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EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AS A PREDICTOR OF JOB PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING ROLES OF JOB INVOLVEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AMONG ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines how emotional competence affects job performance among academic professionals, especially through the mediating variables of job involvement and perceived organisational support in institutions of higher learning. The research uses quantitative and cross-sectional design and draws data on 530 faculties in Arts and Science colleges in Tiruchirappalli District in Tamil Nadu, India, based on both ability-based emotional intelligence theory and organisational support theory. The results of the study using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS SEM) indicate that emotional competence has a statistically significant positive influence on job involvement, perceived organisational support and job performance. The findings note that faculty members who are emotionally competent tend to be more engaged in their academic activities and have higher chances of perceiving institutional support, hence improving the overall performance of the institutions. Moreover, the mediation analysis shows that perceived organisational support is a relatively significant mediator of the relationship between emotional competence and job performance, but the mediating role of job involvement is relatively less significant. Such results indicate the significance of organisational support systems at the organisational level in the process of converting personal emotional capabilities to high academic achievement. The research makes a contribution to the literature in the field of higher education and human resource management by providing empirical data regarding the Indian context and by combining emotional competence with the attitudinal and contextual mediators. In practice, the findings imply that the institutions of higher education must also invest in the growth of emotional competencies and the supportive organisational practices that will encourage sustainable faculty performance.

KEYWORDS: Emotional competence, Job performance, Job involvement, Perceived organizational support, Academic professionals, Higher education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to globalisation, competitive accreditation systems, digital learning environments, and growing societal expectations, institutions are facing constant change in higher education. It is now anticipated of academic professionals to be outstanding simultaneously in the domain of teaching, conducting researches, mentoring, administrative and institutional engagement. These broadened roles have increased accountability of performance and altered the character of academic work as to make it more complicated, social, and emotionally engaged (Bhatnagar, 2007; Luthra, Dixit and Arya, 2024).

In this regard, job performance is one of the academic professionals whose performance has become a crucial way in defining institutional quality and sustainability. The measurement of performance in higher education is no longer defined by tangible results, like hours of instruction or the number of publications, and presented more likely by wider markers of performance, such as teaching efficacy, student interaction, academic teamwork, and institutional progress (Campbell, 1990; Motowidlo and Van Scotter, 1994; Nazir and Islam, 2017). These versatile performance expectations place a strain on faculty members who have not only cognitive and technical work demands but also issues like emotional and interpersonal problems that are part of academic work (Goleman, 1998; D'Souza, Irudayasamy and Parayitam, 2023).

In India, colleges of arts and science form a good part of the higher education system and are crucial in developing human capital. The environment that faculty members at these institutions are often subjected to is characterised by restricted resources, diverse groups of students, administrative demands and changing expectations of pedagogy. Such circumstances highlight the necessity to study psychological and contextual aspects of achieving faculty performance effectiveness in challenging academic settings (Naderi Anari, 2012; Kamboj & Garg, 2021; Sihag & Dhoopar, 2023).

Affective and Psychological Foundations of Academic Effectiveness

Recent developments also in the field of organisational psychology and education research state that workplace performance is profoundly affected by both affective and psychological performance. The emotional aspects of work have become eminent as the scholars have realised that professional effectiveness does not merely rely on ideas and abilities, but the capacity of individuals to comprehend, manage, and apply emotions positively

(Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1998; Alam, 2022). Particularly academic work entails constant emotional involvement in terms of teaching, mentoring, evaluation, and collaboration.

Faculty members are regularly obligated to work with the emotions in the classroom, address the needs of various students, deal with pressures of research, and navigate the social settings of the institutions as well as their hierarchies. Academicians with the ability to adjust to such demands more quickly, remain calm in the face of stress and create positive learning conditions, on the basis of emotion. Empirical research reveals that these capabilities are related to better work performance, resistance, and adaptive functioning in professional settings (Srivastava and Dhar, 2016; Aruldoss, Kowalski and Parayitam, 2021).

In the context of higher education, emotionally based views can be useful in explaining why individuals with similar qualifications tend to achieve different levels of performance effectiveness. Emotional competence determines whether academic professionals see challenges positively, maintain motivation, and perform their jobs in the long term. As a result, current studies are moving towards the consideration of emotional characteristics as the basic part of scholarly achievement and the stability of performance (Pulakos, Arad, Donovan and Plamondon, 2000).

