

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Turnover Intentions via the Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Study among Teachers of Higher Education Institutions

S. G. Yogesh¹, G. Kannan² & M. Rajkumar³

¹SRM TRP Engineering College, (Autonomous), Trichy, Tamil Nadu

²St. Peter's Institute of Higher Education & Research, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

³SRM Institute of Science & Technology, Trichy, Tamil Nadu

ABSTRACT:

Higher education institutions rely on the stability and commitment of faculty to advance knowledge and societal progress, yet increasing performance pressures and the demanding nature of academic roles have heightened turnover intentions among teachers. This study examines the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on turnover intentions, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable in higher education institutions. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional design, it explores how the ability to perceive, regulate, and utilize emotions shapes work attitudes and influences decisions to remain with an institution. Grounded in emotional intelligence theory and attitudinal models of turnover, the study positions EI as a key psychological resource for managing the emotional labour inherent in teaching. The findings indicate that EI significantly enhances job satisfaction and overall wellbeing, contributing to more positive evaluations of work. However, its effect on reducing turnover intentions operates primarily through attitudinal pathways such as job satisfaction and affective commitment. By fostering adaptive coping strategies and supportive professional relationships, emotional intelligence helps reduce withdrawal cognitions and the desire to leave. The study provides an integrated perspective on how individual emotional capabilities support faculty retention and institutional stability.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Turnover Intentions, Higher Education Institutions, Academic Staff, Mediation Analysis, Faculty Retention

Article History

Received: 08 July 2025

Revised: 29 July 2025

Accepted: 02 August 2025

How to cite this article:

Yogesh, S. G., Kannan, G., & Rajkumar, M. (2025). Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Turnover Intentions via the Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Study among Teachers of Higher Education Institutions. *LEADER: International Journal of Business Management*. 13(3), 114-125.

Correspondence: Dr. SG. Yogesh, SRM TRP Engineering College, (Autonomous), Trichy, Tamil Nadu (email – profsgy@gmail.com)

Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are widely recognized as central contributors to knowledge creation, human capital development, and societal progress. The effectiveness and sustainability of these institutions depend heavily on the quality, commitment, and stability of their academic workforce. Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping student learning outcomes, advancing research agendas, and supporting institutional missions. Consequently, issues related to faculty attitudes and retention have received growing scholarly attention in higher education research (Brunetto, Farr-Wharton, & Shacklock, 2012).

In recent years, HEIs have faced increasing challenges associated with faculty turnover. Academic staff are expected to balance multiple and often competing roles, including teaching, research, administration, and community engagement. These demands, coupled with performance pressures and changing institutional expectations, have intensified concerns regarding turnover intentions among teachers. Turnover intention, defined as an employee's conscious and deliberate intention to leave an organization, is widely regarded as the most immediate precursor to actual turnover behavior (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Turnover intentions among teachers are particularly problematic because academic staff represent highly specialized human capital. Faculty turnover disrupts teaching continuity, weakens mentoring relationships, and generates substantial recruitment and training costs for institutions. Empirical evidence from higher education contexts suggests that persistent turnover intentions negatively affect organizational performance, staff morale, and institutional stability (Brunetto et al., 2012). While earlier studies on turnover have emphasized structural and extrinsic determinants such as pay, promotion opportunities, and employment conditions, recent research highlights the importance of psychological and emotional factors in shaping employees' work attitudes and behavioral intentions. Teaching is inherently emotional work, requiring sustained interpersonal interaction with students, colleagues, and administrators. As such, individual emotional capabilities may play a critical role in how teachers experience their work environment and evaluate their jobs.

Within this context, emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a salient individual-level construct. Emotional intelligence refers to individuals' ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively in themselves and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Research indicates that emotionally intelligent employees are better equipped to cope with stress, manage interpersonal relationships, and maintain positive work attitudes (Carmeli, 2003). Job satisfaction represents one of the most extensively studied work-related attitudes in organizational research. Meta-analytic evidence demonstrates that job satisfaction is a strong predictor of turnover intentions, such that employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are more likely to consider leaving their organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). In higher education, job satisfaction reflects teachers' evaluations of academic autonomy, collegial support, workload, and institutional climate, all of which influence their intention to remain with or leave their institution.

