

# Emotional Intelligence as Mediator of Quality of Work Life and Commitment: Context of Public Sector Employees

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** To determine the mediating effect of emotional intelligence on quality of work life and commitment of public sector employees within the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur.

**Study design:** Non-experimental quantitative design

**Place and Duration of Study:** Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur, CARAGA Region, Philippines during the January - March 2023.

**Methodology:** Stratified random sampling technique was used to obtain the 362 public sector employees as respondents of the study. Mediation analysis approach and descriptive-correlational technique were used to explore and appreciate how emotional intelligence could affect the relationship between quality of work life and employees' commitment. The mean, regression, Pearson r and Sobel z-test were utilized as statistical tools.

**Results:** The level of quality of work life, emotional intelligence, and commitment among the public sector employees was high. Moreover, there was a significant relationship between the three variables ( $p$ -value  $< .05$ ). Using Sobel z-test, the results of the study showed partial mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between quality of work life and commitment. This means that the mediating role played by emotional intelligence of public sector employees partly helped to explain the mechanism that was responsible to explain the connection between quality of work and commitment.

**Conclusion:** Emotional intelligence has a big impact on commitment, so organizations need to consider an employee's personal compatibility and develop competent strategic human resource management with employee-friendly policies.

*Keywords: Quality or work life, emotional intelligence, commitment, public sector employees, Philippines*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The job standing of public sector employees in the Philippines continues to face increasing challenges as public servants' loyalty and commitment to their organization are projected to be extremely poor [1]. An unexpected employee resignation can slow down the company's ability to provide timely services to its stakeholders [2]. Into the bargain and most importantly in these challenging times, the government's attempts at innovation and development are unlikely to succeed if those involved are not completely committed and demonstrate apathetic support to the organization [3]. It has been discovered [4] that retaining young employees has become a major issue on a global and national scale, one that is not only unsolved but also growing. The Generation Y or those employees born from 1980 to 2000, demonstrate the ability to job hop when their desires and demands are not fulfilled. This leads to visible and invisible losses, low performance, and unproductivity.

Employees are the most important assets and driving force in deciding an organization's performance in a difficult climate, and their devotion is critical to any organization's success [5]. Employee commitment refers to a set of rules and procedures that enable employees to stay with a company for a long time. Employees must be retained in a real spirit in order to cope with all of these constraints and achieve competitive advantage, maximum resource utilization, and organizational efficiency [6]. According to prior research, highly devoted individuals are more likely to be engaged and to engage in proactive behavior in support of the organization's aims and objectives. It's understandable that an employee who is highly engaged is more dedicated than one who is not [7]

As a current employee in the public sector, the researcher aims to explore matters pertaining to emotional intelligence, quality of work life, and commitment in the public sector employees of the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur. Alfonso et al. (2016 p. 112) [8] stated that when there is an existence of a poor quality of work life in the organization, an established emotional intelligence could be possible to motivate the employees, build alliances, and push through individuals. However, the study of [9] rejects the previous idea and states that, emotional intelligence doesn't always create a positive impact to the organization because workers behave differently with different intentions; higher emotional intelligence can be associated to lesser positive effect towards the workplace and vice-versa. The positive power of emotional intelligence is not inherent; rather, it depends on the employee's goals toward the company [10]. Another study by [11], which was conducted within the Province of Agusan del Sur, states that factors such as retiring age, gender, degree, income (whether it is below minimum or above), and position are not related to the employee's work performance within their organization; rather, the work values of an individual are determined by his emotional relationship with his family, his friends, his environment, his co-workers, and even his religion. Considering the above conflicting ideas, the researcher is eager to proceed with the conduct of this study to help the province and further explain matters pertaining to quality of work life, emotional intelligence, and work commitment. The researcher is determined to carry out this process that is geared towards an effective outcome and visible transformation.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS / EXPERIMENTAL DETAILS / METHODOLOGY

### Research Instrument

A contextualized, expert-validated survey questionnaire was used as research tool in order to accomplish the study's goals. The three-dimensional questionnaire was created by credible scholars and researchers on the three variables used in the study. The researcher subjected the items to pilot testing in determining their internal consistency or Cronbach alpha, to include Quality of Work life .74, Commitment .96, and Emotional Intelligence .96.

For ethical considerations, a copy of the informed consent form was also attached to the instrument for the approval of the respondents to participate in the study. Finally, the researchers followed all of the protocols established by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee with UMERC Protocol Number – 2022-303, prior to collecting data from the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur.

