

MITIGATING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY THROUGH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: EVIDENCE FROM KASHMIR INDIA

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to examine the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on employee retention and job satisfaction in the hospitality industry, with a specific focus on understanding how EI dimensions contribute to improving employee engagement and reducing turnover. Emotional intelligence, encompassing self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in workplace dynamics, particularly in high-stress industries like hospitality. A survey questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale was developed after a thorough literature review. Data was collected from 190 respondents working in the hospitality sector, including hotels, restaurants, and tourism-related businesses. The survey assessed emotional intelligence dimensions and their relationship with job satisfaction and retention. The collected data was analyzed using reliability analysis to ensure the consistency of the survey instrument, followed by correlation techniques to evaluate the relationships between EI dimensions and job satisfaction. The analysis revealed significant positive relationships between all emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management) and job satisfaction. Notably, self-management and social awareness exhibited the strongest correlations with job satisfaction, highlighting their critical role in enhancing employee well-being and engagement. Employees with higher self-management skills were better equipped to handle workplace stress, while those with strong social awareness demonstrated improved interpersonal relationships, contributing to a more positive work environment. These findings align with previous research suggesting that emotionally intelligent employees are more likely to experience job satisfaction and remain committed to their organizations. The findings underscore the importance of incorporating emotional intelligence training programs in the hospitality sector to enhance employee job satisfaction and retention. Hotel administrators and HR professionals can leverage these insights to design targeted interventions aimed at developing EI competencies among employees. By fostering self-management and social awareness skills, organizations can create a more engaged and stable workforce, ultimately reducing turnover rates. This study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting the value of emotional intelligence in improving workplace outcomes, particularly in high-turnover industries like hospitality.

Keywords: employee retention, emotional intelligence, hospitality, turnover, targeted training

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INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover is a persistent global challenge, particularly in the hospitality industry, which is renowned for its high attrition rates. Globally, employee turnover in hospitality is significantly higher compared to other industries. For instance, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports an average annual employee turnover rate of 12-15% across all industries, whereas the hotel and motel industry experiences a turnover rate of 73.8% (Penn & Nezamis, 2022). This problem is even more severe in Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs), where turnover rates often exceed 150% (Kusluvan et al., 2010). Such staggering numbers highlight a critical weakness in workforce management strategies, with far-reaching implications for profitability, customer satisfaction, and service quality. In the context of Indian settings, the culturally unique and economically vital union territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir, the hospitality industry forms a cornerstone of the economy due to its strong reliance on tourism. However, the high employee turnover in this sector undermines operational efficiency, disrupts customer service, and escalates recruitment and training costs. Additionally, the socio-political instability in the UT and harsh climatic conditions further exacerbate workforce challenges. Despite the critical role that human capital plays in the hospitality sector of Kashmir, little attention has been given to understanding and addressing these issues from a contextually relevant perspective (Nguyen et al., 2023; Igbino et al., 2022).

The purpose of this study is to address these challenges by exploring the potential of emotional intelligence (EI) as a tool for controlling employee turnover and enhancing job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, has been widely recognized as a critical factor in improving workplace relationships, team dynamics, and individual job performance. Yet, its application to the hospitality industry, particularly in high-turnover regions like Kashmir, remains underexplored. To achieve this, the study investigates the relationship between the four dimensions of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among hospitality employees in Kashmir (Figure 1). The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the research:

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H1: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.

H1a: There is a significant relationship between self- awareness and job satisfaction.

H1b: There is a significant relationship between self- management and job satisfaction.

H1c: There is a significant relationship between social awareness and job satisfaction.

H1d: There is a significant relationship between relationship management and job satisfaction.

Using a robust quantitative approach, this research employs surveys and statistical analysis to evaluate the reliability of EI constructs and their correlation with job satisfaction. By addressing both global and local challenges, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how emotional intelligence can be harnessed to mitigate turnover and improve workforce stability in the hospitality sector. In doing so, the research provides valuable insights for industry practitioners and policymakers, offering a roadmap for fostering emotionally intelligent workplaces that not only retain employees but also thrive in an increasingly competitive global market.

