# Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Counterproductive Work Behaviors Among Teachers of Kathmandu

Pralhad ADHİKARİ(ID)

Department of Psychology and Philosophy, TriChandra Campus, Kathmandu, Nepal

## Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) is set of skills for knowing and managing emotions in self and others. Counterproductive work behaviors (CWB) are those behaviors employees display intentionally but are against organizational goals. This research aimed to determine if EI and CWB were significantly correlated among teachers of Kathmandu. Convenient sample of 1020 teachers was used. Assessing emotions scale (AES) and briefer version of counterproductive work behavior checklist (CWB-C 10) were used to measure EI and CWB. Data were organized in MS Excel 2016 and imported to IBM SPSS Statistics 25 to analyze. The results showed that EI and CWB are significantly correlated, r (1017)=-0.234, p<0.05. Four factors of EI also showed negative correlation with CWB. The results mean teachers with more emotional intelligence conduct less workplace deviant behaviors.

**Keywords:** Social skills, emotions, workplace theft, utilization of emotions, workplace deviant behaviors

## Öz

**Katmandu Öğretmenleri Arasında Duygusal Zeka ve Verimlilik Karşıtı İş Davranışları Davranışları Arasındaki İlişki**

Duygusal Zekâ (DZ), kişinin kendisinin ve başkalarının duygularını bilmesi ve yönetmesi için gerekli beceriler bütünüdür. Verimlilik Karşıtı İş Davranışları (VKİD), çalışanların kasıtlı olarak sergiledikleri ancak kuruluşun hedeflerine aykırı olan birtakım davranışlardır. Bu araştırmada, Katmandu'daki öğretmenlerde DZ ve VKİD'nin arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olup olmadığını belirlemek amaçladı. Örneklemde 1020 öğretmen bulunmaktadır. Duygu-Biliş Etkileşim Ölçeği (DBEÖ) ve Verimlilik Karşıtı İş Davranışları Envanteri'nin daha kısa bir versiyonu, DZ ve VKİD'yi ölçmek için kullanıldı. Veriler MS Excel 2016'da düzenlendi ve analiz edilmek için IBM SPSS Statistics 25'e aktarıldı. Sonuçlar, DZ ve VKİD'nin anlamlı boyutta ilişkili olduğunu gösterdi, r (1017) = -.234, p <.05. DZ'nin dört faktörü de VKİD ile negatif korelasyon gösterdi. Sonuçlar duygusal zekâsı daha yüksek olan öğretmenlerin iş yerinde daha az işten sapma davranışları sergilediğini gösteriyor.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal beceri, duygular, işyeri hırsızlığı, duyguların etkin kullanımı, işyerinde işten sapma davranışları

**Correspondence /** *Yazışma:*
Pralhad ADHIKARI, Department of Psychology and Philosophy, TriChandra Campus, Kathmandu, Nepal

**E-mail:** pralhad.adhikari@gmail.com

## INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to know and manage own emotions, know others' emotional state and behave with them appropriately. Counterproductive work behaviors (CWB) are the intentional behaviors of employees that impede the productivity of organizations. Many researchers study CWB as workplace deviant behaviors (e.g. Anwar,

et al., 2011; Omar, et al., 2011) or employee withdrawal (e.g. Falkenburg, & Schyns, 2007; Shapira-Lishchinsky, & Tsemach, 2014). This research primarily aimed to see how EI and CWB are related for teachers in Kathmandu. There were other specific objectives also.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to assess, express and regulate emotions. EI is a set of abilities to carry out complicated information processing about emotions or emotions-related stimuli and to use them as a guide to thinking and behaving (Mayer, et al., 2008). The five skills related to emotional intelligence are self-awareness of emotions, self-management of emotion, self-motivation, empathy (knowing others' emotions) and social skills (dealing people according to their emotional state). Emotionally intelligent people can get along with others. EI permits us to respond appropriately to others' needs (Feldman, 2015). In 1997, Mayer and Salovey had proposed four-branch model of emotional intelligence (EI). This model suggests that the four abilities related to EI are: 1) managing emotions so as to attain particular goals, 2) understanding emotions through language and gestures, 3) using emotions to moderate thinking, and 4) perceiving emotions precisely in self and others (Mayer, et al., 2008). In a study, people who were able to amplify emotional reaction to a certain stimulus were shown to have more income (Coté, et al., 2010). Income and emotional intelligence can be correlated. Other sociodemographic variables like age and family size also might correlate with emotional intelligence. Females reported higher EI than males in a study (Harrod, & Scheer, 2005). Other variables like gender, education and ethnicity also might affect EI.

