

Navigating Complexity: Emotional Intelligence as a Catalyst for Positive Employee Attitudes in Organizations

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Abstract: The study explores the relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation, and employees' attitudes within organizational settings. The research analyzes how self-awareness directly and indirectly influences employee attitudes through self-regulation. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a structured questionnaire distributed to 498 university faculty and staff members. The data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the path coefficient and relationships between the variables. Results indicate that self-awareness significantly impacts employee attitudes (path coefficient = 0.286, $p = 0.04$). Additionally, self-awareness positively influences self-regulating self-regulation (path coefficient = 0.375, $p = 0.01$), which, in turn, significantly enhances employee attitude (path coefficient = 0.595, $p = 0.00$). The findings also reveal that self-regulation mediated the relationship between self-awareness and employee attitudes (indirect effect = 0.223, $p = 0.013$). The study highlights the importance of emotional intelligence components- specifically self-awareness and self-regulation – in fostering positive employee attitudes. These insights contribute to organizational behavior by emphasizing the need for developing emotional intelligence to enhance employee well-being and performance. The results suggest that organizations should invest in emotional intelligence training programs to equip employees better to manage their emotions and respond effectively to workplace challenges.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Employee Attitudes, Employee Well-Being.

Introduction

In an increasingly unpredictable world characterized by VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity), organizations face challenges that demand innovative leadership and workforce development (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014; Goleman, 1995; Johansen, 2012). Navigating this dynamic environment depends significantly on employees and leaders' emotional intelligence (EI) of employees and leaders. Emotional intelligence, encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation,

empathy, and motivation, is critical for enhancing decision-making, fostering resilience, and improving employee attitudes. (Bar-On, 2006; Salovey & Mayer, 1990) Self-awareness is the foundation of emotional intelligence, enabling individuals to recognize their emotions and their impact on behavior (J. D. Brown & Marshall, 2001). When combined with self-regulation, which involves managing emotional responses to challenges, employees are better equipped to maintain positive attitudes and perform effectively (Bandura, 1991) (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996). In organizations, higher levels of emotional intelligence have been linked to improved job satisfaction, commitment, and leadership effectiveness (Boyatzis et al., 2000) (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

The importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace cannot be overstated (Goleman, 1998), which asserts that EI is twice as important as technical skills and IQ workplace success. The components of EI- self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and motivation – contribute to improved decision-making, leadership effectiveness, and employee and employee satisfaction (Brackett et al., 2011) (Mayer et al., 2008). Self-awareness and self-regulation are critical for fostering positive employee attitudes and organizational outcomes (Schutte et al., 1998) (Brown, 2003).

Employees' attitudes, encompassing job satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment, significantly influence performance, retention, and overall organizational climate (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Positive employee attitudes are associated with lower turnover, increased productivity, and better workplace morale (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000)

In the VUCA environment, fostering these positive attitudes requires employees and leaders to manage their emotions and effectively maintain a sense of clarity and resilience (Bennis, 2003) (Horney, 2010)

This study investigates the relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation, and employee attitudes within VUCA challenges. Examining these constructs using structural equation modeling, the research aims to determine how emotional intelligence can support employees in adapting to complex organizational environments.

Given this context, the present study investigates the relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation, and employee attitudes using structural equation modeling (SEM). Specifically, the study investigates the relationship between variables and assesses the effect on employees' attitudes.

These objectives provide valuable insights for developing emotionally intelligent leadership practices that enhance organizational performance and employees' well-being in VUCA environments.

Literature review

Emotional Intelligence and Its Components

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions in oneself and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence (EI) is typically divided into core components: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and motivation. These competencies are critical for workplace success, influencing how employees respond to stress, engage with colleagues, and achieve organizational goals. The concept has evolved significantly, with multiple models highlighting different aspects of EI (Goleman, 1995) (Bar-On R, 2006) (Petrides & Furnham, 2003). The four primary components of EI, which are most relevant to organizational settings, include:

1. Self-awareness

The ability to recognize one's emotions and understand their impact on thoughts and behavior (Brown, 2003) (Schraw & Dennison, 1994a). Self-awareness helps individuals identify their emotional triggers and strengths, leading to better decision-making and personal growth (Duval, 1972a). For example, self-aware employees are likelier to remain calm and composed in stressful situations (Zeidner et al., 2004).

