

Emotional Intelligence and Work Engagement as Mediators of Big Five Personality and Knowledge Sharing

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Abstract

This paper aims at enquiring into different interpersonal psychological factors and their interrelationships, such that the influence they possess at workplace on behaviours of knowledge sharing can be described. Knowledge based industries were referred to extract a sample consisting of 450 employees. In order to collect the information about knowledge sharing performance, Big Five personality, Emotional intelligence and work engagement, tools such as viz. Knowledge Sharing Behavior (KSB) scale by Yi (2009)⁵⁶, Big Five personality traits scale by Gosling et al. (2003)²¹, Workgroup Emotional Intelligence Profile (WEIP-S) by Jordan & Lawrence (2009)²⁶ and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale by Schaufeli et al. (2003)⁴⁶ were utilized. Partial Least Square technique of Structural Equation Modeling was applied using Smart PLS 2.0.M3, in order to recognize the proposed meaning of intended relationships. Researches, that sought to interpret behaviors of knowledge sharing at workplace (Here 0.5246 significant at $p < 0.01$ is calculated as the Total Effect of conscientiousness on knowledge sharing), points out at the prominence of conscientiousness amongst Big Five personality traits. Between Big Five traits, except agreeableness, and knowledge sharing, emotional intelligence establishes itself as the main mediator of relationship. Even though work engagement is a significant predictor of knowledge sharing (Here 0.1698, significant at $p < 0.01$ is calculated as Total Effect of work engagement on knowledge sharing), its role as a negotiator is minimal. This paper might have some limitations but the primary concern is that it is the first study that considers propinquity of personality, emotional intelligence, work engagement and knowledge sharing while simultaneously tries to assess and comprehend the mediating role of emotional intelligence and work engagement in outlining and describing knowledge sharing, all in a single study.

Keywords: Conscientiousness, Emotional Intelligence, Knowledge Sharing, Mediation, Work Engagement

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1. Introduction

It has been shown that knowledge sharing lowers costs involved in organizations, aids development of new products, enhances group dynamics, and raises competitive abilities of organizations¹⁵.

However, in an organization, promotion of knowledge sharing can be a taxing procedure. It can propel a feeling of loss of some valuable personal belonging, at individual level⁶. Presently managers face hurdles in endorsing creation and sharing of new knowledge^{9,30}. Organizations implement various advanced knowledge administration structures to make sure of the promotion of knowledge sharing. This procedure, that organizations adopt, is hindered and delayed by several interpersonal factors. These factors hinder the intention and ability of individuals to share knowledge and thereby leading to the failure of such structures (Bock et al. 2005).

The research on knowledge sharing is feasible within various dynamics; be it organizational and cultural, cross-cultural and group characteristics, or motivational contexts⁵².

Within the context of information sciences⁵³, strategic management⁴³, organizational behavior (Bordia et al. 2006) and psychology³³, investigation and analysis have been made at a personal level. The application of knowledge management system in organizations fails due to the lack of its concern towards interpersonal factors. This perturbs knowledge sharing in organizational or individual settings⁵¹.

Knowledge sharing psychology is affected by various factors directly or indirectly. Organizations employ various factors at management and administrative level, for example incentives or rewards to promote and influence individuals for knowledge sharing¹⁰; environmental characteristics (Levin and Cross, 2004). These factors also take in consideration the individuals' characteristics which help them to take the decision whether they want to hide or share their knowledge, since individuals possess the knowledge like strength of bond with organization, the existence of trust within peers and organization and to what extent and where they derive motivation from³².

Various researchers have pointed and presented an insight into an individual's psychology, as to why they share knowledge.

Knowledge sharing is influenced at an individual level by various interpersonal aspects like personality, emotional intelligence, work engagement, motivational aspects, and interpersonal trust³⁹. Only some of the researchers have studied the reasons on knowledge sharing derived from the interaction among these interpersonal factors³⁶. Therefore, this study is amongst rare few considering that it focuses on explaining psychological process of knowledge sharing by pondering mediations between work engagement and emotional intelligence.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing is stated to be “the provision or receipt of task information, know-how and feedback regarding a product or procedure” (Cummings, 2004). It is the assessment of the culture, wherein social interaction takes place and comprises of knowledge exchange, experiences, skills, abilities and values within or between organizations⁵.