1.1 Work Engagement and Performance Dynamics as Institutional Context

The success of academic work is not simply a factor of personal ability, but also of the psychological relationship that faculty members and their work maintain with the organisational environments within which they are working in. The degree to which scholars perceive their practice as meaningful and personally significant determines the degree to which these scholars are willing to put effort and persevere in the presence of difficulties. According to role engagement theory, psychologically engaged people in professional activities exhibit superior quality performance and discretionary effort (Kahn, 1990).

Simultaneously, organisational studies emphasise that an institutional context should influence work attitudes and behaviours. The sense of equitability, appreciation, and institution caring leads to a positive attitude that boosts motivation and dedication. Social Exchange Theory suggests that employees will return favours to their organisation in positive work behaviours and better performance results when they believe that their organisation cares about their contributions and wellness (Eisenberger et al., 1986;

Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

Psychological engagement and professional commitment of faculty members can be encouraged through supportive leadership and the presence of college relationships and clear structure of governance provided in academic institutions. Faculty with emotive capability are especially skilled negotiating organisational relations, creating cooperation, and finding within all systems of the institutions. It is these dynamics between personal emotional performance, psychological absorption in work and institutional support processes which establish a key pathway within which academic performance is determined (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005).

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this research is to investigate to what extent emotional competence is a predictor of job performance in academic professionals employed in arts and science colleges of higher educational institutions in Tiruchirappalli district. This aims at establishing relevance of emotional abilities in describing performance in relation to academic work setting. The second aim is to examine the mediating effect of job involvement in the correlation between job performance and emotional competence. This goal will be accomplished by concentrating on psychological involvement in work in order to explain how emotional abilities are transformed into long-term academic achievement through the participating of faculty members in their professional activities. The third study aim is to examine the mediating role of thought organisational support on the interrelationship between emotional competence and job performance. This objective explains the importance of institutional context in strengthening the impact of individual emotional capabilities on academic performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Emotional Competence and Job Performance

Emotional competence is now being considered as a tipping point in determining individual performance in knowledge intensive and service-based career. Based on theories of emotional intelligence that rest on the ability to handle emotions, emotional competence refers to the skills and capability of an individual to recognize, control and harness emotions to their use at work (Salovey and Mayer, 1997; Alwali and Alwali, 2022). The evidence contradicted by empirical studies in a range of organizational environment confirms that emotionally competent staff members demonstrate

greater adaptability, more efficient interpersonal performance, and enduring task performance (Psilopanagioti, Anagnostopoulos, Mourtou, and Niakas, 2012; Sharma and Dhar, 2016). In educational institutions, academic personnel continuously face emotionally charged activities, such as teaching diverse groups, providing assessment, engaging their peer workers, and managing research requirements. Past research in educational and service domains point to the fact that emotional literacy complements the teaching performance, situational teaching, and discretion (Iqbal, Qureshi, Ashraf, Rasool and Asghar, 2021; Singh and Loh, 2024). The implications of these findings have been that, the emotional competent academic professionals are in better positions to deal with occupational stressors and record stable performance outcomes. Based on this, emotional competence will generally have a positive effect on job performance in academic professionals.

Ha1: Emotional competence has a significant positive effect on job performance among academic professionals.

2.2 Emotional Competence and Job Involvement

Emotional competence is important in influencing psychological attachment to work besides direct performance consequences. Job involvement is a broad term that sums up to the extent at which people both cognitively and emotionally associate themselves with their professional roles and making work the focus of their self-conceptualization. Individuals with high levels of emotion intelligence tend to be more intrinsically motivated, have better control over their emotions, and are psychologically harder, which in turn promotes a higher level of involvement in work tasks (Hameli, Ukaj and Çollaku, 2025; Malik and Garg, 2020). The faculty members in the academic institutions, especially those with strong emotional competencies, are likely to be involved more in teaching, research, and institutional activities. Empirical research of teachers has shown that emotional intelligence is important to increase work involvement and engagement by strengthening enthusiasm, dedication, and professional self (Singh and Loh, 2024; Hameli et al., 2025). This fact substantiates the hypothesis that the notion of emotional competence enables psychological immersion into academic careers, subsequently impacting job involvement among academic professionals in a positive way.

Ha2: Emotional competence has a significant positive effect on job involvement among academic professionals.

