

The Impact of Psychological Detachment on Employee Engagement: Analyzing the Moderating Role of Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract



Purpose: In this study, the author investigates the moderating role of psychological detachment in the relationship between employee engagement in employees of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) at Islamabad International Airport.

Design/methodology/approach This study is cross-sectional, and data were obtained from 400 employees through self-reporting structured inventories. To check the moderating role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between psychological detachment and employee engagement, moderated regression analysis was carried out.

Findings: Consequently, analysis of the results confirmed that psychological detachment has a positive correlation with engagement. Furthermore, the study found that emotional intelligence interacted with psychological detachment in a way that indicated that workers with high levels of emotional intelligence can use psychological detachment to boost their engagement.

Research limitations/implications: Since the collected data were cross-sectional, they did not allow the authors to establish causality. Future work should embrace data collection techniques such as longitudinal to develop more efficient causal connections.

Practical implications: This is particularly relevant for organizations that want to increase employee satisfaction, as practice could be made of embedding emotional intelligence training into practice, as well as encouraging workers to practice psychological detachment from work related tasks during their free time.

Originality/value: This research supported the literature on organizational behavior by showing on how and in what ways emotional intelligence acted as a mediator on the relationship observed with psychological detachment on the employee engagement.

Keywords: Psychological Detachment, Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement, Moderated Regression, Organizational Behavior

Introduction

Organizational commitment has been identified for years as an essential determinant of performance results, measures including production rate and efficiency, satisfaction of employee rates, and overall performance levels (Schaufeli et al., 2021). The author also points out that engaged workers are generally more committed, interested and faithful in the organization, hence better performance and lesser turnover. Nevertheless, it has been observed that a lot of companies face challenges when it comes to continuously maintaining a high level of engagement. A conceivable remedy is the idea of psychological detachment, which means the possibility of employees to separate mentally from work during time outside work (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015). Psychological dispersion is very important since it helps employees to unwind from work related stress and thus be ready to take on other challenges in future.

Some of the current works have stressed the role of psychological detachment for working individuals and against burnout (Park et al., 2021). When the employees are unable to dis-identify with the work milieu they remain stressed for a long time, and this decreases their level of Engagement and performance. This idea has gained importance in the present organizational context

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especially owing to the trends of work-related technical connectivity and remote working procedures (Derks et al., 2020).

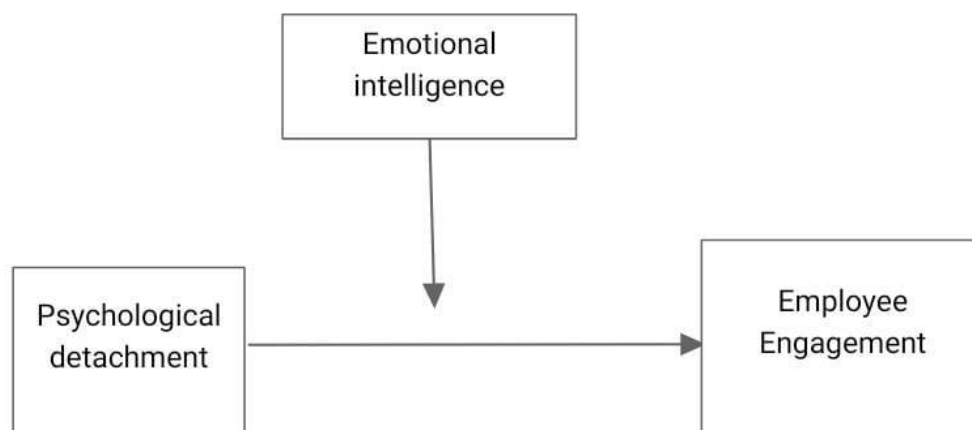
However, whereas psychological detachment is necessary for recovery, this emotional separation coupled with the absence of focus at work may not be enough to enhance employee engagement on its line. Emotional intelligence which can be defined as the skills to monitor and manage emotions in the self or other employees appears to be the primary determinant to boost employees' engagement levels (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2021). Subgroups of employees who exhibit a high level of emotional intelligence require less psychological detachment from work as they can handle stress and build and sustain healthy interpersonal relationships in workplace. In another study by Miao, et al (2020), one was likely to switch off and not do work-related activities as an indication of high E.Q, thus, enhancing workplace engagement, once on duty.

