

## Emotional Intelligence Predicts Depression among Hattar Edible Industry s' Employees

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### Abstract

The research aimed to investigate the effect of emotional intelligence on depression among employees. This study involved 155 employees from various organizations (Qarshi, Tops, Shezan, EBM, Hafeez Ghee, Lateef Ghee, Murree Sparklets) as participants. These participants were assessed using the Depression Scale of DASS-21 and Genos Emotional Intelligence Inventory Scale. Scales were found reliable and internally consistent. Notably, our findings revealed a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and depression and predicted depression significantly negative. Emotional intelligence was significantly higher among young employees as compared to older. Additionally, management levels and organizations did show a significant difference in terms of depression and emotional intelligence. These findings contribute to our understanding of relation between emotional intelligence and depression among employees. It highlighted importance of emotional intelligence in predicting depression levels.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Depression, Food Industry, Hattar

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## INTRODUCTION

Workplace is a significant aspect of an individual's life, where a substantial amount of time is spent. Mental health in the workplace is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in overall well-being (Smith, 2018). Numerous studies suggest that individuals with higher levels of EI are better primed to manage stress, make positive relationships, and steer challenging situations, potentially acting as a protective factor against depression (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Depression is a prevalent mental health concern that can adversely affect employees' performance, job satisfaction, and overall productivity (Jones & Johnson, 2020). Depression is a common and serious medical condition that has a negative impact on emotions, thoughts, and actions. It is categorized as a mood disorder and can manifest as feelings of sadness, loss, or anger that disrupt daily life. People experience depression in various ways. It can hinder daily responsibilities, leading to reduced productivity and time, lost at work. It can also affect relationships and contribute to certain long-term health issues. It's important to understand that occasional feelings of sadness are a normal part of life, as every one goes through difficult and upsetting experiences (Kendler et al., 2016)

Understanding and applying emotional intelligence is a crucial skill in the workplace. This emphasis on emotional intelligence stems from the fact that relationships among people and their performance at work are more influenced by emotions than by purely logical factors. Research has shown that nowadays, employees' commitment and performance suffer due to a lack of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is closely associated to effective communication, conflict resolution, and team collaboration. Employees with high EI may contribute to a healthier and more positive workplace environment (Brackett & Stern, 2004). Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to understand, recognize, manage, and handle one's own emotions and those of others. It plays a crucial role in shaping interpersonal relationships, communication, and coping mechanisms (Goleman, 1995).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is commonly defined as an individual's ability to recognize and realize their own emotions, emotions of others, coupled with ability to effectively manage and respond to these emotions in a thoughtful and appropriate manner (Goleman, 1995). Emotional Intelligence (EI) not only boosts employees' performance but also aids them in managing stress (Goleman, 1995). It plays a significant role in enhancing leadership qualities. Therefore, for leaders, especially those responsible for managing organizational changes and employees, understanding and demonstrating, EI is crucial. Numerous studies have explored the impact of EI on both employees and organizational performance and effectiveness. The results consistently show that strong emotional intelligence in leadership helps facilitate positive changes within the organization (Goleman, 1995). EI skills are a fundamental requirement for successful leadership. Importantly, these skills can be acquired, developed, and refined through training and education in the healthcare sector, just like in other specialized fields, professionals require a higher level of EI. This is because they regularly interact with patients and face significant workloads that can be more demanding compared to many other professions. Proficiency in emotional intelligence is invaluable for leaders in the healthcare sector, as it helps foster healthier relationships among colleagues, team members, and various staff members. EI is equally vital for achieving optimal results and performance among employees and leaders in the healthcare industry (Jones, 2007).

EI plays an important role in work environment (Wong & Song, 2004; Law et al, 2004; Goleman et al, 2002). Studies have confirmed, employees' EI predict work job performance and job satisfaction (Prati et al, 2003; Wong & Law, 2002; Bachman et al, 2000). Managers' EI have significant impact on such work outcomes (Goleman et al, 2002; George, 2000).

