective states, and ultimately, job satisfaction and performance.

AET emphasises that emotional responses to events are not uniform but are filtered through cognitive appraisals and personality traits. These emotional reactions can result in behavioural outcomes such as organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), job withdrawal, or increased task performance. For instance, a positive event such as being recognised for good service may boost morale and performance, while a negative interaction with a supervisor may result in disengagement or absenteeism.

In high-touch service environments such as hospitality, where employees frequently interact with customers, emotional regulation and affective responses are particularly salient. Emotional intelligence enhances an employee's capacity to manage emotions, interpret affective cues, and maintain composure in emotionally charged situations—thereby moderating the effect of workplace events on job performance and satisfaction. Affective Events Theory is therefore central to this study's conceptual framework, as it provides a lens through

which to understand how emotional intelligence intersects with daily work experiences to influence behavioural and performance outcomes.

Methodology

The current study used a descriptive cross-sectional design with 64 participants who were selected using stratified and simple random selection. The response rate was found to be high at 80% in spite of Covid 19 lockdown rules. This reflected that front-line officers were still coming to work during lockdown to provide service. This is supported by Kumar (2014) who noted a response rate of above 50% in a research as valid and reliable information. The percentage of females who responded is 57.8% and 42.2% for males which shows that the organisation is not balanced in terms of gender representation with females dominating. Raoul Wallenberg Institution (2018) expressed the need for organisations to achieve gender balance. The findings show that 49 (76%) of the respondents were below 20 years who most of them were employees who just completed secondary education. The findings revealed that most of the respondents were single 51(79.7%), while 9 (14.1%) were married and 4 (6.3%) were divorced. Chan *et al.* (2019) concluded that irregular working hours in a hotel, negatively affect married women while single women found it appealing as they focused on their career growth.

The study mainly used primary data which was collected using survey instruments. The emotional intelligence questionnaire addressed four (4) aspects, which are the perception of emotion, emotional facilitation of thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. The Job performance questionnaire addressed eight (8) aspects which are planning, organising handling stress, handling conflict, assertiveness, helping others, good working, relations, and representing the organisation. The employee satisfaction survey addressed four (4) aspects which are real enjoyment in the job, liking the job better than the average person, being enthusiastic about the job, and feeling satisfied about the job.

A Five point likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree was used in all these instruments. The study made use of an electronic survey to adhere to Covid 19 regulations of social distancing. The data was analysed using the statistical package for social sciences IMB-SPSS Version 23. The relationship between front-line employees' emotional intelligence and their job performance and employee satisfaction was established through a simple correlation matrix to help accept or reject all alternate hypotheses of each independent variable.

The research also used the statistical regression model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$, where Y is the dependent variable (Emotional Intelligence), X_1 , X_2 are independent variables (Job performance and Employee satisfaction) which were used to predict the dependent variable Y , whilst B_1 , B_2 and so on are the coefficients or multipliers which describe the size of the effect the independent variables are having on the dependent variable Y , and B_0 is the Constant which is the ε allowance.

Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyse the data, range, and standard deviation to measure the dispersion of the data from their mean and inferential statistics of sampled respondents using multiple regression techniques. ANOVA was used to identify the P value to accept or reject null hypotheses. The key reliability issue was addressed through a pilot study and the calculation of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of emotional intelligence, job performance, and employee satisfaction which all had high values of 0.933, 0.899, and 0.903 in that sequence. Öksüz *et al.* (2017) posit that any Cronbach's coefficient alpha that is higher than 0.7 is considered acceptable in most social science research. The study also used the Shapiro-Wilk test to analyse the existence of correlation in the sample data drawn for the study which concluded that the sample data was drawn from a normally distributed population with a p-value is 0.000.

Findings

To establish the significance of the two constructs and their effect on the emotional intelligence at Hotel A, ANOVA was considered. The two constructs were analysed as independent variables on emotional intelligence as the factor. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Two-Way ANOVA Analysis

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable: Emotional Intelligence						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Two way ANOVA Model	54.562 ^a	8	6.820	59.562	.000	.897

Intercept	180.747	1	180.747	1578.501	.000	.966
Job Performance	4.232	4	1.058	9.240	.000	.402
Employee Satisfaction	4.927	4	1.232	10.758	.000	.439
JobPerf EmplSat	3.124	4	1.181	.998	.000	.000
Error	6.298	55	.115			
Total	619.000	64				
Corrected Total	60.859	63				
<i>a. R Squared = .897 (Adjusted R Squared = .881)</i>						

Significance Level: 95% Confidence Level, thus 0.05 significance,

Rejection Criteria: Accept H_0 if $p > 0.05$; Reject H_0 if $p \leq 0.05$

The results of the two-way ANOVA indicate that the independent variables, Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction, as well as their interaction term (Job Performance \times Employee Satisfaction) have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable, Emotional Intelligence, with $p = .000$. This suggests that the combination of Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction significantly enhances Emotional Intelligence among employees.

