

DOI: 10.29141/2218-5003-2021-12-3-4

JEL Classification: D83, D91, Z30

Effects of emotional intelligence on knowledge sharing among employees: A study of HoReCa companies in Turkey

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Abstract. Information and knowledge play a significant role in helping organizations to gain competitive advantages by delivering unique products or services. The dissemination of knowledge within an organization depends on the knowledge sharing behaviour exhibited by the members of this organization. The study aims to examine the effects of emotional intelligence on knowledge sharing behaviour. The methodological basis of the research includes the theoretical concepts of knowledge sharing and emotional intelligence. Within the scope of the study, data were collected through convenience sampling method from 454 employees working in hotels in Bartın, Ankara and Antalya provinces. To interpret the data, descriptive statistics, as well as correlation and regression analysis were performed using SPSS software. The research results demonstrate that among the dimensions of emotional intelligence, understanding emotion, emotion management and social management skills positively affect knowledge sharing behaviour, whereas perceiving emotion and using emotion skills are found to have no significant effect on this behaviour. The authors arrive at the conclusion that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to exhibit more knowledge sharing behaviour and are more prone to disseminate information in the organization.

Keywords: knowledge sharing; emotional intelligence; knowledge management; perceiving emotion; managing emotion; HoReCa; employees; Turkey.

Paper submitted: March 9, 2021

For citation: Çetin S., Karakaş A. (2021). Effects of emotional intelligence on knowledge sharing among employees: A study of HoReCa companies in Turkey. *Upravlenets – The Manager*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 44–55. DOI: 10.29141/2218-5003-2021-12-3-4.

Влияние эмоционального интеллекта на обмен знаниями между работниками: кейс турецких компаний в сфере HoReCa

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Аннотация. Значительную роль в формировании конкурентных преимуществ организаций играют информация и знания, которые позволяют создавать и предлагать уникальные продукты и услуги. Распространение знаний в компании определяется поведением ее работников в отношении обмена информацией. Статья посвящена изучению влияния эмоционального интеллекта работников на обмен знаниями. Методологию исследования составили концепции управления знаниями и эмоционального интеллекта, информационную базу – результаты опроса 454 работников отелей, расположенных в провинциях Бартын, Анкара и Анталья (Турция). Сбор данных осуществлялся методом формирования случайной выборки, для обработки данных применялись методы описательной статистики, корреляционного и регрессионного анализа с использованием статистического пакета SPSS. Исследование показало, что наиболее позитивное влияние на обмен знаниями оказывают такие факторы эмоционального интеллекта, как понимание эмоций, управление эмоциями и навыки социального менеджмента. В то же время не выявлено существенного эффекта от эмоциональной восприимчивости работников и использования ими эмоциональных навыков. Доказано, что люди с высоким эмоциональным интеллектом обладают большей склонностью к обмену знаниями.

Ключевые слова: обмен знаниями; эмоциональный интеллект; управление знаниями; восприятие эмоций; управление эмоциями; HoReCa; работники; Турция.

Дата поступления статьи: 9 марта 2021 г.

Ссылка для цитирования: Четин С., Каракас А. (2021). Влияние эмоционального интеллекта на обмен знаниями между работниками: кейс турецких компаний в сфере HoReCa // *Управленец*. Т. 12, № 3. С. 44–55. DOI: 10.29141/2218-5003-2021-12-3-4.

INTRODUCTION

Generating collective knowledge through knowledge sharing and collaboration is the main resource for the organizations to grow sustainably, especially in the service sector [Ro et al., 2020]. Since knowledge sharing is a process of exchanging information between two or more individuals, individual

tendencies such as motivation or personality traits play a key role in the quality, process and quantity of knowledge that is being exchanged [Priyadarshi, Premchandran, 2019]. Individuals acting by understanding each other's feelings will further increase the effectiveness of this process.