Individuals having higher EI achieve higher goals in personal and work life (Bar-on et.al, 2004) and contribute significantly to performance of their organizations (Carmeli & Josman, 2006; Sala, 2006). The decline in employee performance directly affects an organization's overall performance, and this is linked to the emotional well-being of employees. Emotions each have their own motivating qualities, personal significance, and outward expressions in behavior. Therefore, effectively managing emotions has a significant impact on an employee's performance (Mayer et.al, 2008). Depressed employees may experience decreased job satisfaction, absenteeism, and reduced productivity (Smith, 2018). The well-being of employees is intricately tied to organizational success. The relationship between emotional intelligence and depression provides insights into the role of emotional skills in mitigating or exacerbating mental health issues within the organizational context (Jordan et.al, 2019). The current study aims to provide better understanding that EI impacts depression and harnessing emotions to enhance employee performance and contribute to filling this gap in the literature to enhance existing knowledge base (Green & Jones, 2021). The objectives of research included to investigate the relation between depression and emotional intelligence and to study the differences in demographic variables. Effective management styles play an important role in developing females' confidence in academic and workplace settings. Supportive, democratic, and transformational leadership encourages women to participate in decision-making, express ideas openly, and develop self-efficacy. Research by Gul and Gul highlighted that positive managerial behavior and empowerment-based leadership can improve women's confidence, motivation, and professional performance (Gul & Gul, 2024).

Following hypotheses were developed:

1. A significant negative correlation will be present between emotional intelligence and depression.
2. Emotional intelligence will predict depression significantly.
3. Young employees will score high on emotional intelligence and depression as compare to older employees.
4. Employees of higher management level will have higher emotional intelligence and depression.
5. There will be significant differences between organization on emotional intelligence and depression.

## METHOD

Cross-sectional survey research was carried out. Purposive sampling technique was used. The sample was composed of 155 participants from various organization of Hattar .Demographic variables included age, management levels and education. Participants' age ranged from 25-61 years. It was also a requirements that sample should be literate. Permission was obtained for data collection from the officials of organizations. The Genos EI Inventory concise form (Gignac, 2010) was used to measure emotional intelligence at work. It comprised a series of 31 statements with five possible responses (1 = Almost Never, 2 = Seldom, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = usually, 5 = Almost Always). They were seven sub dimensions: emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, emotional awareness of others, emotional reasoning, emotional self-management, emotional management of others and emotional self-control. Items 2, 4, 5,6, 10,11, 13, 22,23, 27, 29, 31 are the reverse scoring statements. In recent study the depression scale of DASS-21` was used, developed by Lovibond &, Lovibond (1995). The scale comprises of 7 items. The scale was 5 point Likert scale type (ranging from 0-3). The participants were requested to fill the questionnaire. They were assured of confidentiality and instructed for filling the questionnaires. Informed consent was obtained. They filled questionnaires, which

were collected back. The data was arranged and analyzed statistically using SPSS-26.

**RESULTS**

Majority of sample included male employees ie 95%. Young adult employees were greater in number ie 84% mostly with 12 years of education. Maximum employees had average salary between 21,000 to 50,000 PKR and belonged to middle management of Qarshi Industries Pvt.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Participants**

Demographic Characteristics	f	%	Demographic Characteristics	f	%
Gender			Age		
Male	148	95.1	25-40years	131	84
Female	7	4.9	41-60years	24	15.5
Education level			Average salary		
Intermediate	91	58	Less than 20000PKR	33	21.3
Graduation	48	31	21000 to 50000 PKR	96	61.9
Post-Graduation	16	10	51000 to 100000 PKR	26	16.8
Management level			Organizations		
Lower Management	40	25.8	Qarshi	43	27.7
Middle Management	73	47.1	Shezan	25	16.1
Senior Management	42	27.1	Tops	10	6.5
Organizational size			Hafeez ghee	37	23.9
Small	43	27.7	Lateef ghee	13	8.4
Medium	70	45.2	EBM	20	12.9
Large	42	27.1	Murree sparkles	7	4

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics And Pearson Correlation**

