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MODERATING EFFECT OF SALES PERSONNEL'S AGE, QUALIFICATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE ON THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WORK PERFORMANCE RELATIONSHIP IN THE ORGANIZED RETAIL STORES

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Abstract
This study makes an attempt to investigate the moderating effect of age, qualification and work experience of the sales personnel on the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores. The data was collected from the sales personnel working in the organized retail stores of Karnataka state, India. Hierarchical regression analysis was used for data analysis. The results revealed that sales personnel's work experience moderated the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship whereas age and qualification showed no such effect. Suggestions are made to the retail organizations accordingly.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Work Performance, Age, Qualification, Work Experience, Sales Personnel.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) is having quite an impact on the business and corporate world. Emotional Intelligence is skill set which helps a person to appraise one's own feelings and that of others. It will thus help to use those feelings to inspire & encourage one's own self & others to achieve success in life (Abraham, 2000). Emotional intelligence is one of those elements in human psychology which needs great attention of modern researchers as it explains the persons' success better than existing variables available (Extremera and Fernandez-Berrocal, 2004). Emotional Intelligence is a well known concept in various areas like sociology, sales, education, psychology, business etc. Many researchers report that those people with strong emotional intelligence show better performance at workplace (eg. Kulkarni, Janakiram, Kumar, 2009; Khokhar & Kush, 2009; Joseph and Newman, 2010; Jorfi, Jorfi, & Moghadam, 2010; Mishra & Mohapatra, 2010; Prentice and King, 2011; Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver & Story, 2011; Chaudhry & Usman, 2011; One, Sachau, Deal, Englert, & Taylor, 2011; Kushwaha, 2012; Akintayo and Babalola, 2012; Boyatzis, Good, Massa, 2012; Chang, Sy, and Choi, 2012; Ahangar, 2012; Priya & Bisen, 2015). There are very limited researches which have studied how this relationship is influenced by demographic variables such as age, qualification, work experience etc. Hence, this present study makes an attempt to investigate the moderating effect of age, qualification and work experience of the sales personnel on the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores of Karnataka state, India.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There were many studies conducted where demographics such as age, qualification and work experience moderated or had similar effect on emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. In the study conducted by Ezadinea, Fathi & Salami (2011) the gender, age, shareholders' experience and their education levels were taken as moderating variables which are assumed to be moderating the relationship between emotional intelligence and portfolio performance of share holders. The results revealed that the experience of shareholders moderated the relationship between emotional intelligence and portfolio performance. Harris (2009) studied whether gender and tenure moderated this relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. The study did not find any evidence to prove that gender and tenure moderated the emotional intelligence and sales performance relationship. Lopes, Grewal, Kadis, Gall, & Salovey (2006) in their study while analyzing, controlled the effects of other predictors of performance such as gender, age, education, time, Big Five personality traits etc., while assessing the relation between emotional intelligence and job performance of employees at work.

Kaur (2012) study examined whether age moderated this relationship between emotional intelligence and managerial performance. The results divulged that the emotional intelligence and managerial performance relationship was moderated by their age. Similarly, Shooshtarian, Ameli & Lari (2013) while studying the impact of emotional intelligence of labors on their job performance, satisfaction and commitment, also examined the relationship between demographic variables such as age, education with job performance. The results revealed the age and education both were positively and significantly related to the job performance of labors. In this way, many studies were conducted in the past to see how the employee demographics affect the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There have been many studies conducted in the literatures to analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance. The current literature review points out that the some of the demographic variables such as age, qualification, and work experience moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. As a result, it is very logical to investigate whether demographic variables such as age, qualification and work experience of individuals moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in other organizational settings. Hence, this research is carried out to find whether the (a) age, (b) qualification and (c) work experience of the sales personnel working in the organized retail stores, moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To determine the moderating effect of age, qualification, and work experience on the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores.

HYPOTHESES

Main Hypothesis (H): *Age, (b) qualification and (c) work experience of the sales personnel moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.*

The main hypothesis of the study is broken down into three sub hypotheses.

H_1: Age of the sales personnel moderates the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.

H_2: Qualification of the sales personnel moderates the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.

H_3: Work experience of the sales personnel moderates the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The context of present study is carried out to identify the moderating effect of age, qualification, and work experience on the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores. The theoretical framework linking these variables is provided in fig. 1.