The inception and sharing of new knowledge, is the main reason and cause for the development of any organization, and hence should be promoted³⁷. Knowledge as a resource is vitally important to achieve sustainable competitive advantage in a knowledge based organization, wherein the encouragement and motivation would be given to employees to gain and utilize knowledge at optimal level¹⁶. In social exchange theory, the origin of knowledge sharing is at an individual level where employees would incorporate more efficient behaviours through several social interactions, important for success at job (Lin, 2007). Knowledge sharing is about articulation, coordination and organization, apprehending, reusing and relocation the knowledge based on experience derived from the organization, to the areas where it is needed be it within the organization or outside it, making the knowledge accessible when required by others and triggering new knowledge from the already existent.

So, knowledge sharing ensures that the intellectual capital is preserved, even when the employee who gave it as input has left, resulting in the organization becoming more lucrative and productive, ultimately guiding it to the sustainability and value addition (Lin, 2007).

2.2 Personality and Knowledge Sharing

One defines personality as “individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving” (APA). Personality is seem to be cross-situational and highly stable attribute, and thus is recognized to describe differences in a variety of human actions, behaviors and choices³¹. Various theories can explain the different aspects of personality. The Five-Factor Model (FFM) is seen as the most comprehensive and widely used measure of

personality as it lucidly explicates the variability in personality traits⁵⁷. The FFM was proposed by Lewis Goldberg wherein he suggests the five dimensional framework of personality including candor to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability; also nicknamed as the “Big five”²⁰.

The connection between personality type and knowledge sharing has been assessed through various empirical studies. As per Agyemang et al. (2016)³, among instructors, all five aspects except conscientiousness are significantly advancing knowledge sharing. As observed and identified by Chong et al. (2014)¹⁴ the seer of knowledge sharing behaviors in classrooms are extraversion and conscientiousness. Cabrera et al. (2006) identifies and acknowledges agreeableness, candor, and conscientiousness comprehend the intention and motif behind sharing knowledge. As found by Matzler (2006), the increase in trust, due to the motif of amiableness among coworkers, influences knowledge sharing.

2.3 Work Engagement and Knowledge Sharing

As defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002)⁴⁷, engagement is “(a) positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.” Accordingly, work engagement is known to be tenacious and prevalent attribution, originating from deeper cognitive state of mind, which is not focused towards a particular situation, but is a result of the influence of multiple interpersonal factors acting overtime on the individual. In a research conducted among the students of a university, Tang et al. (2015)⁴⁸ found employee engagement to be negatively associated with knowledge concealing, and positively with knowledge sharing. Chen et al. (2011)¹³ emphasizes work engagement as a motif to promote knowledge sharing by reduction in task and relationship conflicts.

2.4 Emotional Intelligence and Knowledge Sharing

Emotional intelligence is a “multi-dimensional interpersonal factor that links emotion and cognition with the target of refining and improving human interactions”³⁵, and is found to enhance workplace behavior⁷ and team performance²⁷.

Emotional intelligence is the intrinsic ability of individuals which helps them to identify their own and other individuals’ emotions, helps them to distinguish and prioritize different emotions and feelings in any given situation, and also helps them to comprehend the emotional information and use it to guide their behaviors and thoughts⁴⁵. As per Abzari et al. (2014)¹, employees’ knowledge sharing behaviors are influenced by social and emotional competencies. Emotional intelligence, from the perspective of knowledge sharing, allows employees to think and behave in a manner aligned with the management since it reconciles cognitive and behavioral aspects. This helps in the promotion of knowledge sharing activities³⁸. A psychological safety is brought

among employees by high emotional intelligence, which encourages knowledge sharing²⁸. Emotionally intelligent employees are known to be more confident, feel more secure and endure lesser fear while indulging in knowledge sharing activities and communication processes²².