In a knowledge-based economy, knowledge sharing among the members of organizations is an important matter in terms of knowledge management. Knowledge sharing contributes to the creation of new ideas and the development of new opportunities within organizations. For this reason, businesses, which desire to continuously provide new goods and services of improved quality, should find effective ways to promote a knowledge sharing culture [Ansari, Malik, 2017]. Therefore, it is vital to identify the matter affecting knowledge sharing.

Various aspects of knowledge sharing are investigated in scientific literature. While some studies focus on knowledge sharing among organizations, others, including the present paper, deal with the subject of knowledge sharing within the organization. Despite the fact that there are many studies on the premises of knowledge sharing, the number of works on the role of emotions in knowledge sharing is still rather limited [Ansari, Malik, 2017]. Emotions are expected to affect the behaviour and actions of individuals. The existing literature reveals that little is known about the effects of emotional intelligence on employees' knowledge sharing behaviour [Tamta, Rao, 2017]. The present paper aims to bridge this gap.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Intelligence (EI). Mayer and Salovey [1993] define emotional intelligence as "the ability of individuals to monitor and control one's and others' emotions, to distinguish them, and to use the knowledge obtained from them in directing their thoughts and behaviours." According to Goleman [2011, p. 393], who has a great impact on the dissemination of this concept, emotional intelligence is the ability to "recognize one's and others' feelings, to motivate ourselves, and to manage emotions within ourselves and our relationships." Goleman [2010, p. 65] states that emotional skills are "meta-skills" affecting how effectively other existing abilities will be used.

Considering emotional and social intelligence together, Bar-On [2007] indicates that individuals with this kind of intelligence have the ability to understand and express themselves, understand and establish good relationships with others, and successfully cope with the needs of daily life. Emotional and social intelligence is based on the ability to recognize emotions, understand one's strengths and weaknesses, and to express emotions in a way not to harm relationships. It also means being emotionally and socially intelligent, being aware of the feelings and the needs of others, and establishing and maintaining collaborative, constructive and mutually satisfying relationships. Lastly, people, who are emotionally intelligent, can effectively manage personal, social and environmental emotions by dealing with them realistically and resiliently. According to Bar-On [2007, p. 2], in order for these to

happen, emotions should be managed effectively, and there should be enough optimistic, positive and internal motivation.

Emotional intelligence involves the processing of knowledge about emotions and the use of this processed information in the reasoning process in order to solve problems [Brackett et al., 2006]. Both cognition and emotion are interrelated concepts shaping behaviour and action together [Mavrou, 2020]. When one does not have sufficient knowledge on his / her emotions, it is not possible for them to understand the emotions of others effectively. From this perspective, emotional intelligence is a mental skill. It is not only about having emotions, but also about understanding their meanings. The concept of emotion requires intelligence, but this is the emotions that help one reach mental system and encourage creative thinking [Sudak, Zehir, 2013]. Hence, emotions play a significant role at every stage of an individual's life.

Emotional intelligence has been studied in different ways by various researchers [Bar-On, 2007; Cooper, 1997; Goleman, 2010; Salovey, Mayer, 1990; Sharma, Sehrawat, 2014]. In this study, the emotional intelligence model suggested by Brackett et al. [2006] was used. The model consists of four components, which are [Brackett et al., 2006, p. 781]:

- 1) perceiving emotion is related to the ability to identify one's own emotions, as well as other people's feelings, and recognize the emotions inherent in other stimuli, such as sounds, stories, music, and artwork;
- 2) using emotion involves the ability to use emotions that help certain cognitive initiatives, such as reasoning, problem solving, decision making, and interpersonal communication;
- 3) understanding emotion involves language and propositional thinking that reflect the capacity of analysing emotions. This skill includes understanding the emotional dictionary; the ways of emotions to join, progress and transit from one to another, and the results of emotional experiences;
- 4) emotion management is related to the ability to experience a series of emotions while making decisions on the appropriateness or usefulness of emotions in a given situation, as well as to reduce, enhance or change an emotional response in oneself and others. Managing emotions is measured by two tasks related to one's ability to manage their own emotions (Managing Emotion) and other people's emotions (Social Management).

