

Gender, EI and Organizational Commitment: Does EI Mean Loyal Employees?

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Abstract- The purpose of this study was to analyze the role of gender on employees' emotional intelligence and the relationship between the levels of emotional intelligence (EI) and the degree of organizational commitment (OC). The recruitment and selection of employees is both a time consuming and expensive process. Knowing the characteristics that are most relevant to test in order to select employees who are likely to have high organizational commitment may reduce turnover as well as the expense of ongoing recruitment. Data collected was based on a sample of 105 currently employed adults residing in the United States, out of which 74 were females and 31 males. Of these participants, the average age for women was of 34.82 and 37.73 for men, while the predominant ethnic backgrounds in the sample was Hispanic and White/Caucasian. Participants were selected using convenient sample and data was collected using two alternative means, a paper and pencil copy of the survey and an online copy of the survey. According to the data collected for the following study, no significant difference was found between males and females' levels of EI. The average level of EI for females was of 161.32 while the average level of EI for males was of 158.61. However, data did support the second hypothesis of a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment ($r= 0.50$, $df=103$, $\alpha \text{ level}=0.05$, one-tailed test, $r_{\text{critical}}=0.164$).

Index Terms- men, women, gender, employees, emotional intelligence, organizational commitment, loyalty, organizations

I. INTRODUCTION

Employers frequently wonder about the characteristics that job candidates should possess in order to select the best fit for their organizations' vacant positions. They also often question whether men or women are more likely to possess them and what role, if any, emotions play in predicting how committed these potential employees will remain to their organizations. For these questions and many others surrounding the field of Industrial/Organizational Psychology and the world of business itself, a recurrent concept has drawn a significant amount of attention. Many studies have recently been able to link the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) to a variety of organizational factors, including but not limited to job satisfaction (Jorfi, Bin Yacco & Shah, 2012; Shooshtarian, Ameli & Aminilan, 2013), occupational stress (Satija & Khan, 2013), and job performance (Rangriz & Mehrabi, 2010; Gondal & Husain, 2012; Shooshtarian, Ameli & Aminilan, 2013) . However, regardless of its popularity, EI has been analyzed only in a few countries and in smaller magnitudes as a predictor of

organizational commitment (OC), a construct that might be vital in the selection of employees for most organizations.

Emotional intelligence, as presented by its creators, Salovey and Mayer (1990) was initially defined as "the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use information to guide one's thinking and action" (pg.189). Even though these two researchers gave birth to the concept, it was Daniel Goleman who popularized the concept around the world. Based on Salovey and Mayer's definition of EI, Goleman (1998) was able to propose a complex and refined new definition that categorized the concept into five abilities (a) self-awareness, (b) self-regulation, (c) self-motivation, (d) social-awareness and (e) social skills. Since emotions are human elements that follow individuals regardless of the situations or settings they might find themselves in, they must be taken as crucial components in the workplace environment as well. The manner in which employees communicate with each other, how they interact in team assignments, how understanding they are of their coworkers' emotions, and how they handle frustration are some of the many work scenarios that are influenced by employees' levels of EI. Many researchers, including Goleman, believe that EI, which is significantly different from the known concept of intelligence itself, plays a crucial role in the success of leaders, employees and organizations overall (Goleman, 1995; Gondal & Husain, 2013).

Organizational commitment, which is mostly known as the degree of loyalty employees have towards their respective organizations, is also a concept that has attracted the interest of researchers. One of the first definitions concerning OC, as developed by Mowday, Steers and Poter referred to it as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (1979, pg.226). A few decades later, in 1991, famous researchers Allen and Meyer, put forward an empirical model that has become popular. This model divided organizational commitment into three components: "affective commitment (one's emotional attachment to his or her organization), continuance commitment (being cognizant of the costs associated with leaving one's organization), and normative commitment (feeling obligated to remain with an organization)" (Rangriz & Mehrabi, 2010, pg.51). Organizational commitment has been negatively related to turnover intention (Jehanzeb, Rasheed & Rasheed, 2013) and positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (Mohamed & Anisa, 2012).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