2.3 Emotional Competence and Perceived

Organizational Support

Perceived organization support refers to the beliefs that the employees hold about the degree to which their organization appreciates their efforts and cares about their welfare (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa, 1986). Emotionally competent people are more likely to look positively at the organizational actions and positively interact with stakeholders. Studies show that emotional intelligence increases trust, communication, and quality of relationship which determine an organizational support perception (Abou Hashish, 2017; Bacha and Kosa, 2024). In the academic setting, emotionally competent faculty are at a better place to develop positive relations with the administrators as well as colleagues, to seek institutional resources and perceive the policies in favorable ways. The association between emotional intelligence and perceived organizational support is supported by empirical evidence in the field of education and service industries (Jin and McDonald, 2017). As a result, it is expected that emotional competence enhances organizational support perceptions among academic professionals.

Ha3: Emotional competence has a significant positive effect on perceived organizational support among academic professionals.

2.4 Job Involvement and Job Performance

Job involvement has also been extensively established as a valid predictor of worker performance in different organizational settings. Employees with high job involvement will show more effort, perseverance, and initiative directly towards better performance results (Singh and Gupta, 2015; 16. Brown, 1996). Job involvement in the academic setting takes the form of commitment to teaching preparation, research output, student mentorship and institutional service. The body of empirical research in the service and higher education services illustrates that job involvement has a positive effect on task and contextual performance (Saeed, Khan, Zada, Ullah, Vega-Muñoz and Contreras-Barraza, 2022; Al-Refaei, Ateeq and Alzoraiki, 2023). Psychologically engaged academics have better chances of maintaining performance despite the lack of resources. Based on this, job involvement will have a positive impact on job performance among the academic professionals.

Ha4: Job involvement has a significant positive effect on job performance among academic professionals.

2.5 Perceived Organizational Support and Job Performance

Perceived organizational support is always reported to be one of the strong antecedents of performance-related outcomes. The social exchange theory assumes that performance, commitment, and effort are reciprocal between the employees and the organization when they will be more careful and supportive (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Several studies in education, in the health and service sector reveal that perceived support improves engagement, citizenship behavior, and job performance (Saadeh and Suifan, 2020; Aldabbas et al., 2023). In institutions that are higher education, the positive organizational climate eases stress, enhances motivation, and helps the members of the faculty work more efficiently. It has been established through empirical evidence that the organizational support of academic professionals with high job performance and institutional commitment is observed (Aboramadan, Pinnington and Lahrech, 2020; Bacha and Kosa, 2024). Therefore, perceived organizational support is likely to have a positive impact on a job performance of academic professionals.

Ha5: Perceived organizational support has a significant positive effect on job performance among academic professionals.

2.6 Mediating Role of Job Involvement

Recent studies in an organization have emphasized that the performance of individuals is subject to both direct and psychological impacts by individual capabilities. Job involvement is also considered an essential mediating factor that converts personal resources to the performance outcome (Saeed, Khan, Zada, 2022; Bashir, Manzoor and Gani, 2025). The emotionally competent academic professionals stand a better chance of becoming highly engaged in their work hence, improving their effectiveness in performance. Previous studies prove that job involvement mediates the associations between psychological antecedents and performance outcomes in the framework of higher education (Aboramadan, Albashiti, Alharazin and Dahleez, 2020). These results indicate that emotional competence positively impacts performance because it influences greater psychological involvement in academic tasks. As a result, the job involvement is hypothesized to mediate the relationship between emotional competence and job performance (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965).

Ha6: Job involvement mediates the relationship between emotional competence and job performance among academic professionals.

2.7 Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support is another mediating variable greatly discussed on the basis of organizational behavior study. Research suggests that perceptions of support, by employees, can explain the effects that personal and contextual factors have on performance and commitment outcomes (Jin and McDonald, 2017; Saadeh and Suifan, 2020). Faculty members who are emotionally competent are better placed to view the actions of the institution in a way that is positive and exploits the available resources. In the academic context, emotional competence can improve the organizational support perceptions that subsequently promote the increased level of performance. The mediating effect of the perceived organizational support indicates the presence in the relationship between the psychological resources and the job performance is supported by the empirical evidence (Bacha and Kosa, 2024; Blau, 2017). Based on this, the perceived organizational support is supposed to mediate the connection between the emotional competence and job performance.

Ha7: Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between emotional competence and job performance among academic professionals.

2.8 Contextual Relevance and Empirical Gap in Indian Higher Education

Although there is a growing international interest in the emotional and contextual determinants of occupational performance, research studies in the field of Indian higher education are limited. The existing empirical studies have focused mostly on either corporate or healthcare or Western academic contexts, which left a relatively limited number of studies that specifically focused on faculty within Indian arts and science colleges. This gap is remarkable, as the socio-cultural, organizational, and structural peculiarities of Indian higher institutions are unique.