Knowledge Sharing. The concept of knowledge sharing is defined in various ways. While Lin [2007, p. 136] defines knowledge sharing as a socially interactive culture that includes the sharing of knowledge, experience and skills of employees through the organization, Bartol and Srivastava [2002, p. 65] define it as the sharing of knowledge, ideas, recommendations

and specialized knowledge regarding the organization among the members of that organization.

Knowledge sharing is a tool for employees to make the best use of the fund of knowledge within the organization [Kremer, Villamor, Aguinis, 2019]. Knowledge sharing requires employees to be willing to communicate with each other. In addition, in order to learn new things, employees should constantly exchange ideas with one another [King, Marks, 2008, p. 132]. Organizational knowledge develops as a result of organizational activities over the years. This development process is related to the transfer of personal information of individuals to the organization [Lin, 2007, p. 137]. Therefore, knowledge sharing, whether explicitly or implicitly, requires effort and often sacrifice on behalf of the sharing person [Bartol, Srivastava, 2002].

Knowledge sharing can be considered from two perspectives of the individual and organizational levels. When considered from the individual perspective, knowledge sharing is the communication of individuals with their colleagues in order to perform better, faster or more efficiently. In terms of the organization level, knowledge sharing is to capture, organize, reuse and transfer the knowledge generated as a result of experience within the organization, and to share that knowledge with other employees within that company. Knowledge sharing at the organizational level presents the protection potential of intellectual capital by reducing the knowledge dependency of an individual [Lin, 2007, p. 137]. Even if individuals leave the organization, the organizational knowledge developed will continue to be beneficial for the organization.

Relationship between emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing. It is possible for one's emotional state at a given moment to affect his/her attitude towards knowledge sharing and his/her intention to actually share that knowledge [van den Hooff, Schouten, Simonovski, 2012]. Employees, who manage to pull their emotions together voluntarily, help in spreading knowledge throughout the organization. However, for this to happen, it is necessary to eliminate the negative perceptions within the organizational environment and employ a participatory management approach [Tamta, Rao, 2017].

Arakelian et al. [2013] found that self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management had a significant positive correlation with knowledge sharing. Goh and Lim [2014] investigated the role of emotional intelligence factors on knowledge sharing, and found that employees with higher EI levels could voluntarily participate in knowledge dissemination activities as well as knowledge gathering activities. Similarly, Karkoulouli, Harake and Messara [2010], Obermayer-Kovács et al. [2015], Tuan [2016], Ansari and Malik [2017] also established a significantly posi-

tive relationship between emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing.

De Geofroy and Evans [2017] state that emotional intelligence has a positive influence on trust, organizational commitment and teamwork. In the theoretical study on the relationship between hiding knowledge and emotional intelligence, the researchers claim that EI will negatively affect the behaviour of hiding knowledge, while positively influencing the trust atmosphere within the organization, organizational commitment of individuals and teamwork behaviour. In spite of this, there are numerous findings regarding the fact that trust [Le, Lei, 2018; Lin, Hung, Chen, 2009; Sezgin, Uçar, Duygulu, 2015], organizational commitment [Cabrera, Collins, Salgado, 2006; Matzler et al., 2011; Ro et al., 2020] and teamwork [Jamshed, Majeed, 2019; Xue, Bradley, Liang, 2011] have a positive effect on knowledge sharing. Reducing the behaviour of hiding knowledge also means improving the behaviour of sharing knowledge. When considered within this framework, it is possible to say that emotional intelligence will support knowledge sharing behaviour.

