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Unlocking the Relationships between Emotional Intelligence and Group Cohesion in South Asia

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ABSTRACT
Emotional intelligence may be a powerful motivator of group cohesion in an organization as emotional intelligence could foster group performance through extending group cohesion. Present examination strives to recognize the associations among the dimensions of emotional intelligence and group cohesion. The convenience sampling technique was embraced to obtain data from respondents performing in different organizations like merchandising, manufacturing, financial, services, and others in Bangladesh through survey questionnaires. We employed an Emotional Quotient Index and a Group Cohesiveness Scale for assessing representatives' emotional intelligence and group cohesion respectively. Finally, 412 usable reactions were recognized which were subsequently investigated through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis. The outcomes uncovered that each dimension of emotional intelligence was positively link to group cohesion (self-awareness ($r=.57$, $p<.001$) (moderate correlation), self-regulation ($r=.70$, $p<.001$) (strong correlation), motivation ($r=.67$, $p<.001$) (strong correlation), empathy ($r=.68$, $p<.001$) (strong correlation), and social skills ($r=.64$, $p<.001$) (strong correlation). Regression analysis additionally unveiled that all parts of emotional intelligence explained 52% of variances in group cohesiveness. These exclusive findings will stimulate researchers, business experts, and employees of different organizations to install emotional impotence to encourage group cohesion among group members, thereby, contributing to superior group performance in the work environment. The constraint of our investigation was the usage of the purposive sampling technique rather than random sampling. Besides, future research directions are talked about in this exploration.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Self-awareness; Self-regulation; Motivation; Empathy; Social Skills; Group Cohesion

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PRELUDE
Would you like to build cohesive groups in your organization? Worldwide, as the industry shifts to emphasize group work instead of individual endeavors, building a cohesive group is a vital task for managers (Black, Kim, Rhee, Wang, & Sakchutchawan, 2018). Specifically, highly cohesive group members tend to achieve excellent financial performance as they burned through much energy to make an outstanding contribution to the group tasks. Emotional intelligence (EI) is often considered as the foundation for building a cohesive group rather than the only factor that determines whether a group is effective (Druskat & Wolff, 2001; Bughao & Baltar, 2021). Additionally, EI would help in figuring out the reason why a few groups operate successfully whilst others fail (Wolff, Druskat, Koman, & Messer, 2006; Bughao & Baltar, 2021). Accordingly, organizations are presently thirsty for finding ways of building cohesive groups by influencing the emotions of colleagues and group members with EI. Henceforth, research on the impact of EI on group cohesion has been highlighted and the main research question of the study is

What is the relationship between EI and GC perceived by the employees at the PCBs of Bangladesh?

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a rich subject that appears in the space of psychology, and presumably the most modern type of knowledge in the area of organizational behavior (Biswas & Rahman, 2017; Biswas, 2018; Lubbadeh, 2020; Biswas & Rahman, 2021). EI is identified with various non-cognitive skills or competencies that may influence an individual's ability (Goleman, 1998; Bhattacharjee & Rahman, 2016; Biswas, 2018). Emotionally smart members can drive group cohesion through mutual support and coordination with each other. Group Cohesion (GC) is how much individuals from a group recognize and support each other in the workspace (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Few researchers claimed that even though EI impacts GC (Beam, 2012; Zhang et al., 2020), each dimension of EI: self-awareness (SA), self-regulation (SR), motivation (MO), empathy (EM), and social skills (SS) might play significant roles in different degrees in enhancing group cohesion (Jani & Deepti, 2015; Black et al., 2018; Bughao & Baltar, 2021).