While literature presents extensive research about the role of gender on emotional intelligence and the variety of

organizational factors it correlates with, little research has been done about its possible linkage with organizational commitment. Jorfi, Bin Yacco and Shah (2012) for example, conducted a research study that focused on examining the role of gender in emotional intelligence and its relationship with communication effectiveness and job satisfaction (Jorfi et al., 2012). The study, which included 120 managers and employees of a university in Iran yielded results that concluded that women as compared to their male colleagues, had higher levels of EI. Jorfi et al. (2012) theorized that because of a natural instinct sometimes shaped by society and cultural norms, women are generally more responsible and concerned about people than men. In addition, even though researchers did not find a direct relationship between EI, communication effectiveness and job satisfaction, they were able to identify EI's possible catalyst's effects on both variables. Low levels of emotional intelligence, on the contrary, have been found to be directly correlated with occupational stress (Satija & Khan, 2013). According to this study conducted over 150 employees, emotional intelligence was proven to be statistically correlated with the levels of stress employees perceive at their jobs and how likely they are to be negatively affected by it (Satija & Khan, 2013).

In 2011, Quader also conducted a study in Asia to compare gender roles on emotional intelligence levels but focusing on its impact on preferable leadership styles. The researcher, whose hypothesis was consistent with that of Jordi et.al (2012) was able to recognize two areas of EI in which women were more likely to distinguish themselves from men. Using Weisinger's Questionnaire on Emotional Intelligence at work, which focuses on the five components of EI, Quader (2011) concluded that women showed higher levels of EI only in two interpersonal factors: relating well and emotional mentoring. Men and women's mean scores showed no significant difference among the first three components of EI: self-awareness, managing emotions, and self-motivation (Quader, 2011). In addition, a significant correlation was identified between EI's self-awareness, self-motivation and emotional mentoring components, and the transactional leadership style (Quader, 2011).

In addition to studies comparing men and women's levels of emotional intelligence, literature presents valuable data comparing emotional intelligence and intelligence quotient in regards to job performance. Gondal and Husain (2013) conducted a quantitative cross sectional study on 300 individuals employed at diverse telecommunication organizations in Pakistan, and were able to conclude that IQ itself is not significantly related to job performance. Researchers, however, found EI to be highly correlated with job performance, which led them to identify EI as a much powerful element to predict employee's performance than the commonly used element of IQ (Gondal & Husain, 2013). A structured questionnaire was the primary method of data collection for this study with response rate of 94%. According to Gondal and Husain (2013) the ability of employees to use emotions in the workplace is more likely to predict organizational success and outcome achievement than intelligence quotient by itself.

Rangriz and Mehrabi (2010) and Shooshtarian et al. (2013) also examined emotional intelligence's impact on employees' performance and organizational commitment in Iran. Rangriz and

Mehrabi were also interested in discovering if a significant relationship between manager's emotional intelligence and employee's organizational commitment/performance existed. Their results, as consistent with previous research on this matter, rejected the hypothesis that managers' EI influences employees' OC. However, their findings, as well as those of Shooshtarian et al. (2013) stated that EI and job performance were significantly correlated, and that a positive relationship was also observable between individuals' emotional intelligence and organizational commitment (Rangriz & Mehrabi, 2010).

On 2011, Ashkan Khalilli, faculty member of the Multimedia University in Malaysia, also conducted a study to examine the relevance of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment in small and medium enterprise in private sector of Iran. Khalili (2011) used questionnaires based on Goleman's concept of EI, and Allen and Meyer model of OC for his methodology. His sample was of 142 participants and the results concluded that overall emotional intelligence is positively and significantly related to organizational commitment (Khalili, 2011). Khalili (2011) particularly found that self-management and social awareness showed the highest relationship to EI, while self-awareness and relationship management, even though a small relationship existed, was not relevant enough to be considered of worth.

On 2003, Humphreys, Weyant and Sprague, researchers of the Eastern New Mexico University analyzed the role of emotional intelligence and practical intelligence within the relationship of leaders and followers on organizational commitment. Their study, which was conducted over 213 employees (leaders and followers included) of a small regional center located in the Southern United States, revealed a parameter very similar to that of Rangriz & Mehrabi (2010). Even though one could hypothesize that emotional and practical intelligent leaders influence the degree of commitment their followers possess to their organization, research rejected this hypothesis (Humphreys et al., 2003). Data presented by this study, regardless of the insignificant correlation shown between these variables, surprisingly indicated that an inverse relationship did exist between the discussed variables (Humphreys et al., 2003). The main hypothesis of these researches was not accepted, however, their study was able to reveal that emotional and practical intelligence in individual followers was significantly correlated to the degree of commitment they had towards their respective organization (Humphreys et al., 2003). On the basis of the data attained, the researchers discussed potential benefits of testing applicants' EI as a selection tool to forecast organizational commitment. Nonetheless, Humphreys et al. (2003) warned the scientific society that using an instrument to measure a person in the abstract rather than focusing on the right person for the job could lead to legal issues. They suggested further studies on this matter.