Variables	α	M	SD	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
1-ER	.65	13.79	2.93	-								
2-ESA	.72	27.32	5.13	.64**	-							
3-ESM	.71	33.75	6.39	.56**	.71**	-						
4-EE	.72	34.10	6.68	.57**	.54**	.60**	-					
5-ESC	.68	26.94	5.38	.53**	.56**	.55**	.59**	-				
6-EAO	.74	26.04	5.96	.53**	.57**	.65**	.62**	.58**	-			
7-EMO	.75	26.81	5.87	.58**	.55**	.57**	.54**	.47**	.55**	-		
8-EI	.90	102.37	17.33	.80**	.83**	.83**	.81**	.76**	.80**	.76**	-	
9-Depression	.88	5.82	5.23	-.37**	-.39**	-.40**	-.18**	-.31**	-.24**	-.39**	-.41**	-

Note: \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001 Emotional Response =ER, Emotional Self-Awareness =ESA, Emotional Expression=EE, Emotional Awareness of Others=EAO, Emotional Self-Management =ESM, Emotional Management of Others =EMO, Emotional Self Control =ESC, Emotional Intelligence =EI

Table 2 showed reliability coefficients ranged from .65 to .90 that were acceptable and satisfactory. The alpha reliability of the depression and emotional intelligence was .88 and .90 respectively. This showed that scales were internally consistent and valid. The correlation values were ranging from  $-.18^{**}$  to  $.83^{**}$ . A significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and depression was found  $-.41^{**}$ . Results confirmed significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and depression.

**Table 3: Linear Regression Coefficient of Emotional intelligence on Depression**

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	95%CI [LL—UL]
Constant	18.64	2.61		7.13	.00	[13.47— 23.82]
EI	-.128	.025	-.41	-5.20	.00	[-.17--- .07]

$R=.413, R^2=.170, \text{Adjusted } R^2=.164$

H<sub>2</sub>: Emotional intelligence will predict depression negatively. Table 4 showed the linear regression analysis, showing that hypothesis was supported. The results showed that emotional intelligence is a significant negative predictor of depression. Emotional intelligence ( $\beta = -.128$ ) has a significant effect on outcome variable with level of significant  $p > .001$ . The adjusted  $R^2$  of .16 indicated that emotional intelligence caused 16.4% variation in depression with  $F=27.1, p = .00$ .

**Table 4: T-test for Age Differences on Emotional Intelligence And Depression.**

Variables	Young Employees (25-40 years)		Older Employees (41-60 years)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
	Emotional Intelligence	104.91	17.61	105.4			
Depression	6.09	5.34	1.17	1.92	4.43	.00	1.22

Significant age differences existed in depression. Table 5 showed significant higher depression in young employees as compared to older employees with  $p = .00$ . Cohen's *d* Value showed that effect size and the difference of the mean values is high and significant. Age differences in emotional intelligence values are non-significant.

**Table 5: One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of management level in Depression and emotional intelligence**

Variables	Lower Management		Middle Management		Senior Management		<i>F</i> (2,131)	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
	Emotional Intelligence	102.43	14.61	109.26	17.78	100.32			
Depression	5.9	5.2	3.1	4.4	8.0	5.1	12.2	.00	.15

One-way ANOVA was carried out to study mean differences between management levels on depression and emotional intelligence. The results in the table showed that the management levels have significant difference on depression  $F(2, 131) = 12.2, p > 0.05$ . The  $\eta^2$  for depression is .15 that the effect size between group means is of small effect. Emotional intelligence has significant values. The results partially supported hypothesis 4 of study. Different management levels have significant difference on emotional intelligence.



**Table 7: One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of different organization in depression, emotional intelligence.**

Variables	Qarshi		Shezan		Tops Hafeez ghee		Lateef EBM ghee		Murree sparkles		F(6, 127)	p	$\eta^2$				
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD							
EI	121.7	18.1	116.3	17.8	90.9	9.1	101.4	9.9	96.5	7.7	96.2	10.2	91.8	13.2	14.42	.00	.40
Depression	3.4	3.1	5.0	5.0	10.6	4.0	1.1	2.8	9.3	3.4	8.3	5.7	5.2	5.2	14.11	.00	.40

Note. Emotional Intelligence=EI, p=.00

One-way ANOVA was used to assess mean differences between organizations. The organizations (Qarshi, Shezan, Tops, Hafeez ghee, Lateef ghee, EBM and Murree sparkles) were analysed by comparing their mean scores on depression and EI. Results showed that the employees have significant differences on depression  $F(6, 127) = 14.11, p < 0.01$  and emotional intelligence  $F(6, 127) = 14.42, p < .01$ . Qarshi had scored high mean value on emotional intelligence and tops had highest mean value in depression. Mean differences between organizations were significant for depression and EI. The  $\eta^2$  is .40 that revealed that the effect size between group means is of medium effect and significant.