For more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were utilized: Average Weighted Mean, used to measure the level of quality of work life, emotional intelligence and commitment of public sector employees of the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur; Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation ( $r$ ) was employed to determine the significance of the relationship between quality of work life and commitment; Quality of Work Life and Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence and Commitment of the public sector employees of the Provincial Government of Agusan del

Sur; Multiple Regression Analysis was being used to measure the influence of quality of work life and emotional intelligence to commitment of Public Sector Employees; Medgraph using Sobel z-test statistical tool was employed to determine the mediating effect of emotional intelligence of public sector employees on the relationship between the variables quality of work life and commitment.

### Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the 362 employees of the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur, CARAGA Region, Philippines. This study did not include employees of other government agencies of CARAGA. Hence, this limitation may indicate according to San Jose et al. (2022) [12] that the findings may only true to the respondents involved and to the agency the study was conducted.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Level of Quality of Work Life of Public Sector Employees.** Shown in Table 1 is the the Level of Quality of Work Life of Public Sector Employees in the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur. The overall mean score is 3.98 verbally described as High. The result shows that the indicators of quality of work among public sector employees are often manifested or observed. The overall standard deviation is 0.57 which signified the consistency of the responses among the respondents. Among all of the indicators, the Social Relevance and Importance of Work dominate indicating that the public sector employees within the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur are happy with the services and products that their company provides, proud of doing their job, happy with the image of their company to the society and contented of the manner of how the company treats them.

**Table 1: Level of Quality of Work Life of Public Sector Employees**

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Adequate and Fair Compensation	0.82	3.73	High
Working Conditions	0.63	4.02	High
Use of Capabilities at Work	0.61	4.04	High
Opportunities at Work	0.70	3.88	High
Social Integration at Work	0.65	4.07	High
Constitutionalism at Work	0.70	3.92	High
Occupied Space by Work Life	0.79	3.97	High
Social Relevance and Importance of Work	0.67	4.21	Very High
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>High</b>

The high level of quality of work life among public sector employees of the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur is a source of numerous positive gains. The Very High manifestation of the indicator Social Relevance and Importance of Work among the employees will lead to improve positive feelings towards one's self (greater self-esteem), towards one's job (improved job satisfaction and engagement), and towards the organization (strong organizational commitment). In consonance, addressing employees' concerns involving the indicator Adequate and Fair Compensation, which got the lowest mean score, is crucial to improving employees' quality of work life within the organization.

This high level of response among the respondents is consistent with studies by [13, 14, 15], which found that a high level of quality of work life in the organization manifests a favorable working atmosphere which encourages and helps promote fulfillment through offering employees job security, growth opportunities, promotion, compensation, and recognition.

Similarly, [16] stated that compensation can be anything that the employee benefits from the organization in return for the services they offered. It can be the main source of retention, recruitment, and motivation for the employees. Likewise, the importance of factors such as staff receiving help from their employers, being integrated into a positive work atmosphere, and feeling valued as professionals and as individuals is one of the many factors of the quality of work life of an employee. The high response on quality of work life among employees is aligned to the Social Exchange Theory of George Homans, which stated that a worthwhile partnership is a cost and benefit process among the employer and the employee.

**Level of Commitment of Public Sector Employees.** Presented in Table 2 is the Level of Commitment of Public Sector Employees in the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur. The highest mean score among the indicators is Values at Work with a Mean = 3.94, labeled as High. This implies that the public sector employees under the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur treated their work as an important aspect of life and has become a major part of their lives. As a whole, the overall mean score is 3.84 which is described as High.

**Table 2: Level of Commitment of Public Sector Employees**

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Occupational Commitment	0.71	3.90	High
Organizational Commitment	0.81	3.76	High
Job Involvement	0.80	3.76	High
Values at Work	0.71	3.94	High
Occupational Commitment	0.71	3.90	High
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>High</b>

The results are supported by the study of [17, 18]. A high level of employee commitment holds particular value for organizations, owing to its impact on organizational effectiveness and employee well-being. The High result of the indicator Values at Work has been associated to the degree to which employees link to their occupations as a part of their whole lives, on the other hand the high Organizational Commitment and Job Involvement among employees shows that they identify strongly their relationship to their job and thinks about it even when not at work. This result is parallel to the study of [19, 20]. It implied that an employee who feels a strong connection to their job wanted to do what they can to help the organization succeed, and by that, they remain to be a member to the organization. This result can also be supported by the anchored theory, the "Social Identity Theory" by [21] It is the contention of this theory that the employees who were able to establish a strong connection to their job and the organization, were more devoted to it.