In 2012, Catherine Chovwen of the University of Ibadan in Nigeria conducted a study that had as a major purpose finding predictors of organizational commitment in factory employees. Chovwen (2012) used a sample of 200 randomly selected employees from the well-known Coca-Cola Company. The study analyzed three factors as predictors of organizational commitment: work climate, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy (Chovwen, 2012). Chovwen (2012) was interested in

finding the independent relationship each variable had with organizational commitment. Chovwen (2012) focused first on studying the effects of favorable vs. unfavorable working climates on OC and the study's results indicated that those employees with perceived unfavorable working climate, showed higher levels of organizational commitment than those with perceived favorable working climate. Consequently, after analyzing her two remaining variables; emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, Chovwen (2012) was able to discover that employees with higher levels of EI, regardless of their perceived working climate, showed higher levels of organizational commitment. Such results provided vast evidence that, even in the presence of powerful extraneous variables, emotional intelligence was still a stronger determinant of organizational commitment.

As discussed on the introduction of this research study, even though emotional intelligence is a popular concept in the field of Industrial/Organizational Psychology and has been widely studied for a variety of significant factors, little investigation has been recently conducted in the United States to analyze its correlation with organizational commitment.

III. METHODS

Participants

The sample for this study was composed of 105 currently employed individuals over the age of 18 residing in United States of America. Of the 105 participants 74 were women and 31 men, $M_{age}=35.66$ and age range: 67-18. The sample was predominantly Hispanic (70%) and well educated with 30 participants who held a bachelor's degree and 37 participants possessing a masters or doctoral degree (see Table 1, Table 2 & Figure 1, for detailed demographics). Participants were selected using convenient sampling and they were not compensated for their participation. Participants had the choice to answer either through an online copy of the survey (N=85) or on a paper and pencil survey (N=20). All participants were assured that data collected was anonymous and no identifying information was collected.

Instrumentation

The instrument chosen for data collection was a survey constructed by the researchers of this study. Survey development came directly from the variables of interests' most recognized and validated definitions. The survey was divided in two parts: part (1), constructed to collect demographic data such as gender, age, ethnicity, level of education, length of employment, level of employment and employment status; and part (2), constructed to analyze the variables emotional intelligence and organizational commitment (see Appendix B for complete survey).

To measure EI, the questionnaire presented items based on Goleman's concept of Emotional Intelligence (1998). Statements 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31 and 36 were designed to measure self-awareness. Statements 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32 and 37 were designed to measure self-regulation. Self-motivation was measured by items 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33 and 38. In addition, social-awareness was measured by statements 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34 and 39. Finally, items 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 measured social skills.

To measure OC, participants had to answer questions adapted from Allen and Meyer's definition of organizational commitment (1991). Items 41, 44, 47, 50 and 53 were intended to measure affective commitment. Items 42, 45, 48, 51 and 54 were intended to measure continuance commitment and items 43, 46, 49, 52 and 55 normative commitment.

Participants responded to the survey on a 5-point Likert Scale where 1 represented completely true, and 5 completely false. The selection of the lower numbers on the scale indicated higher levels of EI or OC. Items 11, 14, 15, 18, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 51, 53, and 54 were reverse scored in order to reduce response bias.

Informed Consent

The informed consent form was responsible of explaining the importance of the participants' collaboration in the study, while assuring them that any information provided was going to be kept completely anonymous, and no one, except for the researcher would have access to it. It also specified that their participation was voluntary and no compensation was going to be provided for their collaboration. The informed consent also delineated that there were no known risks associated with the study as well as the potential benefits to participants. In case the participants needed further clarification in any matter related to the study they were advised to contact the researchers to certify that sufficient aid was provided in order to prevent undesired confusion or eliminate possible concerns (see Appendix A for informed consent).

Procedure

Participants were contacted either in person or via online means. Participants contacted in person were approached by the researchers at settings with high traffic of individuals such as malls, stores, universities, and restaurants. In addition, the researchers contacted individuals utilizing the online service provided by www.surveymonkey.com.

Once the participants read and agreed to the terms in the informed consent, they were allowed to complete the assessment. The surveys collected in person were put on a manila envelope and stored on a key-locked cabinet at the researchers' office. Data will be kept in storage for a period of 5 years after research completion.