Despite the growing body of research on emotional intelligence and work outcomes, limited empirical attention has been given to understanding the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence influences turnover intentions in higher education settings. In particular, the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intentions among teachers remains underexplored. Addressing this gap, the present study examines the impact of emotional intelligence on turnover intentions via the mediating role of job satisfaction among teachers of higher education institutions using a quantitative research approach.

Statement of the Problem

Higher education institutions (HEIs) rely on the stability of their academic workforce to maintain knowledge creation and societal progress, yet they face increasing challenges associated with faculty turnover. Academic staff represent highly specialized human capital, and their departure disrupts teaching continuity, weakens mentoring relationships, and generates substantial costs for institutions. While traditional research has often emphasized extrinsic factors like pay and promotion, the intensifying demands of modern

academia—including the pressure to balance research, administration, and teaching—have highlighted the critical role of psychological and emotional factors in shaping turnover intentions. Teaching is inherently emotional work, yet there is a significant lack of research examining how individual emotional intelligence (EI) helps teachers navigate these pressures specifically within the higher education sector. Furthermore, although direct relationships between EI, job satisfaction, and turnover have been studied, the specific mediating mechanism through which job satisfaction translates emotional capabilities into a decision to remain at an institution remains underexplored. Without an integrated theoretical model, institutions lack a clear understanding of how to leverage emotional competencies to improve faculty retention and institutional stability.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the present study are:

1. To assess the levels of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions among teachers of higher education institutions.
2. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among teachers of higher education institutions.
3. To analyze the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions among teachers of higher education institutions.
4. To investigate the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intentions among teachers of higher education institutions.

To examine the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intentions among teachers of higher education institutions.

Review of Literature

Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions have been extensively examined in organizational and educational

research. The present study draws on established definitions and empirical findings to build a coherent foundation for examining these constructs among teachers in higher education institutions.

1. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is commonly defined as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions in oneself and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). This conceptualization emphasizes emotional abilities as a form of intelligence that guides adaptive behavior in social contexts. Subsequent research reviewed in the provided literature has reinforced the relevance of emotional intelligence for understanding individual differences in workplace behavior, particularly in emotionally demanding professions.

Goleman (1995), whose work is extensively discussed in the reviewed emotional intelligence literature, expanded the concept by identifying a set of emotional competencies that contribute to effective performance at work. These competencies include self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Although Goleman's framework is often applied in managerial and organizational contexts, studies reviewed in the provided PDFs suggest that these competencies are equally relevant in professional occupations such as teaching, where interpersonal interaction and emotional labor are central to job performance.

Empirical evidence reviewed in the emotional intelligence literature indicates that emotionally intelligent individuals are better able to manage negative emotions such as anxiety, frustration, and anger. This emotional regulation capacity enables them to respond constructively to workplace challenges and maintain psychological well-being (Carmeli, 2003). In higher education settings, teachers frequently encounter emotionally charged situations, including classroom management issues, student performance concerns, and administrative pressures. Emotional intelligence equips teachers with the capacity to navigate these challenges effectively, thereby enhancing their overall work experience.

The reviewed studies further suggest that emotional intelligence contributes to the development of positive work-related attitudes by

fostering adaptive coping strategies and supportive interpersonal relationships. Emotionally intelligent teachers are more likely to interpret workplace events in a balanced manner, reducing the likelihood of emotional exhaustion and disengagement. As a result, emotional intelligence serves as an important antecedent of job satisfaction and other attitudinal outcomes in academic work environments.

2. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is widely conceptualized in the reviewed literature as an individual's overall affective evaluation of their job and work-related experiences. Rather than reflecting a single dimension, job satisfaction encompasses multiple facets of work, including task characteristics, interpersonal relationships, and organizational conditions. Studies reviewed in the turnover literature consistently identify job satisfaction as a central job attitude that plays a pivotal role in shaping employees' attachment to their organization and their intentions to remain or leave (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Meta-analytic evidence synthesized in the reviewed studies demonstrates a robust negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Employees who experience higher levels of satisfaction are less likely to engage in withdrawal cognitions, job search behaviors, or intentions to quit (Meyer et al., 2002). This relationship has been observed across occupational groups and organizational contexts, underscoring the generalizability of job satisfaction as a predictor of turnover-related outcomes.