The district-level studies such as those focused on Tiruchirappalli are especially the underrepresented ones, though they are significant to display localized academic realities. Within these areas, the faculty often operates within the flow of institutional requirements and regional educational needs, resource constraints, and reimagined student desires. The study of performance dynamics in these settings requires a combined analysis of individual affective abilities, psychological work engagement and perceived support of the institution.

Most recent research, such as that by Shafait and Huang (2023), highlights that emotional capabilities affect performance results through psychological and organizational mediating processes. However, there

has been an insufficient investigation about the applicability of these findings regarding academic professionals who work in the Indian context of higher education. The process of filling this gap helps in both the development of theory and practical importance by providing evidence-based information based on the academic sector.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research was a quantitative, cross-sectional research design, which aimed at exploring the predictive power of emotional competence on job performance and mediating effect of job involvement and perceived organizational support in the case of academic professionals. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data of 530 full-time faculty members, who work in arts and science-based colleges in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu, India. A purposive sampling method was employed, whereby respondents should have had sufficient teaching and institutional experience, with regard to the research aims. The operationalisation of all constructs was done with validated measurement scales based on past constructed theories and existing empirical studies to ensure content validity and contextual suitability in higher-educational institutions. The responses were scaled in terms of a five-point Likert-type scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which is a method well established in the literature to measure attitudinal and perceptual data (Likert, 1932). Before testing the hypothesis, the data set was filtered on the basis of missing values, outliers, and normality as well as possible common method bias within the required methodological steps (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, Podsakoff, 2003).

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to test the hypotheses and mediation relationships and conduct path analysis to allow the study to examine the complex relationships between several latent constructs simultaneously (Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2019; Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The two-step methodology of Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was adopted, and this included a measurement-model assessment as evidenced by a confirmatory factor analysis, and consequent structural-model assessment. The quality of measurement models was evaluated based on internal consistency reliability, convergent and discriminant validity, and evaluating discriminant validity with the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio, which was the concise approach to modern quality measurement methodologies (Henseler,

Ringle and Sarstedt2015; Sarstedt, Ringle and Hair, 2021). Goodness-of-fit indices such as d_{ULS} , d_G , Chi-square, NFI and SRMR were used to measure adequacy of the model. The mediating role of job involvement and perceived organizational support was estimated through the processes of bootstrapping which produces strong and bias-corrected estimates of indirect effects (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). The sample was large enough to meet minimum requirements set due to structural equation modelling that implied a sufficient amount of statistical power and the stability of estimated model (Kline, 2023).

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Demographic characteristics of the respondents' point at a representative balanced sample of academic professionals, which improves the extrapolation of the results of the study in Table 1. This distribution of an equal number of faculty members (54%) as male and female (46%) is characteristic of the changing gender balance of

Indian higher-education system. The majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 31-50 years of age since it lies within the economic and professional active age span, which indicates that most of the respondents are middle-aged academicians who have had sufficient exposure to the institutional dynamics. In terms of qualification and designation, a significant percentage of the faculty members hold doctorate degrees, followed by postgraduate, M.Phil. degree holders and are appointed as assistant and associate professors, which highlights a high level of academic qualifications and diversity of position. There is another aspect of teaching experience that demonstrates that the majority of the respondents have the appropriate level of professional experience to be able to give the informed perception of the emotional competence, job involvement, and organisational support. In line with the methodology, this type of demographic diversity enhances the robustness of behavioural and perceptual analysis in organisational study (Hair, Hult, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2019).

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N = 530)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	286	54.00
	Female	244	46.00
Age (Years)	Below 30	78	14.70
	31-40	192	36.20
	41-50	167	31.50
	Above 50	93	17.60
Educational Qualification	Postgraduate	148	27.90
	M.Phil.	168	31.70
	Ph.D.	214	40.40
Designation	Assistant Professor	298	56.20
	Associate Professor	146	27.50
	Professor	86	16.30
Teaching Experience	Below 5 years	121	22.80
	6-10 years	183	34.50
	11-15 years	124	23.40
	Above 15 years	102	19.20
Type of Institution	Aided College	212	40.00
	Self-Financing College	318	60.00