2. Self-regulation

The capacity to manage emotional responses, adapt to changing circumstances, and maintain control over impulses (Bandura, 1991) (Gross et al., 1998). Self-regulation is associated with resilience, effective conflict resolution, and stress management (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996). Leaders who practice self-regulation can create a stable and supportive work environment, even during volatility (Carver, 1981).

3. Empathy

The ability to understand and share the feelings of others (Davis, 1983) (Eisenberg, 1987). Empathy is crucial for building trust, collaboration, and a positive organizational culture. Empathetic leaders can address employees' concerns, enhancing morale (Goleman, 1995) and engagement (Boyatzis et al., 1999).

4. Motivation

The drive to achieve goals, persevere through challenges, and maintain a positive outlook (Deci & Ryan, 2000) (Locke, 1990). Motivated employees exhibit higher levels of resilience and job performance (Amabile, 1997) (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Employee Attitudes

Employee attitudes refer to employees' evaluations of their work environment, including their level of job satisfaction, commitment, and engagement (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). (Meyer & Allen, 1991) Positive employee attitudes are

essential for organizational success, influencing performance, turnover rates, and workplace morale (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Research indicates that emotional intelligence significantly impacts employee attitudes (Carmeli, 2003);(Law et al., 2004)

- Self-awareness: Employees with high self-awareness are more likely to experience job satisfaction and engagement (Schutte et al., 1998)(Brackett et al., 2011).
- Self-regulation: Effective self-regulation leads to better stress management, conflict resolution, and workplace harmony. (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996)(Gross et al., 1998).
- Empathy: Empathetic leaders foster a supportive environment, enhancing organization and reducing turnover (Goleman, 1995)(Davis, 1983).

VUCA Challenges and Emotional Intelligence

The VUCA framework characterizes modern organizational challenges as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014). These challenges necessitate emotionally intelligent leadership and workforce management approaches (Johansen, 2012). Research suggests that:

- Emotional intelligence enhances adaptability in volatile environments by fostering self-awareness and self-regulation (Goleman, 1995)(Horney, 2010).
- Empathetic leadership improves communication and collaboration, reducing uncertainty and ambiguity (Boyatzis et al., 1999)(Heifetz, 1997).
- Motivated employees are better equipped to handle complex challenges and maintain performance (Locke, 1990)(Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a powerful statistical technique used to examine the relationships between latent variables (Hair et al., 2011a). (Kline, 2023a) SEM allows researchers to test hypotheses, explore mediating effects, and identify pathways between constructs (Preacher & Hayes, 2004a)(Baron & Kenny, 1986). In the context of this study, SEM is used to :

- Analyze the direct relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation, and employees' attitudes.
- Examine mediating effects to understand how self-regulation influences the relationship between self-awareness and employee attitude (MacKinnon et al., 2007)

By applying SEM, this study provides robust insights into the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing employees' attitudes and managing VUCA challenges.

Objectives

- To analyze the impact of self-awareness on employee attitudes.
- To investigate the relationship between self-awareness and self-regulation.
- To assess the effect of self-regulation on employee attitudes.
- To assess the effect of self-regulation on employee attitudes.

Hypotheses

1. **Self-awareness and employees**
 - H₁: there is a positive relationship between self-awareness and employee attitudes.
2. **Self-awareness and self-regulation**
 - Self-awareness positively influences self-regulation.
3. **Self-regulation and employee attitude**
 - Self-regulation positively affects employee attitude.
4. **The mediating role of self-regulation**
 - Self-regulation mediated the relationship between self-awareness and employee attitudes.

Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence components (self-awareness, self-regulation) and employees' attitudes in the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) framework. A structured equation modeling approach assessed these constructs' direct, indirect, and total effects.

Sample and Population

The study targeted university employees as the population of interest, including faculty and administrative staff.

- Sample size: 498 participants were selected using a stratified random sampling method to ensure representation across various departments and roles.
- Demographics: Relevant details on participants' demographics, including age, gender, job roles, and experience, were collected.

Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was designed and distributed to the participants. The questionnaire included items for measuring emotional intelligence, employees' attitudes, and organizational variables.

- Measurement scale: A Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to collect responses.
- Variables Measured: Emotional Intelligence (Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation) And Organizational Variables (Employees Attitudes).

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using statistical tools to ensure the results' reliability, validity, and robustness.

- Reliability Analysis: Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (rho_c) were computed to evaluate internal consistency.
- Validity Analysis: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and variance inflation factor (VIF) were used to assess convergent and discriminant validity.
- Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): Outer model evaluation measurement model reliability and validity and inner model evaluation path coefficients, confidence intervals, and total effects were assessed.