2.5 Personality and Emotional Intelligence

Trait emotional intelligence integrates the “emotional” aspects of different personality traits, and is a collection of self-perceptions of emotions located at the fundamental levels of personality traits⁴². Matthews et al. (2002)³⁴ provides evidence relating different dimensions of emotional intelligence with Big Five personality factors⁴¹. Trait emotional intelligence has been known to have such a high integration with personality traits, that it is often refuted to consider it along with personality traits in an analysis. However, despite showing a strong link with various personality dimensions (Vernon et al. 2008), trait emotional intelligence has been found to explain additional variances in different situations beyond the personality traits; sometimes even “out-predicting” them (Paunonen & Ashton, 2001). Emotional intelligence has demonstrated an additional and varied validity in explaining different interpersonal factors and outcomes (eg- motivational, engagement, trust and knowledge sharing factors in our research) (Russo et al., 2012), which justifies the need to consider emotional intelligence as a significantly different factor from personality (Petrides et al. 2007). Van der et al. (2002)⁴⁹ found emotional intelligence dimensions to be predicted by Big Five, particularly by extraversion and emotional stability. Siegling et al. (2014) using a meta-analysis found emotional stability among Big Five to be prominently correlated with emotional intelligence, followed by agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness.

2.6 Personality and Work Engagement

Certain personality traits have been found to be more susceptibility to induce work engagement among employees due to the distinctiveness of their behaviors⁵⁵. Employee engagement is significantly predicted by all the Big Five personality traits (Akhtar et al. 2015). Inceoglu and Warr (2011) found that high levels extraversion results in more work engagement among employees, while high neuroticism was found to be related to burnout. Kim & Swanger (2009) found conscientiousness to be the most prominent personality trait among Big Five in order to explain work engagement. This, they explain, is due to the fact that work engagement is fundamentally and inherently associated with accomplishment of goals, and that conscientiousness influences the work engagement through this fundamental level. Wefald et al. (2011)⁵⁴ found agreeableness, in addition to extraversion and conscientiousness, to be significant predictors of work engagement. Inceoglu and Warr (2011)²⁵ found creative thinking among employees, which is an aspect of openness, to be a predictor of

engagement. Akhtar et al. (2015) found conscientiousness, openness to experience and extraversion to significantly explain work engagement.

2.7 Emotional Intelligence and Work Engagement

Emotional intelligence can be considered to be a personal resource, which is known to promote positive work attitudes and increase employee performance, thereby resulting in a more engaged workforce (Akhtar et al. 2015).

Highly emotionally intelligent employees are known to initiate more effective communication with their colleagues, which in turn enhances their emotional resources even further, prompting them to employ higher efforts and vigor at work¹⁷. Akhtar et al. (2015) found trait emotional intelligence to significantly predict engagement among employees, over and above personality.

3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses can be proposed based on theoretical and empirical evidences:

3.1 Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator

H1: Emotional intelligence will reconcile the relation between personality traits and knowledge sharing.

3.2 Work Engagement as a Mediator

H2: Work engagement will reconcile the relation between personality traits and knowledge sharing.

H3: Work engagement will reconcile the relation between emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing.

4. Research Method

4.1 Sample and Data Collection

The research's chief aim is to inspect factors prompting knowledge sharing. Following this aim, the data should be collected from a population where knowledge sharing is an important factor to control the success of team performance of employees and thereby success of organization as a whole. Hence, data was collected from companies from Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based industry and financial institutions located in Delhi and Delhi-NCR regions, which are also categorized as knowledge based industries. The middle to top level employees, who were the member of teams working on projects, were assessed using the survey method. Only the constructs with reflective models are comprised in this study. 600 questionnaires were distributed out of which 450 valid ones were returned. The whole procedure of handing out and collecting again took

around 180 days. The table- 1 illustrates a descriptive profile of data collected.