Source: Primary Data

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results of the measurement items used to measure the emotional competence, job involvement, perceived organisational support, and job performance in academic professionals are indicated in Table 2. The results reveal good reliability of the indicators as all standardised factor loadings (0.816 to 0.925) are above the required value of 0.70, thus indicating satisfactory convergent validity of the constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019). Items pertaining to emotional competence have strong loadings (0.857 to 0.916) this is the ability of the faculty members to be emotionally aware, emotionally regulated, understand others and

resilient as it is an inherent part of core emotional-intelligence models (Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Gross, 1998; Goleman, 1998; Bar-on, 1997). Likewise, job-involvement indicators indicate high loadings (0.839 to 0.925) indicating the central importance of work identity, absorption and emotional attachment to academic job roles (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965; Kanungo, 1982; Boyatzis, 2009). Also, the organisational supportive construct reveals high measurement properties (0.816 to 0.906), perceived care, equitable and developmental assistance by institutions are salient and well-captured dimensions as expected in the organisational-support theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986;

Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). In addition, job-performance items demonstrate very high loadings (0.827 to 0.902) that reflect task performance and contextual performance behaviours among faculty members (Campbell, 1990; Borman and Motowidlo,

1993; Organ, 1988). On the whole, CFA outcomes substantiate that measurement model is psychometric and can be later subjected to structural-model and mediation analysis within an empirical framework.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results

Code	Statement	CFA
Emotional Competence		
EC1	I am aware of my emotions while performing academic duties.	0.857
EC2	I am able to control my emotions in stressful academic situations.	0.916
EC3	I remain calm when handling academic pressure or conflicts.	0.888
EC4	I understand the emotional needs of students and colleagues.	0.885
EC5	I manage interpersonal conflicts effectively at my institution.	0.892
EC6	I use my emotions to make effective academic decisions.	0.866
EC7	I recover quickly from emotionally challenging work situations.	0.859
Job Involvement		
J11	My job is an important part of who I am.	0.868
J12	My job occupies a central place in my life.	0.879
J13	I am deeply involved in my academic responsibilities.	0.925
J14	I become fully absorbed in my academic work.	0.839
J15	I feel emotionally attached to my job.	0.884
J16	My self-esteem depends on how well I perform my job.	0.858
Organizational Support		
OS1	My institution genuinely cares about my well-being.	0.874
OS2	My institution values my academic contributions.	0.906
OS3	The administration supports me in performing my job effectively.	0.886
OS4	I am treated fairly in work-related matters by my institution.	0.876
OS5	My institution provides adequate resources for teaching and research.	0.816
OS6	My institution supports my professional development.	0.864
Job Performance		
JP1	I complete my academic responsibilities efficiently.	0.832
JP2	The quality of my teaching and research meets institutional standards.	0.902
JP3	I voluntarily help colleagues with academic work.	0.827
JP4	I contribute beyond my formal job requirements.	0.847
JP5	I adapt effectively to changes in academic policies.	0.859
JP6	I manage my academic workload efficiently.	0.891
JP7	I maintain professionalism in all academic activities.	0.892

Source: Smart PLS SEM

Table 3 shows internal-consistent reliability and convergent-validity values of the study constructs. According to Cronbach alpha, reliability coefficients are found within the range of 0.936 and 0.952, which are far beyond the standard of 0.70 and thus confirm high internal consistency between the items (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). All constructs also have composite reliability estimate values (ρ_a and ρ_c) exceeding the acceptable standard of 0.70, and this supports construct reliability in line with the current SEM standards (Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2015; Sarstedt, Ringle and Hair, 2021). The

convergent validity is also supported by an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.775 in Emotional Competence, 0.767 in Job Involvement, 0.758 in Organizational Support and 0.748 in Job Performance, all of which exceed the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.50 as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The findings overall indicate that the measurement model has a strong level of reliability with a reasonable level of convergent validity thus giving a good-empirical basis upon which the hypothesis structural relationships and trait mediation hypotheses can then be tested.

Table 3. Reliability and Validity Measures

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (ρ_a)	Composite reliability (ρ_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Emotional Competence	0.952	0.952	0.960	0.775
Job Involvement	0.939	0.940	0.952	0.767
Organizational Support	0.936	0.937	0.949	0.758
Job Performance	0.944	0.945	0.954	0.748

Source: Smart PLS SEM

Table 4 shows the model fit index of the PLS-SEM path analysis by giving the results of the saturated

and estimated model. The saturated model and the estimated model have a Standardized Root Mean

Square Residual (SRMR) value of 0.043 and 0.048 respectively, which is significantly lower than the recommended 0.08 and implies that the overall model fits the data acceptably and that the differences between the observed and model-implied correlations are negligible (Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2015). The d_ULS and d_G discrepancy values are also within reasonable limits of both models, which indicates that the empirical data is sufficiently consistent with the theoretically

proposed structure. Moreover, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) of 0.837 (saturated) and 0.831 (estimated) are above the acceptable norm of 0.80 in confirmation of acceptability of incremental model fit (Sarstedt, Ringle and Hair, 2021). On the whole, these fit statistics indicate that the proposed structural model has sufficient explanatory power and can be applied in hypothesis testing and the analysis of mediation in an empirical framework.