IV. RESULTS

The survey research design utilized in this study resembled the methodology used in previous research (e.g., Khalili, 2011). The author of this study identified three variables for analysis: gender, emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. To analyze if a significant difference existed between male and female's level of emotional intelligence, an independent sample t-test was utilized (gender identified as the independent variable and emotional intelligence as the dependent variable). The researcher of this study hypothesized H_1 : a significant difference exists between men and women's levels of emotional intelligence. With t statistic $< t_{critical}$ ($.81 < 1.67$) and p value $> \alpha$ ($0.21 > 0.05$), results did not support H_1 , men and women did not seem to possess significantly different levels of emotional intelligence (see Table 3).

For the second hypothesis, emotional intelligence was identified as the independent variable and organizational commitment as the dependent variable. A statistical analysis of Pearson correlation test was run to test the hypothesis, H_2 : There is a positive correlation between EI and OC. With results $r = 0.50$ and $r_{critical}$ of 0.164 ($df = 103$, $\alpha level = 0.05$, one-tailed test), the decision was to reject H_0 . Data revealed that a positive relationship existed between the variables of emotional intelligence and organizational commitment.

V. DISCUSSION

The author of this study hypothesized that men and women have significantly different levels of emotional intelligence and that, emotional intelligence overall has a positive relationship with organizational commitment. Only the second hypothesis was supported by the findings of the study.

In regards to the relationship between gender and emotional intelligence, the findings were expected to be similar to the ones presented by Jorfi et al. (2012) and Quader (2011), but data failed to yield similar results. This may be due to the unequal cell sizes of the two groups since the participants in the study were predominantly female ($N = 74$) and men were underrepresented ($N = 30$) in the sample.

However, data did support the hypothesis that a correlation exists between the emotional intelligence of employees and their degree of organizational commitment. These findings were consistent with several previous studies including: Covwen (2012), Humphreys et al. (2003), Khalili (2011), and Rangriz and Mehrabi, (2010). Findings suggest that employers who emphasize on hiring or training employees to reach high levels of emotional intelligence could be able to have lower percentages of turnover rates and higher percentages of loyal individuals who desire to stay within the organization (e.g., Humphreys et al., 2003).

This study does contain certain limitations. Due to time and financial constraints, the sample was conveniently chosen, which impacts the generalizability of the findings and could have impacted the reliability of the results. In addition, it is important to note that the sample size of participants of both genders was not equal. Finally, it must be taken into consideration that the instrument used was created for this study and although it has face validity it was not empirically validated.

Regardless of its limitations, the data collected is expected to contribute to scientific knowledge by emphasizing the importance of EI in employees as a potential predictor of organizational commitment. In addition, the study could provide important elements to consider for the development of successful training programs.

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AUTHORS

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Table 1

Participants Age

Age Analysis	Females	Males
mean	34.82	37.73
range	46	49
sdev	12.04	13.07
variance	144.89	170.75
max score	67	67
min score	20	18

Note. Not all of the participants reported their age, scores were adjusted to N=104 (females N=74, males N=30).

Table 2

Participants Ethnicity

ETHNICITY	Percentage
WHITE/CAUCASIAN	15
HISPANIC	71
BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN	1
NATIVE AMERICAN	0
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	0
OTHER	2
SKIPPED ANSWER	11

