

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The influence of emotional intelligence and organizational politics on employee turnover and performance

Al-Dubai Omar Yaseen

School of Business Administration, Zhejiang Gongshang University, Hangzhou, China



Correspondence to: Al-Dubai Omar Yaseen, School of Business Administration, Zhejiang Gongshang University, China;
E-mail: wasetc@hotmail.com

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Abstract: Employees are viewed as the most valuable organizational assets especially in today's competitive environment. Accordingly, it is essential to retain skilled employees and provide a supportive environment to improve their performance especially in service companies as their employees have direct communication and interaction with customers. The purpose of this research is to examine the influence of organizational politics and emotional intelligence on two fundamental employee outcomes: turnover intention and employee performance. In addition, the current study examined the moderating impact of emotional intelligence on the relationship between organizational politics and turnover intention, and on the relationship between organizational politics and employee performance. Further, the study examined the association between employee characteristics: gender, age and work experience, and their turnover intention and performance. This study employed a quantitative research method and used administered survey questionnaire to collect data from 400 employees working in four service industries in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor states, Malaysia: banking, telecommunication, insurance and tourism. Structural equation modelling using Smart-PLS was used to analyze collected data. The research findings revealed that organizational politics and emotional intelligence had a significant impact on turnover and employee performance. However, emotional intelligence had no significant moderating impact on the relationship between organizational politics and the two employee outcomes: turnover intention and employee performance. Moreover, employees' age was found to be significantly related to their turnover intention as employees as older employees were found to have a low turnover intention. The findings of this research provide a significant managerial implications which revolve around the need for managers to ensure a fair and effective organizational politics and retain employees with good level of emotional intelligence.

Keywords: organizational politics, employee performance, turnover intention, emotional intelligence, service industry

1 Introduction

There is no denial that organizations depend on employees to operate and achieve their objectives. Despite heavy reliance on information technology and artificial intelligence, organizations still need to consider and appreciate the influential role played by employees in achieving their goals especially in service industry. Organizations operating in service industry such as tourism, insurance, banking, telecommunications, *etc.* rely on the abilities of their employees to communicate and interact with their customers.

Employee performance or individual performance is considered to be a significant building block for the company and provides the basis for high performance^[1]. Prior studies found a negative relationship between organizational politics and job performance^[2-5].

Over the years, researchers have validated and consented that perceived organizational politics have a positive impact on the purpose of turnover^[6,7]. Organizations are currently facing the issue of a comparatively lower degree of emotional intelligence among the majority of employees and researchers proposed a number of strategies to improve employee emotional intelligence. This study builds on the definition of emotional intelligence as "The ability to regulate emotions to support intellectual growth" presented by Salovey & Mayer (1990). The fundamental research aim of this research is to examine the impact of emotional intelligence and

organizational politics on employee turnover and performance in Malaysian service industry. This paper seeks to extend literature on employees' turnover intention and performance in relation to one comprehensive organizational based variable: organizational politics and one employee based variable: emotional intelligence. Based on the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study that intended to examine the collective relationships among these four fundamental variables. In addition, the current study aims to develop a conceptual model to predict employees' turnover and level of performance in relation to organizational politics and turnover intention in service industry context. This comprehensive model has the potential to effectively explain employees' turnover intention and performance and can be tested in different contexts. Further, this research intends to provide a set of recommendations to Malaysian service companies on how to improve their employee performance and decrease the turnover intention. Research findings reflect employees' perception of their organizational politics and its impact on their performance and turnover intention and explain how their emotional intelligence affects their level of performance and their intention to quit their jobs.

2 Theoretical framework & hypothesis development

Two fundamental theories are proposed to explain the two employee outcomes: turnover intention and performance in relation to their level of emotional intelligence and organizational climate represented by organizational politics. These theories are: organizational support theory and theory of planned behavior. Eisenberger *et al* (1990) are the main founders of organizational support theory which indicates that employees will appreciate their organizations and perform job tasks effectively when the company fulfill their socio-emotional needs and care about their well-being. Organizational support produces organizational justice and other factors that all aim at developing and improving performance to achieve. The theory of organizational support tries to focus on determining the nature of the reciprocal relationship between employees and the organization on the basis of the theory of reciprocal benefits. Benefit sharing will enhance benefits that will affect this relationship later, as Eisenberger and Aselage (2003) see social relationships help provide individuals with the expectations that will benefit the organization to the extent that it is both a worker and an owner the work will be on constant willingness and desire to improve benefits. This research argues that the theory of organizational support has the potential to explain why some employees in certain companies have low willingness to quit their jobs and perform their job tasks effectively due to the support and care received from their organizations. On the other hand, organizations that don't care about their employees and provide no support may result in higher turnover intention and low level of employee performance.