Table 4. Model Fit Summary (PLS-SEM Path Analysis)

Model Fit Index	Observed Value	Recommended Threshold	Status
SRMR	0.048	≤ 0.08	Acceptable fit
d_ULS	0.810	< 95% bootstrapped HI value	Acceptable fit
d_G	1.221	< 95% bootstrapped HI value	Acceptable fit
NFI	0.831	≥ 0.80	Acceptable fit

Source: Smart PLS SEM

Table 5 and Figure 1.1 & Figure 1.2 provides the findings of the PLS-SEM path analysis, including the direct and indirect effects between emotional competence and the independent variable, job involvement, the perceived organizational support, and the job performance. The results demonstrate that emotional competence has strong and statistically significant positive impact on job involvement ($\beta = 0.931, t = 39.429, p < 0.001$) and perceived organizational support ($\beta = 0.916, t = 33.575, p < 0.001$), which means that academically emotionally competent faculty tend to be more greatly engaged in their activities and experience higher levels of institutional support. It also suggests

that emotional competence has a direct positive impact on job performance ($\beta = 0.210, t = 2.463, p = 0.014$), as the capacity of faculty members to comprehend and manage emotional states and apply them helps to achieve academic performance outcomes in meaningful ways. These findings can be compared and contrasted with the previous empirical studies which place emotional competence as a key personal resource contributing to positive work-related attitudes and performance in educational and service-oriented environments (Salovey in Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1998; Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2019).

Table 5: Structural Model Summary

Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Emotional Competence -> Job Involvement	0.931	0.928	0.024	39.429	0.000
Emotional Competence -> Job Performance	0.210	0.205	0.085	2.463	0.014
Emotional Competence -> Organizational Support	0.916	0.913	0.027	33.575	0.000
Job Involvement -> Job Performance	0.176	0.186	0.094	1.862	0.063
Organizational Support -> Job Performance	0.588	0.580	0.105	5.593	0.000
Emotional Competence -> Job Involvement -> Job Performance	0.164	0.173	0.088	1.866	0.062
Emotional Competence -> Organizational Support -> Job Performance	0.538	0.530	0.098	5.480	0.000

Source: Smart PLS SEM

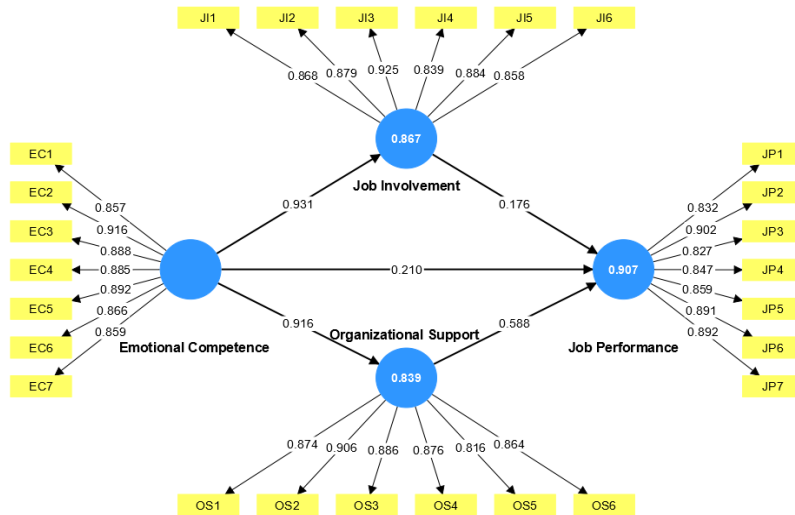


Figure 1.1 Path Coefficient and R2 using PLS-SEM
Source: Smart PLS SEM

Regarding the mediating mechanisms, the perceived organizational support has a strong and significant positive influence on job performance ($\beta = 0.588, t = 5.593, p < 0.001$), whereas the direct impact of job involvement on job performance is positive and insignificant ($\beta = 0.176, t = 1.862, p = 0.063$). The mediation analysis also shows that organizational perceived support plays a significant role in mediating the association between emotional competence and job performance ($\beta = 0.538, t = 5.480,$

$p < 0.001$), which also supports its mediating explanatory role in converting the emotional competence into high performance results (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 198). On the other hand, the indirect impact of emotional competence on job performance through job involvement is positive but has no usual significance values ($\beta = 0.164, t = 1.866, p = 0.062$), indicating a less powerful mediating role.