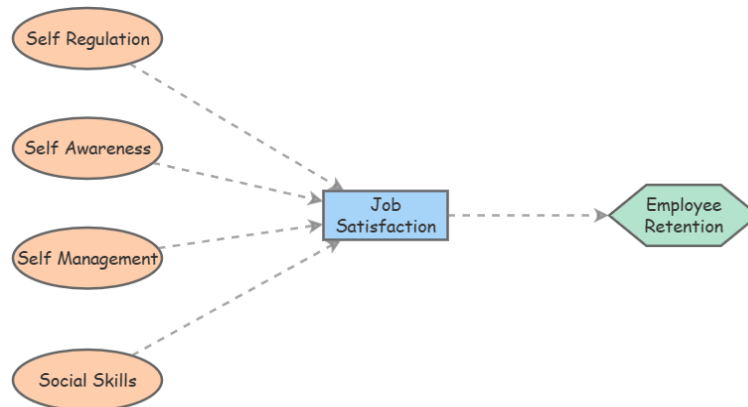


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Employee turnover remains a critical challenge in the hospitality industry, with global studies highlighting emotional intelligence (EI) as a promising approach to mitigate this issue. Defined as the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions in oneself and others, EI is increasingly recognized for its role in improving workplace outcomes (Mayer et al., 2001). Goleman (1998) extended this understanding by identifying four dimensions of EI—self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management—critical for managing interpersonal dynamics in high-stress environments. There is a need to understand EI and its dimensions in detail as portrayed by various literature sources.

“A rational ability of understanding and controlling one's emotional behavior at work place to capitalize one's thinking ability. It includes the ability to perceive emotions, to generate and control emotions so as to make thought, to discern emotions and emotional knowledge, and to control emotional state so as to encourage intellectual and emotional growth respectively” (Mayer et al., 2001, p. 197). Literature provides a number of different ways of defining the concept of emotional intelligence but in general it refers to the potential to understand, recognize, and manage emotions of ourselves and of others. Emotional intelligence is playing a significant role in organizations like positive workplace outcomes, organizational commitment, organizational behavior, and job organizational performance (Peker et al., 2022).

In the fast and professional pass of the world, the EI has gained an essential place in determining various aspects of an individual's personal and professional life (Xiao et al., 2023; Brackett et al., 2011). Particularly in view of the hospitality industry, it plays a crucial role in achieving job satisfaction among hotel employees. Employees with higher emotional intelligence are better in managing customer interactions, foster positive relationships, and moreover contribute in long retention, enhanced customer engagement and loyalty (Prentice et al., 2023).

The relevant literature also suggests that emotional intelligence is closely associated with job satisfaction among hotel employees. Customers tend to prefer service experiences with employees who possess strong emotional intelligence, as they can easily understand and respond to the emotional demands of their clients. (Prentice et al., 2023) In addition to above, the hotel industry is characterized by a compact environment with high levels of stress and demanding healthy customer interactions, which remains an easy task for employees with strong emotional skill sets (Cavelzani et al., 2006). Employee's real feelings for their work environment, work compensation, career development opportunities, and overall well-being have a visible impact on job satisfaction. Apparently, management of an organization must line up the culture of emotional intelligence among their employees to enhance satisfaction and, in turn, improve service standards and organizational performance (Prentice et al., 2023). Wash answered the question how to attain emotional intelligence among the hotel employees by providing them with particular training sessions, educational interventions (Walsh et al., 2015).

Hospitality trainers can also play a crucial role in equipping students with the necessary emotional skills to thrive in the industry and foster long-term career success. The EI as a topic for research has gained a lot of popularity in recent times (Dev et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2001; Petrides & Furnham, 2003; Schutte et al., 2009; Goleman, 2001; 2009; Stough et al., 2009) Many researchers defined EI as an skill of recognizing own feeling better than others, motivate themselves and have healthy management of emotions with relationships (Goleman, 2001). Woolfolk, et al. (2008) defined EI as the efficiency to process emotional thinking accurately and efficiently, Goleman (1998) and Higgs (2004)

said that EI is about own feeling and having ability to hand those as well, having motivation to get jobs done, have creativity and perform at highest level, being sensitive and able to handle relationships effectively. The model used for this study was developed by Goleman in 1995, to understand the performance of employees in the workplace, the EI had played a highlighted factor and that model gained the widely acceptance among the others (Goleman, 1995). This model is spread over four clusters which are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management (Goleman, 1995). Masrek et al. (2015) added in their research that with the contribution of emotional intelligence, an organization can achieve teamwork and can develop talent within the employees.