**Level of Emotional Intelligence of Public Sector Employees.** Discussed in Table 3 is the Level of Emotional Intelligence of Public Sector Employees in the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur. The overall mean score is 3.81, labeled as High which means that emotional intelligence among public sector employees is often manifested. This means that the public sector employees of the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur manifest high value of Self-Awareness and able to accurately express their feelings. High value of Self-Awareness means that the employees are able to comprehend what they want and that they can easily justify their actions. Moreover, the public sector employees easily comprehend feed backs from other employees within the organization which aid them to have a positive working environment.

**Table 3: Level of Emotional Intelligence of Public Sector Employees**

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Self-awareness	0.59	3.92	High
Self-management	0.68	3.70	High

Motivation	0.77	3.86	High
Empathy	0.69	3.87	High
Relationship Management	0.71	3.71	High
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>High</b>

Emotional intelligence affects organizations and businesses in a wide range of ways that are crucial for the workplace's performance in the future. It is an essential requirement for success, as supported by the previous studies [22]. An individual's ability to reason about feelings would not be unusual or exceptional; rather, it would be part of a wider reasoning about human existence. Based on the results, the High level of Self-Awareness determines the employees broader personal and social intelligence, or the so-called socio-emotional-personal intelligence. On the other hand, managers of the organization may need to consider various control strategies to successfully increase the Self-management among its employees, since they would be more likely to become affected by their intrapersonal conflict and it will be reciprocal to the service they offer.

### **Significance on the Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Commitment of Public Sector Employees.**

Data outputs of the significant tests between Quality of Work Life and Commitment of Public Sector Employees are shown in Table 4.1. The overall coefficient of correlation is .824 and has a p-value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , labeled as significant. Thus, the null hypothesis "no significant relationship between Quality of Work Life and Commitment of Public Sector Employees" is rejected. Likewise, the correlation coefficient,  $r = 0.824$  suggest that quality of work life is related to and can be explained by commitment approximately 82 percent.

**Table 4.1. Significance on the Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Commitment of Public Sector Employees**

Quality of Work Life	Commitment				
	Occupational Commitment	Organizational Commitment	Job Involvement	Value of Work	Overall
Adequate and Fair Compensation	.464 <sup>**</sup> .000	.415 <sup>**</sup> .000	.444 <sup>**</sup> .000	.346 <sup>**</sup> .000	.450 <sup>**</sup> .000
Working Conditions	.612 <sup>**</sup> .000	.629 <sup>**</sup> .000	.596 <sup>**</sup> .000	.639 <sup>**</sup> .000	.666 <sup>**</sup> .000
Use of Capacities at Work	.634 <sup>**</sup> .000	.628 <sup>**</sup> .000	.557 <sup>**</sup> .000	.546 <sup>**</sup> .000	.637 <sup>**</sup> .000
Opportunities at Work	.644 <sup>**</sup> .000	.621 <sup>**</sup> .000	.601 <sup>**</sup> .000	.592 <sup>**</sup> .000	.662 <sup>**</sup> .000
Social Integration at Work	.765 <sup>**</sup> .000	.746 <sup>**</sup> .000	.604 <sup>**</sup> .000	.571 <sup>**</sup> .000	.723 <sup>**</sup> .000
Constitutionalism at Work	.704 <sup>**</sup> .000	.711 <sup>**</sup> .000	.618 <sup>**</sup> .000	.608 <sup>**</sup> .000	.711 <sup>**</sup> .000
Occupied Space by Work Life	.814 <sup>**</sup> .000	.727 <sup>**</sup> .000	.754 <sup>**</sup> .000	.683 <sup>**</sup> .000	.801 <sup>**</sup> .000
Social Relevance and Importance of Work	.744 <sup>**</sup> .000	.736 <sup>**</sup> .000	.665 <sup>**</sup> .000	.691 <sup>**</sup> .000	.763 <sup>**</sup> .000
Overall	.821 <sup>**</sup> .000	.792 <sup>**</sup> .000	.739 <sup>**</sup> .000	.710 <sup>**</sup> .000	.824 <sup>**</sup> .000