The theory of planned behavior was originated in 1985 by one of the leading scholars in the field of social psychology and professor emeritus of the University of Massachusetts, Dr. Ayske Ajzen. Scholars argued that theory of planned behavior provides a better understanding of employees' turnover intention. This research argues that the theory of planned behavior has the potential to explain employees' turnover intentions based on their decision making processes and beliefs about their companies which might be reflected by their actions such as searching for attractive job offers in other companies.

2.1 Emotional intelligence and turnover intention

Previous research has shown a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and turnover of employees^[8,9]. They said workers with higher emotional intelligence had very low intentions to resign. Mir (2018) argued that Emotional Intelligence was described as one of the most important and essential factors in the reduction and modification of the degree of intent of Turnover by workers working in private telecommunications organizations across Jammu and Kashmir.

Many scholars examined the relationship between employee emotional intelligence and their intention to quit their job^[10]. Researchers argued that employees with high emotional intelligence are capable of managing their own and others' positive and negative emotions and this leads to decreasing their turnover intentions^[10]. According to Raza *et al.* (2018)^[11] emotional intelligence possessed by employees allow them to reduce job dissatisfaction and stress and decrease their intention to leave their companies. Falahat *et al.* (2014) revealed that there is a substantial connection between the Emotional Intelligence and the Turnover intention of ICT professionals in Malaysia. Authors argued that emotional intelligence helps to build a good working atmosphere in businesses that ultimately reduces the rate of turnover intention to a minimum. This indicates that individuals who are emotionally intelligent on the private aspects

and emotions of others are more open to the positive and negative of their inner experience, which leads to the effective regulation of emotions in themselves and in the self of others^[12]. Based on these argumentations, the first research hypothesis is stated as follows:

H1: Emotional intelligence has a significant relationship with employee turnover intention.

2.2 Emotional intelligence and employee performance

Godini & Baghfalaki (2015) portrays emotional intelligence as a central component of employee performance. Emotional intelligence has a direct correlation with the success of workers^[13]. In their research on the effect of the performance of Emotional Intelligence employees in their work place, Rexhepi and Tobin (2017)^[13] argued that success in work and overall work performance depends not only on the technical knowledge and level of IQ of employees and managers, but also on the very significant impact of the level of Emotional Intelligence. Munir and Azam (2018)^[14] argued that emotional intelligence relates significantly and positively to the mission and contextual success of employees. The findings also showed a noticeable change in the employee satisfaction scores of the participants as a result of their increased level of emotional intelligence.

Munir and Azam (2018) argued that emotional intelligence relates significantly and positively to the mission and contextual success of employees. The findings also showed a noticeable change in the employee satisfaction scores of the participants as a result of their increased level of emotional intelligence. Priti and Das (2010) conducted a research on the importance of emotional intelligence to successful job performance has been performed. The idea of their study was to investigate the relationship between the score and the score of the performance appraisal checklist. Relationship was investigated using a correlation analysis. Chirasha *et al.* (2017) found the gradual effect of EI-approved managers on the performance of employees. Shahzad *et al.* (2011) analyzed the effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance, which revealed a positive correlation between social knowledge and employee performance. Guided by previous explanations, the second research hypothesis is states as following:

H2: Emotional intelligence has a significant relationship with employee performance.

2.3 Organizational politics and turnover intention

Employees perceiving unfavorable organizational politics such as injustice and the presence of influential groups with own interests maintain a high level of turnover intention^[2]. Organizational Politics have the potential to result in psychological withdrawal of employees, neglect, and turnover intention^[2,6,16]. The Model of Ferris *et al.* (2002)^[16] argued that organizational politics have direct impact on several employee outcomes such as turnover intention, job anxiety and success, job satisfaction, affective commitment.