Goleman (1995) refers self-awareness an ability of a person to recognize and understand emotions and to sense one's feelings, acts and emotions of others. It involves noticing others emotional reactions and being able to discern the emotions rightly. Self-awareness is considered one of the most crucial competencies associated with workplace emotional intelligence. Grayson (2013) described self-awareness as the cognitive ability to recognize one's feelings, to rationalize between them, to understand the reason of the feeling, and to know how the feeling came in. Goleman (1998) defined self-awareness as a way by which one can identify a person's emotions and how its effects. "Yeung (2009) in his research stated that the only possible way of become emotionally intelligent is to become self-aware first". The researcher further stated that in a journey of becoming emotionally intelligent self-awareness acts as a skill of navigation and understanding.

Self motivation or self-management mentions time, and time is a rare resource, and not only in the hospitality industry but in other industries as well that applies self-management. Self-management is a personal fulfilling life needs; it demands time and mindfulness too. Learning self-motivation to balance work-life is challenging, it also has a visible difference to the working environment. In nutshell it can be summed like: all the goals and tasks given at workplace can be achieved if an employee prepares himself for the environment of the work place he/she can change the environment at work place and can achieve goals and objectives of an organization (Gobelna, 2019). Goleman (1995) defined that self-motivation is the state controlled emotional tendency which assists others to reach their goals. Self-motivation also refers to the ability to set goals and to push harder to achieve and also to remain focused and maintain positivity during any setbacks that may occur during setting or achieving of goals. Wolmarans & Martins (2001) suggested that one way that defines self-motivations is carrying someone's responsibilities for successes and failures.

Social awareness or self-regulation as a dimension of emotional intelligence involves the manner of expressing their emotions. It includes being flexible, adopting changes and coping with conflicts. It also refers to managing difficult situations and being able to calculate how much one's action can affect others emotionally (Goleman, 1995). In Golemans cluster of core competencies Social Awareness or Self-regulation or self-management has got second place and the concept of social awareness is though the ability to remain calm during hyper or provocative or conflict situation, while maintaining defensiveness to a minimum and ultimately encouraging rationality (Wolmarans & Martins, 2001). According to Schunk (2003), social awareness would encourage people to take a considerable role in their thoughts, emotions, and performances.

Relationship management is also termed as social skills and as per Goleman (1995), it refers to communication within the group or with peoples, it also involves application of understanding with respect to emotions of ours and others while interaction and communicating with co-workers or others in our day to day lives and at work place. Relationship skills include Active listening, and communication skills (verbal and non verbal), and quality of leadership and develop harmony in relations. It also can describe a person's skills in managing old relationships with others and building new ones as well. The social skills set is considered of: respect and love for others, mutual regard, commitment, openness, maturity, empathy, flexibility, communication etc. (Schröder–Abé & Schuetz, 2011).

It involves the openness of exchanging information and thoughts about feelings, capacity of fulfilling each other's legitimate needs related to work and non-work matters. Social interaction may help employees in many ways and can prove with many advantages like: it can build confidence and sociability, it can help to achieve targets timely by teams even those not possible to do alone, hence can help in improvement in team tasks (Khalid et al., 2018).

Job satisfaction in this research is defined as "an overall measure of the degree to which the employee is satisfied and happy with the job" (Hackman & Oldham, 1976: 10). Researchers have developed various interpretations of job satisfaction, with two most common definitions are: "The pleasurable emotional state that arises when one evaluates their job as aligning with or aiding the accomplishment of their job values" and "The degree to which individuals enjoy (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs" (Kessler et al., 2020). Various theories explaining human motivation share significant common base with those focusing on job satisfaction. Key theories in this realm encompass Maslow's needs hierarchy theory (1943), Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory (1966), the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Job satisfaction is a complex concept triggered by individual emotions and their perceived significance. Ensuring employee contentment and minimizing stress poses a formidable challenge, particularly in service-oriented sectors like hotels. The hospitality industry is just one pillar of the broader service industry, which has become the first step of contemporary society, evolving from agrarian background and industrial roots. This expansive service sector covers various fields such as Airlines, Railways, Telecommunications, Utility Services, Hairdressing, Tailoring, and more. Essentially, a service defines a benefit delivered to satisfy the customer who pays for it.