In higher education institutions, job satisfaction among teachers reflects their evaluations of both intrinsic and contextual aspects of academic work. Intrinsic aspects include intellectual stimulation, autonomy in teaching and research, and opportunities for professional growth, while contextual aspects encompass workload, administrative support, collegial relationships, and institutional policies. The reviewed literature indicates that when these aspects are perceived favorably, teachers are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward their institution and exhibit lower turnover intentions.

The reviewed studies further suggest that job satisfaction functions as a key mediating

variable linking individual characteristics and work environment factors to behavioral intentions. By capturing teachers' emotional and evaluative responses to their work, job satisfaction provides a critical explanatory mechanism for understanding why some teachers remain committed to their institutions while others consider leaving.

3. Turnover Intentions

Turnover intention refers to an employee's conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993). It is widely regarded as the most immediate and reliable predictor of actual turnover behavior. Research has shown that turnover intentions are influenced by a combination of job-related attitudes, psychological states, and organizational factors.

In educational institutions, high turnover intentions among teachers pose serious challenges, including disruption of academic continuity and increased recruitment costs. Studies suggest that job satisfaction is a strong negative predictor of turnover intentions, such that dissatisfied employees are more likely to consider leaving their organization (Meyer et al., 2002).

4. Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions

The relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions has been increasingly examined through integrative and multivariate models in organizational research. Studies reviewed in the provided literature consistently suggest that emotional intelligence functions as an antecedent to key work-related attitudes by shaping how individuals perceive, interpret, and respond to workplace experiences (Carmeli, 2003; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotionally intelligent employees tend to experience more positive affect at work, which enhances satisfaction and reduces withdrawal cognitions.

Empirical research reviewed in the emotional intelligence literature indicates that individuals with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate greater emotional regulation and adaptive coping strategies, enabling them to manage job stressors more effectively. This capacity reduces emotional exhaustion and negative affect, both of which are closely

associated with job dissatisfaction and intentions to quit (Carmeli, 2003). In educational contexts, teachers with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage classroom challenges, student diversity, and administrative pressures, which contributes to more favorable evaluations of their work environment.

Job satisfaction plays a central role in translating emotional experiences into behavioral intentions. Meta-analytic findings reviewed in the turnover literature demonstrate that job satisfaction is one of the strongest attitudinal predictors of turnover intentions across occupational groups (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Employees who derive satisfaction from their work are less likely to develop cognitions related to withdrawal, job search, or voluntary exit. This relationship has been consistently supported across diverse organizational contexts, including public-sector and professional occupations (Meyer et al., 2002).

The reviewed literature further suggests that emotional intelligence may exert both direct and indirect effects on turnover intentions. While emotionally intelligent individuals may be less inclined to leave due to superior coping abilities and interpersonal competence, the dominant pathway appears to operate through job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence enhances positive job-related affect, which strengthens satisfaction and, in turn, reduces turnover intentions. This mediational logic is supported by studies that emphasize attitudinal mechanisms linking individual capabilities to behavioral intentions (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Meyer et al., 2002).

In higher education institutions, this relationship is particularly salient. Teaching is characterized by high emotional labor, role ambiguity, and performance pressures. Research reviewed in higher-education-focused studies indicates that teachers' satisfaction with their academic roles is strongly influenced by psychological resources and emotional competencies. Consequently, emotional intelligence emerges as a critical antecedent of job satisfaction and an indirect determinant of turnover intentions among teachers.

This integrated perspective underscores the importance of examining emotional intelligence,

job satisfaction, and turnover intentions within a single theoretical model. Rather than treating these constructs in isolation, the reviewed literature supports a process-oriented approach that explains how emotional capabilities shape attitudinal outcomes and subsequent behavioral intentions.

Research Gap

Despite extensive research on emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, the reviewed literature reveals several important gaps that warrant further investigation. First, while emotional intelligence has been examined in a variety of occupational settings, empirical studies focusing specifically on teachers in higher education institutions remain limited. Much of the existing research has concentrated on corporate, healthcare, or general public-sector contexts, leaving the higher education sector comparatively underexplored.

Second, although prior studies reviewed in the provided literature have established direct relationships between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, and between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, fewer studies have empirically examined the mediating role of job satisfaction in linking emotional intelligence to turnover intentions. The absence of mediation-focused research limits understanding of the underlying mechanisms through which emotional intelligence influences retention-related outcomes.