Many researchers looked at the impact of perceived organizational behaviors and turnover in various workplaces. The findings showed a substantial relationship between these two variables, in which Cropanzano *et al.* (1997) found that perceived organizational policy had negative effects on the intentions of turnover, while Abubakar and Abdullah (2017) found that the two variables had a reciprocal effect. Because both the perceived organizational strategy and the intention to make a turnover are strongly met by workers at work. Hassan and Vina (2017)^[17] indicated that perceived organizational strategy was positively linked to the purpose of the turnover. Present study was carried out due to continuing research limitations in the methods used to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee outcomes. Miao, Humphrey, and Qian (2017) suggested the use of a longitudinal design rather than a cross-section design to calculate a true causal relationship. They also argued that emotional intelligence was not natural, but an ability to learn. Another important reason for this study was the presence of research gaps in the field of emotional intelligence training intervention development and implementation with a view to increasing the existing level of emotional intelligence among employees.

In a study undertaken by Abubakara *et al.* (2014) on the relationship between perceived organizational policies, organizational confidence, human resource practices and turnover intentions among nurses in Nigeria, they found that organizational policy has a positive relationship with the intention of turnover. Guided by relevant literature, the third research hypothesis is withdrawn as:

H3: Organizational politics have a significant relationship with employee turnover intention.

2.4 Organizational politics and employee performance

Many researchers paid attention to investigating the impact of organizational politics on different dimensions of employee performance and how organizational politics influence the efficiency, productivity and quality of employee performance which indicates that organizations need to address and emphasize the increasing needs of their employees^[5, 18, 19].

Enyinna *et al.* (2014) conducted a qualitative study on two banks in Nigeria, the study found that bad political behavior had a negative impact on employee results. In addition, Bai *et al.* (2016)^[3] found out that the use of the political environment contributed to the conflict of tasks and relations. Negative organizational policies are disapproved because of the moral dilemmas and issues that emerge in the workplace, while positive organizational policies result from the amalgamation of shared interests and the stimulation of collaboration^[20].

Albloush *et al.* (2020)^[21] investigates the effects of organizational politics on the efficiency of employees in the 22 regional directorates of the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), Jordan. Authors suggested that there are several workers whose output is poor or unsatisfactory. Albloush, Ahmad, Yousoff and Mat (2019) suggested that the interpretation of organizational policy had a negative effect on job efficiency. Moreover, Abubakar and Abdullah (2017) have stated and argued that the perceived organizational politics and turnover intentions have a reciprocal impact. In other words, both perceived organizational policies influence each other by perceived organizational policies that influence the role of turnover, and the intention of turnover may also influence the perception of organizational policy in the labor market. According to vast literature on the relationship between organizational politics and employee performance, the fourth research hypothesis is stated as following:

H4: Organizational politics have a significant impact on employee performance.

2.5 Moderating role of emotional intelligence

Adequate evidence has also shown that emotional intelligence, considering the significant predictor of employability related outcomes. Poon (2012)^[22] indicated that emotional intelligence can not be observed explicitly while the significance of emotional intelligence has been observed as a moderator in a variety of settings, such as, the moderating variability of emotional intelligence between several variables indicates that emotional intelligence plays a positive and significant role in stress and mental health. Jordan, Ashkanasy & Hartel (2002)^[21] argue that the moderating influence of emotional intelligence has been identified between emotional and behavioral reactions to job security. The same moderating effect of Karimi, Leggat, Farrell & Couper (2013) investigating the moderating effect of emotional intelligence between well-being and perceived work stress. In addition, a number of scholars have suggested hypotheses and have sought to clear this debate as to how individual variations have moderated behavior predictors. However, no reliably accurate inference has yet been drawn as to how emotional intelligence moderates the role of employability and employability (self-perceived) (Bastian *et al.* 2005; Potgietez and Coetzee, 2013) explicitly at the undergraduate level. Studies have shown EI to be a significant factor in numerous work-related results, including innovation and creativity (*e.g.*, Joseph & Newman, 2010). In addition, emotional intelligence has also been shown to be a moderator in several studies. Ojedokun (2010) stated that the emotional intelligence moderated the interaction between certain psychosocial factors and behaviors. This association may be responsible for the ability to understand, control self and others' emotions and the use of emotions in people. EI allows individuals to produce and maintain positive emotions.