Around the world, many scholars in the EI domain have guaranteed the liaison between EI and GC at work, but there are constraints and gaps. This prompted us to explore the connections between these variables specifically for the working environment in Bangladesh. As an additional contribution, the current examination focuses on how each sub-dimensions of EI affect GC. To inspect the influence, we explicitly incorporate five antecedents (SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS) of EI. Therefore, the purpose of our examination is to unveil the connections among the dimensions of EI and GC in various organizations in Bangladesh. To track down the aforesaid relationship, we set out the accompanying research goals:

1. To reveal the association between SA and GC perceived by the respondents.
2. To unearth the link between SR and GC perceived by the respondents.
3. To identify the connection between MO and GC perceived by the respondents.
4. To examine the relationship between EM and GC perceived by the respondents.
5. To determine the liaison between SS and GC perceived by the respondents.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Emotional Intelligence
In the past few decades, EI has attracted the attention of scholars and has turned into an elegant research subject (Coetzee & Harry, 2014; Rahman, Uddin, & Rahman., 2016; Giao, Vuong, Huan, Tushar, & Quan, 2020). In recent days, more and more investigations have been conducted on EI's untapped treasures to determine its antecedents and impact on business-related outcomes (Suifan, Abdallah, & Sweis., 2015; Noureen, Ahmad, & Chaudhry, 2020). Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) proposed the term EI and explained 'EI' as "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action" (p. 189). Goleman (1995) described EI as the basis for achieving hierarchical goals. He added: when employees feel great at their workplace, they will perform at their best (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). EI empowers individuals to viably oversee connections, construct networks and rapport (Goleman, 1998; Kim, 2010; Kim, Cundiff, & Choi, 2014). As revealed by Avery (2004, p. 92) "although the basic idea behind EI is not new, there is much controversy and disagreement as to exactly what EI is".

Dimensions of EI
For this research, we embraced Goleman's mixed model which contains five sub-dimensions of EI (Goleman, 1995; Rahim et al., 2002; Rahman, 2018; Biswas & Rahman, 2021):
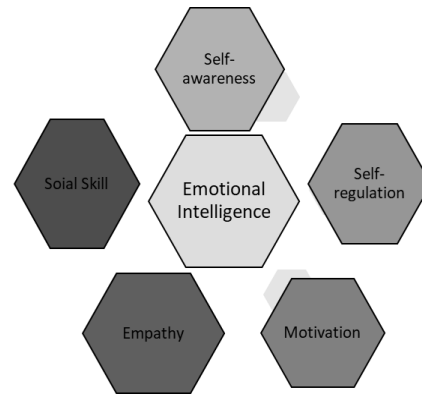

Figure 3.1: Dimensions of EI
Source: Goleman, 1995

a. **Self-awareness**: Knowing one's emotions, self-worth, limitations, and understanding their impact on performance.
b. **Self-regulation**: Controlling one's distressful feelings and emotions to remain positive under pressure.
c. **Motivation**: Person's strong drive, desire, expectations, or confidence to attain challenging objectives.
d. **Empathy**: Understanding and managing the desire, needs, emotions of other people as well as supporting their concerns.
e. **Social skills**: It is essential for cultivating human relationships, negotiating and solving disputes, encouraging public consciousness, and establishing a cooperative work environment.

Group Cohesion
Group cohesion (GC) is depicted as the attractiveness of group members to the group and the desire of members to remain in the group (Hogg & Hains, 1996; Black et al., 2018). At this point, when they trust one another, search for shared destinations, and work together to accomplish these common targets, the group will cohesive (Robbins & Judge, 2019). As shown by Hogg (1993) there are different components of GC like ethnocentrism, normative conduct, liking, trust within the group, and mutual respect. As per Evans and Dion (2012) cohesive groups perform better than non-cohesive groups by about 18 percent (Black et al., 2018). Plenty of assessments have uncovered that GC considers more to achieve the corporate target, expand functions and satisfaction within the group (Tekleab, Quigley, & Tesluk, 2009; Black et al., 2018). On the other hand, few studies investigations have cautioned about the adverse consequences of GC. For example, Berkowitz (1954) reported that when the group goal clashed with the authoritative goals, strong GC harm the organizational performance. Besides, Wise (2013) observed that too little or too much GC minimizes group functioning.

DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES
Emotional Intelligence and Group Cohesion
There is ample evidence demonstrating that EI is a key driver of GC. Emotionally stable group members produce GC, as well as excellent performance (Rapisarda, 2002) as the level of GC of group members, relies upon their EI (Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, & Bucley, 2003; Bughao & Baltar, 2021).