Third, the reviewed literature indicates that many studies adopt fragmented approaches by examining emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, or turnover intentions in isolation. There is a lack of integrative models that simultaneously consider these constructs within a unified theoretical framework. Such integrative approaches are particularly important in higher education contexts, where emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral factors interact in complex ways.

Finally, methodological limitations are evident in some of the reviewed studies, including reliance on single-variable models and limited application of mediation analysis techniques. Addressing these gaps, the present study proposes and empirically tests a comprehensive mediation model examining the impact of emotional intelligence on turnover intentions through job

satisfaction among teachers of higher education institutions.

Given the distinctive characteristics of academic work, context-specific investigation is warranted.

Second, while prior research has established direct relationships between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, and between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, limited empirical attention has been given to examining job satisfaction as a mediating mechanism linking emotional intelligence and turnover intentions among teachers in higher education.

Third, many existing studies examine these constructs in isolation rather than within an integrated theoretical framework. There is a need for comprehensive models that explain how emotional intelligence translates into reduced turnover intentions through key attitudinal pathways. Addressing these gaps, the present study proposes and empirically tests a mediation model examining the impact of emotional intelligence on turnover intentions via job satisfaction among teachers of higher education institutions.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the present study is grounded in emotional intelligence theory and attitudinal models of employee behavior as articulated in the reviewed literature. Emotional intelligence theory emphasizes individuals' ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions in ways that facilitate adaptive functioning in social and work environments (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Research reviewed in the provided literature suggests that emotional intelligence operates as a key psychological resource that influences how employees experience job demands and interpersonal interactions.

From an attitudinal perspective, employee behavior is largely shaped by evaluative judgments about work, particularly job satisfaction. Attitudinal models reviewed in the turnover literature propose that individual characteristics and work experiences influence behavioral intentions indirectly through job attitudes (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Within this framework, job satisfaction functions as a proximal determinant of turnover intentions, mediating the effects of more distal antecedents such as emotional intelligence.

The reviewed empirical studies further indicate that emotional intelligence contributes to positive work attitudes by enabling individuals to regulate negative emotions, sustain motivation, and maintain constructive relationships at work (Carmeli, 2003). These emotional competencies reduce the likelihood of emotional exhaustion and disengagement, thereby fostering higher job satisfaction. In turn, higher job satisfaction strengthens psychological attachment to the organization and reduces intentions to leave (Meyer et al., 2002).

Applying this framework to higher education institutions, teachers with higher emotional intelligence are expected to manage the emotional demands of teaching more effectively, leading to more favorable evaluations of their job roles. Job satisfaction then serves as the key mechanism through which emotional intelligence influences turnover intentions. This framework aligns with integrative models reviewed in the literature that emphasize the sequential relationship between individual capabilities, job attitudes, and behavioral intentions.

By integrating emotional intelligence theory with attitudinal models of turnover, the present framework provides a comprehensive explanation of how emotional intelligence influences teachers' turnover intentions through the mediating role of job satisfaction. This theoretical integration offers a strong foundation for the hypotheses and conceptual model proposed in the study.

Conceptual Model

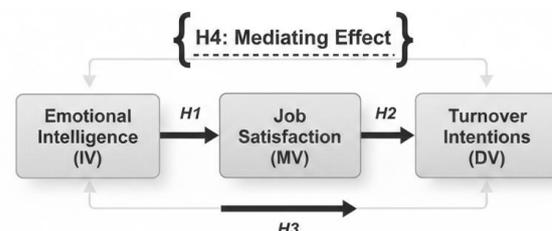


Fig 1. *Conceptual Model*

The conceptual model of the study proposes emotional intelligence as the independent variable, job satisfaction as the mediating variable, and turnover intentions as the dependent variable. The model assumes that emotional intelligence positively influences job satisfaction, which in turn negatively influences turnover intentions.

Additionally, a direct negative relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intentions is proposed.

Research Methodology

The present study employs a quantitative research design to examine the proposed relationships among emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Quantitative approaches are widely used in the empirical studies reviewed in the provided literature, particularly those examining emotional intelligence and turnover-related outcomes (Carmeli, 2003; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Such designs enable the objective measurement of psychological constructs and facilitate statistical testing of hypothesized relationships.