Model Fit

The fit of the SEM model was evaluated using indices:

- Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR): 0.105
- Normed Fit Index (NFI): 0.605
- Chi-Square: 55.702

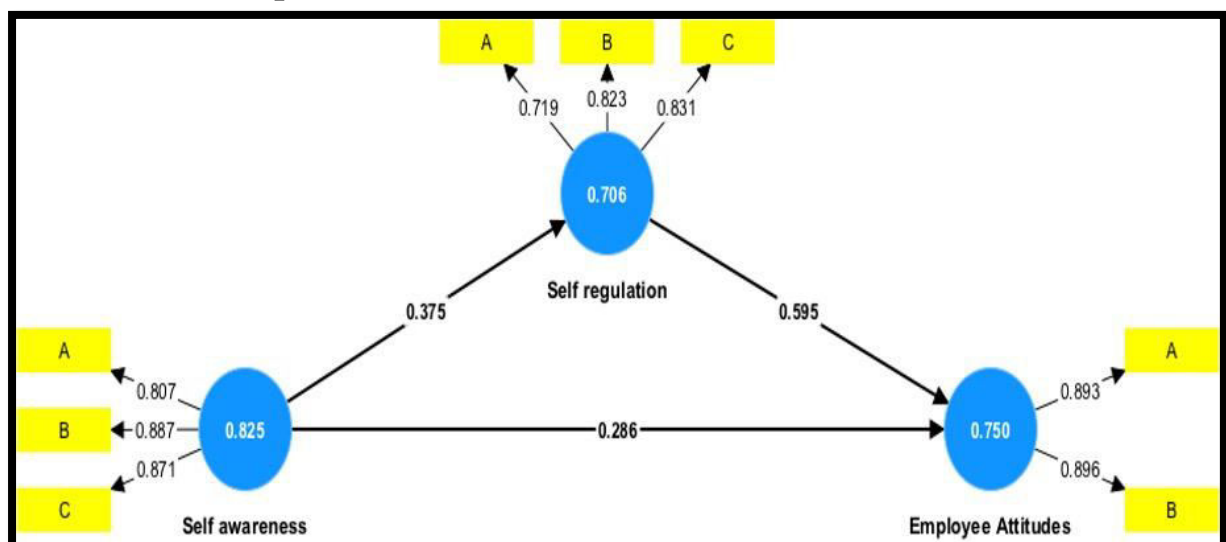
Ethical Considerations

- Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.
- Informed consent was obtained before data collection.
- The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research on subjects.

Tools and software

Data were analyzed using R and Smart PLS for statistical analysis and SEM modeling.

Results And Interpretation



(Figure 1)

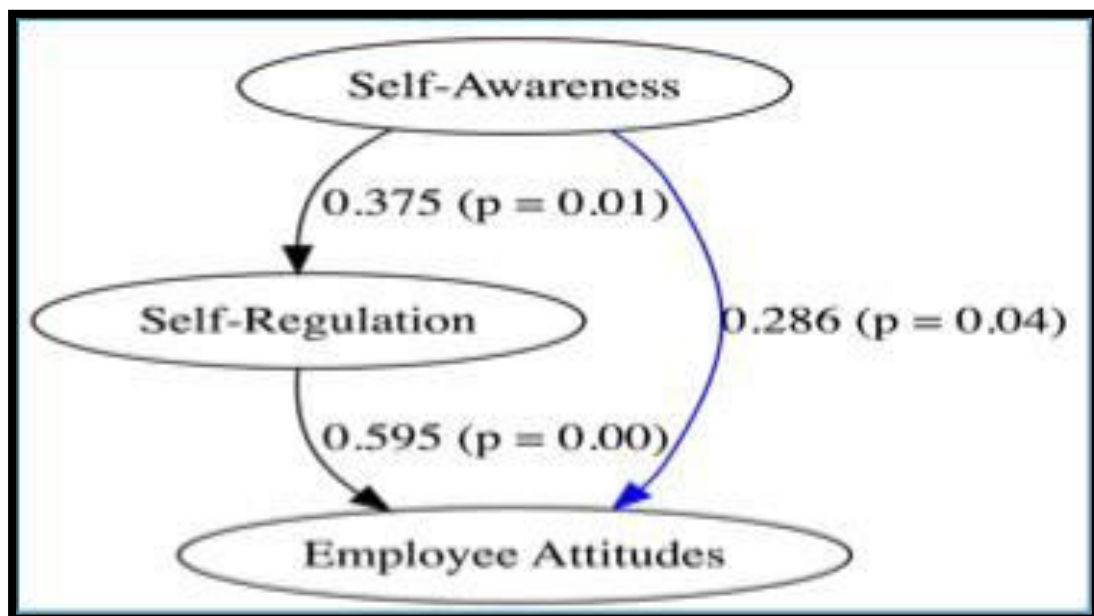
Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Employee Attitudes	0.75	0.75	0.889	0.8
Self-Awareness	0.825	0.891	0.891	0.732
Self-Regulation	0.706	0.722	0.835	0.629