Beam (2012) studied the associations between EI and GC and tracked down a positive connection between them. Black et al. (2018) researched to explore the impact of EI on the cohesiveness of the group. They assembled data on 146 students from American universities and reported that when group members showed greater EI, the GC was highest among them. Zhang et al. (2020) analyzed the unique mediating components that connect the EI of group leaders with group performance. They assembled data from 64 group leaders from 194 group members. Their research results showed that group leaders' EI can improve group performance by advancing GC.

Relationship among the dimensions of EI and GC
Few theoretical keystones guide hypotheses focusing on the connections among the five dimensions of EI and GC. Black et al. (2018) recommended that the individual with SA, SR trait will succeed well and bring greater GC, harmony, and satisfaction in a group. Many researchers claimed that MO and EM traits are closely related to EI and these traits are necessary for GC (Miville, Carlozzi, Gushue, Schara, & Ueda, 2006). Similarly, Group members' EI is closely related to the SS required for the groupwork (Salovey & Mayer, 1989; 1990; Goleman, 1998; Goleman et al., 2002; Sjoberg, 2001; Black et al., 2018). Jani and Deepti (2015) revealed that EI and its' dimensions (SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS) work as prime factors for influencing GC and found positive connection exist amongst the aspects of EI with GC. Bughao and Baltar (2021) inspected the impact of EI on GC and found a significant association with emotion being a strongly correlated element of EI. They also ascertained that GC was significantly related to each dimension of EI: SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS. Henceforth, by taking lead from these contributions it can be assumed that all these components of EI (SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS) would entice a significant connection with GC. Therefore, the underlying hypotheses are drawn:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between SA and GC perceived by the respondents.
Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between SR and GC perceived by the respondents.
Hypothesis 3: There is a negative relationship between MO and GC perceived by the respondents.
Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between EM and GC perceived by the respondents.
Hypothesis 5: There is a positive relationship between SS and GC perceived by the respondents.
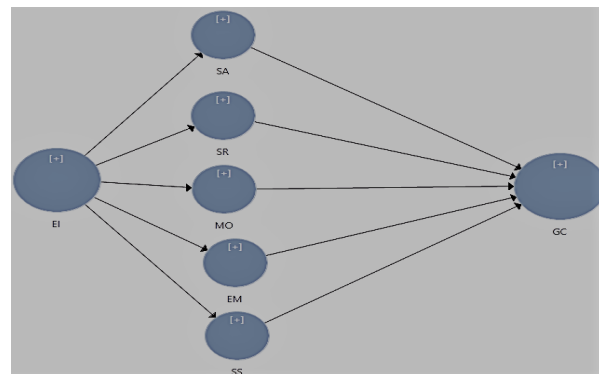

Figure 4.1: Research Model
Authors' contribution, 2021

Our research model (Figure 4.1) demonstrates the impact of EI and its five key parts: SA, SR, MO, EM, SS) as independent variables and outcomes of respondents like GC was as the dependent variable.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The current inquiry is exploratory research where quantitative strategies were applied to accumulate data from the participants. The authors embraced positivism philosophy as it deals with a large number of samples and quantitative procedures.

Research Question
The prime research question of our research is:
What is the impact of EI on GC perceived by the employees in different organizations of Bangladesh?

Research Hypotheses
In this survey, the underlying hypotheses have been formulated:
a) SA and GC
Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between SA and GC perceived by the respondents.
b) SR and GC
Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between SR and GC perceived by the respondents.
c) MO and GC
Hypothesis 3: There is a negative relationship between MO and GC perceived by the respondents.
d) EM and GC
Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between EM and GC perceived by the respondents.
e) SS and GC
Hypothesis 5: There is a positive relationship between SS and GC perceived by the respondents.

Participants
The target respondents of our examination incorporate the residents of Bangladesh working in different organizations (manufacturing, merchandising, financial, services, and others) at the upper, middle, and lower management levels in the Chattogram region to represent all the participants.

Sampling Procedure
Sampling Size and Techniques
In this study, a non-probability sampling design was used, based on the method of convenience because this strategy might be the suitable choice because in some cases, the target audience may not be approached (Cooper & Schindler, 2001). As mentioned by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) if the extent of the general population is at least 100000 or more, then with a 95% certainty level, and a 5% error margin, the sample size of an examination ought to be at least 383. In our inquiry, we recognized about 412 (81%) available responses out of 510 respondents of which 19% were female and 81% were male.

