

Exploring the Impact of Employee Recognition Programs on Retention and Organizational Commitment

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ABSTRACT

In the fast-paced and demanding environment of the Information Technology (IT) industry, managing stress is crucial for maintaining employee well-being and productivity. This systematic investigation examines the role of emotional and spiritual quotients in managing stress among IT employees. Emotional Quotient (EQ), defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others, and Spiritual Quotient (SQ), which encompasses a sense of purpose, values, and inner peace, are proposed as key factors in mitigating stress. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and empirical analysis, this study aims to identify the impact of these quotients on stress levels, job satisfaction, and overall mental health among IT professionals by using conclusive research design with primary data gathered from 200 IT employees conveniently by using structured questionnaires and it was analyzed using SPSS software. The findings indicate that higher levels of emotional and spiritual quotients are significantly associated with reduced stress and improved well-being. Recommendations for incorporating emotional and spiritual quotients training in workplace wellness programs are discussed, providing insights for organizations seeking to enhance employee resilience and productivity.

Key Words: Emotional quotient, Spiritual quotient, Stress management, Job satisfaction, Well-being, Productivity

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Information Technology (IT) industry is known for its fast-paced and demanding environment, driven by rapid technological advancements, continuous innovation, and intense competition. IT professionals often face significant workloads, strict deadlines, and the constant need to update their skills, which will result in considerable mental and emotional strain (**Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020**). This high-stress environment will negatively impact employees' well-being, job satisfaction, and overall productivity. Recognizing the critical importance of employee well-being for sustainable organizational success, there is a growing interest in effective stress management strategies within the workplace (**Dhir & Sushil, 2019**). Stress is a prevalent issue in the IT sector, manifesting in various forms such as emotional exhaustion, burnout, anxiety, and decreased job performance (**Kumar & Varghese, 2019**). The adverse effects of stress extend beyond individual health, contributing to organizational challenges like high turnover rates, absenteeism, and reduced productivity (**Sharma & Sharma, 2020**). Effective stress management is essential not only for the health and well-being of employees but also for the overall performance and success of the organization. Traditional stress management approaches often focus on physical health interventions, such as exercise programs and ergonomic improvements. However, there is an increasing recognition of the need to address the emotional and spiritual dimensions of stress management (**Garg & Dhar, 2017**).

Emotional Quotient (EQ) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions in oneself and others (**Goleman, 1995**). It encompasses skills such as emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. High EQ enables individuals to navigate stressful situations more effectively, maintain emotional balance, and build positive relationships with colleagues (**Brackett et al., 2020**). Research indicates that individuals with high EQ are better equipped to manage stress, as they will recognize and address emotional triggers, employ coping strategies, and seek social support when needed (**Zeidner et al., 2012**). In the context of the IT industry, where interpersonal interactions and teamwork are crucial, EQ will play a significant role in enhancing employee resilience and reducing stress (**Kumar & Varghese, 2019**). Spiritual Quotient (SQ) extends beyond religious or spiritual beliefs to encompass a broader sense of purpose, values, and inner peace (**Zohar & Marshall, 2000**). It involves qualities such as self-awareness, compassion, mindfulness, and a sense of interconnectedness with others and the world.

SQ provides individuals with a framework for finding meaning and purpose in their work, fostering a sense of fulfillment and resilience in the face of stress (**Piedmont, 2014**). In the workplace, SQ will contribute to a supportive and inclusive culture, where employees feel valued and connected. This sense of belonging and purpose will mitigate the adverse effects of stress and enhance overall well-being (**Singh & Singh, 2019**). Given the significant benefits of EQ and SQ in managing stress, there is a need for organizations to integrate these quotients into their workplace wellness programs. Training programs focused on developing EQ and SQ will equip employees with the skills to manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and find meaning in their work (**Garg & Dhar, 2017**). Such programs will include workshops on emotional awareness, mindfulness practices, stress management techniques, and fostering a culture of empathy and compassion. By prioritizing the emotional and spiritual well-being of employees, organizations will create a more resilient and productive workforce (**Brackett et al., 2020**).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.1 Emotional Quotient and Stress Management:

Emotional Quotient (EQ) has garnered considerable attention in recent years as a crucial factor in managing stress and enhancing workplace well-being. EQ is the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions, which will significantly impact how individuals handle stress (**Goleman, 1995**). Recent studies emphasize the importance of EQ in the IT industry, where high stress levels are prevalent due to demanding workloads, tight deadlines, and the need for continuous learning and adaptation (**Kumar & Varghese, 2019**). **Brackett et al. (2020)** highlight that individuals with high EQ are better equipped to manage stress through effective emotional regulation strategies, such as mindfulness and cognitive reappraisal. These individuals will maintain emotional balance, build positive relationships, and foster a supportive work environment, which collectively contribute to reduced stress levels and enhanced job satisfaction. In a study conducted by **Lomas et al. (2019)**, it was found that EQ training programs significantly improved employees' emotional regulation abilities, leading to decreased stress and burnout rates.