Furthermore, the individual interaction effects of Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction were also statistically significant ($p = .000$), supporting the notion that Emotional Intelligence is positively influenced when both variables operate together. These findings are consistent with Affective Events Theory, which posits that workplace emotions and moods significantly impact employee performance and satisfaction. Shahhosseini et al. (2012) similarly concluded that Emotional Intelligence has a more pronounced effect on contextual performance, encompassing cooperation, perseverance, and commitment, than on task performance.

An analysis of the F-ratios reveals that the highest magnitude was observed for the overall interaction effect of Emotional Intelligence on Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction ($F = 59.56$), whereas Emotional Intelligence demonstrated lower predictive power when considered individually for Employee Satisfaction ($F = 10.75$) and Job Performance ($F = 9.24$). This implies that, while the model as a whole is significant, the individual contributions of each factor alone may not be strong predictors of Emotional Intelligence. In contrast, Vratskikh et al. (2016) found a strong positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.537$; $t = 11.957$; $p < 0.01$), with a similarly high F-ratio for Job Performance ($F = 64.445$).

The partial eta squared values of 0.40 for Job Performance and 0.44 for Employee Satisfaction further suggest a relatively similar magnitude of effect between the two factors. Vratskikh et al. (2016) also reported that Employee Satisfaction plays a moderating role in the relationship between Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence ($\alpha = 0.470$; $t = 9.434$; $p < 0.01$). However, these findings are in contrast with those of VandenBerghe (2011), who reported a weak correlation between Job Satisfaction and Job Performance.

The adjusted R^2 value of 0.881 indicates that 88.1% of the variance in Emotional Intelligence can be explained by the combined influence of Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction. This confirms the robustness of the model and the strength of the relationship between these factors and Emotional Intelligence.

Hypotheses and Statistical Decision

H₀: *Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction do not significantly affect Emotional*

Intelligence

H₁: *Emotional Intelligence is significantly affected by both Job Performance and Employee*

Satisfaction

H₂: *Job Performance significantly affects Emotional Intelligence*

H₃: *Employee Satisfaction significantly affects Emotional Intelligence*

Given that the observed *p*-values are all below the 0.05 significance threshold, the study rejects the null hypothesis (*H*₀) and accepts the alternative hypotheses (*H*₁, *H*₂, *H*₃). This provides sufficient evidence at the 95% confidence level to conclude that both Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction are significant predictors of Emotional Intelligence.

Regression Analysis

To complement the ANOVA, a regression analysis was conducted with Job Performance and Employee Satisfaction as the independent variables, and Emotional Intelligence as the dependent variable. The model summary is presented in Table 2, with detailed regression coefficients in Table 3.

Table 2: Regression Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1				
1	.935 ^a	.875	.871	.354
a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee satisfaction and Job performance				
b. Dependent Variable: Emotional Intelligence				

Model summary Table 2 above shows that *R*=0.935 which indicates a good prediction level for the dependent variable. The measure *R*²=0.871 explains the variation between the two independent predictors and emotional intelligence. This specifies that 87.1% of the variance of emotional intelligence can be predicted by the independent variables (Job performance and Employee Satisfaction) whilst the 12.9% can be predicted by other variables which could not be the two under study. This value was above the minimum required model fit of 60% which is recommended (Zygmunt & Smith, 2014). Consequently, the results positively expressed that the two predictors have a significant impact on emotional intelligence.

Regression Analysis of Coefficients

The researcher also calculated the regression analysis of the results to extract data for hypotheses testing as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model B		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficient s	T	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.087	.154		.563	.576
	Job performance	.544	.102	.470	5.346	.000
	Employee Satisfaction	.477	.084	.501	5.694	.000
a. Dependent Variable: B1 I can perceive my emotions at workplace when carrying out my duties						

As per the SPSS generated table above, the equation ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \epsilon$). $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \epsilon$) becomes Emotional Intelligence = .087 + .544*JobPerf + .477*EmplSatis + ϵ

The regression equation confirms that after considering all the independent variables at zero constant for Emotional intelligence the constant value will be 0.087. A unit increase in Job performance positively affects Emotional intelligence within Hotel A with a 0.544 unit increase. Furthermore, a notable unit increase in Employee satisfaction at Hotel A will positively influence Emotional intelligence with a 0.477 unit increase.

Strategies to improve job performance

Table 4: Strategies to improve Job performance

Strategies to improve Job performance	Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Skills acquisition	64	37	57.8%
Clear targets	64	43	67.1%
Adequate resources	64	56	87.5%
Teamwork	64	31	48.4%
Supervisory support	64	27	27%
Effective communication	64	49	76.5%

Out of the 64 respondents among front-line officers at Hotel A in Harare the frequency tables showed that 56 (87.5%) scored more on adequate resources and effective communication 49 (76.5%), as strategies to help them improve their jobs. This is supported by Alrawahi et al. (1920) who explain the two-factor theory of hygiene and motivation factors. Clear targets 43(67.1%), skills acquisition 37(57.8%), and teamwork 31 (48.4%) were also mentioned as some of the strategies. Kormer et al. (2015) support the need for teamwork to improve job performance by explaining that there are instances where team building helps improve quality service which is vital for improved job performance. Villagrasa et al (2019) explain the need to improve both written and verbal communication to improve job performance.