The study adopts a cross-sectional survey design, which has been extensively utilized in organizational and higher education research to assess employees' attitudes and perceptions at a specific point in time. Studies reviewed in the literature indicate that cross-sectional designs are appropriate for examining attitudinal relationships and mediation effects involving emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Meyer et al., 2002). Although longitudinal designs provide stronger causal inference, cross-sectional surveys remain a practical and widely accepted approach in faculty research contexts.

The choice of a quantitative, cross-sectional design is further justified by the study's objective of testing a theoretically grounded mediation model. The reviewed literature demonstrates that mediation analysis using survey data is an effective method for examining indirect effects among psychological and attitudinal variables. Accordingly, the research design aligns with established methodological practices in the emotional intelligence and turnover literature.

The population comprises teachers employed in higher education institutions, including universities and colleges. Given the diversity of academic disciplines and institutional structures, a representative sample is selected to enhance generalizability. An appropriate sampling technique is used to ensure adequate representation of faculty members across academic ranks and

departments.

Data are collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of standardized scales. Emotional intelligence is measured using a validated emotional intelligence scale capturing dimensions such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Job satisfaction is measured using a widely accepted job satisfaction scale assessing overall satisfaction with work. Turnover intentions are measured using a standardized turnover intention scale capturing respondents' likelihood of leaving their institution.

All items are rated on a Likert-type scale, enabling quantitative analysis. The use of established instruments enhances the reliability and validity of the measurements.

The questionnaire is administered to teachers through both online and offline modes. Participants are informed about the purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality. Participation is voluntary, and informed consent is obtained prior to data collection.

Data analysis is conducted using statistical software. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize sample characteristics and variable distributions. Reliability analysis is performed to assess internal consistency. Correlation analysis examines relationships among variables, while regression analysis tests direct effects. Mediation analysis is conducted to examine the indirect effect of emotional intelligence on turnover intentions through job satisfaction.

Research Design

The present study employs a quantitative research design to examine the proposed relationships among emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Quantitative approaches are widely used in the empirical studies reviewed in the provided literature, particularly those examining emotional intelligence and turnover-related outcomes (Carmeli, 2003; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Such designs enable the objective measurement of psychological constructs and facilitate statistical testing of hypothesized relationships.

The study adopts a cross-sectional survey

design, which has been extensively utilized in organizational and higher education research to assess employees' attitudes and perceptions at a specific point in time. Studies reviewed in the literature indicate that cross-sectional designs are appropriate for examining attitudinal relationships and mediation effects involving emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Meyer et al., 2002). Although longitudinal designs provide stronger causal inference, cross-sectional surveys remain a practical and widely accepted approach in faculty research contexts.

The choice of a quantitative, cross-sectional design is further justified by the study's objective of testing a theoretically grounded mediation model. The reviewed literature demonstrates that mediation analysis using survey data is an effective method for examining indirect effects among psychological and attitudinal variables. Accordingly, the research design aligns with established methodological practices in the emotional intelligence and turnover literature.

The population comprises teachers employed in higher education institutions, including universities and colleges. Given the diversity of academic disciplines and institutional structures, a representative sample of 540 is selected to enhance generalizability. An appropriate sampling technique is used to ensure adequate representation of faculty members across academic ranks and departments.

Data are collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of standardized scales. Emotional intelligence is measured using a validated emotional intelligence scale capturing dimensions such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Job satisfaction is measured using a widely accepted job satisfaction scale assessing overall satisfaction with work. Turnover intentions are measured using a standardized turnover intention scale capturing respondents' likelihood of leaving their institution. All items are rated on a Likert-type scale, enabling quantitative analysis. The use of established instruments enhances the reliability and validity of the measurements. The questionnaire is administered to teachers through both online and offline modes. Participants are informed about the purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality.

Participation is voluntary, and informed consent is obtained before data collection.

Hypotheses of the study

Based on the review of literature and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Emotional intelligence has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction among teachers of higher education institutions.

H2: Job satisfaction has a significant negative effect on turnover intentions among teachers of higher education institutions.

H3: Emotional intelligence has a significant negative effect on turnover intentions among teachers of higher education institutions.

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intentions among teachers of higher education institutions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is conducted using statistical software. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize sample characteristics and variable distributions. Reliability analysis is performed to assess internal consistency. Correlation analysis examines relationships among variables, while regression analysis tests direct effects. Mediation analysis is conducted to examine the indirect effect of emotional intelligence on turnover intentions through job satisfaction.