Table 1. (Demographic profile)

| Demographic Characteristic | | No. of responses | Percentage |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 264 | 58.67 |
| | Female | 186 | 41.33 |
| Age | Upto 30 years | 261 | 58 |
| | 30-40 years | 140 | 31.11 |
| | Over 40 years | 49 | 10.89 |
| Experience | 0-5 years | 170 | 37.78 |
| | 5-10 years | 207 | 46 |
| | Over 10 years | 73 | 16.22 |
| Education | Undergraduate | 193 | 42.89 |
| | Post-graduate | 257 | 57.11 |
| Industry | ICT | 181 | 40.22 |
| | Financial | 269 | 59.78 |

4.2 Instrumentation

The earlier studies were referred to for the adaptation of the scales to measure the variables in this study. There are multiple sub-dimensions to all constructs. 5-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1 = Never to 5 = Always; and 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree respectively) was used to measure knowledge sharing. A 7-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) was utilized for deliberating the remaining constructs.

Ten-Item Personality Inventory-(TIPI) established by Gosling et al. (2003) was employed for calculating the Big-5 traits (mentioned earlier). A shortened kind of Utrecht Work Engagement scale consisting of nine- items which was developed by Schaufeli & Bakker(2003) was used to measure Work engagement.16-items Workgroup Emotional Intelligence Profile (WEIP-S) evolved by Jordan, P. J., & Lawrence, S. A. (2009) was applied to measure Emotional intelligence containing four sub-dimensions associated to awareness and management of own and others' emotions. Lastly, 28-item knowledge sharing behavior (KSB) scale developed by Yi (2009) was employed to measure knowledge sharing. The Written contributions (5-items), organizational communications (8-items), personal interactions (8-items), and communities of practice (7-items) are the four dimensions of KSB measure.

5. Data Analysis and Results

Through the approach of Partial Least Squares (PLS), structural equation modeling was employed for the evaluation of relation-

ship between variables. SmartPLS 2.0.M3 was used in this study to conduct all the probes⁴⁴. As emphasized by Hulland (1999)²⁴, PLS model's assessment and interpretation is a two step process. The first step involves the measurement of model by conducting reliability and validity analysis, while on the other hand in the second step, the significance of paths between constructs in structural model is gauged and also the predictability.

Indicator reliability results showed the item D5 in the 'Vigor' scale, to be the problematic, where deleting this item would increase the Cronbach's α of the respective scales from 0.867 to 0.91. However, as both values reflect a good degree of reliability, it is advisable to retain such items (Hair et al. 2013)²³, hence we decided not to remove them.

Average variance extracted (AVE) is a general measure, which helps in setting up convergent validity on the construct level.

Table 2 presents the findings of AVEs for different constructs and sub-constructs used in our model.

Table 2. (Construct level AVE measures)

| Variables | AVE | Variables | AVE |
|---------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------|
| Extraversion | 0.9779 | OthersAware | 0.8669 |
| Openness | 0.8187 | OthersMgt | 0.7937 |
| Agreeableness | 0.9754 | OwnAware | 0.6778 |
| Conscientiousness | 0.9789 | OwnMgt | 0.8342 |
| Emotional stability | 0.9682 | Written contribution | 0.6858 |
| Vigor | 0.7986 | Organizational comm. | 0.6075 |
| Dedication | 0.6971 | Personal interaction | 0.6231 |
| Absorption | 0.7344 | Communities of practice | 0.624 |

The table shows that AVEs of all constructs are greater than 0.5, which means that such constructs and henceforth the entire model fulfills the convergent validity requirement.

Discriminant validity (Hulland, 1999) helps in denoting the degree of diversification of any construct from others. For measuring this discriminant validity the Fornell-Larcker criterion¹⁹, shown in Table-3, is a used as methodology in which square root of the AVE values (given in diagonal) is associated with latent variable correlations (given on the lower left triangle). The square root of the AVE value for a given construct must be greater than any of it correlation with other constructs so as to achieve a discriminant validity. It is suggestive of the fact that as compared to any other construct, more variance is shared by the given construct with its own indicators.