Counterproductive work behaviors (CWB) include those intentional behaviors of employees that harm the organization or its stakeholders (Spector, et al., 2005). Examples of counterproductive work behaviors (CWB) are aggression, theft, sabotage and withdrawal. CWB includes acts of physical violence, verbal aggressive acts, other forms of mistreatments aimed at people, destruction and misuse of organizational properties, intentionally not notifying the mistakes and work problems, and doing work incorrectly. CWB can come in form of aggression, deviance, retaliation, revenge, bullying, emotional abuse and mobbing also. Other examples are substance abuse, unionization attempts, stealing at work, undue socializing (like workplace romance or factionalism) and tardiness (Robbins, & Judge, 2014). In private organizations in Nepal also, unions are rarely seen. It is considered deviant if the employees try

to unionize. Still other examples are corporate fraud, assault, alcohol abuse, harassment, withholding job efforts and employee theft (Kidwell, & Martin, 2004). CWBs are the voluntary behaviors that deviate from norms of organization and threaten the well-being of organization or its members.

In academic setting also, counterproductive work behaviors are not less. Teachers were found high in terms of time theft, reluctance to accept administrative duties, favoritism and miscommunication in a study (Ching, et al., 2017). Some predictors of counterproductive work behaviors are abusive supervision, work tension and work overload (Uzondu, et al., 2017). There might be other causes of such behaviors also like the scarcity in life, bad observational learning, work stress, job dissatisfaction, and so on. For example, Omar, et al. (2011) found positive correlation between job stress and CWB, and negative correlation between job satisfaction and CWB among civil servants of Malaysia. Age did not influence employees' CWB tendency in a Nigerian study (Uchenna, 2013). Age and other sociodemographic variables are of interest to explore relationship with CWB. In cases of high moral disengagement and negative emotions, males tended to conduct CWB than females (Samnani, et al., 2014). Exploring relationship between sociodemographic variables and CWB is intriguing.

A meta-analysis found that EI and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) are negatively correlated. OCB is generally considered the opposite of CWB. Such correlation was stronger in fields where emotional labor was more demanded (Miao, et al., 2017). In hospitality industry, emotional intelligence was found to significantly corelate with counterproductive behaviors, r=-0.339, p=0.01, two-tailed (Ying, & Ting, 2013). Such literature is not available for teachers.

In Nepal, this research is the first attempt to explore the relationship between EI and CWB; it is practically significant. Since teachers model behaviors for students and even other members of society, their counterproductive behaviors can be damaging. It obviously is a barrier to effective educating. Schools can choose not to select lowly emotionally intelligent teachers if significant correlation is seen. Moreover, in this research, effect of gender, family type, religion, ethnicity and educational level on both EI and CWB has been tested. Likewise, correlations of monthly income, age and family size of teachers with EI or CWB have been computed.

## METHOD

Correlational research design was used to determine the association of EI and CWB. Survey method was used to collect data. Ethical approval for research was taken from Ethics Committee in Department of Psychology and Philosophy of Tri Chandra Campus. Two psychological tests were utilized. One was Assessing Emotions Scale (AES). Another was brief version of counterproductive work behavior– checklist (CWB-C). The principal author of AES gave permission to use it in Nepal. CWB-C can be used freely for academic research purposes. Both the tests were translated to Nepali language. Questions were presented in both English and Nepali languages as the mixed vernacular is a norm in academia. AES had Cronbach alpha of 0.862 for 1005 observations and CWB-C had 0.827 from 1015 observations among the teachers of Nepal. These alphas mean that items were internally consistent well for both tests. Sampling was non-probability convenient. All teachers of all levels were considered a population. There were 1020 participant teachers from 29 schools, 14 colleges and an informal tuition institute of Kathmandu. The participants were told about the purpose of the research and their role as participants. They signed the consent form and the survey was conducted. Twelve trained assistants were deployed to collect and enter data into MS Excel. Data were organized in it and imported to IBM SPSS Statistics 25 to analyze them.