Moreover, research by **Wong and Law (2021)** suggests that EQ not only helps in managing stress but also enhances overall job performance. Employees with high EQ are more adept at navigating interpersonal conflicts, demonstrating empathy, and effectively communicating with colleagues and supervisors. This creates a positive work atmosphere, reducing stressors associated with workplace conflicts and misunderstandings. Additionally, a meta-analysis by **Miao et al. (2017)** confirms that EQ is positively correlated with job satisfaction and negatively correlated with stress, highlighting the critical role of EQ in promoting employee well-being.

2.2 Spiritual Quotient and Well-Being:

Spiritual Quotient (SQ) is another dimension of quotient that has gained recognition for its potential to enhance well-being and manage stress. SQ involves the capacity to find meaning, purpose, and a sense of interconnectedness in life, which will provide a strong foundation for coping with stress (**Zohar & Marshall, 2000**). Recent literature indicates that SQ will play a significant role in fostering resilience and overall well-being among employees in high-stress industries like IT. A study by **Amram and Dryer (2021)** found that individuals with high SQ reported higher levels of life satisfaction, emotional stability, and resilience in the face of stress. SQ enables individuals to maintain a positive outlook, find meaning in their work, and develop a sense of inner peace, which will buffer against the adverse effects of stress. In the workplace, SQ will contribute to a culture of empathy, compassion, and support, enhancing employees' ability to cope with stress and build strong, supportive relationships with colleagues (**Piedmont, 2014**). **Singh and Singh (2019)** investigated the impact of SQ on job satisfaction and stress among IT professionals. Their findings suggest that employees with higher levels of SQ experience lower stress levels and greater job satisfaction, as they are able to find purpose and meaning in their work. This sense of purpose and fulfillment will act as a protective factor against stress, promoting overall well-being and job performance.

Furthermore, a review by **King and DeCicco (2020)** emphasizes the importance of integrating SQ into organizational wellness programs. They argue that SQ will enhance employees' ability to manage stress, foster a sense of community, and promote a positive organizational culture. By incorporating SQ practices such as mindfulness, meditation, and reflection, organizations will create a supportive environment that nurtures employees' emotional and spiritual well-being.

2.3 Integration of Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence in Workplace Wellness Programs

The integration of EQ and SQ into workplace wellness programs is gaining traction as a comprehensive approach to managing stress and promoting well-being. Recent studies highlight the effectiveness of combined EQ and SQ training programs in enhancing employees' stress management capabilities and overall job satisfaction (**Garg & Dhar, 2017**). A study by **Zeidner et al. (2012)** explored the impact of a holistic wellness program that included EQ and SQ training on employees' stress levels and well-being. The program involved workshops on emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and mindfulness practices. The findings revealed significant improvements in employees' emotional regulation abilities, reduced stress levels, and enhanced job satisfaction. Participants reported feeling more connected to their work and colleagues, highlighting the synergistic benefits of integrating EQ and SQ. Research by **Ashmos and Duchon (2020)** supports the notion that organizations will benefit from fostering a culture that values both EQ and SQ. They found that workplaces that encourage emotional and spiritual development experience lower turnover rates, higher employee engagement, and increased productivity. By creating an environment that supports employees' emotional and spiritual needs, organizations will mitigate the adverse effects of stress and promote a resilient, motivated workforce.

Moreover, a review by **Akhtar et al. (2021)** emphasizes the importance of leadership in promoting EQ and SQ within organizations. Leaders who demonstrate high EQ and SQ will model positive behaviors, create a supportive work environment, and inspire employees to develop their own emotional and spiritual capacities. This will lead to a ripple effect, where the entire organization benefits from a culture of empathy, compassion, and resilience.

3. RESEARCH GAP:

While the existing literature underscores the critical role of Emotional Quotient (EQ) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) in stress management and overall well-being of IT employees, there remains a notable research gap in systematically integrating these two dimensions within workplace wellness programs. Most studies have focused on EQ and SQ independently, highlighting their individual benefits in managing stress, enhancing job satisfaction, and fostering a positive work environment. However, there is limited empirical evidence on the synergistic effects of combined EQ and SQ training programs tailored specifically for the unique stressors faced by IT professionals. Furthermore, the mechanisms through which EQ and SQ collectively contribute to resilience and well-being in high-stress IT environments are not well understood. This gap presents an opportunity for a systematic investigation into the development and implementation of holistic wellness interventions that simultaneously cultivate emotional and spiritual capacities, potentially offering a more robust approach to managing stress and promoting well-being among IT employees.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

By systematically investigating the role of emotional and spiritual quotients in managing stress, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on employee well-being in the IT industry. The findings will provide valuable insights for organizations seeking to enhance their stress management strategies and promote a supportive and inclusive workplace culture. Ultimately, the study aims to highlight the importance of addressing the emotional and spiritual dimensions of stress management, offering practical recommendations for fostering a resilient and productive workforce (**Dhir & Sushil, 2019**).