Survey Instruments
EI
A complete 40-item instrument acquired from the EQ Index designed by Rahim et al. (2002) was employed to examine the parts of EI like SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS advised by Goleman

(1998a). An example from this scale was: "My supervisor keeps his or her anger in check."

GC

GC was evaluated with a 7-item scale acquired from a modified version by Dobbins and Zaccaro (1986) of the Group Cohesiveness Scale, which was developed by Buchanan (1998). The participants were approached to provide their reactions on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). An example from this scale is: "My colleague enjoyed belonging to his group because he thinks he could be friends with many of its members".

Data Collection Procedure

We prepared printed questionnaires and distributed them to 600 representatives performing in various organizations at different levels to obtain raw data from them. We visited the participants' office and welcomed them to take part in our survey after obtaining permission from their superiors. We received 510 responses but rejected 98 reactions due to a lack of responses. At last, we acknowledged 412 (80.78%) usable reactions for our inspection. Later, we entered the primary data into the SPSS Statistics 23.0 to test all hypotheses.

Table 5.1: Survey Responses

Questionnaire sent	Responses received	Response rate	Suitable responses
600	510	80.78	412

Reliability and Validity

We calculated Cronbach's alpha for this examination since it is a broadly used strategy for checking the reliability of different instruments (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 2003; Biswas & Rahman, 2021). The satisfactory value must be higher than 0.60 for the scale to be reliable (Malhotra, 2002; Cronbach, 1951; Rahman, 2018; Biswas & Rahman, 2021). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients' outcomes for SA, SR, MO, EM, SS, an GC are 0.82, 0.83, 0.85, 0.82, 0.79, and 0.89. So, both tools are reliable for gathering data. Furthermore, we guaranteed the criterion validity and translated the tools into Bangla and afterward compared them with the original version to assure their validity (Kaur, Sambasivan, and Kumar, 2013; Uddin, Rahman, & Howlader, 2017). Through broad investigations in various nations including Bangladesh, the validity of the tools was secured (Rahim et al., 2002; 2006; Uddin et al., 2017; Biswas & Rahman, 2021).

Table: 5.2: The Result of Reliability Test

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
SA	0.82	Reliable
SR	0.83	Reliable
MO	0.85	Reliable
EM	0.82	Reliable
SS	0.79	Reliable
GC	0.89	Reliable

RESULTS

Table 6.1 exhibits the frequency distributions for demographic variables:

Table 6.1: Frequency Distributions for Socio-demographic Variables

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percent
Experience (in Year)	1-4	248	60.2
	5-10	97	23.5
	11-14	40	9.7
	15-20	12	2.9
	21-25	8	1.9
	26-30	7	1.7
Age (In Year)	21-30	153	37.1
	31-40	203	49.3
	41-50	40	9.7
	51-60	16	3.9
Organization	Manufacturing	98	23.8
	Merchandising	51	12.4
	Financial	97	23.5
	Service	157	38.1
	Others	9	2.2
Education	Bachelor	42	11.8
	Master	310	87.4
Gender	Male	334	81.1
	Female	78	18.9
Position	Top	49	11.9
	Middle	322	78.2
	Low	41	10.0

Note. n = 412. Source: Authors' contribution, 2021

Table-6.1 presented that a large portion of the participants (49%) were between 31-40 years. There were 12% top-level employees, 78% middle-level employees, and 10% lower-level employees. Most of the respondents 87.4% (n=310) had finished master's degrees and 12% (n=42) had finished graduate degrees. In terms of organizational units, 38% belonged to services, 24% to manufacturing, 12.4% to merchandising, 23% to finance, and 2.2% to other industries. The values of mean and standard deviation (SD) (Table 6.3) were steady with the previous investigations (Rahim et al., 2002; 2006; Rahman, 2018; Biswas, 2018; Biswas & Rahman, 2021).