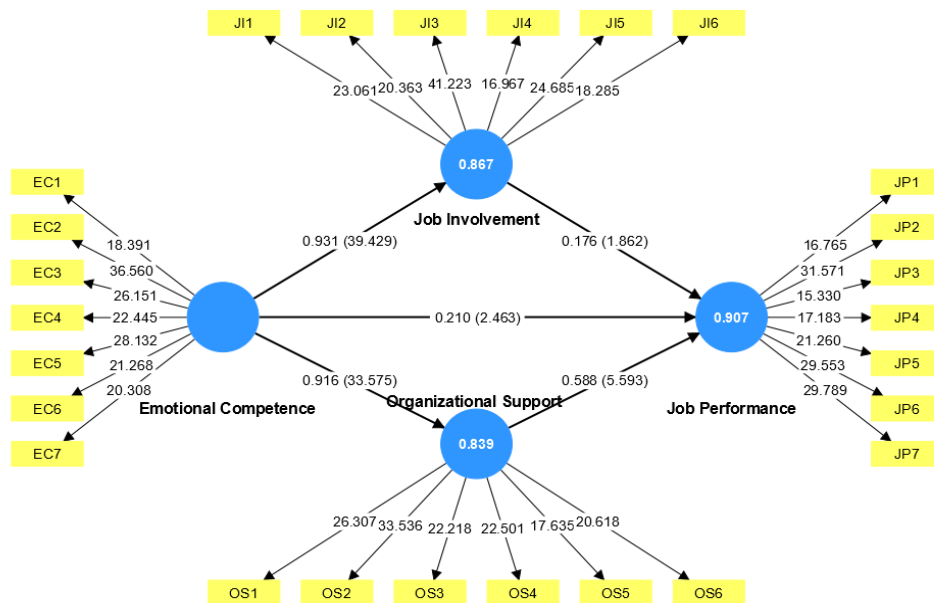


Figure 1.2 T-Statistics values using PLS-SEM
Source: Smart PLS SEM

In sum, the presented results emphasize the essential role of organizational support as a major contextual factor involved in the process of exploiting the emotionally competent academic professionals in order to improve their job performance, in line with

the organizational support theory, and modern mediation-based SEM studies within the academic spheres (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Sarstedt, Ringle and Hair, 2021).

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The current research supports the centrality of emotional competence as an essential source of individual resources that determine relevant work-associated outcomes in academic professionals. The considerable impacts of emotional competence on both job involvement and perceived organizational support suggest that those faculties with greater levels of emotional competence are more involved in their academic process and more prone to regard their academic institutions as nurturing and supporting ones. These findings conform to the theory of emotional intelligence as ability-based, which emphasizes on the capacity of people to perceive, understand, and control emotions to cope with working pressures and human relationships (Salovey, 1997). Besides, the fact that emotional competence has been directly related to job performance supports empirical evidence made earlier that indicated that emotionally competent academics show better instructional performance, teamwork, and adaptability in terms of performance in higher education settings (Goleman, 1998; Shafait and Huang, 2023). Combined, these results highlight the strategic role of emotional competence in improving faculty involvement and performance in institutions of higher-education.

The mediation analysis can give more insight into the mechanisms by which emotional competence can lead to job performance. Perceived organizational support was found to be a powerful and meaningful mediator which suggests that a strong state of emotional competence in faculty is more likely to associate the perception of institutional policies, the action of leadership and the provision of resources in a positive manner hence increasing their performance. This finding aligns with the Organizational Support Theory, according to which employees give back the perceived care and support of their organization by dedicating themselves more, by performing better (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). However, in contrast, job involvement showed a positive correlation to job performance, but the mediating effect was relatively low and quite insignificant. Therefore, it seems that emotional competence imports into higher performance more efficiently through organizational-level support systems rather than solely psychological immersion in work jobs. The trend corresponds to the recent studies identifying PLS-SEM, which focus on contextual and organizational variables as having better explanatory models compared to individual attitudes in complicated academic settings (Henseler,

Ringle and Sarstedt, 2015; Sarstedt, Ringle and Hair, 2021). In general, these findings place perceived organizational support as a key mediating factor by which emotional competence benefits academic job performance.

6. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Regardless of its contribution, the research has a number of limitations that should be mentioned. To begin with, the cross-sectional design does not allow inferring causation between emotional competence, job involvement, perceived organizational support, and job performance; longitudinal or experimental designs should address future study to reveal causal relationships over the course of time. Second, the use of self-reported information can provoke the questions about common method bias although the procedural solutions were used in accordance with the recommendations (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff, 2003). Future research may integrate multi source data, including peer or supervisor ratings of job performance, to increase the strength of the measure. Third, the research has been limited to Arts and Science colleges in the Tiruchirappalli District and this may not be representative of other areas or even other types of higher-educational institutions. Based on this, future studies can generalize the model to different types of institutional settings, such as professional and technical institutions and investigate other mediators or moderators, including organizational commitment, leadership style, or work engagement, to further deepen insight on the role of emotional competence in academic achievement (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

7. CONCLUSION

The research provides empirical data regarding the critical involvement of emotional competence in influencing the main attitudinal and behavioral outcomes among educational professionals in higher education. These results indicate that emotional competence is a significant improvement in job involvement, perceived organizational support, and job performance and therefore its significance as a central psychological asset among academic work environments. The study contributes to the existing body of literature by shedding light on how the emotionally competent faculty members can become more involved in their work and react to institutional support more positively, which results in the better performance outcomes in the end. These findings support previous studies on the strategic importance of emotional capabilities in the development of

successful teaching, research productivity and professional behaviour in higher-education contexts in India.

Moreover, the research emphasizes the mediating role of perceived organizational support in the emotional-competence-performance association, which implies the institutional settings are the highly influential factor in converting the personalized emotional states into the actual performance effects. Whereas the levels of job involvement have a positive effect on performance, a relatively lower mediating effect means that positive organizational practices and refreshing institutional policies have a better effect in improving academic performance, than the effect of psychological immersion alone. As a practical implication, the results are to recommend the higher-education institutions to consider faculty-development programs which enhance emotional

competence at the same time, nurture supportive organizational environments. These interventions have the potential to improve the faculty well-being, interest and output and in turn the effectiveness and long-term viability of the institution.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship and publication of this article.

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ANNEXURE

Questionnaire Statements	
Likert-Scale Questionnaire Item	Citation
Emotional Competence	
I am aware of my emotions while performing academic duties.	Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990); Gross, J. J. (1998); Goleman, D. (1998); Boyatzis, R. E. (2009); Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997); Bar-On, R. (1997)
I am able to control my emotions in stressful academic situations.	
I remain calm when handling academic pressure or conflicts.	
I understand the emotional needs of students and colleagues.	
I manage interpersonal conflicts effectively at my institution.	
I use my emotions to make effective academic decisions.	
I recover quickly from emotionally challenging work situations.	
Job Involvement	
My job is an important part of who I am.	Lodahl, T. M., & Kejner, M. (1965); Kanungo, R. N. (1982); Brown, S. P. (1996); Lodahl & Kejner (1965); Kanungo (1982)
My job occupies a central place in my life.	
I am deeply involved in my academic responsibilities.	
I become fully absorbed in my academic work.	
I feel emotionally attached to my job.	
My self-esteem depends on how well I perform my job.	
Organizational Support	
My institution genuinely cares about my well-being.	Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986); Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002); Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005); Blau, P. M. (1964)
My institution values my academic contributions.	
The administration supports me in performing my job effectively.	
I am treated fairly in work-related matters by my institution.	
My institution provides adequate resources for teaching and research.	
My institution supports my professional development.	
Job Performance	
I complete my academic responsibilities efficiently.	Borman, W. C., & Motowidlo, S. J. (1993); Campbell, J. P. (1990); Organ, D. W. (1988); Pulakos, E. D., Arad, S., Donovan, M. A., & Plamondon, K. E. (2000); Campbell (1990); Motowidlo, S. J., & Van Scotter, J. R. (1994)
The quality of my teaching and research meets institutional standards.	
I voluntarily help colleagues with academic work.	
I contribute beyond my formal job requirements.	
I adapt effectively to changes in academic policies.	
I manage my academic workload efficiently.	
I maintain professionalism in all academic activities.	