People with high EI have the ability to accurately read other people's emotions. This helps people to understand how to react and behave in various social situations [Miao, Humphrey, Qian, 2017]. Since individuals with high emotional intelligence can manage their emotions, they do not think of giving up and quitting in case of unpredicted situations that may have a negative influence on them. Therefore, such individuals are less prone to quit than others. On the other hand, their sense of organizational belonging are expected to be high [Ahmad et al., 2017; Carmeli, 2003; Miao, Humphrey, Qian, 2017]. Consequently, as emotionally intelligent people are also socially intelligent [Priyadarshi, Premchandran, 2019], employees with high emotional intelligence are expected to positively affect knowledge sharing behaviour.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research model and hypotheses. Theoretical explanations for the effects of emotional intelligence on knowledge sharing are given in Figure. In the current study, EI was discussed with its sub-dimensions, and the hypotheses were developed accordingly. We test the following hypotheses:

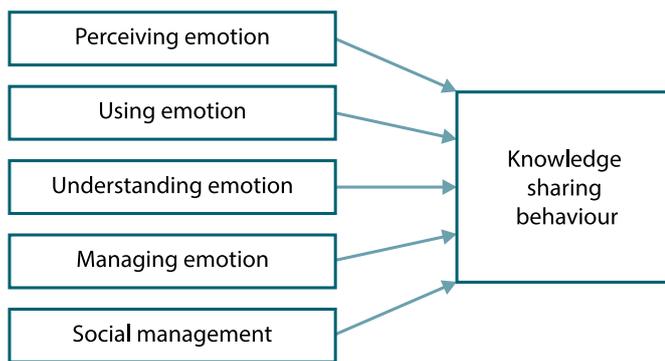
H1: Perceiving emotion affects knowledge sharing behaviour.

H2: Using emotion affects knowledge sharing behaviour.

H3: Understanding emotions affects knowledge sharing behaviour.

H4: Managing emotion affects knowledge sharing behaviour.

H5: Social management affects knowledge sharing behaviour.



Visual representation of the research model

Визуальная модель исследования

Sampling, data collection and evaluation technique. The study is conducted using a correlational survey model. With this model, the relationship between emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing behaviour is investigated. To attain this purpose, the questionnaire technique is used. The questionnaire includes questions regarding the emotional intelligence scale, knowledge sharing behaviour scale and demographic information. The population of the study is the hotel employees working in Bartin, Antalya and Ankara provinces. Since it was not possible to reach all hotel employees in these provinces considering the cost and time, the convenience sampling method was used. The data were obtained by the researchers through face-to-face interviews and via e-mail between April and July, 2019. The data were recorded in the SPSS program, and the frequency analysis, correlation, regression and structural equation modelling were carried out after performing the suitability tests for the analysis. While 386 replies were sufficient as the sampling number [Yamane, 2001], data from 454 respondents were obtained in this study.

In order to measure emotional intelligence, a 19-item emotional intelligence scale developed by Brackett et al. [2006] was used. The scale consists of five factors: perceiving emotion (4 items), using emotions (3 items), understanding emotion (4 items), and managing emotion (4 items), and social management (4 items).

To measure knowledge sharing behaviour, the scale developed by van den Hooff and de Leeuw van Weenen [2004] to determine knowledge sharing behaviour within the organization was used. The scale is composed of a single factor and seven statements. All scales used in the study were prepared as 5-point Likert type ranging from "I totally disagree" to "I totally agree".

Table 1 shows the demographic information of the participants; most of them are women (60.1 %). Approximately 57.9 % of the respondents are at the age of between 22 and 29. When the information on the

education level is analysed, it is seen that 69.2 % of the participants are individuals with associate's degree and higher education. The distribution of the participants according to the departments is close to each other. As for the respondents' skills, it is seen that half of them have experience between 1 and 5 years. In addition, employees constitute most of the participants.