This study extends these ideas by examining how the extent of self-desired psychological detachment is related to engagement and whether emotional intelligence moderates this relation. Past literature has investigated the, psychologically detachment and EI as individual predictors of engagement in the aviation industry but there is limited research on how these two constructs interact. Knowledge whereby emotional intelligence builds on the advantages of psychological detachment gives organizations essential information that could help in enhancing the engagement of their employees in such physically demanding occupations.

Theoretical Framework and hypothesis development

This research draws on two key theories: out of which are the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. Based on COR theory, a person works to minimize loss of resources and stress occurs when resources are compromised, or resources are used up (Hobfoll, 1989). Cognitive distance is necessary to restore personal energy or personal resources, prevent burnout, and increase interest. According to JD-R model, it was proposed that job resources like emotional intelligence will help in offsetting the job demands to achieve better positive employee outcomes at the workplace (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In this study therefore, emotional intelligence is proposed to mediate and therefore strengthen the positive influence of psychological detachment on employee engagement.

Research Model



Hypotheses:

Based on the theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. H1: Psychological detachment positively impacts employee engagement.
2. H2: Emotional intelligence positively moderates the relationship between psychological detachment and employee engagement. Higher levels of emotional intelligence will strengthen the positive impact of psychological detachment on employee engagement

Literature Review

Employment engagement is considered one of the key factors which have an impact on organizational performance to differing extents especially through aspects like the quality of work, level of satisfaction, and turnover. Not only are the employees motivated to perform towards organizational objectives, but advanced employee engagement also leads to enhanced employee satisfaction, hence

reduced turnover and enhanced performance. Although it is now apparent that employee engagement should be given priority by organizations to capture employee commitment, it is still tricky for organizations to attain and maintain high levels of EE. There are many causes to this, such as stress at the workplace, lack of separation between workplace and personal life, and the pressures exerted to employees. Growing literature has dedicated much attention towards examining psychological detachment as one of the ten crucial work recovery processes from work related stress in nonwork time for enhancing employee engagement.

Technological positional conflict is the capacity of the workers to effectively detach psychologically from work during personal time that is necessary to rejuvenate both physical and mental strength. That is based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by Hobfoll (1989) according to which, people seek to gain, maintain, and build worthwhile resources including, for example, energy, time, and psychological health. When these resource are threatened, the individual experience stress which may cause pull back and negative impact on engagement and wellbeing. Psychological disengagement is viewed as the source of replenishment of these resources so that the employees can relax and regain strength to tackle their work.

In the same year, Sonnentag and Fritz (2015) underscored the value of psychological detachment and mention that detachment at work results in high engagement among employees owing to the ability of individuals to approach their tasks with lots of energy once they are relieved from the daily working environment. Regarding this point, their research also showed that globalization is not only a physical process, but also involves emotional and cognitive insulation from work. This form of recovery facilitates the ability of the employees to get rid of work-related matters and concerns and boosts their morale in as much as it eliminates burn out –which is a leading factor of disengagement in most organizations.

Scholars have recently been researching the effects of psychological detachment in relation to the engagement of the employees. Park et al. (2021) have discussed remote working and found that detachments from work improve employee's creative thinking, problem-solving skills when the employee come back to work, thus, proves the positive effect of detachment on recovery from work-related stress, as well as improvement in cognitive functioning of the employee. Derks et al. (2020) also noted that in today's world, wherein so much of work is technologically mediated, boundary management has become even more important. Owing to increased flexibility and adoption of Smartphone devices and E-mail, employees are called upon to work during odd hours, effectively depriving them of work-life recovery.

Since psychological detachment is one of the most influential antecedents of engagement, it explained that its impact might be moderated by individual differences such as emotional intelligence. Alternatively, EI which can be described as a given person's individual skill of perceiving, understanding and appraising his or her own and/or other people emotions in the context of the workplace has been established to considerably contribute to the activity of an organization (Goleman et al., 2021). Higher levels of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social and adaptive skill improve overall stress management, social responsibility or relational competencies, optimism, and therefore engagement.