In accordance with this, all the constructs meet Fornell-Larcker criterion essentials and discriminant validity fixed.

Table 3. (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

| Fornell-Larcker Criterion | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Agree. | Consc | EI | Extrav | KS | EmoSta | Openn | WE |
| Agree. | 0.988 | | | | | | | |
| Consc. | 0.026 | 0.989 | | | | | | |
| EI | -0.048 | 0.157 | 0.730 | | | | | |
| Extrav. | 0.009 | 0.003 | 0.373 | 0.989 | | | | |
| KS | 0.339 | 0.541 | 0.379 | 0.271 | 0.579 | | | |
| EmoSta. | 0.009 | 0.009 | 0.376 | -0.004 | 0.289 | 0.984 | | |
| Openn. | 0.037 | -0.037 | 0.141 | 0.278 | 0.107 | 0.020 | 0.905 | |
| WE | 0.099 | 0.268 | 0.297 | 0.117 | 0.434 | 0.549 | 0.048 | 0.761 |

5.1 Assessment of the significance and Relevance of the Structural Model Relationships

Examining the Total Effects

Various constructs can help indirectly in explaining an endogenous construct in case of the complex structural models like we used here. Thus, to gain a better understanding of the structural model, it is vital to know the application and significance of the relation between different exogenous constructs and endogenous constructs. This relevance is explained by Total Effect of a certain exogenous construct on target endogenous construct. All indirect effects linking two constructs and the direct effect – both these add up to form the Total Effect. For assessing standard mistakes, PLS makes use of bootstrapping methodology¹⁸ which estimates structural coefficients' significance.

Table-4 displays the Total effects and their significance at 5% level for each exogenous construct on each endogenous construct.

Table 4. (Total effects)

| Total effects | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | EI | KS | WE |
| Agreeableness | -0.0605 | 0.1675* | 0.0855* |
| Conscientiousness | 0.1559* | 0.5246* | 0.2607* |
| EI | | 0.2751* | 0.0154 |
| Extraversion | 0.3629* | 0.1265* | 0.1139* |
| KS | | | |
| Emotional stability | 0.3752* | 0.2047* | 0.5463* |
| Openness | 0.0407 | -0.0011 | 0.0122 |
| WE | | 0.1698* | |

*p<0.01

From Table-4, we can see that among Big Five; the strongest significant total effect on emotional intelligence is done by emo-

tional stability(0.35), following which is extraversion (0.363) and conscientiousness (0.156). Work engagement had the significant total effect from all of the Big Five except openness, with emotional stability having the highest (0.546). Knowledge sharing have a significant total effect from all the endogenous constructs except openness, with conscientiousness having the highest (0.525) among the Big Five.

Coefficients of determination (R²) results are presented in Table-5. It portrays the combined effects of exogenous variables on the endogenous latent variable. The measure R² suggests and emphasizes the predictability of the construct in the given model. To calculate value of R² and to measure it, the squared correlation between the actual values and the predicted values of a particular endogenous construct is used.

Table 5. (*Coefficients of determination: R²*)

| Constructs | R Square |
|------------|----------|
| EI | 0.3092 |
| KS | 0.257 |
| WE | 0.392 |

Using the results of R² displayed in table-5, we can conclude that R² values of 'knowledge sharing' are moderate-to-substantial, while the R² values of emotional intelligence and work engagement are moderate-to-weak.

5.2 Importance-performance Matrix Analysis

PLS –SEM provides this tool namely - Importance- performance matrix analysis (IPMA). By using latent variable scores, for any dependent variable, the structural model total effects (importance) is compared with the mean values of latent variable scores (performance). In this manner it signifies those facets which permit managerial attention (Hair et al. 2013). The result of IPMA analysis is depicted by Table-6 and Figure 1.