Table 6.2: Kolmogorov – Smirnov Test of normality for dependent variable

Variables	Kolmogorov – Smirnov Test		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.
SA	.316	412	.000
SR	.271	412	.001
MO	.269	412	.000
EM	.264	412	.000
SS	.216	412	.002
GC	.212	412	.000

Source: Author's contribution, 2021
(Note: n= 412; EI= Emotional intelligence, SA= Self-awareness, SR= Self-regulation, MO= Motivation, EM= Empathy, SS= Social skill, GC= Group Cohesion)

Kolmogorov – Smirnov test was applied for assessing the normality of data. Table 6.2 shows the normality of EI (SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS) and GC. Examining the table 6.2, we found that the value of P is less than .05 for all variables which

indicate that data are not normally distributed. However, if the sample size is more than 30, than the violation of normality is not a problem (Tabachinick & Fidell, 2007) and a linear regression remains a statistically sound technique in studies of large sample sizes and liner regression was shown in table-6.4.

Varia bles	M	SD	A	Correlations					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
1. SA	4.10	0.57	0.82	1					
2. SR	4.25	0.61	0.83	0.76**	1				
3. MO	4.36	0.62	0.85	0.68**	0.86**	1			
4. EM	4.39	0.60	0.82	0.67**	0.87**	0.87**	1		
5. SS	4.20	0.57	0.79	0.68**	0.82**	0.82**	0.80**	1	
6. GC	4.36	0.39	0.91	0.57**	0.70**	0.67**	0.68**	0.64**	1

Source: Author's contribution, 2021

(Note: n= 412; Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); EI= Emotional intelligence, SA= Self-awareness, SR= Self-regulation, Mo= Motivation, EM= Empathy, SS= Social skill, GC= Group Cohesion)

Table 6.3: Means (M), Standard Deviations (SD), and Correlations of Variables

A review of the above Table-6.3 displays that there are significant associations among the sub-dimension of EI and GC: a) SA (r=.57, p<.001) (moderate correlation), b) SR (r=.70, p<.001) (strong correlation), c) MO (r =.67, p<.001), (strong correlation), d) EM (r = .68, p <.001) (strong correlation), e) SS (r =.64, p <.001) (strong correlation). The magnitude of the affiliation is strong for SR, MO, EM, and SS and moderate for SA (Evans, 1996). The direction of the relationship is positive which means that EI and GC are positively associated suggesting that greater EI is connected with greater GC. The outcomes rely upon n= 412 cases. Since this is steady with the sample size of the present study, subsequently in our data there are no missing values. In conclusion, the outcomes indicate that all parts of EI might be indispensable in advancing group cohesiveness among representatives at work. The outcomes of linear regression analysis with respect to the dimensions of EI with GC are shown in Table-6.4:

Table 6.4: Summary of Regression Analysis in respect to the components of EI with GC

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Value of t-statistic	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Value of R²	Value of F – statistic (ANOVA)
	B	Std. Error				
SA	.06	.04	1.41	.08		
SR	.31	.07	3.13**	.29		
MO	.06	.07	0.647	.06	.52	86.55**
EM	.20	.06	2.44**	.20		
SS	.14	.05	2.11**	.13		

From Table-6.4, the value of the R^2 is 0.52 concerning EI and GC, which demonstrates a strong effect size according to Evans (1996). Subsequently, one might say that 52% of changes in the GC are explained by the key parts of EI (SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS). From Table 6.4, it is seen that the values of the unstandardized B coefficients are positive numbers for EI (SA, SR, MO, and EM), inferring that higher EI is associated with higher GC. The beta coefficient implies how strongly the parts of EI (independent variables) are linked with GC (dependent variable). The standardized beta values for the parts of EI i.e., SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS are 0.08, 0.29, 0.06, 0.20, and 0.13 respectively, implying that if the value of the aspects of EI increases, GC value will likewise increase. The t-test affirms that among the five indicators just SR (β=0.29, t=3.13, p<.01), EM (β=0.20, t=2.44, p<.01), and SS (β=0.13, t=2.11, p<.01) are critical for developing GC. Consequently, SA and MO are not significant indicators for explaining the GC. From the value of F, we can say that the model can significantly anticipate the GC. Along these lines, it is clear that EI and its' sub-dimensions could be fundamental factors for foreseeing GC.