Assessing Emotions Scale (AES) was used to measure EI. AES is reliable and valid self-report questionnaire or verbal psychological test made by Nicola S. Schutte, John M. Malouff and Navjot Bhullar. It consists of 33 items with 3 items (Items 5, 28 and 33) reverse-scored. It measures emotional intelligence in four dimensions– perception of emotions, managing emotions in the self, social skills (managing emotions in others) and utilizing emotions (Schutte, et al., 2009). In the original study, scores on AES items correlated with theoretically related concepts like alexithymia, mood repair, expression of feelings and optimism (Schutte, et al., 1998). Items were internally consistent with Cronbach's alpha 0.90. The test-retest reliability coefficient was 0.78. AES also had good concurrent and predictive validities. Counterproductive Work Behavior–Checklist (CWB-C)'s shorter version was used to measure counterproductive work behaviors (CWB) of teachers. It was made by Paul E Spector and Suzy Fox. It consists of 10 items. Among them, five items are related to organization and other 5 items are related to person's behaviours.

Both the scales use Likert scale. CWB-C has 5-point Likert scale with options of Never, Once or twice, Once or twice/month, Once or twice/week. And Every day. AES has 5-point Likert scale with options of strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, and strongly agree. Cronbach's alpha for these items was 0.78 for employees and 0.89 for supervisors (Spector, et al., 2010) in the original study.

## RESULTS

As seen in table 1, emotional intelligence of teachers was significantly negatively correlated to counterproductive work behavior, r (1017)=-0.234, p<0.05. Family size did not correlate significantly to EI, r (1016)=0.017, p=0.59. Monthly income of teachers did not correlate significantly to EI either, r (992)=0.006, p=0.852. Neither did age correlate to it, r (1014)=-0.042, p=0.186. Similarly, monthly income did not correlate to CWB, r (992)=0.012, p=0.703. Neither did age of teachers correlate to it, r (1014)=0.049, p<. 120. However, family size significantly negatively

**Table 1:** Parametric correlates

| Variables | Pearson's Coefficient | df | p-value | Significance at α=0. 05 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EI-CWB | -0.234 | 1017 | 0.001 | Yes |
| Family size– EI | 0.017 | 1016 | 0.590 | No |
| Income-EI | 0.006 | 992 | 0.852 | No |
| Family size-CWB | -0.067 | 1016 | 0.033 | Yes |
| Income-CWB | 0.012 | 992 | 0.703 | No |
| Age-income | -0.031 | 989 | 0.329 | No |
| Age-EI | 0.042 | 1014 | 0.186 | No |
| Age-CWB | 0.049 | 1014 | 0.120 | No |

correlated to CWB, r (1017)=-0.067, p<. 05. Table 2 depicts that counterproductive work behavior is significantly (negatively) correlated with all four factors of emotional intelligence– perception of emotions, management of own emotions, social skills and utilization of emotions. Figure 1 shows the scatterplot of EI and CWB relationship.

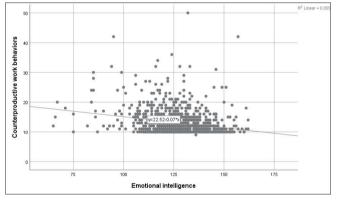A one-way ANOVA showed that effect of religion on EI was insignificant, F (4, 1013)=1.897, p=0.109. Its effect on

CWB was insignificant either, F (4, 1013)=1.285, p=0.274. The five religious groups were Buddhist, Hindu, Kirant, Muslims and Christians. As shown in table 3, another one-way ANOVA reveals that effect of ethnicity on CWB is insignificant F (11, 998)=0.815, p=0.625, and its effect on EI is not significant F (11, 998)=1.285, p=0.228. The ethnicities considered were Tharu, Tamang, Rai, Magar, Newar, Limbu, Gurung, the Dalit (that included Pariyar, Sunar, Kami), Chhetri, Brahman, Janjati and others (including Madhesi, indigenous Muslims). Effect of education level on EI was not significant, F (3, 997)=0.169, p=0.917. Its effect on CWB was also insignificant, F (3, 997)=1.197, p=0.310. The education levels considered were PhD, master's degree, bachelor's degree and high school degree.

t tests for independent means revealed that effect of family type (i. e. joint and nuclear) on CWB is significant as seen in table 4. The effect of family type is not significant on EI. Effect of family type on EI is insignificant. Effect of marital status on EI and CWB is insignificant. Effect of gender on EI and CWB is not significant either.