Emotional intelligence can not only be acquired, but also improved at any point of one's life. However, a strong encouragement, a structured learning situation and continuous practice are required to do this. Besides Daniel Goleman and his colleagues, almost all leading scholars and psychologists who have published high-quality research journals around the world believe that emotional intelligence can be taught, learned and improved in all age groups and careers^[23]. Apart from empirical research, the principle of self-efficacy supports the idea that emotional intelligence can be acquired and improved. The current study showed that workers had a deep confidence in their abilities, which is why they had improved their emotional intelligence skills. The framework created by the theory supported this study during the implementation of emotional intelligence training and coaching strategies to improve emotional intelligence. Guided by different studies which employed emotional intelligence as a moderator to examine various employee and organizational outcomes, the fifth and six hypotheses are stated as follows: *H5: Emotional intelligence has a significant moderating impact on organizational politics and employee turnover intention.*

H6: Emotional intelligence has a significant moderating impact on organizational politics and employee performance.

This study has two independent variables: emotional intelligence and organizational politics, two dependent variables: turnover intention and employee performance, one moderating variable: emotional intelligence. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework.

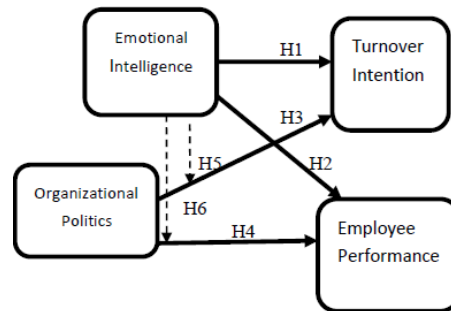


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

3 Method

The researcher believed that using quantitative research and employing survey questionnaire is an effective method to gain a better understanding of how organizational politics and emotional intelligence affect employees' turnover and performance. This research employed a developed questionnaire to collect primary data from first line employees working in Malaysian service industry in order to obtain pertinent quantifiable data for the descriptive research using 5 Likert scale to evaluate respondents' answers from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". Questionnaires allow respondent to express their views simply and quickly. Further, questionnaires were advocated as a better data collection method after respondents were ensured that their responses are kept confidential and permission taken from managers and collected data are used solely for academic purpose. This research employed a non-probability convenience sampling due to the pandemic of Corona-Virus and due to concentration of service industries main branches in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor states.

The researcher identified the fundamental sectors of Malaysian service industry. After careful observation and discussions with some academician and professionals, the researcher decided on selecting four main sectors: banking, insurance, telecommunication, and tourism. Guided by their market share and availability of many branches, the researcher selected Maybank and, CIMB banks. In telecommunication industry, the researcher decided to collect data from Digi, Celecom, and Maxis. These companies are well known and widely used by huge number of consumers in Malaysia. For tourism companies, the researcher selected some of the common hotels and travel agencies such as Times Square hotel, Istana, and Hilton in Kuala Lumpur State. With regard to insurance companies, the researcher has decided on selecting three main companies: "AIA General Berhad", "AXA Affin General Insurance Berhad" and "Allianz General Insurance Co" due to their well-known image and growth. Later, the researcher determined the main and well known branches and offices of respondent organizations and paid initial visits to meet their managers and request permission to allow employees to fill in questionnaires. The researcher selected big sized branches in order to gain better understanding of the potential relationship among study variables. Huge branches have high number of employees and employees can describe the organizational politics and their emotional intelligence.

The researcher distributed 600 questionnaires to employees working in four Malaysian service industries: banking, tourism, telecommunication and insurance. The researcher has requested the help of two local Malaysian citizens and a foreign citizen residing in Malaysia for several years to distribute and collect survey questionnaire. At an initial stage, the researcher has identified the names and number of Malaysian banks, insurance, tourism, and telecommunication companies as a target population. Given, the help presented by Malaysian citizens and foreign friend, the researcher had the chance to take to managers in order to ask employees to fill in questionnaires. Employees were given one week to complete questionnaires.