Table 1 – Socio-demographic distribution of participants
Таблица 1 – Социально-демографические характеристики респондентов

Variable		f	%
Gender	Male	181	39.9
	Female	273	60.1
Marital status	Married	157	34.6
	Single	297	65.4
Age	22–29	263	57.9
	30–39	138	30.4
	40–49	46	10.1
	50 and above	7	1.5
Education level	Elementary education	23	5.1
	High school	117	25.8
	Associate degree	147	32.4
	Bachelor's degree	152	33.5
	Postgraduate	15	3.3
	Manager / employer	68	15.0
Department	Front office services	90	19.8
	Housekeeping	83	18.3
	Kitchen and food services	104	22.9
	Service	113	24.9
	Assisted services	49	10.8
	Accounting	15	3.3
Experience	1–5 years	228	50.2
	6–10 years	140	30.8
	11–15 years	56	12.3
	16–20 years	20	4.4
	21 years and above	10	2.2
Position	Employee	386	85.0
	Manager	68	15.0

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The factor loads, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE) and Cronbach's Alpha (α) values of the factors in the research model are given in Table 2. Within the scope of the study, the factor loads of all variables are expected to be higher than 0.40 [Cokluk et al., 2014, p. 220], CR test results – higher than 0.70, AVE values – lower than 0.50 [Anderson et al., 1998, p. 612], and Cronbach's Alpha values higher than 70 [Altunisik et al., 2012, p. 126].

Table 2 – Factor loading, CR, AVE, and Cronbach Alfa (α) values of the factors in the research model
Таблица 2 – Показатели факторной нагрузки, составной надежности (CR), средней извлеченной дисперсии (AVE) и значения коэффициента альфа Кронбаха для факторов модели исследования

Variables	Items	Factor loading	Cronbach Alfa (α)	CR	AVE
Perceiving emotion	PER1	.825	0.836	0.852	0.591
	PER2	.765			
	PER3	.750			
	PER4	.733			
Using emotion	USE1	.789	0.827	0.875	0.701
	USE2	.767			
	USE3	.798			
Understanding emotion	UND1	.738	0.709	0.779	0.471
	UND2	.732			
	UND3	.670			
	UND4	.594			
Managing emotion	MAN1	.802	0.810	0.847	0.584
	MAN2	.756			
	MAN3	.693			
	MAN4	.718			
Social management	SOC1	.791	0.748	0.790	0.498
	SOC2	.785			
	SOC3	.767			
	SOC4	.402			
Knowledge sharing behaviour	KSB1	.804	0.873	0.892	0.580
	KSB2	.780			
	KSB3	.767			
	KSB4	.759			
	KSB5	.759			
	KSB6	.697			
	KSB7	.804			

According to the analysis results, Cronbach's Alpha (α) values are higher than 0.70 for all variables. All the factor loads are higher than 0.40, for this reason, all the items show good construct validity [Fornell, Larcker, 1981]. CR indices of each scale are higher than 0.70. In addition, AVE values vary between 0.471 and 0.701. It is observed that the AVE values of understanding emotion and social management variables remain below the desired level. Since the CR and (α) reliability coefficients are at a sufficient level, and the condition of $CR > AVE$ is obtained [Anderson et al., as cited in 2009; Akbiyik, 2012, p. 174], we can say that the internal structure consistency of the variables is ensured.

In order to analyse the measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed; its results are presented in Table 3. When the factor values are examined, the compliance values are at an acceptable level [Doğan, Ozdamar, 2017].

The mean and standard deviation values among the descriptive statistics of the variables and the correlation coefficients are given in Table 4. It was found that there were no high correlations between independent variables, and there were significant relationships between dependent and independent variables.