**Table 2:** Correlation of CWB with four factors of emotional intelligence

|  |  | Perception of emotions | Managing own emotions | Social skills | Use of emotions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CWB | Pearson Correlation | -0.127** | -0.236** | -0.201** | -0.226** |
|  | p value | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| ** correlations are significant at α=0.01 | | | | | |



**Figure 1**.

**Table 4:** t tests for independent means

| Independent variable | Dependent variable | t | df | P | Significance at α=0. 05 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | CWB | -0.132 | 1016 | 0.895 | No |
| Gender | EI | 1.117 | 1016 | 0.264 | No |
| Marital status | CWB | 1.118 | 1010 | 0.264 | No |
| Marital status | EI | -0.205 | 1011 | 0.838 | No |
| Family type | CWB | -2.741 | 588.62 | 0.006 | Yes |
| Family type | EI | 0.734 | 957 | 0.463 | No |

**Table 3:** Analysis of variance

| Independent variable | Dependent variable |  | Sum of squares | df | Mean Square | F | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Religion | EI | Between Groups | 1371.235 | 4 | 342.809 | 1.897 | 0.109 |
|  |  | Within Groups | 183034.395 | 1013 | 180.685 |  |  |
| Religion | CWB | Between Groups | 93.395 | 4 | 23.349 | 1.285 | 0.274 |
|  |  | Within Groups | 18403.824 | 1013 | 18.168 |  |  |
| Ethnicity | EI | Between Groups | 2539.744 | 11 | 230.886 | 1.285 | 0.228 |
|  |  | Within Groups | 179369.703 | 998 | 179.729 |  |  |
| Ethnicity | CWB | Between Groups | 160.313 | 11 | 14.574 | 0.815 | 0.625 |
|  |  | Within Groups | 17850.757 | 998 | 17.887 |  |  |
| Education level | EI | Between Groups | 92.508 | 3 | 30.836 | 0.169 | 0.917 |
|  |  | Within Groups | 182032.623 | 997 | 182.580 |  |  |
| Education level | CWB | Between Groups | 64.750 | 3 | 21.583 | 1.197 | 0.310 |
|  |  | Within Groups | 17973.032 | 997 | 18.027 |  |  |

## DISCUSSION

Correlational research hypotheses were supported. There was seen correlation of whole and componential EI with counterproductive work behaviors significantly. The results are similar to Emami (2014) who found that components of EI negatively correlate to CWB. Research participants in that research were Iranian industrial employees. Ying and Ting (2013) found that EI, as a whole, and CWB are negatively significantly correlated in Malaysian employees of hospitality industry. Income did not correlate with CWB. It means, being rich or poor does not affect emotional intelligence. Effect of religion, ethnicity and educational level was not significant on both EI and CWB. Family type made difference to CWB but not to EI. Marital status and gender did not affect them both. Anwar, et al. (2011) had found male teachers had more mean deviant workplace behaviors than female teachers but Cabello, et al. (2016) had found women adults scored more in ability EI than men adults. Spector, & Zhou (2014) found small gender differences in overall CWB. To generalize the results, we can say that among teachers of Kathmandu, age does not correlate with their EI and CWB. Cabello, et al. (2016) had found that middle-aged adults were more in ability EI than younger or older adults. According to this research's findings, when emotional intelligence increases, the counterproductive behavior decreases. When it decreases, CWB increases. As the correlations are seen significant, the four dimensions of EI –perception of emotion, self-management of emotions, social skills and utilization of emotions– also decrease as CWB increases. The results are as expected. Religious affiliation does not affect emotional intelligence and counterproductive work behaviors. Teachers' ethnicity does not affect EI or CWB. Neither does the educational level. Family type affect CWB but not EI. Marital status does not affect EI or CWB. Most of the research hypotheses got rejected.

The meanings of the findings can be helpful to counselors and psychotherapists. The findings have shown that most of the cultural factors do not contribute anything to emotional intelligence. So, interventions designed to enhance somebody's EI have to consider these results.

The research was based on convenient sample. So, the findings may not be generalizable to all teachers of Kathmandu. Analysis is limited. The analyses could have been broken down to levels of teaching and departments. The averaging nature of analysis has put teachers from Montessori to university level in the same basket. The future researches can fill this gap.

The future researchers also can look at mediating of job satisfaction, work stress or self-esteem on relationship between EI and CWB, or moderating effect of gender, socioeconomic status, or blue-collar vs. white-collar division of labor in that relationship. The regression analysis of EI and CWB is also a possibility. The regression model can include EI and other factors like income, job satisfaction, life satisfaction and other variables as independent factors and CWB as dependent variable.

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