It represents a service encounter, subject to interpretation, positive or negative based on the customer expectations. Globally, studies have linked EI to improved employee performance, job satisfaction, and retention, especially in consumer-facing sectors like hospitality. Wong & Law (2002) established that emotionally intelligent employees are better equipped to handle workplace pressures, leading to enhanced job performance. Similarly, Prentice et al. (2020) found that EI helps employees navigate the emotional demands of hospitality roles, fostering job satisfaction and reducing turnover. However, Cho et al. (2006) highlighted that the hospitality industry continues to struggle with high employee turnover, emphasizing the

need for innovative retention strategies. Despite its significance, EI's application in addressing employee turnover is underexplored in culturally diverse and conflict-affected regions. Research by Clarke (2006) underscored the importance of context in developing EI-driven interventions, while Hofstede (1993) highlighted cultural differences in emotional expression and management. Yet, limited studies examine how these cultural factors influence EI's effectiveness in South Asia, particularly in Kashmir—a region where socio-political instability and environmental challenges exacerbate workforce retention issues. In the Indian context, studies on EI remain sparse and often overlook region-specific challenges. Bar-On (1997) emphasized the need for culturally adaptive EI strategies, while Jordan & Troth (2021) demonstrated that EI improves conflict resolution and team dynamics across various sectors. However, these insights have rarely been applied to the hospitality industry in Kashmir, where employee turnover undermines operational efficiency and service quality.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the relationship between EI dimensions and job satisfaction among hospitality employees in Kashmir. By focusing on this unique setting, the research not only builds on global findings but also introduces novel insights into EI's role in managing employee turnover in conflict-prone regions.

The study contributes to the literature by exploring the applicability of EI in a culturally and economically significant region, offering practical recommendations for fostering emotionally intelligent workplaces in the hospitality industry.

Table 1. Select works on EI and comparison with present work

Aspect	Existing Literature	Present Study	References
Focus of Emotional Intelligence	Primarily focuses on general workplace performance, leadership, and stress management (e.g., healthcare, education).	Focuses specifically on the hospitality industry's high turnover rates and job satisfaction.	Goleman (1998); Clarke (2006); Prentice et al. (2020); Nawaz et al. (2024); Badshah et al. (2025).
Industry Context	Studies often conducted in corporate, healthcare, artificial intelligence in tourism or education sectors.	Addresses the hospitality industry in a culturally unique setting, i.e., Kashmir, India.	Wong & Law (2002); Jordan & Troth (2021); Hofstede (1993); Fallah et al. (2023); Nawaz et al. (2024).
Dimensions of EI	Explores EI dimensions like self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy broadly.	Examines four specific EI dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management) in relation to job satisfaction.	Mayer et al. (2001); Bar-On (1997); Rodrigues & Silva (2024).
Methodology	Uses surveys, interviews, and psychometric tools to assess EI but often lacks a focus on job satisfaction metrics.	Incorporates quantitative analysis using Cronbach's alpha for reliability and correlational analysis between EI dimensions and job satisfaction.	Cherniss & Goleman (2001); Robinson et al. (1994); Garcia & Domínguez (2024).
Geographic and Cultural Context	Studies conducted in Western or urbanized settings, emphasizing generalized strategies.	Investigates EI in a localized, culturally rich context (Kashmir), highlighting region-specific workforce challenges.	Hofstede (1993); Cho et al. (2006); Senčanski et al. (2024).
Impact on Job Satisfaction	Highlights indirect effects of EI on job satisfaction through improved team dynamics and leadership.	Establishes a direct correlation between EI dimensions and job satisfaction metrics in hospitality.	Jordan & Troth (2021); Prentice et al. (2020); Li et al. (2024).
Retention Strategies	Focuses on broad organizational strategies like training, religious spirituality and recognition programs.	Advocates EQ-centric retention strategies tailored for high-stress hospitality roles.	Wong & Law (2002); Bar-On (1997); Ayad & Hasanein (2024); Salihy & Sharma (2024).
Novelty	Limited application of EI specifically to the hospitality sector and high turnover challenges.	Bridges the gap by directly linking EI dimensions with retention challenges in the hospitality industry of Kashmir.	Present study