The result can be supported by the previous studies of [23, 24, 25] stating that quality of work life has a positive effect on commitment. Furthermore, empowerment in quality of work life will aid in the development of an organizational culture of teamwork, cooperation, versatility, and partnership, resulting in improved employee commitment. Nonetheless, improved quality of work life will keep workers engaged and help them achieve the organization's vision more effectively. As quality of work life and commitment are combined, the result is a synergetic impact on employee behaviors and organizational outcomes. Employees will be inspired in body, mind, and spirit to overcome job pressure, circumstances, and obstacles and transform them into life lessons that will help them to develop and emerge as winners. In addition, one of the most important indicators of an organization's stability is employee retention [26]. To attain the retention rate, the company needs put forth extra effort in its quality of work life activities. It is critical to develop and maintain a healthy and balanced work life for employees in order to improve job satisfaction and performance . This illustrates the effect of quality of work life and intention to stay (QWL affected employee commitment, which in turn affected intention to stay). As a result, we now have a better understanding of why different employees arrived at different decisions [5, 27].

**Significance on the Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Emotional Intelligence of Public Sector Employees.** Presented in table 4.2 is the significance on the Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Emotional Intelligence of Public Sector Employees within the Province of Agusan del Sur. The overall coefficient of correlation is .730 and has a p-value of <.05, labeled as significant. Thus, the null hypothesis “no significant relationship between Quality of Work Life and Emotional Intelligence of Public Sector Employees” was rejected. In addition, the correlation coefficient,  $r = 0.730$  suggest that quality of work life is related to and can be explained by emotional intelligence approximately 73 percent.

**Table 4.2. Significance on the Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Emotional Intelligence of Public Sector Employees**

Quality of Work Life	Emotional Intelligence					Overall
	<i>Self-awareness</i>	<i>Self-management</i>	<i>Motivation</i>	<i>Empathy</i>	<i>Relationship Management</i>	
Adequate and Fair Compensation	.407** .000	.290** .000	.403** .000	.308** .000	.358** .000	.399** .000
Working Conditions	.627** .000	.513** .000	.543** .000	.510** .000	.518** .000	.610** .000
Use of Capacities at Work	.556** .000	.430** .000	.485** .000	.431** .000	.473** .000	.535** .000
Opportunities at Work	.538** .000	.498** .000	.556** .000	.059** .000	.532** .000	.595** .000
Social Integration at Work	.658** .000	.565** .000	.611** .000	.655** .000	.581** .000	.690** .000
Constitutionalism at Work	.626** .000	.056** .000	.569** .000	.601** .000	.548** .000	.641** .000
Occupied Space by Work Life	.657** .000	.520** .000	.669** .000	.611** .000	.552** .000	.679** .000
Social Relevance and Important Work	.617** .000	.543** .000	.616** .000	.606** .000	.517** .000	.654** .000
Overall	.712** .000	.586** .000	.680** .000	.643** .000	.620** .000	.730** .000

The above result implies that employee training which is an essential part on the development on the quality of work life among employees updates them with the skills, knowledge, and behavioral competencies that foster emotional attachment and loyalty to the company. Also, when employees are given training, they see it as a form of communication from the employer that the employer cares about their well-being, and in return, the employees feel as if they owe the organization something for what it has done for them, so they make an effort to stay committed and devoted to it [28, 29, 30].

Employee engagement entails the sharing of information, participation in processing, decision-making, and problem-solving in order to generate new ideas and prospective alternatives. It allows employees to have some control over their duties and participate in decision-making processes within the context of their workplace [31, 32].

Employee participation in decision-making has the ability to influence employee perception, competitive advantage, and work performance. Employees' quality of work life can be aided by participation when they have control over their workload, receive social support from coworkers and supervisors, are adequately compensated for their contributions, and are treated with respect and fairness. This habit of involvement is critical for efficient integration and capacity optimization inside the organization. Emotional Intelligence is fostered when employees believe they are supported by their employers and they have a voice in the workplace [33]. Gyawali (2017 p. 23) [34] also looked at the impact of employee perceptions of justice has the greatest impact on quality of work life.

**Significance on the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Commitment of Public Sector Employees.**

The significant test on the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Commitment of Public Sector Employees within the Province of Agusan del Sur was shown in Table 4.3. The overall coefficient of correlation is .818 and has a p-value of <.05, labeled as significant. This implies rejection of the null hypothesis "no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Commitment of Public Sector Employees". Moreover, the correlation coefficient,  $r = 0.818$  suggest that emotional intelligence is related to and can be explained by commitment approximately 82 percent.