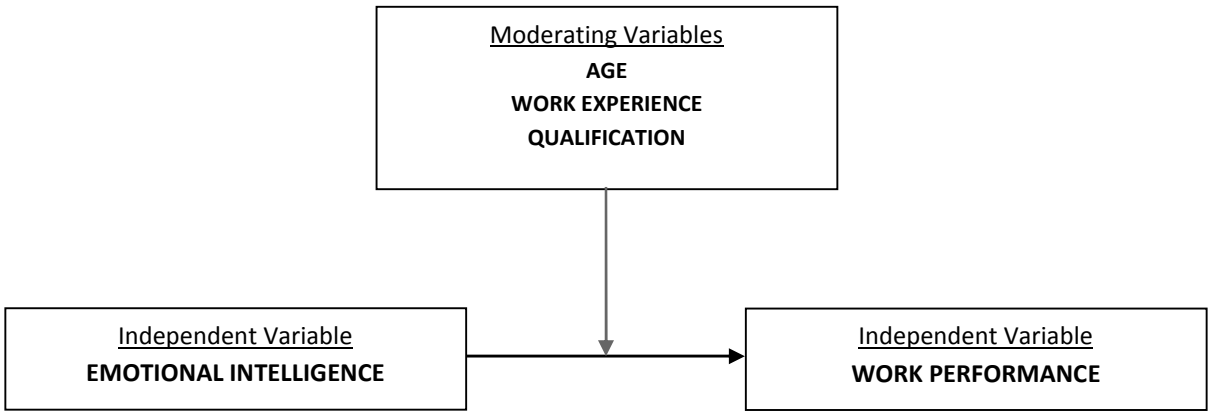

Fig 1: Theoretical framework of the study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, both exploratory and descriptive research designs have been used. The exploratory research design was used to get more insights and understanding about the overall organized retail stores, about the sales personnel working in them. The descriptive research design was mainly employed to test the research hypotheses and examine the moderating effect of demographics on the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. Well structured questionnaires were used to collect the data and later analysis was done using SPSS 16 version software. Two questionnaires were used in this study. The first questionnaire was used to measure the emotional intelligence of sales personnel, where it used self report emotional intelligence scale called TEIQue-SF developed by Petrides & Furnham, (2006). This scale consisted of 30 items to measure overall EI of the sales personnel and along with questions on the sales personnel's demographics such as their age, qualification and work experience. It was administered to the sales personnel to measure their emotional intelligence. The second questionnaire was used to measure the work performance of the sales personnel and it used a self developed scale

(Munshi & Hanji, 2014) to measure the work performance. This scale consisted of 23 items and it used five point rating scale. This questionnaire was administered to the managers of sales personnel and not to the sales personnel themselves. The managers reported the work performance of sales personnel working under them. The study was conducted in organized retail stores situated in different districts of Karnataka state. A two stage cluster sampling technique was used here with a sample size of 700 respondents. The study covered different organized retail formats such as hypermarkets, department stores, exclusive retail stores, specialty stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, etc.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data analysis and interpretation is carried out for the above set hypotheses.

H_1: Age of the sales personnel moderates the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.

The objective of testing this hypothesis is to know whether the age of sales personnel interact (work together) with emotional intelligence to have a statistically significant linear relationship with work performance. The correlation analysis was conducted to check the bi-variate relations between predictor variables, emotional intelligence, the interaction term (age × EI) and the criterion variable work performance. This was done before going for hierarchical regression analysis. In the table 1, the results indicated that emotional intelligence of the sales personnel was significantly correlated with work performance with r = .558, p = <.05. The interaction term (age × EI) was also significantly correlated with work performance with r = .214, p = <.05. These pointed out that these two predictors, emotional intelligence and the interaction term (between age × EI) were fit to go for the hierarchical regression analysis.

Table 1: Correlation analysis between emotional intelligence, age*emotional intelligence and work performance

Correlations		Work Performance	Emotional Intelligence	Age * Emotional Intelligence
Pearson Correlation	Work Performance	1.000	.558	.214
	Emotional Intelligence	.558	1.000	.302
	Age * EI	.214	.302	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Work Performance	.	.000	.000
	Emotional Intelligence	.000	.	.000
	Age * EI	.000	.000	.
N	Work Performance	700	700	700
	Emotional Intelligence	700	700	700
	Age * EI	700	700	700