Employee turnover remains a persistent challenge in the hospitality industry due to its demanding work environment, seasonal fluctuations, and high-pressure roles (Nawaz et al., 2024). Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial factor influencing job satisfaction and employee retention, with research indicating that employees with higher EI exhibit better stress management, teamwork, and job commitment (Prentice et al., 2020; Badshah et al., 2025). However, existing literature largely focuses on general workplace performance and leadership, often overlooking its direct role in reducing turnover within hospitality settings (Clarke, 2006). Previous research on EI primarily examines its impact on leadership effectiveness, stress reduction, and job performance in sectors such as healthcare, education, and corporate settings (Goleman, 1998; Clarke, 2006). While these studies establish EI as a vital workplace skill, they do not explicitly explore its effect on high-turnover industries like hospitality (Rodrigues & Silva, 2024). Our study bridges this gap by investigating how specific EI dimensions—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management—affect job satisfaction and employee retention in the hospitality industry of Kashmir, India.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative research design to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and employee retention in the hospitality industry. A structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale was employed to collect data, focusing on the four dimensions of EI: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, as well as job satisfaction.

Development of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed following an extensive review of the literature on emotional intelligence and its

application in organizational behavior. Established frameworks, such as those by Goleman (1998); Wong & Law (2002), informed the inclusion of validated constructs for measuring the dimensions of EI.

The questionnaire comprised 35 items: Emotional Intelligence (18 items); Self-awareness (5 items); Self-management (5 items); Social awareness (4 items); Relationship management (4 items); Job satisfaction (17 items); Career development (7 items); Career rewards (5 items); Workplace environment (5 items); Each item was measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Sampling and Data Collection

The target population consisted of employees working in the hospitality industry in Kashmir. A sample size of 300 individuals was identified using a simple random sampling technique to ensure representativeness. The questionnaire was distributed electronically and in person to the respondents. Of the 300 questionnaires distributed, 190 valid responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 63.33%. The sample included participants from diverse demographic and professional backgrounds, ensuring the robustness of the findings.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach’s alpha to ensure the internal consistency of the scales, with all dimensions demonstrating acceptable reliability values ($\alpha > 0.7$). Pearson’s correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships between the dimensions of EI and job satisfaction. The correlation coefficients were interpreted to understand the strength and direction of these relationships. Additionally, regression analysis was employed to evaluate the predictive impact of EI on job satisfaction and employee retention.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical research practices. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and anonymity was assured. Participants were informed that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes and kept confidential. This methodological approach ensures the reliability and validity of the findings while contributing novel insights into the role of emotional intelligence in addressing employee retention challenges in the hospitality industry of Kashmir.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of the respondents reveals a diverse sample with a majority of male participants (81.57%), while 18.42% were female (Table 2). The age distribution indicates a younger workforce, with 20% of respondents in the 18 to 25 age group, 21.05% in the 26 to 34 age range, and the largest proportion (25.26%) falling in the 35 to 43 age group.

The remaining respondents were spread across the older age categories, with 15.78% in the 44 to 52 range and 17.89% above 52 years. In terms of ethnicity, a vast majority of participants (89.47%) identified as Kashmiri, while 10.52% were from other racial backgrounds. Regarding educational qualifications, 31.57% held a master's degree, 60% had a bachelor's degree, and 21.05% held a diploma. Experience-wise, the respondents were fairly spread out, with 6.3% having 1 to 2 years of experience, 23.1% with 3 to 5 years, 26.3% with 6 to 8 years, 15.7% with 9 to 11 years, and 28.4% with 12 or more years of experience. This demographic profile suggests a well-balanced mix of younger and more experienced employees, as well as a strong representation of local Kashmiris with varied educational backgrounds and work experience, which adds depth to the study's findings on emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

Table 2. Demographic profile of respondents

	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	155	81.57
	Female	35	18.42
Age	18 to 25	38	20
	26 to 34	40	21.052
	35 to 43	48	25.26
	44 to 52	30	15.78
	Above	34	17.89
Race	Kashmiri	170	89.47
	Others	20	10.52
Academic Qualification	Master Degree	30	15.78
	Bachelor Degree	60	31.57
	Diploma	40	21.052
	Others	60	31.57
Work Experience in Years	1 to 2	12	6.3
	3 to 5	44	23.1
	6 to 8	50	26.3
	9 to 11	30	15.7
	12 and above	54	28.4

Correlational Analysis

This study aimed to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and job satisfaction, along with its four

dimensions: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. The results of the correlation analysis are summarized in this subsection, addressing each hypothesis.

H1: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.

The analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between overall emotional intelligence and job satisfaction ($r=0.475, p<0.01$ $r = 0.475, p < 0.01$ $r=0.475, p<0.01$), supporting H1. This finding underscores the pivotal role of emotional intelligence in enhancing job satisfaction among employees in the hospitality industry.

H1a: There is a significant relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction.

The results show a positive and significant correlation between self-awareness and job satisfaction ($r=0.252, p<0.01$ $r = 0.252, p < 0.01$ $r=0.252, p<0.01$), validating H1a. Employees with higher levels of self-awareness tend to experience greater job satisfaction, likely due to their ability to recognize and manage their emotions effectively.

H1b: There is a significant relationship between self-management and job satisfaction.

Self-management demonstrates a significant positive correlation with job satisfaction ($r=0.380, p<0.01$ $r = 0.380, p < 0.01$ $r=0.380, p<0.01$), supporting H1b. This result indicates that employees who can regulate their emotions and maintain composure in stressful situations are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction.

H1c: There is a significant relationship between social awareness and job satisfaction.

Social awareness, represented by social skills in the analysis, is significantly correlated with job satisfaction ($r=0.547, p<0.01$ $r = 0.547, p < 0.01$ $r=0.547, p<0.01$), confirming H1c. Employees who excel in understanding others' emotions and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships are more satisfied with their jobs.

H1d: There is a significant relationship between relationship management and job satisfaction.

While relationship management was not explicitly labeled in the correlation matrix, the strong correlation between emotional intelligence dimensions like social awareness ($r = 0.547, p < 0.01$ $r = 0.547, p < 0.01$ $r = 0.547, p < 0.01$) and job satisfaction implies a substantial role for relationship management in influencing job satisfaction. H1d is thus supported.

Table 3. Relationship between the four dimensions of EI and job satisfaction

Variables	Emotional Intelligence	Self-regulation	Self-awareness	Self-management	Social Skills	Job Satisfaction
Emotional Intelligence	1	.642**	.657**	.824**	.800**	.475**
Self-regulation	.649**	1	.246**	.411**	.281*	.203**
Self-awareness	.657**	.246**	1	.352**	.423**	.252**
Self-management	.824**	.411**	.352**	1	.581**	.380**
Social Skills	.800**	.281*	.423**	.581**	1	.547**
Job Satisfaction	.475**	.203**	.252**	.380**	.547**	1

All five hypotheses (H1, H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d) are supported, demonstrating that emotional intelligence and its dimensions are positively and significantly related to job satisfaction. This highlights the potential of EI-focused interventions in enhancing employee retention and satisfaction in the hospitality industry (Table 3) and (Figure 2) reveal significant positive correlations between emotional intelligence dimensions and job satisfaction.



Figure 2. Correlational matrix of EI and its dimensions

Table 4. Reliability analysis

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional Intelligence	28	0.871
Self-awareness	8	0.719
Self-management	7	0.829
Social Awareness	7	0.809
Relationship Management	6	0.714
Job Satisfaction	7	0.804

Reliability Analysis

As shown in Table 4, Cronbach's Alpha values for emotional intelligence and its dimensions ranged between 0.714 and 0.871, indicating good internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales. The alpha values for self-awareness (0.719) and relationship management (0.714) are on the lower threshold, but they still fall within the acceptable range for Cronbach's Alpha, which typically considers values above 0.70 as acceptable for ensuring reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). These values suggest that while the internal consistency of these dimensions is adequate, some caution should be exercised in their interpretation, particularly in comparing them with dimensions that have higher alpha values.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study align with the growing body of literature emphasizing the critical role of emotional intelligence (EQ) in enhancing employee retention, particularly in high-turnover industries like hospitality. This discussion integrates empirical results with theoretical and practical insights from existing literature to provide a comprehensive understanding of the context. Emotional intelligence has been widely recognized in the literature as a key factor influencing employee satisfaction and retention. Scholars like Goleman (1998) have highlighted that EQ is essential for managing workplace stress, building strong interpersonal relationships, and fostering a positive organizational culture. The present study corroborates these findings, demonstrating a significant positive correlation between overall EQ ($r = 0.475$) and job satisfaction. This suggests that employees who can effectively manage their emotions and interpersonal interactions are more likely to remain engaged and satisfied, reducing the likelihood of turnover.