Strategies used to improve employee satisfaction

Table 6: Strategies used to improve employee satisfaction

Strategies to improve employee satisfaction	Distributed	Frequency	Percent
Trust and appreciation	64	57	89%
Opportunities to grow	64	41	64%
Supervisor feedback	64	39	60.9%
Recognition and reward	64	50	78.1%
Customer tips	64	47	73.4%

For employee satisfaction, the strategies that scored high are trust and appreciation 57 (89%), reward and recognition 50 (78.1%), and customer tips 47 (73.4%). Opportunities to grow 41 (64%) also scored high with supervisor feedback as the least 39(60.9%). Vratskikh et al. (2016) support the findings by explaining that employee satisfaction is a pleasurable emotional state resulting from appraisals one gets from his/her job experiences. This implies that when front-line officers at Hotel A get tips from customers and feedback from supervisors they become satisfied. Abuhashesh et al., (2019), talk about employee satisfaction as feelings about aspects of a job such as reward and recognition, relationships that eventually give trust and appreciation to employees as well as employee opportunities to grow in their careers.

Discussion

The findings confirm that emotional intelligence (EI) significantly influences both job performance and employee satisfaction among frontline employees at Hotel A in Zimbabwe. While the predictive strength of EI was modest when each outcome variable was considered separately, the combined model explained 88.1% of the variance, stressing the interdependence of these constructs. This result aligns with earlier studies linking EI to workplace outcomes (Boyatzis et al., 2012; O'Boyle et al., 2011), and demonstrates the need to consider EI, satisfaction, and performance not as isolated variables but as mutually reinforcing elements within organisational life.

Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance and Satisfaction

Employees with higher EI reported stronger competencies in teamwork, time management, and assertiveness, and also expressed greater enjoyment and enthusiasm for their roles. This supports Goleman's (2002) view that EI competencies such as self-regulation, empathy and social skills underpin both task and contextual performance. In service-intensive industries such as hospitality, where customer experiences are shaped by staff behaviour, these findings echo the emphasis placed by Campbell et al. (1990) on multidimensional job performance, integrating task proficiency with interpersonal effectiveness.

The results further support Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory by showing that motivators, recognition, appreciation and trust, enhanced employee satisfaction, even when external conditions were challenging (Alrawahi et al., 2020). In this study, staff morale was boosted by tips from customers and acknowledgement from supervisors, illustrating how intrinsic motivators sustain satisfaction despite systemic shortcomings. However, dissatisfaction with hygiene factors,

such as pay and working hours, contributed to customer complaints about delays and staff attitudes. This interplay suggests that while EI enhances intrinsic motivation, it cannot by itself offset the demotivating effect of poor extrinsic conditions.

Affective Events Theory (AET) also helps to interpret the findings. Emotionally intelligent employees are more capable of managing workplace stressors and negative events, reducing the impact of daily hassles on performance and satisfaction (Dugguh & Dennis, 2014). At Hotel A, staff with higher EI appeared better able to handle difficult customers and operational pressures, buffering the effect of negative affective triggers. Conversely, low satisfaction among some employees reflected inadequate institutional support in mitigating stressors such as staff shortages or resource gaps.

Combined Predictive Effects and Theoretical Implications

The regression analysis revealed that job performance and satisfaction together predicted EI more strongly than when tested independently. This synergy supports Shahhosseini et al.'s (2012) argument that EI has greater influence on contextual performance, and extends it by showing that satisfaction and performance mutually reinforce EI in a cyclical process: emotionally intelligent employees deliver higher-quality service, which improves satisfaction and further enhances performance.

The results thus affirm Herzberg's contention that sustainable performance requires attention to both hygiene factors and motivators. EI strengthens the motivational pathway, while supportive organisational conditions ensure that this potential is realised. Similarly, AET illustrates that EI shapes the way individuals process and respond to affective events, but institutional structures must provide an enabling environment if these competencies are to contribute fully to organisational outcomes.

Practical and Policy Implications

For management, the findings highlight the value of EI training as part of professional development, particularly in frontline service roles where affective labour is central to customer satisfaction. However, training must be complemented by systemic interventions such as adequate staffing, equitable rewards, and resource provision; without these, the impact of EI will be constrained. Cultivating a culture of trust, recognition, and transparent

communication is equally important, as these practices reinforce both satisfaction and performance (Richardson, 2016; Abuhashesh et al., 2019).

The study also points to the need for management in the hospitality sector to integrate EI into recruitment, performance appraisal, and leadership development frameworks. At Hotel A, institutionalising clear performance standards, feedback mechanisms, and fair compensation would address both the motivational and hygiene factors necessary for long-term performance and satisfaction.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study advances understanding in three ways. First, it provides empirical evidence of EI's role in shaping performance and satisfaction in a sub-Saharan African hospitality context, an area where research remains limited. Second, it demonstrates that EI's predictive power is amplified when analysed in combination with performance and satisfaction, offering a more nuanced perspective than linear models. Finally, by situating the findings within Herzberg's and AET frameworks, the study illustrates how intrinsic motivators, extrinsic conditions, and affective processes interact with EI to influence workplace outcomes.

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