Table 3

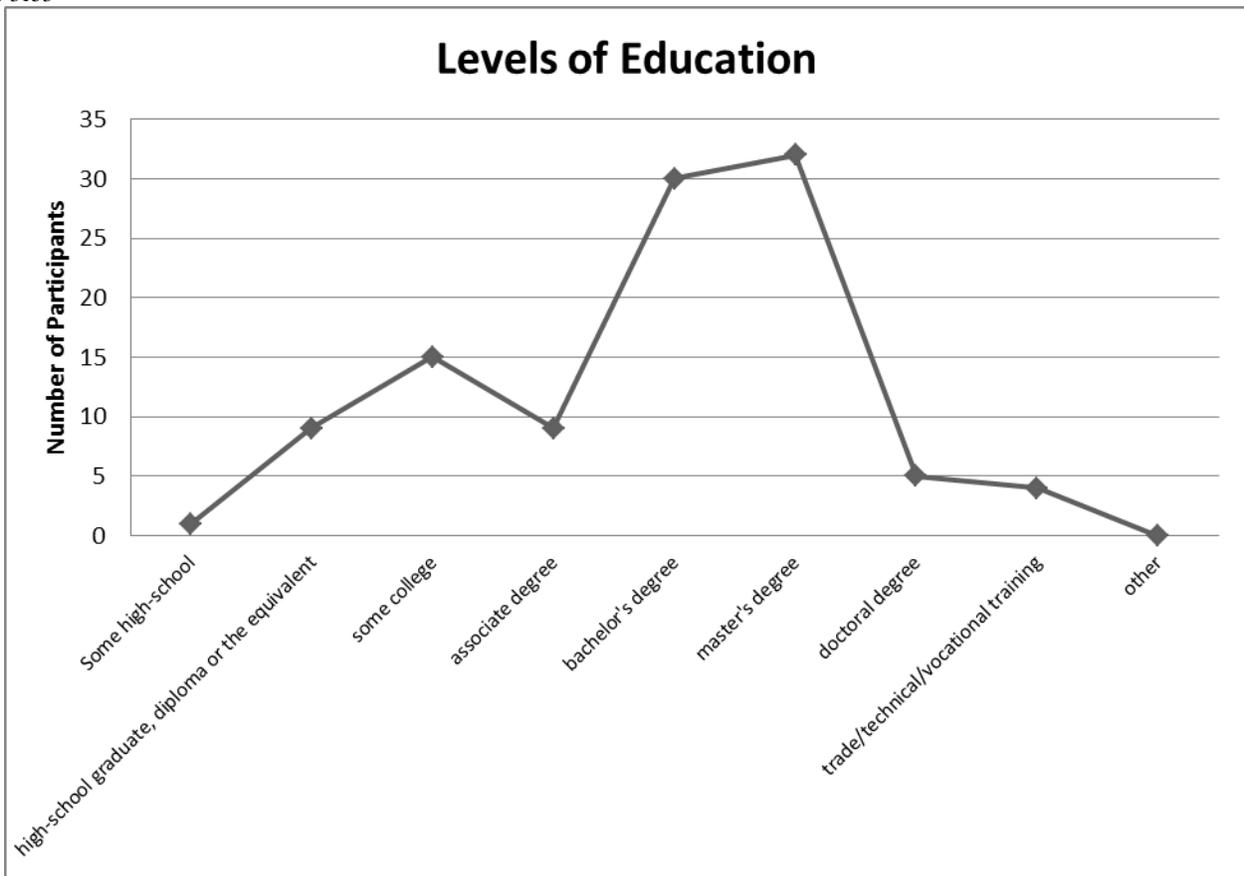
Females and Males' Levels of Emotional Intelligence Comparison Analysis

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	161.3243243	158.6129032
Variance	268.441318	236.6451613
Observations	74	31
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	60	
t Stat	0.807983891	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.21114589	
t Critical one-tail	1.670648865	

Figure 1

Participants Level of Education



Note. Participants reported on highest level of education attained.

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

You are being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Denise N. Winschel, a graduate student of the Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program at Carlos Albizu University. The purpose of the research is to better understand individuals' psychological reasoning and its correlation with some particular organizational related outcomes. For the purpose of this study, participants will have to be currently employed individuals over the age of 18, residing in the United States.

What will I be asked to do as a participant?

If you decide to take part of this study, you will be asked to complete a survey intended to measure your response to presented statements. The survey will be composed of a total of 62 items, which will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

RISKS & BENEFITS

Other than the time and inconvenience it might cause you to complete the survey, there are no known foreseeable potential risks associated with this study.

This study will have no direct benefits to you as a participant, but it will contribute to our scientific understanding of important organizational matters. This research could help provide beneficial information to improve the success of organizations and employees.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information you provide will be completely confidential, and no one, except for the researcher will have access to it. The survey will be anonymous, meaning that you will not be asked to put your name in any information you provide. The data collected will be kept on a key-locked cabinet at the researcher's office for a period of at least 5 years and at most 10 years after completion.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you feel or wish to terminate your participation in the study, you might stop or withdraw from it at any time with no penalty. There is no compensation for participating in this study.

OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS

Participants seeking further clarification or information about any matter related to this study can contact researcher Denise N. Winschel at dwinschel947@sunmail.albizu.edu or faculty supervisor, Dr. DiDona, at tdidona@albizu.edu.

CONSENT

I have read and understood the above information, and my completion of the following study indicates my consent.

Appendix B

Survey

PART 1

Demographic Questions

Please check one answer that best describes you.