The analysis of EQ dimensions offers nuanced insights consistent with prior research, the strong correlation between social skills and job satisfaction ($r = 0.547$) echoes findings by Prentice et al. (2020), who emphasized that effective communication and teamwork are critical for enhancing employee morale in customer-facing industries. In the hospitality context, social skills enable employees to navigate complex interactions with customers and colleagues, fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment. The self-management with a correlation of $r = 0.380$, aligns with studies by Wong and Law (2002), which highlight the role of self-regulation in mitigating workplace stress and improving adaptability. Employees with high self-management skills can maintain composure in challenging situations, a crucial attribute in the dynamic hospitality sector. Although its correlation of self-awareness with job satisfaction was weaker ($r = 0.252$), self-awareness remains a foundational component of EQ, as noted by Cherniss et al. (2001). It enhances employees' understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, contributing indirectly to job satisfaction by facilitating personal and professional growth. The significant relationship between the relationship management and job satisfaction ($r = 0.546$) supports findings by Jordan & Troth (2021), who assert that fostering positive workplace relationships leads to higher job satisfaction and lower turnover rates. The hospitality industry, characterized by high turnover rates and demanding work conditions, stands to benefit significantly from integrating EQ into its employee management strategies. Existing literature, including studies by Cho et al. (2006), highlights that turnover rates in the hospitality sector are not only costly but also disruptive to service quality. The study findings suggest that developing EQ, particularly in dimensions like social skills and self-management, can address these challenges by enhancing job satisfaction and fostering employee loyalty.

The demographic profile of respondents indicates that the workforce is predominantly male (81.57%) and local (89.47%). This cultural specificity aligns with studies such as Hofstede's (1993) cultural dimensions theory, which suggests that localized strategies are more effective in addressing workforce challenges. For instance, EQ training tailored to the socio-cultural dynamics of Kashmir could enhance its relevance and impact, addressing unique workplace challenges in the region.

Building on the literature and empirical findings, the strategies like EQ-centric training, supportive leadership and work-life balancing policies are recommended as retention tools. As supported by Clarke (2006), training programs focusing on social skills, self-management, and relationship management can improve employee satisfaction and performance. Studies by Bar-On (1997) highlight the importance of emotionally intelligent leaders in creating a positive work environment. Hospitality businesses should train managers to exhibit empathy, effective communication, and conflict resolution skills. Aligning with Robinson et al. (1994), policies promoting work-life balance and recognition can enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover. This study contributes to the broader discourse on EQ by validating its relevance in high-turnover industries like hospitality. The findings align with global research trends, such as those by Mayer et al. (2001), which position EQ as a critical competency for organizational success. Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of contextualizing EQ strategies to address regional and industry-specific challenges.

While this study provides meaningful insights, its scope is limited to the hospitality sector in Kashmir. Future research could expand the sample size and include longitudinal designs to explore the long-term impact of EQ interventions. Additionally, comparative studies across different regions and industries could provide a more comprehensive understanding of EQ's role in employee retention. This study is limited to particular region so the results may not be generalized to the whole industry. Kashmir is the place with very distinct features considering seasons, availability, and accessibility. Multiple studies should be conducted at different places that could provide additional insight into the proposed relationship. The employee turnover and rates vary across hotel and tourism industry in different countries. Organizational demands, conflicts and culture are likely to vary from hotel to hotel. Investigation across the hotel chains and in different countries, without distinguishing between organizations and hotel chains, can limit the generalizability of research findings. The integration of emotional intelligence into employee management strategies holds significant potential for addressing turnover challenges in the hospitality sector. By fostering a culture of emotional intelligence, organizations can enhance job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and improve overall performance, as evidenced in this study and supported by the broader literature.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that emotional intelligence (EI) is a critical factor in addressing employee turnover in the hospitality industry, particularly in the unique socio-cultural context of Kashmir. The findings demonstrate strong correlations between the four dimensions of EI—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management—and job satisfaction, which significantly influences employee retention. By fostering EI competencies through targeted training and emotionally intelligent leadership, organizations can create a more supportive and satisfying work environment. This research not only validates the role of EI in enhancing organizational outcomes but also offers valuable regional insights, paving the way for future studies to explore its application in diverse settings. The implications of the present study are:

- Every hotel organization must use Emotional intelligence related programs to enhance organizational capacity and performance in order to bringing best out of the peoples and constructing powerful workplace environment. With this will help to increase engagement, trust and integrity and can be used best retention tool.
- Various skills could be developed like, creativity, comprehension, rational, communication and management skills etc.

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