**Table 4.3. Significance on the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Commitment of Public Sector Employees.**

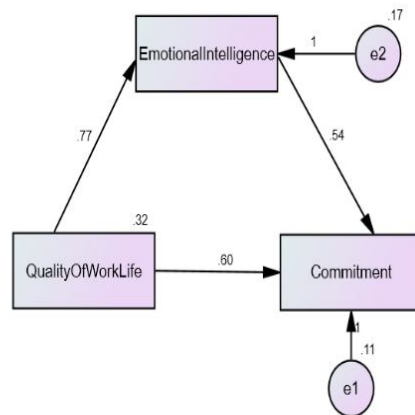
Emotional Intelligence	Commitment				
	Occupational Commitment	Organizational Commitment	Job Involvement	Value of Work	Overall
Self-awareness	.755 .000	.730 .000	.665 .000	.727 .000	.773 .000
Self-management	.612 .000	.660 .000	.591 .000	.659 .000	.679 .000
Motivation	.805 .000	.822 .000	.726 .000	.697 .000	.822 .000
Empathy	.728 .000	.753 .000	.594 .000	.626 .000	.728 .000
Relationship Management	.610 .000	.632 .000	.496 .000	.568 .000	.620 .000
Overall	.793 .000	.813 .000	.694 .000	.738 .000	.818 .000

### Mediation Analysis

Described in Table 5 is the mediation analysis of the variables Quality of Work Life, Emotional Intelligence and Commitment. As presented in the table, three steps were met for the third variable (Emotional Intelligence) acting as mediator, these are categorized as steps 1 to 4. In step 1, Quality of Work Life as the independent variable (IV) significantly predict Emotional Intelligence, the mediating variable, at 0.05 level of significance. In step 2, Emotional Intelligence significantly predict Commitment, the dependent variable, at 0.05 level of significance. In step 3, Quality of Work Life (IV) significantly predicts Commitment (DV), at 0.05 level of significance. Since the three steps (paths a, b, and c) are significant, further analysis through Med-Graph is warranted. Moreover, this implies that part of the independent variable (Commitment) is mediated by the Mediator variable (Emotional Intelligence), however, other parts are either direct or mediated by other variables that are not included in the model. Thus, since the effect was found to be significant at 0.05 level, partial mediation took place.

Results on the computation of the effect size in the mediation test conducted between the three variables were presented in the Figure 1. The effect size of measures how much of the effect of Quality of Work Life and Commitment could be attributed to the indirect path. The indirect effect value of .600 is the beta of Quality of Work Life towards Commitment included in the regression. The direct effect value of .767 is the beta between Emotional Intelligence and Quality of Work Life and the direct effect value of .543 is the beta between Emotional Intelligence and Commitment included in the regression. To conclude, since it can be noted that partial mediation took place in this study, it can be understood that Emotional Intelligence is not the sole reason how Quality of Work Life can influence Commitment.

**Table 5. Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables**



### Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Emotional Intelligence	<---	Quality of Work Life	.767	.038	20.203	***	
Commitment	<---	Quality of Work Life	.600	.045	13.364	***	

Commitment	<---	Emotional Intelligence	.543	.043	12.703	***
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Partial mediation

Figure 1. Path Diagram for the Regression

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The study found that the level of Quality of Work Life, Emotional Intelligence and Commitment among Public Sector Employees in the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur was high, with a significant relationship among the three variables. Path analysis revealed a partial mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between quality of work life and commitment. Recommendations were made to retain and bolster policies and best practices, but the indicator "Adequate and Fair Compensation" had the lowest mean. The organization must provide additional opportunities and benefits to employees, such as rewards, educational assistance, financial assistance, medical assistance, dental plans, and insurance. The Level of Emotional Intelligence among public sector employees was high, but the indicator "Self-Management" had the lowest mean score. The level of Commitment among public sector employees was high, but the specific item "I would not pursue a different line of work" had moderate descriptive level. It is recommended that the HR or administrator should assess and identify the needs and wants of their employees, and re-assess their skills and expertise if necessary. Trainings and seminars are highly recommended. The partial mediation result of Emotional Intelligence to the relationship between Quality of Work Life and Commitment suggests that it is not always the duty of the administrator/HR managers to retain the commitment of their employees. Organizations must consider a candidate's personality compatibility, develop alternatives to ease stress, and have competent strategic human resource management with employee-friendly policies. Future studies are recommended to examine other variables not included in this study.

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