The measures of study variables were adopted from mature literature. Emotional intelligence scale was measured using Wong and Law (2011) scale which covers appraisal of

self emotions, appraisal of others' emotions and the use of emotions dimensions. Emotional intelligence was measured using 16 items. Examples of these items include "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time" and "I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions". Organizational politics variable was measured using Kacmar and Carlson (1997). Organizational politics variable was measured using 15 items such as "People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down" and "Agreeing with powerful others is the best alternative in this organization". Turnover intention was measured using Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997) scale. Turnover intention was measured using three items: 1) "As soon as I can find a better job, I will leave the organization" 2) "I am actively looking for a job outside the organization" and 3) "I am seriously thinking of quitting my job". Employee performance was measured using 7 items based on Williams and Anderson (1991) measurement scale. Examples of these items are: "I complete assigned duties adequately" and "I fulfil responsibilities specified in job description".

4 Results

Table 1 lists the demographic and general information related to research participants. The research findings revealed that approximately 57% of employees are males and 43% are females with ages ranging between 26-35 years (501%) and 36-45 years (26%). The discrepancies between employed men and women in Malaysia are not very high as women are highly involved in work environment.

Further, it was evident that majority of employees are youth aged (76%). For work experience, it was reported that 45% of the valid sample have work experience ranging between 4-10 years, followed by 35% who possess short term work experience (1-3 years). Around 33% of employees are working in telecommunication industry, followed by 28% working in banking industry while insurance and tourism industry had closer results 19% and 21% respectively. Finally, approximately 83 of employees have undergraduate degrees.

Table 1 Respondents' profile

	Item	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	227	56.75
	Female	193	43.25
Age	21-25	49	11.6
	26-35	211	50.2
	36-45	107	25.5
	46+	53	12.7
Work Experience (y)	1-3	149	35.5
	4-10	187	44.5
	10-15	68	16.2
	15+	16	3.8
Industry	Tourism	78	18.6
	Banking	119	28.3
	Telecommunication	136	32.4
	Insurance	87	20.7
Educational Level	High school/Diploma	29	6.9
	Undergraduate	347	82.6
	Postgraduate	44	10.5

4.1 Analysis of research model

Structural equation modelling (SEM) technique was used to test the research model. Research findings revealed that all constructs reported Cronbach's alphas above .70 threshold and all of the constructs have item loadings higher than the recommended 0.70. On the other, construct validity measure the extent to which a measurement logically connects and reflects the observed phenomenon to the construct. Construct validity is often measured using convergent and discriminant validity

Table 3 includes the AVE values for the converging validity of the constructs used in this analysis. Since all values reached the minimum threshold value (0.50) of AVE, the correct convergent validity for the measurement model of the present study was demonstrated. Discriminant validity identify if two variables or measures that should not be related are actually related. **Table 4** indicates that the square root of the construct AVE is greater than its association with

other constructs, meaning that the Fornell and Larcker criterion metrics have strong differential validity in this research.

Table 2 Constructs' reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Employee Performance	0.927	0.938
Turnover Intention	0.883	0.892
Organizational Politics	0.916	0.924
Emotional Intelligence	0.891	0.895

Table 3 Average variance extracted (AVE) value

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Employee Performance	0.713
Turnover Intention	0.759
Organizational Politics	0.728
Emotional Intelligence	0.698

Table 4 Fornell-Lecker criterion

	EP	TI	OP	EI
EI	0.861	-0.362	0.103	0.057
OP		0.817	1.063	-0.032
TI			0.791	-0.079
EP				0.785

4.2 Assessment of structural model

This research predicated a significant relationship between two independent variables: emotional intelligence and organizational politics, and the two dependent variables: turnover intention and employee performance along with considering the moderating role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between organizational politics and the two dependent variables. This research used "bootstrapping" to calculate the values of path coefficients for each independent and moderating variable on the dependent variables with considering the t value of 0.95 standard error measure and significance level value of 0.05. Table 5 reports the results of research hypotheses.

Further, the results of structural model are depicted in Figure 2 and Figure 3. The coefficient of determination (R^2) calculated in the present studies. R^2 value of 0.689 which accounted for a significant amount (75.6 per cent) of variation in employee turnover induced by the organizational politics. Guided by current research findings, it can be inferred that this research structural model maintain a significant impact of independent variables: organizational politics and emotional intelligence on the dependent variables turnover intention and performance. For employee performance, the calculated R^2 was 0.837 which means that a 83.7% of variation in employee performance can be accounted for organizational politics. The adjusted R square means that if the current study has been conducted in another context, the R square will be 0.719 for employee turnover intention and 0.811 for employee performance.