(Table 1)

Table 1 demonstrates the reliability and validity of the construct in the research study.

- Cronbach’s Alpha Indicates internal consistency (values above 0.7 are acceptable).
- Composite Reliability: Confirms construct reliability (values above 0.7 are ideal).
- AVE: Measures convergent validity (values above 0.5 indicate sufficient shared variance).



(Figure 2)

Path Coefficients - Mean, STDEV, T Values, P Values

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Self-Awareness -> Employee Attitudes	0.286	0.286	0.139	2.059	0.04
Self-Awareness -> Self-Regulation	0.375	0.408	0.146	2.574	0.01
Self-Regulation -> Employee Attitudes	0.595	0.595	0.136	4.368	0

(Table 2)

Table 2 presents the structural relationship between variables in the model.

Self-Awareness - Employee Attitudes

- Path coefficient (O=0.286): This shows a positive relationship between self-awareness and Employee Attitudes, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of self-awareness are likely to have more positive attitudes at work.
- T - statistics (2.059) and P -value (0.04): These values confirm that the relationship is statistically significant. A higher self-awareness level enhances employees' ability to reflect, understand their behavior, and develop a constructive attitude.

Self-Awareness - Self-Regulation

- Path Coefficient (O = 0.375): This demonstrates a moderately strong positive relationship between self-awareness and self-regulation. Individuals who are more self-aware tend to regulate their emotions and behavior more effectively.
- T - statistics (2.574) and P-value (0.01): This significant relationship suggests that self-awareness is critical in developing self-regulation capabilities.

Self-Regulation - Employee Attitudes

- Path Coefficient (O = .595): This is the strongest relationship in the model, indicating that self-regulation substantially impacts employee attitude. Employees who can regulate their emotions as actions are more likely to maintain a positive outlook and attitude at work.
- T- statistics (4.368) and P-value (0.000): The highly significant results reinforce the importance of self-regulation as a critical factor in shaping favorable employee attitudes.

The significant relationship between the constructs. Each path emphasizes the crucial role of emotional intelligence components (self-awareness and self-regulation) in

improving employee attitudes and providing actionable insights for leadership and organizational development.

Total Indirect Effects - Mean, STDEV, T Values, P Values

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Self-awareness -> Employee Attitudes	0.223	0.234	0.089	2.497	0.013

(Table 3)

The indirect effect of self-awareness – employee attitude (mediated by self-regulation) is significant ($p = 0.013$). This highlights the moderating role of self-regulation in the model.

Model Fit

Fit Index	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.105	0.105
d_ ULS	0.397	0.397
d_ G	0.254	0.254
Chi-square	55.702	55.702
NFI	0.605	0.605

(Table 4)

Table 4 shows the goodness-of-fit metrics for the structural model.

- SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Residual): Below 0.008 indicates a good fit; 0.105 suggests acceptable.
- Chi-square: Indicates model-data consistency.
- NFI (Normed Fit Index): values closer to 1 indicate a better fit.

Outer model

Variable	VIF
A	1.561
A	1.314
A	1.996
B	1.667
B	1.409
B	1.561
C	2.123
C	1.656

(Table 5)

All outer model VIF values are below 5, indicating no multicollinearity issue. Table 5 suggests that the measurement items (A, B, C) are appropriate and not redundant.

The outer model VIF values refer to the measurement indicators (A, B, and C) used to measure constructs like self-awareness, self-regulation, and employee attitudes.

All VIF values are between 1.314 and 2.123, well below the threshold of 5, indicating no problematic multicollinearity among the measurement items.

This confirms that each item (A, B, and C) contributes independently to the constructs and does not overlap significantly with other items.

The measurement model is valid, meaning each indicator measures a unique aspect of the construct it represents. There is no need to eliminate or merge indicators, as each adds a distinct value to the construct measurement.