Table 2: Results of hierarchical regression analysis for emotional intelligence, age*emotional intelligence and work performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1.	.558[a]	.312	.311	.32630	.312	315.848	1	698	.000
2.	.560[b]	.314	.312	.32599	.002	2.303	1	697	.130

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Age * EI

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
1.	Regression	33.628	1	33.628	315.848	.000[a]
	Residual	74.315	698	.106		
	Total	107.943	699			
2.	Regression	33.873	2	16.936	159.370	.000[b]
	Residual	74.071	697	.106		
	Total	107.943	699			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Age * Emotional Intelligence
c. Dependent Variable: Work Performance

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1.	(Constant)	.568	.183		3.114	.002		
	Emotional telligence	.898	.051	.558	17.772	.000	1.000	1.000
2.	(Constant)	.576	.182		3.159	.002		
	Emotional telligence	.873	.053	.543	16.497	.000	.909	1.101
	Age * EI	.008	.005	.050	1.518	.130	.909	1.101
a. Dependent Variable: Work Performance								

A hierarchical regression analysis was performed to investigate whether the age of sales personnel moderated the relationship between their emotional intelligence and work performance, which is shown in the table 2. In the first stage (model 1), the emotional intelligence was added as the independent variable and work performance as the dependent variable. The model 1 produced an R^2 of .312 which means that emotional intelligence explained 31.2% of variance in the dependent variable work performance. The model was also significant at F (1, 698) = 315.85, p < .001 and it accounted for 31.2 % of variance. This indicated that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between the emotional intelligence of sales personnel and their work performance. Subsequently, to test the moderating effect of age on the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship, an interaction term was created between age and emotional intelligence (i.e. age × emotional intelligence). This was done by multiplying the age scores of sales personnel with their emotional intelligence scores. In the second stage (model 2), the interaction term (between age and EI) was also added along with emotional intelligence as another independent variable. The model 2 produced an R^2 of .314 which means that the EI and interaction term explained 31.4 % of variance in the dependent variable. The "R Square Change" column in the model summary table explained the amount of change in R^2 from model 1 to model 2. In this case, the change in R^2 was reported as .002 which means that with the addition of interaction term (age × EI) produced 0.2% increase in R^2 but the change in R^2 was also not statistically significant with F Change (1, 697) = 2.303, p = .130. This showed that the interaction term of (age × EI) along with emotional intelligence did not explain any significant additional variance in the work performance of sales personnel than just only the emotional intelligence. Hence, the model demonstrated that the age of sales personnel did not moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores. The coefficients section reported that the emotional intelligence (β = .543, p < .05) was significantly related to work performance whereas the interaction term (age × EI) (β = .050, p > .05) was not significantly related to the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores.

H_2: Qualification of the sales personnel moderates the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.

The objective of testing this hypothesis is to know whether the qualification of sales personnel interact (work together) with emotional intelligence to have a statistically significant linear relationship with work performance. The correlation analysis was conducted to check the bi-variate relations between predictor variables, emotional intelligence, the interaction term (qualification × EI) and the criterion variable work performance. This was done before going for hierarchical regression analysis. In the table 3, the results indicated that emotional intelligence of the sales personnel was significantly correlated with work performance with r = .558, p = <.05. The interaction term (qualification × EI) was also significantly correlated with work performance with r = .161, p = <.05. This pointed out that these two predictors, emotional intelligence and the interaction term (between qualification × EI) were fit to go for hierarchical regression analysis.

Table 3: Correlation analysis between emotional intelligence, qualification*emotional intelligence and work performance

Correlations		Work Performance	Emotional Intelligence	Qualification * Emotional Intelligence
Pearson Correlation	Work Performance	1.000	.558	.161
	Emotional Intelligence	.558	1.000	.259
	Qualification * EI	.161	.259	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Work Performance	.	.000	.000
	Emotional Intelligence	.000	.	.000
	Qualification * EI	.000	.000	.
N	Work Performance	700	700	700
	Emotional Intelligence	700	700	700
	Qualification * EI	700	700	700

Table 4: Results of hierarchical regression analysis for emotional intelligence, qualification*emotional intelligence and work performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1.	.558[a]	.312	.311	.32630	.312	315.848	1	698	.000
2.	.558[b]	.312	.310	.32646	.000	.287	1	697	.593

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Qualification * EI

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
1.	Regression	33.628	1	33.628	315.848	.000[a]
	Residual	74.315	698	.106		
	Total	107.943	699			
2.	Regression	33.659	2	16.829	157.906	.000[b]
	Residual	74.285	697	.107		
	Total	107.943	699			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Qualification * EI
c. Dependent Variable: Work Performance