The model of the regression analysis (Table 5) carried out in order to measure the effects of emotional intelligence components on knowledge sharing behaviour is seen to be significant ($F: 27.384$). Durbin-Watson test was performed to analyse whether there was autocorrelation between variables or not, and this value was found to be ranging between 0 and 4. Values close to zero indicate a positive correlation, whereas values close to four indicate a negative correlation. Values close to two indicate that there is no autocorrelation. Durbin-Watson value is required to be between

Table 3 – Confirmatory factor analysis results
Таблица 3 – Результаты факторного анализа

Variable	χ^2/df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Emotional intelligence	2.093	0.936	0.913	0.911	0.940	0.951	0.049
Knowledge sharing behaviour	2.403	0.986	0.960	0.982	0.978	0.990	0.056

Table 4 – Descriptive statistics and correlations results
Таблица 4 – Дескриптивная статистика и результаты корреляционного анализа

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5
Perceiving emotion	3.82	.845	1				
Using emotion	3.51	.948	.252**	1			
Understanding emotion	3.76	.737	.447**	.362**	1		
Managing emotion	3.74	.874	.371**	.179**	.324**	1	
Social management	3.84	.755	.456**	.272**	.416**	.410**	1
Knowledge sharing behaviour	3.97	.750	.310**	.161**	.313**	.293**	.449**

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

1.5 and 2.5 [Kalayci, 2010, p. 264]. As a result of the analysis conducted, this value was found to be 1.740, which indicated that there was no autocorrelation between the variables.

Table 5 – Regression analysis results
Таблица 5 – Результаты регрессионного анализа

Independent variable	Std. Hata	Beta	t	p
Perceiving emotion	.044	.075	1.496	.135
Using emotion	.036	-.006	-.125	.901
Understanding emotion	.051	.114	2.286	.023
Managing emotion	.040	.093	1.992	.047
Social management	.050	.331	6.603	.000

Dependent Variable: Knowledge sharing behaviour
 R^2 : 0.226, F : 27.384***, Durbin-Watson: 1.740
 (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$)

The values of variance inflation factor (VIF) were calculated in order to show any problems with multicollinearity. In the present study, VIF values vary between 1.18 and 1.47, and these values are within an acceptable range, since the overall cut-off value exceeding 10 is considered as a sign of multicollinearity points [O'Brien, 2007].

When the effects of emotional intelligence components on knowledge sharing behaviour were examined, it was found that the variables of perceiving and using emotions did not have any statistically significant effect on knowledge sharing behaviour. The components of understanding emotions ($p < 0.05$; Beta: 0.114), managing emotions ($p < 0.05$; Beta: 0.093) and social management ($p < 0.001$; Beta: 0.331) positively affect knowledge sharing behaviour. Emotional intelligence components explain 22.6 % (R^2 : 0.226) of knowledge sharing behaviour.

Next, we analyzed whether the participants' opinions on the dimensions of emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing behaviour differed according to gender, marital status and position. Information on

the factors with statistically significant difference is presented in Table 6. According to the findings, the mean value of the participants' ability to perceive emotions showed a significant difference depending on the position ($t = -2.662$; $p < 0.05$). The mean values of the managers in relation to the emotion perception dimension were found to be higher than the employees' mean values. It was also seen that the mean values of the understanding emotions differed significantly depending on the marital status ($t = 3.140$; $p < 0.05$). Accordingly, the mean values of the married participants were found to be higher than that of the single ones. Therefore, we can say that married people have better emotional understanding skills than single ones.

According to the findings, the mean values of the emotional management dimension differ significantly depending on both marital status ($t = 3.656$; $p < 0.01$) and position ($t = -2.019$; $p < 0.05$). According to the results, the mean values of married employees and those holding at the managerial positions regarding emotion management skills are found to be higher. In terms of emotion management, married people are better than single ones, and managers are better than employees.

Lastly, it was found that the mean values of the participants' social management skills differed depending on the marital status ($t = 2.171$; $p < 0.05$). The mean values of the married respondents were found higher than those of the single ones. Accordingly, married people are better at social management than single ones.