1. What is your gender?

Male _____

Female _____

2. What is your age? (Please write the number on the blank space). _____

3. How do you describe yourself?

- White/Caucasian _____
- Hispanic _____
- Black or African-American _____
- Native American _____
- Asian/ Pacific Islander _____
- Other _____

4. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

- Some High-school _____
- High-school graduate, diploma or the equivalent _____
- Some college _____
- Associate degree _____
- Bachelor's degree _____
- Master's degree _____
- Doctoral degree _____
- Trade/ Technical/ Vocational Training _____
- Other _____

5. What is the length of employment at you current job (please write the number on the blank space; make sure to specify if you refer to days, months, or years).

6. What is your level of employment?

- Entry-level position _____
- Managerial position _____
- Owner or founder involved with organization _____
- Professional _____
- Other _____

7. What is your current employee status?

- Part-time _____
- Full-time _____
- Seasonal _____
- Other _____

PART 2

Please read each statement below and indicate the extent to which the idea expressed is true or not true of you. Rate it by circling a number between 1 and 5 where the numbers mean the following:

1. Completely true 2. Mostly true 3. Neutral 4. Mostly false 5. Completely false

Please be honest with your answers, remember this survey is completely anonymous.

	Completely true	Mostly true	Neutral	Mostly false	Completely false
1. I am aware of my own feelings and emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I strive for a harmonious and peaceful working environment.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I put a lot of effort into succeeding, regardless of the rewards I might receive.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I consider myself an intuitive person.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I take constructive criticism well; I feel I can learn from the feedback I get.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I know what my goals are and I work hard to achieve them.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I prefer not to get into arguments at work, even if I feel like doing so.	1	2	3	4	5
8. It is not easy for others to put me down; I am strong and push myself to overcome difficult situations.	1	2	3	4	5
	Completely true	Mostly true	Neutral	Mostly false	Completely false
9. I can sense when one of my coworkers is not feeling well or bothered just by looking at them or exchanging a few words.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I think carefully before I talk.	1	2	3	4	5
11. When I am in a "bad mood" I tend to blame it on others. It is hard for me to recognize that sometimes I might be the cause of those emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I prefer to transform negative feelings into productive outcomes. I rather focus on the good things that surround me than on the bad ones.	1	2	3	4	5

13. I motivate myself to do better.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I tend to assume the worst of people.	1	2	3	4	5
15. If I have a heated discussion with someone, I feel I will never be able to put those differences aside.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am aware of the ramifications my behaviors or impulses can have on others at work.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I do not have difficulty controlling my emotions; I understand there is a time and place for everything.	1	2	3	4	5
18. When I fail I tend to get discouraged and lose confidence in myself.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I like encouraging people to be their best, motivation is very important in the workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I feel that people use me or take advantage of me.	1	2	3	4	5
	Completely true	Mostly true	Neutral	Mostly false	Completely false
21. My “gut feelings” often guide my decisions and they usually don’t let me down.	1	2	3	4	5
22. If I do not like a task I have been assigned to complete at work, I start complaining and criticizing whoever delegated that to me.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I need others to recognize my achievements, it is hard for me to feel accomplished when they don’t.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I consider myself a good listener; I truly care about other people’s emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
25. If a customer complains about my company or the service provided to him/her, I put my pride aside, apologize and seek to solve the	1	2	3	4	5

trustworthy and non-judgmental.

40. I consider effective communication an essential tool to success.	1	2	3	4	5
41. I desire to remain part of the organization I currently work for.	1	2	3	4	5
42. I understand that quitting my job will not only affect me, but my employer as well.	1	2	3	4	5
43. I feel I have an obligation to exert effort on behalf of my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I enjoy working where I do, and I take pride for the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
45. I never show up late for work.	1	2	3	4	5
	Completely true	Mostly true	Neutral	Mostly false	Completely false
46. When I commit to a job, I believe it is my duty to give my best.	1	2	3	4	5
47. I am very involved with everything that goes on at my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
48. Even If an organization has been great to me, I would not think twice about leaving them if a better opportunity is presented to me.	1	2	3	4	5
49. I can't afford to lose my job.	1	2	3	4	5
50. If I see an organization is investing a lot of resources and trust on me, I believe it is my moral obligation to actively respond to it.	1	2	3	4	5
51. A lot of things often interfere with my working schedule and I feel I have no other option but to be absent.	1	2	3	4	5
52. My job is one of my priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
53. Sometimes I feel I don't belong in the organization I work for.	1	2	3	4	5
54. I am not willing to go the extra	1	2	3	4	5

**mile to support my organization. I do
what is expected from me, and believe
that's enough.**

**55. I consider myself loyal to my
organization.**

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