The results of structural model are presented in Table 4. The fundamental measures used for illustrating the results of a structural model are the regression weights (path coefficients), t values, and p values for significance of t statistics were used to structural model. Path coefficient was measured and analyzed using bootstrapping. Figure 2 shows the regression weights for organizational politics and emotional intelligence, and employee turnover intention along with the moderating impact of emotional intelligence.

Figure 3 depicts the results of the structural model by identifying the regression weights and R square of the relationship between organizational politics and emotional intelligence, and employee performance with the consideration of moderating impact of emotional intelligence. This research proposed six research hypotheses to determine the direct and moderate relationship between the proposed variables. The first research hypothesis aimed at testing the association between employees' emotional intelligence and their turnover intention. Research findings revealed that path coefficient value (0.226), t value was (3.088), and p value (0.003). Accordingly,

Table 5 Path coefficient and hypothesis testing

Path relationship	Path Coefficient	SE	t Value	P Values	Resut
Emotional Intelligence ≥ Turnover Intention	0.226	0.049	3.008	0.003	Supported
Emotional Intelligence ≥ Employee Performance	0.693	0.081	8.157	0.000	Supported
Organizational Politics ≥ Turnover Intention	0.642	0.063	8.044	0.000	Supported
Organizational Politics ≥ Employee Performance	0.254	0.081	3.166	0.001	Supported
Organizational Politics* Emotional Intelligence ≥ Turnover Intention	-0.125	0.069	3.358	0.000	Supported
Organizational Politics* Emotional Intelligence ≥ Employee Performance	-0.043	0.082	1.409	0.673	Declined

Notes: OP = Organizational Politics, EI = Emotional Intelligenc, TI = Tunover Intention, EP = Employee Performance

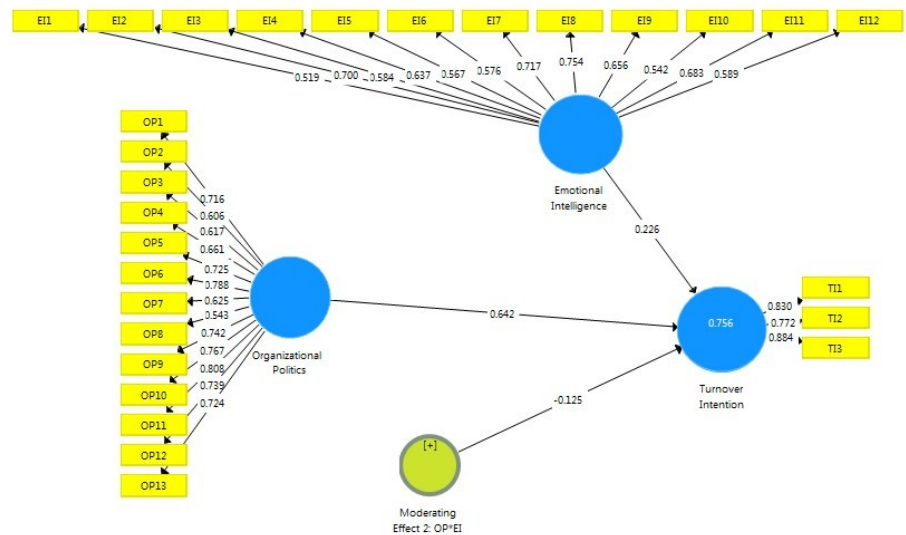


Figure 2 Results of structural model (Regression Weights): Organizational politics & turnover intention

the first hypothesis is supported and this research concluded that emotional intelligence had a significant impact on employee turnover intention.

The second research hypothesis tended to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on employee performance. The result revealed that path coefficient value (0.693), t value was (8.157), and p value (0.000). Such findings led to accepting second research hypothesis and stated that emotional intelligence had a significant impact on employee performance.

The third research hypothesis intended to study the relationship between organizational politics and employee turnover intention in Malaysian service industry. The reported findings (path coefficient (0.642), t value (8.044), and p value (0.000) indicated a significant relationship between organizational politics and employee turnover intention. Accordingly, third hypothesis was supported.

The fourth research hypothesis examined the relationship between: organizational politics have a significant impact on employee turnover intention. The result revealed that path coefficient of (0.254), t value (3.166), and p value of (0.001) and revealed a significant relationship between organizational politics and employee performance. Therefore, fourth hypothesis was supported.