**DISCUSSION**

The objective of research were to investigate the relation between emotional intelligence and depression among edible industrial employees (N= 155 with age range from 25 years to 61 years). Demographic variables included age, organizational levels and management level. The Genos EI Inventory and DASS-21 were used and alpha reliabilities (.90 and .88) were satisfactory. This shows that scales were internally consistent and reliable. Table 2 showed a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and depression. These result supported hypothesis 1. The inability to control negative emotions can leave individuals vulnerable to stress and depression (Brown et.al, 1998; Ciarrochi et.al, 2002). Salovey (2001) used an objective assessment of emotional management skill and found it to be associated with induced positive mood. People scored higher on asesment of “managing the emotions of others” reported decreased levels of depression. Table 3 shows that emotional intelligence is a significant negative predictor of depression. It supports the second hypothesis. Bukhari (2022) also confirmed this significant negative correlation between levels of depression and understanding of other’s emotions (Ciarrochi et.al, 2002, Nolidinet.al, 2013). Results confirmed that enhanced Emotional Intelligence has a beneficial effect on depression status. Negative significant correlation was found between late life depression and ability of emotional intelligence (Lloyd et al, 2012). Different studies confirmed negative correlation between interpersonal subscale of emotional intelligence to depression (Grazes et al, 2023, Onur et.al, 2012). Table 4 shows that emotional intelligence values are non-significantly higher in young employees as compared to elder. Results disclosed higher level of emotional intelligence among younger employees than elders (Wing & Love, 2001). Young employees showed higher level of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management thus higher emotional intelligence (Lloyd et al, 2012, Singh, 2002). As expected that emotional intelligence increases with age. Results showed significant differences between the age groups on their emotional intelligence (Meshkat, & Nejati, 2017).

Table 6 shows that management level have significant difference on depression and emotional intelligence. Middle management has scored high in emotional intelligence while senior management has score high in depression. These results supported the hypothesis that different management levels have significant difference on depression. Management style

contribute in Employees innovation and creativity and confidence. Autocratic leadership style lower the innovation and higher innovation and creativity among employees with democratic leadership style (Gul et al., 2024). Employees with higher emotional intelligence become more proficient at regulating and managing their and others' emotions to foster organizational citizenship behaviors that contribute to performance (Wong & Law, 2002). Table 7 shows that different organization had significant differences on depression and emotional intelligence. Qarshi scored high mean value on emotional intelligence and Tops had highest mean value in depression. As organizations increasingly recognize the importance of mental health in the workplace, the research could have policy implications. Insights into the relationship between emotional intelligence and depression may contribute to the formulation of workplace policies that prioritize and support the mental health of employees (APA, 2020). While there is a growing body of research on emotional intelligence and mental health, there is a need for more specific investigations into its impact on depression among employees. Enhancing intrapersonal emotional skills enhances immune system and decreases depression (Grases et al, 2023). Limitations of the study included as information was collected through self-report measures that may have social desirability. Time and economic constraints made sample size small. Sample size can be increased and be extendable to other work settings and social settings. In future, research information should be cross-rated through some other sources as data was collected from limited Organization in Hattar. These can be studied through experimental studies. Findings have confirmed the relationship between emotional intelligence and depression. The finding can be used in understanding how emotional intelligence influences depression levels among employees can contribute to the development of strategies that promote both individual well-being and organizational effectiveness (Cherniss, 2010). Findings from this research could inform the development of targeted interventions and training programs aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence in the workplace. Interventions and training programs may help enhance EI and prevent symptoms of depression among employees, ultimately fostering a mentally healthier workforce (Lopes et.al, 2004).

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