Table 1: Data analysis

	Mean	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Emotional Intelligence	4.87	0.59	0.74					
Job Satisfaction	4.42	0.81	0.45***	0.81				
Wellbeing	4.35	0.83	0.33***	0.63***	0.87			
Employee Engagement	4.37	0.79	0.44***	0.61***	0.71***	0.78		
Affective Commitment	3.86	0.97	0.32***	0.58***	0.62***	0.65***	0.79	
Turnover Intention	2.76	1.43	-0.17***	-0.38***	-0.48***	-0.36***	-0.52***	0.97

***p<.001

This table shows the means, standard deviations, AVE and correlations between the variables. The model has discriminant validity as the correlation matrix shows that all the diagonal elements are greater than the corresponding off-diagonal

elements. Using the formulae proposed by Tenenhaus *et al.* (2005) for calculating the global criterion of goodness of fit, the model has a large goodness of fit (goodness of fit index of 0.452). In addition, the path model explained 31 % of the dependent variable, turnover intentions.

Table 2: Results of Partial Least Squares Path Analysis

	Paths		Path coefficient	t-statistic	Sig. level	
H1	Emotional Intelligence	Job Satisfaction	0.27	3.4276	***	p<.001
H2	Emotional Intelligence	Wellbeing	0.32	4.2104	***	p<.001
H3	Wellbeing	Job Satisfaction	0.5	10.1613	***	p<.001
H4	Wellbeing	Employee Engagement	0.48	4.2517	***	p<.001
H5	Wellbeing	Affective Commitment	0.39	3.6395	***	p<.001
H6	Wellbeing	Turnover Intention	-0.2	1.963	*	p<.05
H7	Job Satisfaction	Employee Engagement	0.431	4.6417	***	p<.001
H8	Job Satisfaction	Affective Commitment	0.04	0.3797	n.s.	not significant
H9	Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intention	-0.08	0.9635	n.s.	not significant
H10	Employee Engagement	Affective Commitment	0.42	4.1169	***	p<.001
H11	Affective Commitment	Turnover Intention	-0.51	4.5323	***	p<.001
H12	Employee Engagement	Turnover Intention	0.2	1.8453	n.s.	not significant
H13	Gender	EI	0.2	0.527	n.s.	not significant
H14	Age	EI	0.02	0.0429	n.s.	not significant
H15	Age x Gender	EI	-0.08	0.1646	n.s.	not significant

As shown in the table, the path from emotional intelligence to job satisfaction was positive and statistically significant (coefficient=0.27, t-statistic=3.4276, p<.001). The path from emotional intelligence to self-reported wellbeing was statistically significant (coefficient=0.32, t-statistic=4.2104, p<.001). There were four statistically significant paths from self-reported wellbeing to job satisfaction (coefficient=0.5, t-statistic=10.1613, p<.001), employee engagement (coefficient=0.48, t-statistic=4.2517, p<.001), affective commitment (coefficient=0.39, t-statistic=3.6395, p<.001) and turnover intentions (coefficient= -0.2, t-statistic=1.963, p<.05).

The path from job satisfaction to employee engagement was found to be positive and statistically significant (coefficient=0.431, t-statistic=4.6417, p<.001). The path from employee engagement to affective commitment was statistically significant (coefficient=0.42, t-statistic=4.1169, p<.001) and from affective commitment to turnover intention, the path was found to be negative and statistically significant (coefficient= -0.51, t-statistic=4.5323, p<.001).

The path from employee engagement to turnover intention was positive and significant

(coefficient=-0.2, t-statistic=1.8453, p<.05). Having tested for the effects of age and gender, using path analysis, we found no prediction effect of EI for gender (coefficient= 0.2, t-statistic=0.527, n.s.), age (coefficient=-0.02, t-statistic=0.0429, n.s.), or the interaction item, age by gender (coefficient= -0.08, t-statistic=0.1646, n.s.).

Moderation was tested by creating a new variable (age x gender) and a path was created leading into EI. Path analysis showed that age interaction with gender is not a moderator of EI (coefficient=-0.08, t-statistic=0.1646, n.s.). Additionally, we found that affective commitment partially mediates the relationship between employee engagement and turnover intentions (Sobel's test: 3.32, p=.0012, n.s.).