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1.	(Constant)	.568	.183		3.114	.002		
	Emotional Intelligence	.898	.051	.558	17.772	.000	1.000	1.000
2.	(Constant)	.568	.183		3.111	.002		
	Emotional Intelligence	.890	.052	.554	17.018	.000	.933	1.072
	Qualification * EI	.003	.006	.017	.535	.593	.933	1.072

a. Dependent Variable: Work Performance

A hierarchical regression analysis was performed to investigate whether qualification of the sales personnel moderated the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance, which is shown in the table 4. In the first stage (model 1), the emotional intelligence was added as the independent variable and work performance as the dependent variable. The model 1 produced an R^2 of .312 which means that emotional intelligence explained 31.2% of variance in the dependent variable work performance. The model was also significant at F (1, 698) = 315.85, $p < .001$ and it accounted for 31.2% of variance. This indicated that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between the emotional intelligence of the sales personnel and their work performance. Subsequently, to test the moderating effect of qualification on the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship, an interaction term was created between qualification and emotional intelligence (i.e. qualification × emotional intelligence). This was done by multiplying the qualification scores of sales personnel with their emotional intelligence scores. In the second stage (model 2), the interaction term (between qualification and EI) was also added along with emotional intelligence as another independent variable. The model 2 produced an R^2 of .312 which means that the EI and interaction term explained 31.2% of variance in the dependent variable. The "R Square Change" column in the model summary table explained the amount of change in R^2 from model 1 to model 2. In this case the change in R^2 was reported as .000 which means that with the addition of interaction term (qualification × EI) produced no increase in R^2 and the change in R^2 was of course not statistically significant with F Change (1, 697) = .29, p = .593. This showed that the interaction term of (qualification × EI) along with the emotional intelligence did not explain any extra variance in the work performance of the sales personnel than just only emotional intelligence. Hence, the model

demonstrated that the qualification of sales personnel did not moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores. The coefficients section reported that the emotional intelligence (β = .507, p < .05) was significantly related to the work performance whereas the interaction term (qualification × EI) (β = .017, p > .05) was not significantly related to the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores.

H_3: Work experience of the sales personnel moderates the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.

The objective of testing this hypothesis is to know whether the work experience of sales personnel interact (work together) with emotional intelligence to have a statistically significant linear relationship with work performance. The correlation analysis was conducted to check the bi-variate relations between predictor variables, emotional intelligence, the interaction term (work experience × EI) and the criterion variable work performance. This was done before going for hierarchical regression analysis. In the table 5, the results indicated that the emotional intelligence of sales personnel was significantly correlated with work performance with r = .558, p = <.05. The interaction term (work experience × EI) was also significantly correlated with work performance with r = .323, p = <.05. This pointed out that these two predictors, emotional intelligence and the interaction term (between work experience × EI) were fit to go for further hierarchical regression analysis.

Table 5: Correlation analysis between emotional intelligence, work experience* emotional intelligence and work performance

Correlations		Work Performance	Emotional Intelligence	Work Experience * Emotional Intelligence
Pearson Correlation	Work Performance	1.000	.558	.323
	Emotional Intelligence	.558	1.000	.328
	Work Experience * EI	.323	.328	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Work Performance	.	.000	.000
	Emotional Intelligence	.000	.	.000
	Work Experience * EI	.000	.000	.
N	Work Performance	700	700	700
	Emotional Intelligence	700	700	700
	Work Experience * EI	700	700	700

Table 6: Results of hierarchical regression analysis for emotional intelligence, work experience* emotional intelligence and work performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1.	.558[a]	.312	.311	.32630	.312	315.848	1	698	.000
2.	.577[b]	.333	.332	.32128	.022	22.959	1	697	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Work Experience * EI

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
1.	Regression	33.628	1	33.628	315.848	.000[a]
	Residual	74.315	698	.106		
	Total	107.943	699			
2.	Regression	35.998	2	17.999	174.372	.000[b]
	Residual	71.945	697	.103		
	Total	107.943	699			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Work Experience * EI
c. Dependent Variable: Work Performance