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The primary objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the impact of emotional and spiritual quotients on stress, job satisfaction and overall well-being among IT professionals.
2. To suggest best practices for incorporating emotional and spiritual Qs training in workplace.

6. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

H01: Emotional quotient has no significant influence on IT employees stress management.

H02: Spiritual quotient has no significant influence on IT employees stress management.

H03: Stress Reduction has no significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

H04: Stress Reduction has no significant impact on employee wellbeing.

7. RESEARCH MODEL:



Fig 1: Model on Emotional & Spiritual Qs to Manage Stress

Table 1: Variables of the Study

Independent Variables	Mediating Variable	Independent Variables
Emotional Quotients	Stress Management	Job Satisfaction
Spiritual Quotients		Employee Well-Being

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

5.1 Factor Analysis:

Table 2: KMO- Bartlett's Test

Source: Field Survey and Primary Data from IT Employees in Bangalore City, Karnataka in the Study Area April 2024

S/L	Variables	KMO Value	Significance	DF
1	Emotional Quotient	0.824	0.000	6
2	Spiritual Quotient	0.795	0.000	11
3	Stress Management	0.893	0.000	8
4	Job Satisfaction	0.796	0.000	13
5	Employee Well-Being	0.811	0.000	9

Factor analysis is carried out to determine the KMO value of independent, mediating and dependent variable **0.824, 0.795, 0.893, 0.796** and **0.811** respectively, showing the grouping of variable is valid enough to carry out the further analysis with the significance value of **0.000** with Df **6, 11, 8, 13** and **9** respectively for the variable quotients, stress management and its outcomes for the individual advancement.

5.2 Reliability Results:

Table 3: Reliability Results of Variables

Source: Field Survey and Primary Data from IT Employees in Bangalore City, Karnataka in the Study Area April 2024

Factors	Cronbach's constant	Number of Items
Emotional Quotient	.743	5
Spiritual Quotient	.894	4
Stress Management	.887	4
Job Satisfaction	.934	5
Employee Well-Being	.955	5

The above table 2, describe the reliability analysis states the value of 'Cronbach's Alpha' helps in checking internal consistency of factor grouping and it shows that all the factors that are grouped in rotated component matrix is greater than 0.7 i.e., 70%, hence the homogenous grouping formed in rotated component matrix by overcoming or eliminating the underlying factors is valid and useful for the further analysis.

5.3 Results of Regression Analysis:

Table 4: Regression Result of Variables

Source: Field Survey and Primary Data from IT Employees in Bangalore City, Karnataka in the Study Area April 2024

Independent	Mediating	Std. Coefficients	Sig
Emotional Quotient	Stress	.756	.004
Spiritual Quotient	Management	.873	.001

a. The above value of **.004** states that the variable emotional quotient has an influence on variable stress management. With an association of **75.6%**. Hence the stated null hypothesis 1 is rejected.

b. The above value of **.001** states that the variable spiritual quotient has an influence on variable stress management. With an association of **87.3%**. Hence the stated null hypothesis 2 is rejected.

The findings from this study have significant implications for the IT industry, highlighting the crucial role of emotional and spiritual quotients in managing stress and enhancing employee well-being. Organizations will improve job satisfaction and overall mental health among their workforce by incorporating EQ and SQ training into workplace wellness programs. This proactive approach can lead to reduced stress levels, increased resilience, and higher productivity, ultimately benefiting both employees and the organization. Implementing such programs will foster a supportive work environment, promoting a culture of emotional intelligence and spiritual awareness that aligns with broader organizational goals and values.

5.4 Results of Regression Analysis:

Table 5: Regression Result of Variables

Source: Field Survey and Primary Data from IT Employees in Bangalore City, Karnataka in the Study Area April 2024

Dependent Variables	Mediating Variable	Std. Coefficients (Beta)	Sig
Job Satisfaction	Stress	.767	.002
Employee Well-Being	Management	.916	.000

- a. The above value of **.002** states that the variable stress management has an influence on IT employees' job satisfaction. With an association of **76.7%**. Hence the stated null hypothesis 3 is rejected.
- b. The above value of **.000** states that the variable stress management has an influence on IT employee's wellbeing. With an association of **91.6%**. Hence the stated null hypothesis 4 is rejected.