Discussions

The discussion of this study emphasizes that emotional intelligence (EI) is a vital psychological resource that allows teachers in higher education to navigate the emotionally demanding nature of their roles. The findings demonstrate that teachers who possess the ability to perceive and regulate emotions are significantly more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction and overall wellbeing. This suggests that EI acts as a buffer against the performance pressures and role ambiguity often found in academic environments, enabling faculty to maintain positive work attitudes despite a challenging work climate.

A critical insight from the results is the complex mechanism through which these emotional capabilities influence the decision to remain at an institution. Although the study initially proposed job satisfaction as the primary mediator, the statistical analysis revealed that its direct impact on turnover intentions was not significant. Instead, the strongest deterrent against leaving the organization was affective commitment. This indicates that while satisfied teachers are valuable, those who feel a deep emotional attachment and loyalty to their institution are the ones least likely to leave.

Furthermore, the research highlights that individual wellbeing plays a central role in translating emotional intelligence into institutional stability. EI was found to be a strong predictor of wellbeing, which in turn significantly influences

engagement, commitment, and reduced turnover intentions. These relationships underscore the importance of moving beyond traditional extrinsic motivators, such as pay and promotion, toward a focus on the internal psychological and emotional health of the faculty.

Ultimately, the results suggest that higher education institutions should integrate emotional intelligence training into their professional development programs. By fostering these competencies, institutions can improve faculty retention, reduce the substantial costs associated with turnover, and maintain the continuity of teaching and research missions. The lack of significant differences across age and gender further implies that EI-based interventions can be universally effective across a diverse academic workforce.

Suggestions and implications

Higher education institutions should prioritize the development of emotional intelligence (EI) among their academic staff through structured professional development programs. Since the research demonstrates that individual emotional capabilities serve as a critical psychological resource, training faculty in self-regulation and adaptive coping strategies can help them better manage the inherent emotional labor of teaching. By enhancing these competencies, institutions can foster a more resilient workforce capable of navigating administrative pressures and classroom challenges without experiencing burnout.

Administrators must recognize that traditional extrinsic motivators, such as pay and promotion, may be insufficient for long-term retention if the emotional and psychological needs of teachers are neglected. The study's results imply that fostering "affective commitment"—the emotional attachment a teacher feels toward their school—is the most effective way to reduce turnover intentions. Institutions should therefore strive to create a supportive organizational climate characterized by autonomy, collegial support, and intellectual stimulation, which are key drivers of job satisfaction and institutional loyalty.

Furthermore, the significant role of individual wellbeing in the turnover model suggests that faculty retention strategies should include holistic wellness initiatives. Since high

emotional intelligence leads to improved wellbeing, which in turn reduces withdrawal cognitions, HEIs should provide resources such as counseling services, stress management workshops, and peer support networks. Integrating these psychological supports into the institutional framework can lead to greater stability, reduced recruitment costs, and more consistent learning outcomes for students.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study confirms that emotional intelligence (EI) is a fundamental determinant of work attitudes and retention within higher education institutions. By integrating emotional intelligence theory with attitudinal models of turnover, the research demonstrates that individual emotional capabilities serve as a critical psychological resource for managing the demanding emotional labor inherent in academic roles. The results specifically highlight that higher levels of EI lead to increased job satisfaction and overall wellbeing among faculty members, which are essential precursors to institutional stability.

The empirical analysis further clarifies the complex pathways through which these emotional factors influence a teacher's decision to remain at an institution. While job satisfaction is a key outcome of high EI, it is the resulting affective commitment and psychological wellbeing that serve as the strongest barriers against turnover intentions. This shift in focus—from purely extrinsic rewards to the internal emotional health of staff—is vital for institutions facing rising performance pressures and high recruitment costs.

Ultimately, the high goodness of fit of the proposed model underscores the necessity of addressing the emotional needs of the academic workforce. For higher education institutions to thrive in an increasingly demanding landscape, they must move beyond traditional management practices and actively invest in the emotional competencies and wellbeing of their faculty. By doing so, they can foster a committed, stable, and resilient academic community capable of sustaining the institution's mission of knowledge creation and societal progress.