Inner model

Variable	Employee Attitudes	Self-awareness	Self-regulation
Employee Attitudes			
Self-awareness	1.164		1
Self-regulation	1.164		

(Table 6)

The inner model VIF values are below 5, indicating no multicollinearity between self-awareness and self-regulation as predictors. These constructs contribute independently to employee attitude and are not overly correlated.

The inner model VIF values assess the predictors in the structural model. In this study, self-awareness and self-regulation are predicting employee attitudes. Both predictors have VIF values of 1.164, indicating very low multicollinearity.

This suggests that self-awareness and self-regulation are distinct constructs and contribute uniquely to explaining employee attitudes.

The structural model is robust, and the constructs are meaningful and can be interpreted confidently. The model reliably assesses the impact of self-awareness and self-regulation on employee attitude.

Outer model and inner model VIF values confirm that multicollinearity is within acceptable limits

The reliability of the measurement and structural models strengthens the study's validity. The model demonstrates validity and reliability in both the measurement and structural components.

Confidence Intervals for Path Coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	2.50%	97.50%
Self-awareness -> Employee Attitudes	0.286	0.286	0.011	0.556
Self-awareness ->Self-regulation	0.375	0.408	0.116	0.659
Self-regulation -> Employee Attitudes	0.595	0.595	0.283	0.822

(Table7)

Confidence intervals confirm the reliability of the estimates. Self-regulation-employee attitude has a 97.5%confidence upper bound of 0.822, reinforcing its strong positive impact.

The results indicate that self-awareness enhances self-regulation, significantly boosting employee attitudes. The indirect effect underscores the mediating role of self-regulation in influencing employee attitudes.

Conclusion

The study examines the relationships between Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, and Employee Attitudes, offering valuable insights into how emotional intelligence components influence employee perceptions and behaviors. The result, supported by reliable statistical measures, highlights several key findings:

1. Self-Awareness And Employee Attitudes:

- There is a significant positive relationship between self-awareness and employee attitude, with a path coefficient of 0.286 and a p-value of 0.04.
- Employees with higher self-awareness are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes, which underscores the importance of self-awareness training in organizational development
- The findings support that employees with higher self-awareness are likelier to exhibit a positive workplace attitude. Enhancing self-awareness can lead to improved job satisfaction and workplace engagement.

2. Self-Awareness And Self-Regulation:

- Self-awareness has a significant positive impact on self-regulation, with a path coefficient of 0.375 and a p-value of 0.01.
- This indicates that more self-aware employees are better equipped to manage their emotions and responses, improving their self-regulation abilities.
- This aligns with previous research indicating that self-aware individuals are better at recognizing and managing emotional responses (). Effective

self-regulation leads to more composed and rational decision-making processes in the workplace ().

3. Self-Regulation And Employee Attitudes:

- Self-regulation strongly influences employee attitude, with a path coefficient of 0.595 and a p-value < 0.0001 .
- This result reflects the findings(), who noted that individuals who regulate their emotions effectively maintain a more positive attitude even under stressful conditions.

4. Indirect Effects:

- Self-awareness indirectly influences employees' attitudes through self-regulation, with a significant indirect effect of 0.223 and a p-value of 0.013.
- This highlights the mediating role of self-regulation in the relationship between self-awareness and employee attitudes.
- This underscores the mediating role of self-regulation in fostering positive employee attitudes ().

5. Model Validity:

- The outer and inner model VIF values indicate no multicollinearity issues, confirming the validity of the construct. Reliability measures, indicating Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE), demonstrate that the constructs are reliable and valid.

6. Model Fit:

- The model fit indices (e.g., SRMR, d_UIS, d_G, Chi-square, and NFI) show acceptable fir levels, supporting the robustness of the model.

Organizational development enhancing self-awareness and self-regulation in employees can lead to more positive workplace attitudes and behavior. Implementing emotional intelligence (EI) training programs can improve employee satisfaction and performance (). Leaders who foster self-awareness and self-regulation in their teams can create a supportive and productive work environment (). Emotionally intelligent leadership can enhance organizational resilience in the face of VUCA challenges.

In conclusion, this study validates the importance of emotional intelligence components- self-awareness and self-regulation shaping employees' attitudes. Integrating EI-focused strategies can significantly enhance workforce development and organizational effectiveness.

Future Research

- Expanding the study to include other emotional intelligence dimensions, such as empathy and motivation, may provide a more comprehensive understanding of their impact on employee attitudes.

- Conducting cross-industry comparisons could help generalize these findings to different organizational contexts.

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