One-Way ANOVA test was carried out to determine whether the participants' views on emotional intelligence dimensions and knowledge sharing behaviour differed depending on age, education level, department and experience. Information on the factors with statistically significant difference is presented in Table 7. The ability to understand emotions was found to be differing depending on the experience levels ($F = 3.326$; $p < 0.05$). According to Tukey's multiple

Table 6 – Independent sample t-test results
Таблица 6 – Результаты расчета t-критерия Стьюдента для независимой выборки

Variable		Frequency	Means	SS	t/F	P	
Perceiving emotion	Position	Employee	386	3.7830	.84518	-2.662	.008
		Manager	68	4.0772	.81183		
Understanding emotion	Marital status	Married	157	3.9140	.71146	3.140	.002
		Single	297	3.6877	.74002		
Managing emotion	Marital status	Married	157	3.9331	.75711	3.656	.000
		Single	297	3.6389	.91618		
Managing emotion	Position	Employee	386	3.7060	.87924	-2.019	.044
		Manager	68	3.9375	.82902		
Social management	Marital status	Married	157	3.9490	.67921	2.171	.030
		Single	297	3.7879	.78792		

Table 7 – One-Way ANOVA test results

Таблица 7 – Результаты однофакторного дисперсионного анализа

Variable		Frequency	Means	SS	t/F	P	
Understanding emotion	Experience	1–5 years	228	3.6820	.72387	3.326	.011
		6–10 years	140	3.7536	.77621		
		11–15 years	56	4.0402	.64275		
		16–20 years	20	4.0125	.73213		
		21 years and above	10	3.8250	.63519		
Managing emotion	Age	22–29 years	263	3.6587	.93528	3.221	.023
		30–39 years	138	3.7754	.80219		
		40–49 years	46	4.0707	.64261		
		50 years and above	7	3.9643	.76959		
Managing emotion	Experience	1–5 years	228	3.6667	.89551	4.136	.003
		6–10 years	140	3.6643	.87005		
		11–15 years	56	4.1473	.79025		
		16–20 years	20	3.9625	.61385		
		21 years and above	10	3.7750	.79451		
Social management	Experience	1–5 years	228	3.8213	.78401	2.669	.032
		6–10 years	140	3.7500	.67055		
		11–15 years	56	4.1071	.69061		
		16–20 years	20	4.0375	.91865		
		21 years and above	10	3.8000	.94868		
Knowledge sharing behaviour	Experience	1–5 years	228	3.9336	.75072	5.667	.000
		6–10 years	140	3.8602	.73174		
		11–15 years	56	4.3495	.65148		
		16–20 years	20	4.3000	.61471		
		21 years and above	10	3.9000	1.04773		

comparison test showing which binary group caused the differences, it was found that there was a significant difference in understanding emotional skills of the employees.

Emotion management skills of the participants differ depending on both age ($F = 3.221$; $p < 0.05$) and experience ($F = 4.136$; $p < 0.05$). Accordingly, there is a significant difference between the emotion management skills of individuals at the age of 22–29 (Mean = 3.65; SD = 0.93) and those ranging between 40 and 49 (Mean = 4.07; SD = 0.64). There was found a significant difference between the emotion management skills of the employees with 11 to 15 years of experience (Mean = 4.14; SD = 0.79) and those with both 1 to 5 years (Mean = 3.66; SD = 0.89) and 6 to 10 years of experience (Mean = 3.66; SD = 0.89). Hence, individuals with 11 to 15 years of experience demonstrate higher emotion management skills.

The social management skills show differences depending on the experience ($F = 2.669$; $p < 0.05$). Accordingly, a significant difference was observed in the mean values of social management skills of the employees with 11 to 15 years (Mean = 4.10; SD = 0.69) and the employees with 6 to 10 years of experience (Mean = 3.75; SD = 0.67).