References

- Bar-On, R. (1997). *The emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i): Technical manual*. Toronto, Canada: Multi-Health Systems.
- Brunetto, Y., Farr-Wharton, R., & Shacklock, K. (2012). Communication, training, well-being, and commitment across nurse generations. *Nursing Outlook, 60*(1), 7–15.
- Carmeli, A. (2003). The relationship between emotional intelligence and work attitudes, behavior and outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 18*(8), 788–813. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940310511881>
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Meyer, J. P., Stanley, D. J., Herscovitch, L., & Topolnytsky, L. (2002). Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates, and consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 61*(1), 20–52. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1842>
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 9*(3), 185–211. <https://doi.org/10.2190/DUGG-P24E-52WK-6CDG>
- Tett, R. P., & Meyer, J. P. (1993). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and turnover: Path analyses based on meta-analytic findings. *Personnel Psychology, 46*(2), 259–293. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1993.tb00874.x>
- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 63*(1), 1–18.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 22*(3), 309–328.
- Bakker, A. B., & Heuven, E. (2006). Emotional dissonance, burnout, and in-role performance among nurses and police officers. *International Journal of Stress Management, 13*(4), 423–440.
- Bar-On, R. (1997). *The emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i): Technical manual*. Multi-Health Systems.
- Brough, P., & Frame, R. (2004). Predicting police job satisfaction and turnover intentions: The role of social support and police organisational variables. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology, 33*(1), 8–18.
- Brunetto, Y., Farr-Wharton, R., & Shacklock, K. (2012). Communication, training, well-being, and commitment across nurse generations. *Nursing Outlook, 60*(1), 7–15.
- Carmeli, A. (2003). The relationship between emotional intelligence and work attitudes, behavior and outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 18*(8), 788–813.
- Chin, W. W. (2010). How to write up and report PLS analyses. In V. Esposito Vinzi, W. W. Chin, J. Henseler, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Handbook of partial least squares: Concepts, methods and applications* (pp. 655–690). Springer.
- Coffman, C., & Gonzalez-Molina, G. (2002). *Follow this path: How the world's greatest organizations tap human potential and create growth*. Warner Books.
- Curran, D. B. (1999). The causal order of job satisfaction and organizational commitment in models of employee turnover. *Human Resource Management Review, 9*(4), 495–524.
- Dick, G. P. M. (2011). The influence of managerial and organizational factors on the organizational commitment of police officers. *Public Administration, 89*(2), 481–500.
- Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 34–43.
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(1), 39–50.

- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.
- Grant, A. M., Christianson, M. K., & Price, R. H. (2007). Happiness, health, or relationships? Managerial practices and the tradeoffs between wellbeing. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 21(3), 51–63.
- Griffeth, R. W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and programmatic error for the next millennium. *Journal of Management*, 26(3), 463–488.
- Güteryüz, G., Güney, S., Aydın, E. M., & Aşan, Ö. (2008). The mediating effect of job satisfaction between emotional intelligence and organisational commitment of nurses: A questionnaire survey. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 45(11), 1625–1635.
- Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268–279.
- Jaramillo, F., Nixon, R., & Sams, D. (2005). The effect of law enforcement stressors on organizational commitment. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 28(2), 321–336.
- Johlke, M. C., & Durham, D. F. (2000). Role ambiguity, role conflict and turnover intentions among boundary-spanning service employees. *Journal of Service Research*, 3(1), 58–65.
- Joseph, D. L., & Newman, D. A. (2010). Emotional intelligence: An integrative meta-analysis and cascading model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95(1), 54–78.
- Judge, T. A., & Watanabe, S. (1993). Another look at the job satisfaction-life satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(6), 939–948.
- Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692–724.
- Law, K. S., & Wong, C. S. (2002). The construct and criterion validity of emotional intelligence and its potential utility for management studies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 243–252.
- Luchak, A. A., & Gellatly, I. R. (2007). A comparison of linear and nonlinear relations between affective commitment and work outcomes. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 80(4), 685–693.
- May, D. R., Gilson, R. L., & Harter, L. M. (2004). The psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety and availability and the engagement of the human spirit at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(1), 11–37.
- Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In P. Salovey & D. J. Sluyter (Eds.), *Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications* (pp. 3–31). Basic Books.
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1), 61–89.
- Meyer, J. P., Stanley, D. J., Herscovitch, L., & Topolnytsky, L. (2002). Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates, and consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 61(1), 20–52.
- Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes, and consequences*. Sage.