The fifth research hypothesis aimed to identify the moderating impact of emotional intelligence on the relationship between organizational politics and employee turnover intention. The reported findings showed a path coefficient of (-0.125), t value (3.358) and p value of 0.000. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is accepted and emotional intelligence was found to have a negative impact on the link between organizational politics and turnover intention.

The sixth research hypothesis aimed at assessing the impact of the interaction of emotional intelligence with organizational politics on both turnover and performance of employees in Malaysian service industry. The reported findings showed a path coefficient of (-0.043), t value (1.409) and p value of (0.763). Guided by these results, H6 is declined and the current research concluded that emotional intelligence was found not to significantly affect the relationship between organizational politics and employee performance.

It was evident from Figure 4.3 that the presence of emotional intelligence decreases the impact of organizational politics on employee turnover intention. Employees with high

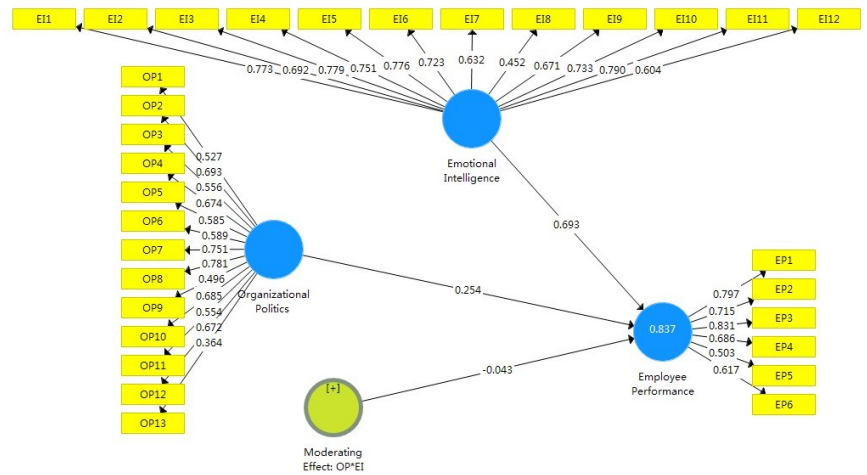


Figure 3 Distribution map of meteorological stations in Iraq

emotional intelligence are planning to quit their jobs while employees with low emotional intelligence are gradually and slowly thinking of quitting their jobs as depicted in Figure 4.

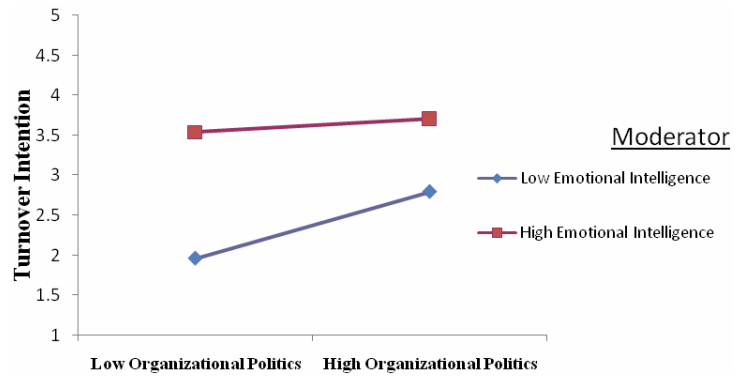


Figure 4 Moderating Effect of Emotional Intelligence

5 Discussion

This research validates the theory of organizational support and theory of planned behavior. Employees who feel justice and fair organizational politics are found to work hard. On the other hand, emotional with high level of emotional intelligence are less likely to quit their jobs. Developing employees who are extremely emotional would have a positive effect on the degree to which the company succeeds in maintaining its most critical staff. When this strategy is fully applied, the organization will be able to save an immense amount of advertising and orientation, hiring and retraining expenses, in addition to the time and effort of recruiting employees. In addition, emotionally intelligent workers are capable of generating positive organizational culture among employees. This positive impact would lead to higher efficiency, more creative ideas and eventually increase the overall performance of the company. Despite the unfavourable organizational politics employees are performing their tasks effectively but they plan to leave their companies when they get nice job offers. Accordingly, managers and leaders in Malaysian service companies need to maintain a fair and motivating organizational politics and perform some human resource management practices such as fair performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, and training and development in order to retain their employees and enhance their performance.