Table 6. (IPMA analysis)

| Index values and Total Effects for the IPMA of Knowledge Sharing | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------------|
| | Importance (total effects) | Performance |
| Agreeableness | 0.1675 | 43.3242 |
| Conscientiousness | 0.5246 | 43.5534 |
| EI | 0.2751 | 54.5861 |
| Extraversion | 0.1265 | 40.446 |
| Emotional stability | 0.2047 | 39.3773 |
| Openness | -0.0011 | 16.7301 |
| WE | 0.1698 | 37.9627 |

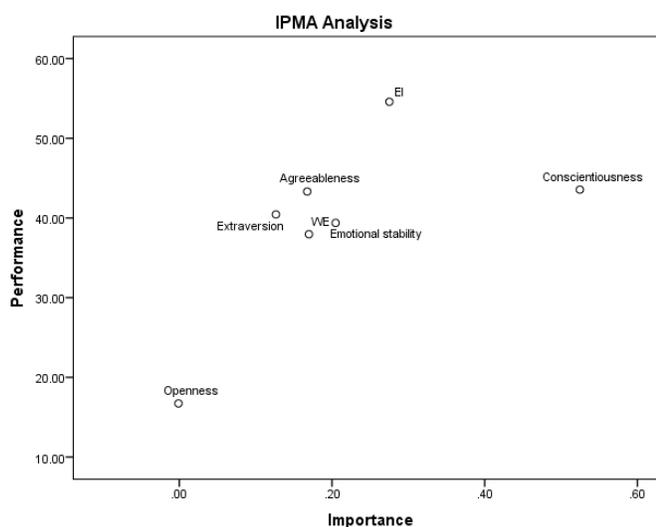


Figure 1. (IPMA analysis).

Table 7. (Significance analysis of Mediation)

| Mediator: EI | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|---------|-----|------|
| Path | Path coefficient to EI | Path coefficient of EI to KS | Total effect | t value | Sig | VAF |
| Agreeableness>EI>KS | -0.08 | 0.18 | 0.23 | -1.99 | NS | - |
| Conscientiousness>EI>KS | 0.21 | 0.18 | 0.20 | 4.35 | *** | 0.19 |
| Extraversion>EI>KS | 0.49 | 0.18 | 0.33 | 5.87 | *** | 0.26 |
| Emotional stability>EI>KS | 0.51 | 0.18 | 0.33 | 5.98 | *** | 0.27 |
| Openness>EI>KS | 0.12 | 0.18 | 0.15 | 3.01 | *** | 0.14 |
| Mediator: WE | | | | | | |
| Path | Path coefficient to WE | Path coefficient of WE to KS | Total effect | t value | Sig | VAF |
| Agreeableness>WE>KS | 0.01 | 0.06 | 0.24 | 0.12 | NS | - |
| Conscientiousness>WE>KS | 0.31 | 0.06 | 0.18 | 2.07 | ** | 0.11 |
| EI>WE>KS | 0.02 | 0.06 | 0.18 | 0.43 | NS | - |
| Extraversion>WE>KS | 0.15 | 0.06 | 0.26 | 2.00 | ** | 0.04 |
| Emotional stability>WE>KS | 0.73 | 0.06 | 0.29 | 2.36 | ** | 0.16 |
| Openness>WE>KS | 0.06 | 0.06 | 0.13 | 1.38 | NS | - |

p < .05. *p < 0.01

It becomes clear from this figure depicting IPMA analysis that most important construct that can further knowledge sharing is conscientiousness whilst in comparison to others; its performance is quite lesser. The best performer evidently is the emotional intelligence construct. Moreover, although construct work engagement is one of the most important facilitators of knowledge sharing, it is the least performing one at the same time.

5.3 Mediation Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

Mediation is characterized as a situation where a mediator variable, to an extent, absorbs the effect of an exogenous on an endogenous latent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986)⁸. In this study, in order to make comprehension comparatively easier, all the mediation analysis between 3 variables at a time depending on the hypothesis propounded here is restricted. The results of mediation are portrayed in Table-7, in case of all those paths which meet this condition of significant direct effect (without mediator). In case of direct effects of openness of knowledge sharing without emotional intelligence and work engagement as the mediators, this condition was not met. From mediation analysis therefore, such paths were removed.