Lastly, it was found that knowledge sharing behaviour differed depending on the experience ($F = 5.667$; $p < 0.01$). When the experience-induced difference was examined, a significant difference was observed between the knowledge sharing behaviour of the employees with 11 to 15 years of experience (Mean = 4.34; SD = 0.65) and those with 1 to 5 years (Mean = 3.93; SD = 0.75) and 6 to 10 years (Mean = 3.93; SD = 0.75) of experience.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to analyse the relationship between emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing behaviour. The desire to spread and share knowledge leads to the creation of new knowledge. For this reason, examining the factors, which influence such behaviours, and studying the ways, in which knowledge sharing occurs, play a key role in improving the quality, process, and quantity of knowledge exchanged [Priyadarshi, Premchandran, 2019].

It was found that understanding emotions, managing emotions and social management skills had significant impacts on knowledge sharing behaviour, and that skills of perceiving and using emotions did not have a statistically significant impact on knowledge sharing

behaviour. These results comply with other studies on emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing behaviour [Ansari, Malik, 2017; Arakelian et al., 2013; Goh, Lim, 2014; Komlosi, Obermayer-Kovacs, 2014; van den Hooff, de Leeuw van Weenen, 2012]. We can conclude that employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to exhibit knowledge sharing behaviour within the organization.

The study also examined whether emotional intelligence skills and knowledge sharing behaviour differed according to demographic characteristics. The average score of the perceiving and managing emotions skills shows differences between managers and employees. According to the results of the analysis, the average score of managers was found to be higher than that of employees. However, this difference may be due to the rates of the participants, since the number of the employees participating in the study is more than five times the number of the managers. The averages of understanding emotions, managing emotions and social management skills were examined according to the marital status of the participants, and it was found that the mean values of married employees in all three skills were higher. Accordingly, it can be said that emotional intelligence skills of married individuals are higher than those of single ones.

We also explored whether the mean values of emotional intelligence skills differed according to age and experience. Experience-induced differences were detected in the average scores of the skills of understanding emotions, managing emotions and social management. Employees with 11 to 15 years of experience show significant differences in the mean values of understanding emotions skills compared to the employees with 1 to 5 years of experience, in managing emotions skills compared to the employees with 1 to 5 and 6 to 10 years of experience, and in social skills compared to the employees with 6 to 10 years of experience. When the mean values are evaluated in general, it is seen that the emotional intelligence skills of those with 11 years of experience are higher than those of other employees. Only the mean values of emotion management skills differ according to age. The mean

values calculated for the employees aged 40–49 show significant differences from those aged 22–29. Thus, employees over a certain age are better at managing emotions than younger employees.

Finally, we discussed whether or not the mean scores of knowledge sharing behaviour differed according to the demographic characteristics. A difference was found in the mean values in term of the experience only. As for emotional intelligence skills, the mean scores of individuals with 11 to 15 years of experience varied compared to the employees with 1 to 5 years and 6 to 10 years of experience. Thus, we can say that the level of knowledge sharing behaviour of experienced employees is higher.

It is of utmost importance for the organizations in the service sector to be willing to change behaviour by focusing on knowledge sharing and creating new knowledge through collaboration of employees [Ro et al., 2020]. Nowadays, new knowledge regarding both the way of doing business and customer expectations, which concern all sectors, is constantly generated. It is also getting increasingly difficult to control this knowledge by a certain number of employees within the organization. Therefore, effective knowledge sharing behaviour among individuals within the organization will help organizations to survive by adapting to environmental changes. At this point, involvement of the organizations in activities to improve employees' emotional intelligence skills and actively use their experience throughout this process will affect knowledge sharing within the organization in a positive way.

This study contributes to the literature by analysing the effects of emotional intelligence on knowledge sharing in businesses operating in tourism industry. The most essential constraint of this study is the sampling method. Since private sector did not participate much in the study, probability sampling method could not be used. Another constraint was the fact that the employees sometimes misunderstood the questions. In future studies, the relationship between knowledge sharing behaviour and emotional intelligence can be examined in other fields of tourism industry. ■

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