It is evident that organizational politics are mainly related to negative employee outcomes such as employee job dissatisfaction, low level of performance, turnover intention, and employee disengagement. It deserves to mention that the way organizational politics is measured is usually expressed in a negative way. Therefore, some companies might maintain a good and

encouraging organizational politics which eventually result in positive and favorable employee performance. The current study also found an important direct association between emotional intelligence and employee performance, similar to the results of Rexhepi and Tobin (2017)^[13]. Prior studies highlighted that perceived organizational politics had a direct impact on job performance (Mesiler Vigoda, 2014). Mastar, Darus and Shamsudin (2016)^[25] argued that turnover of workers is a current issue in the Malaysian service industry, such as the hotel industry. Mastar *et al.* (2016)^[25] stated that organizational policy has a major effect on the turnover of employees in the Malaysian hotel industry. In a recent study on the link between employees' emotional intelligence and their turnover intention, Brewster (2020)^[26] revealed surprising findings and argued that there was no association between both concepts but significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment was reported. Mohammad *et al.* (2014)^[27] reported that employees who possess high emotional intelligence level are able to make wise decisions and organizations find no difficulty retaining them and recommended managers to pay attention to developing and enhancing employee emotional intelligence.

Venugopal (2013)^[28] underlined the significant impact on employee performance caused by organizational politics and argued that work spirituality and emotional intelligence have the potential to decrease this negative influence. The author advocated the importance of employee emotional intelligence and work spirituality and recommended organization to maintain a reasonable level of each in order to enhance employee performance. Puri and Mehta^[29] have shown that there is a clear and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance in Pakistani hospitals. Authors concluded that workers with high emotions can control their own and other emotions that can eventually contribute to high job results. Javed (2014) underlined a positive significant influence of organizational politics on employees' turnover intention. In general, majority of studies indicates a positive impact on employees' intention to quit their jobs and move to other companies^[30]. Yusof, Zulkiffli, Padlee, and Yusof (2018)^[31] looked at the association between organizational politics, employee satisfaction and turnover intention and reported a major correlation between organizational strategy, employee satisfaction and the plan to make a turnover. Sanchez-Gomez and Bresó (2020)^[32] found positive associations between emotional intelligence and success among Spanish professionals and argued that high-level emotional intelligence professionals reported the highest performance. Previous research has shown that success at work is highly influenced by emotions and feelings that are an integral part of human life in any sense^[33]. Many scholars indicated that emotional intelligence skills include communication, empathy, coordination, negotiation, and success orientation which play a vital role in allowing employees to perform their job tasks effectively and in a timely manner^[34].

Based on the research findings, emotionally intelligent employees were performing their jobs effectively and don't have the intention to quit their jobs. Therefore, managers of Malaysian service companies need to maintain a high level of emotional intelligence in their employees and may organize some activities to help employees learn about the positive influence of emotional intelligence. This will increase the awareness of emotional intelligence among employees and its benefits back to organization because employees with high level of emotional intelligence understand their own and others' emotions and will work in a harmonic atmosphere. Further, when recruiting new employees, managers should focus on assessing the emotional intelligence of candidates and don't over emphasize the gender, experience and age of the new recruits.

6 Conclusion and further research

This research examined the impact of organizational politics and emotional intelligence on two fundamental outcomes: turnover intention and employee turnover and considered the moderating role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between organizational politics, and turnover intention and employee performance in Malaysian service industry. In addition, the results of the study revealed that organizational politics and emotional intelligence have a significant impact on turnover intention and employee performance. Further, emotional intelligence had a significant moderating impact on the relationship between organizational politics and turnover intention. Employees with high emotions working in organizations with unfavourable organizational politics are likely not to consider turnover intention compared to employees with low emotional intelligence. Guided by such findings, this study proposes three future research avenues. First, apply research framework in different context and using qualitative research method (qualitative, case study, mixed research methods). Second, further research may investigate the reasons that may lead some employees to leave their organization despite the availability of favorable organizational politics. Finally, given the vital role of emotional intelligence, further research may focus on how firms help employees to develop and

increase their emotional intelligence.

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