Interpretation of mediation results (at 5% significance level:

5.4 Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator

Emotional intelligence was found to have a weak-to-moderate mediation for all Big-Five traits, except agreeableness, and knowledge sharing supporting H1.

5.5 Work Engagement as a Mediator

Work engagement was found to be a weak mediator for conscientiousness, extraversion, emotional stability, and knowledge sharing (VAF=0.11, 0.04, 0.16 respectively), partially supporting H2. Hypothesis H3 could not be confirmed.

6. Discussion

In order to comprehend the complex relationship amongst interpersonal psychological factors and their relation with behavior of employees in knowledge sharing, this study included the Big Five personality traits, emotional intelligence, and work engagement as a structural model. The dominance of conscientiousness and emotional stability among Big Five was observed in the final results in lines with Cabrera et al. (2006)¹¹. The same results were pointed out by Kim Shin and Swanger (2009)²⁹, which emphasized at the pre-eminence of conscientiousness as most significant personality trait for describing knowledge sharing. However, it was pointed out in IPMA analysis that conscientiousness' performance is smaller than other interpersonal traits like emotional intelligence, though it is the prominent factor in describing knowledge sharing. It indicates towards recruitment practices where if promotion of knowledge sharing is the aim, management should attempt to hire more employees rated higher at conscientiousness front.

Work engagement also proved to significantly explain knowledge sharing, as also shown by Chen&Hsieh (2015)¹², however only to a moderate extent. Surprisingly, it proved to a weak mediator for most of the proposed factors to explain knowledge sharing, which is in contrast with literature (eg- Akhtar et al. 2015⁴; Agarwal, 2014)². Though, it did mediate conscientiousness, extraversion, emotional stability, and knowledge sharing, but only marginally. Effect of emotional stability and conscientiousness was found to be highest on work engagement among other factors. Work engagement seems to be heavily dependent on personality factors, rather than emotional; meaning that certain deeper cognitive factors play an important role in providing integration with the job. Future research is needed at the cognitive levels of employees in order to better identify such factors other than personality, which play a major role in explaining work engagement.

Emotional intelligence was also one of the top predictors of knowledge sharing, which explained it over and above emotional stability facet of Big Five, supporting the claims by Paunonen & Ashton, (2001)⁴⁰. It was also the most significant mediator between all Big Five traits, except agreeableness, and knowledge sharing. Emotional stability and extraversion among the Big Five has the highest impact on emotional intelligence, while agreeableness and openness has an insignificant effect. This is in

lines with Vernon et al., (2008) who suggested that neuroticism embraces most of the emotional traits, while openness and agreeableness comprises the fewest⁵⁰. It is also the highest performer among other factors as per the IPMA analysis. However, given its importance, management should keep on focusing on this aspect in their organization. As it is a highly stable aspect of an individual's psychology, emotional intelligence should be given importance in hiring practices. Also, due to its high correlation with most of the personality traits, an instrument measuring the emotional intelligence may substitute a lengthy tool used for personality assessment during recruitment, if time and cost are a major factor, which may give, to a certain extent, insights into the personality traits of the applicant.

7. Limitations

In this study, apart from personality traits' aspect, Hierarchical Component model was used for all constructs. In this model, two or more underlying dimensions are used to explain a construct. The effect of one sub dimension of a construct on that of other was hard to point out, because this study had a large number of constructs. A better understanding of mechanism of interaction of different factors with each other could have been attained by doing so. To interpret such a mechanism, future researchers must focus on fewer factors. Results, especially those regarding role of personality in defining knowledge sharing and other interpersonal factors, are not in terms with older studies. Nevertheless, it is known that such studies associated with personality usually produce inconsistent results⁵⁸. To have a reasonable length in terms of questionnaire for measuring Big Five traits, only 10 items were included here although in other inventories available, the number usually exceeds 40 (Facet, B. F. D. Big Five Inventory-BFI). Future researchers can have a more thorough and concentrated study to comprehend detailed interactions of personality traits with other interpersonal factors.

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