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The impact of EI (counting each of the dimensions of EI) on GC perceived by the respondents in various organizations of Bangladesh was analyzed in this survey. The quantitative outcome of this exploration was similar to the earlier findings that EI and its' dimensions (SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS) are the most important traits in stimulating high GC among group members inside the workplace (Miville et al., 2006; Beam, 2012; Jani & Deepti, 2015; Black et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2020; Bughao & Baltar, 2021). Henceforth, all the speculations were acknowledged. Thusly, the central themes of the findings are that emotionally intelligent members in a group are experts at managing the emotions of their group members or colleagues by handling their negative emotions. This, consequently, may promptly flourish GC among them. Notwithstanding, the outcomes of the regression analysis, showed that among the five aspects of EI, only SR, EM, and SS are significant predictors and SA (β=0.08, t=1.41, p<.01) and MO (β=0.12, t=1.18, p<.01) are not significant predictors for promoting the GC. This may be a direct result of the fact that few group leaders neglect to comprehend their group members' emotions or recognize their endeavors at work. Subsequently, group leaders need to give rewards or apricate group members' contributions simply by saying "Good Job" or "Thank You".

The current research demonstrated the benefits of the aspects of EI to the group members' cohesiveness. The strength of this investigation is that the knowledge learned from this investigation provides clear direction to the group leaders to learn EI traits (SA, SR, MO, EM, and SS) which will, thusly, contribute to superior group performance. From theoretical insight, a superior understanding of this study will establish a standard for the connection among the aspects of EI to GC, thereby upgrading current knowledge. The indispensable theoretical implication is the utilization of different tools to assess the respondents' perceptions. The authors prove the

research model through hypothetical development, that is, the aspects of EI can expand the GC among group members at work. Present exploration will be especially useful for pioneers to understand what behaviors to encourage group members, how to oversee them in a group. EI can likewise be utilized to direct organizations in enrolling qualified employees (Fulmer, 1997). Moreover, a significant administrative implication of this inquiry is that the professionals of any organization may utilize these findings in recruiting individuals with EI traits so that they can regulate emotions of their own and other group members by effectively taking care of their offensive conduct. Further, the survey results showed socio-segment attributes of workers working at various organizations that will satisfy the essential of leading investigations for South Asian culture, because the present inquiry is featured toward a developing country like Bangladesh.

LIMITATION

The primary constraint was the adoption of the convenience sampling procedure to aggregate data rather than random sampling, which might hinder the generality of the survey. Samples were collected from various industries, like manufacturing, merchandising, financial, and services. Ninety-seven respondents were from the financial sector; subsequently, the responses were less convincing. Likewise, we had to confine the size of the sample (n=412) to eliminate sample disorder from the number of people. Additionally, samples were assembled from chosen organizations in Bangladesh. Subsequently, the consequences of this review can't be stretched out to the other organizational setting. As a result, the statistical results of this exploration can't be applied to the whole populace. Moreover, some of the correlation is higher than 0.85 which means the multicollinearity problem may occur in a model. Further after, mediating/moderating variables which might convey complete knowledge of EI and GC, were not considered in the study. Finally, the positivist paradigm (which is debatable) continued in this survey, expecting that the exploration endeavors in a worth-free way (Saunders et al., 2012).

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future inspections ought to adapt random sampling as opposed to convenience sampling to broaden the exploration results. Focusing on some chosen organizations rather than whole industries can be another promising future study that can map out the whole picture of the country. Further inquiry should be planned to survey the influence of mediating variables to explore the link among the parts of EI and GC in organizations. Also, it is prescribed to evaluate the connection among them moderated by socio-segment variables. Advanced inferential strategies like structural equation modeling or multiple regression should be utilized in later investigations.

CONCLUSIONS

The current study proves that emotionally steady workers can stimulate high GC to others, thereby bringing the maximum potential for superior group performance in any organization. The quantitative outcomes lead to many numerous conclusions. At first, the findings of the exploration affirmed that in different organizations, higher EI is associated with higher GC. Next, the estimation scales had a satisfactory level of internal consistency. Besides, the in-depth inspection revealed that all dimensions of EI imparted positive liaison with GC. Again, the regression test reported that out of the five aspects of EI, SA and MO were not vital factors for anticipating GC. With this knowledge, top management should train group members to attain these skills, which can stimulate building cohesive groups and thusly innate their capacity to deliver extraordinary performance in order to achieve the corporate goal in organizations.

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