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. rror	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1.	(Constant)	.568	.183		3.114	.002		
	Emotional Intelligence	.898	.051	.558	17.772	.000	1.000	1.000
2.	(Constant)	.629	.180		3.493	.001		
	Emotional Intelligence	.815	.053	.507	15.475	.000	.892	1.121
	Work Experience * EI	.018	.004	.157	4.792	.000	.892	1.121
a. Dependent Variable: Work Performance								

A hierarchical regression analysis was performed to investigate whether the work experience of sales personnel moderated the relationship between their emotional intelligence and work performance, which is shown in the table 6. In the first stage (model 1), the emotional intelligence was added as the independent variable and work performance as the dependent variable. The model 1 produced an R^2 of .312 which means that emotional intelligence explained 31.2% of variance in the dependent variable work performance. The model was also significant at $F(1, 698) = 315.85$, $p < .001$ and it accounted for 31.2% of the variance. This indicated that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between the emotional intelligence of sales personnel and their work performance. Subsequently, to test the moderating effect of work experience on the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship, an interaction term was created between work experience and emotional intelligence (i.e. work experience × emotional intelligence). This was done by multiplying the work experience scores of sales personnel with their emotional intelligence scores. In the second stage (model 2), the interaction term (between work experience and EI) was also added along with emotional intelligence as another independent variables. The model 2 produced an R^2 of .333 which means that the EI and interaction term explained 33.3% of variance in the dependent variable. The "R Square Change" column in the model summary table explained the amount of change in R^2 from model 1 to model 2. In this case, the change in R^2 was reported as .022 which means that with the addition of interaction term (work experience × EI) produced an increase in R^2 of 2.2%. The change in R^2 was also significant with F Change $(1, 697) = 22.96$, $p < .001$. This showed that the interaction term (work experience × EI) along with emotional intelligence explained more variance in the work performance of the sales personnel more than just only the emotional intelligence. Hence, the model demonstrated that the work experience of sales personnel positively moderated their emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores. The coefficients section reported that each of the independent variables, emotional intelligence ($\beta = .507$, $p < .05$) and the interaction term (work experience × EI) ($\beta = .157$, $p < .05$) were both significantly and positively related to the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores. Multicollinearity was not a concern here as the collinearity statistics column in coefficients showed that Tolerance and VIF were well within the accepted limits (Coakes, 2005; Hair et al., 2006).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of hypotheses testing are discussed in detail.

Hypothesis 1: The results of hierarchical regression analysis for hypothesis H_1 showed that the age of sales personnel in the organized retail stores did not moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. This result is consistent with the previous research conducted by Ezadinea, Fathi & Salami (2011) but contradicts the research findings of Kaur (2012). In particular, it is evident that in organized retail stores, the relationship between sales personnel's emotional intelligence and work performance remains unaffected by their age groups. Hence, it is evident that the age of sales personnel has no influence on the relationship between their emotional intelligence and work performance.

Hypothesis 2: The results of hierarchical regression analysis for hypothesis H_2 showed that the qualification level of sales personnel in organized retail stores did not moderate the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. This result concurs with the previous research conducted by Ezadinea, Fathi & Salami (2011). On the whole, this research gives evidence that even qualification of the sales personnel does not have any effect on their emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores.

Hypothesis 3: The results of hierarchical regression analysis for hypothesis H_3 showed that the work experience of sales personnel in organized retail stores moderated the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. The regression model containing work experience and emotional intelligence explained an additional variance of 2.2 % than the model just containing emotional intelligence and the overall change was also found significant. This research finding coincides with the previous research findings of Ezadinea, Fathi & Salami (2011) but contradicts the research findings of Harris (2009).

However, this particular research has given preliminary evidence that increase in the work experiences of sales personnel along with their emotional intelligence produces an increased work performance in the organized retail stores than just only the emotional intelligence. Hence, there will be implications from this finding for the researchers and practitioners.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to examine the whether the sales personnel's age, qualification, and work experience moderate their emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. This study was mainly focussed on the sales personnel working in the organized retail stores of Karnataka state, India. The results of hierarchical regression analysis confirmed that work experience of the sales personnel moderated the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship, whereas age and qualification did not moderate this relationship. Based on the study findings, it is suggested that retail organizations can consider hiring candidates with moderately high work experience for the sales jobs during recruitment and selection process which might benefit the organizations in terms of performance. The work experience criteria can also be used while making promotion decisions for the sales jobs in organized retail stores. These small key considerations could improve the overall productivity of the retail organizations. Nevertheless, future studies are required to further validate the research findings.

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