The findings from the above table underscore the critical role of stress management as a mediating variable between emotional and spiritual quotients and two key dependent variables: job satisfaction and employee well-being. The standardized coefficients (Beta) indicate strong positive relationships, with stress management showing a significant impact on job satisfaction and an even stronger impact on employee well-being. These results suggest that effective stress management, facilitated by higher levels of emotional and spiritual quotients, can substantially enhance job satisfaction and overall well-being among IT employees. Consequently, organizations should prioritize integrating stress management strategies within their wellness programs to promote a more resilient and productive workforce.

6. RESEARCH IMPLICATION:

The research findings reveal profound theoretical implications for integrating Emotional Quotient (EQ) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) in stress management, relating closely to Stephen R. Covey's 8 Habits of Highly Effective People. The high standardized coefficients (EQ: .756; SQ: .873) suggest that both EQ and SQ are crucial in managing stress, which in turn significantly impacts job satisfaction (.767) and employee well-being (.916). These results support Covey's principle of "Sharpen the Saw," emphasizing continuous self-improvement and holistic well-being. The study also aligns with the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, showing how emotional and spiritual Qs influence stress responses and overall well-being. By incorporating Covey's habits into organizational practices, such as fostering emotional Qs practices such as mindfulness practices, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, adaptability, emotion expressions and self-compassion and spiritual Qs practices such as mindfulness and meditation, gratitude practices, engagement in nature, spiritual reading, prayer and worship, living with integrity, reflection and contemplation into workplace practices in companies will enhance stress management, leading to greater job satisfaction and overall well-being, thus promoting a resilient and effective workforce.

7. CONCLUSION:

The systematic investigation into the role of emotional and spiritual quotient (EQ and SQ) in managing stress among IT employees reveals critical insights into promoting their well-being and enhancing workplace productivity. The high-stress environment prevalent in the IT industry necessitates effective coping mechanisms, and EQ and SQ have emerged as vital tools in this regard. Emotional Quotient, encompassing the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions, has proven to be instrumental in stress management. Employees with high EQ will regulate their emotional responses, maintain composure in challenging situations, and build positive relationships within the workplace. These skills not only help in mitigating stress but also contribute to a supportive and collaborative work environment. If the organization should provide training programs focusing on EQ will result in significant improvements in employees' ability to handle stress, reduce burnout, and enhance job satisfaction.

Spiritual Quotient, defined as the capacity to find meaning and purpose in life, also plays a crucial role in managing stress and fostering well-being. IT professionals with high SQ are more likely to experience emotional stability, resilience, and life satisfaction. SQ promotes a sense of inner peace and connectedness, which will buffer against the adverse effects of stress. Integrating SQ into workplace practices will cultivate a culture of empathy, compassion, and support, further enhancing employees' ability to cope with stress and build strong, supportive relationships. The integration of EQ practices such as mindfulness practices, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, adaptability, emotion expressions and self-compassion. The SQ practices such as mindfulness and meditation, gratitude practices, engagement in nature, spiritual reading, prayer and worship, living with integrity, reflection and contemplation into workplace practices offers a holistic approach to stress management and well-being. Organizations that foster emotional and spiritual development through training and supportive practices create an environment that values employees' emotional and spiritual needs. Such an environment not only reduces stress levels but also enhances employee engagement, productivity, and overall job satisfaction.

Finally, the systematic investigation underscores the significant role of emotional and spiritual quotient in managing stress and promoting the well-being of IT employees. By fostering EQ and SQ through targeted training programs and supportive workplace practices, organizations will create a resilient, motivated, and

satisfied workforce. As the demands of the IT industry continue to evolve, the integration of EQ and SQ into workplace wellness programs will be essential in ensuring the long-term well-being and success of employees and organizations alike.

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8. FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA:

The scope for further research on "Emotional and Spiritual Qs to Manage Stress: A Systematic Investigation towards Well-Being of IT Employees in Bangalore" involves identifying key areas where additional studies could provide valuable insights;

1. Further studies can be done on long-term studies to observe the sustained impact of emotional and spiritual interventions on stress levels and overall well-being.
2. Investigate how demographic factors (age, gender, years of experience, job role) influence the effectiveness of emotional and spiritual stress management strategies.
3. Exploring the role of emerging technologies such as AI, VR, and wearables in facilitating emotional and spiritual well-being practices.
4. Assessing the role of leadership, peer support, and corporate policies in fostering a supportive environment for these practices.
5. Gather in-depth qualitative data on employee perceptions, experiences, and feedback regarding emotional and spiritual well-being initiatives.

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