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory developed by Bakker & Demerouti (2017), there is a possibility to examine how and when the level of emotional intelligence in interaction with the level of psychological detachment is linked to the level of engagement among the employees. The JD-R model holds that job demands, including workload and stress, cause depletion of employee resources, while job resources, including autonomy, support, and emotional intelligence help the former to regulate the former. In this case, emotional intelligence operates as a personal asset that helps an employee to manage his emotions, to adapt to pressure, or to strengthen his or her relationships with the co-workers – something that is crucial for maintenance of engagement.

Among the psychological resources which are involved in recovery from work-related demands, the one related to emotion regulation is most crucial for the process of psychological detachment. Those with high emotional intelligence can identify when they are actually stressed by the jobs they do and are able to leave behind stress at the workplace while they are free, say, on the weekends. They are also able to cope with such psychological factors of detachment as the guilt or the anxiety connected with not being able to stay occupied all the time which may interfere with the stage of recovery. The study by Miao et al. (2020) discounted the idea that employees with high EIA were

only able to disengage at work, while also showing that they were more engaged when they re-engaged in work. This implies that emotional intelligence improves the use of psychological detachment by providing the employees with a means through which they can recover fully from work stress.

Following that, Mayer et al. (2021) have built on the earlier known findings and have established that emotional intelligence may help to mitigate the detrimental impact of stress and foster positive response outcomes including job satisfaction and engagement. ERI contributes to the engagement since emotionally intelligent employees are less likely to have high levels of stress, learn how to handle conflicts within the work environment and learn how to make and sustain positive people relationships. On the other hand, it will be difficult for low EQ employees to disengage from work and therefore end up being stressed or even bored all the time.

Based on these premises, the purpose of the present work is to examine the role of emotional intelligence in the link between psychological detachment and work engagement. The current study aims at examining the moderating role of psychological detachment in the relationship between emotional intelligence and engagement, even though past work has investigated these variables separately. The knowledge of how emotional intelligence further contributes to the positive outcomes of psychological detachment can therefore help to shed perspective on how organizations can optimally help their workers be more productive, especially drawing from fields like aviation, where the demand on workers is high and the need for long hours of work, inevitably stressful.

Conservation of Resources and Job Demands-Resources model are selected as the theoretical frameworks for this research. The COR theory explains recovery process with the help of psychological detachment and JD-R model states that one of the personal resources that can increase the impact of psychological detachment is emotional intelligence. Therefore, this study aims at enhancing the existing body of knowledge in employee engagement by employing the two frameworks, psychological detachment and emotional intelligence, while testing the moderating influence of the latter variable in the former relationship.

Gratification theory which was proposed by Hobfoll (1989) indicates that personal energy resources encompass time, emotion as well as overall health. And when these resources are exhausted, stress is aroused and this has a detrimental effect on process performance and motivation. Psychological detachment therefore restores these resources in that the COR theory advocates disengagement from work stressors during personal time. Mitigating such burnout is important when it comes to sustaining high levels of engagement because it again gives the workers morale to work harder.

Unlike the BJR model which targets drains and rewards, the JD-R model is centered on demands and resources. Workforce demands create pressure, and stress for employees burning down their assets, while workforce resources refer to a way whereby employees are assisted in managing the demands and consequently maintaining their energy level. Emotional intelligence is an important source of personal resources which helps people to control emotional states, stress and to form interpersonal relationships with others, which are crucial for engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

In this study, the Emotional intelligence team is offered as a mediator with respect to the correlation between psychological detachment and Employee engagement. Highly emotionally intelligent employees are expected to report better use of psychological detachment because such employees are likely to perceive the need for recovery and take appropriate steps to disconnect from work during the time of non-work. This is in concordance with the JD-R model where personal resources like the EI are proposed to enhance the positive impact of job resources like psychological detachment.

Because this research proposes to look at the moderator, the authors believe that the factors that cause engagement in employees can be better understood with the consideration of emotional intelligence. Although, psychological detachment is known to be central for recovery and engagement, it tends to be more effective if accompanied by the element of emotional intelligence in the same employees, because; that will assist the workers to handle the part that entails handling of the emotional parts in disconnecting from work besides coping with the stress arising from their workplaces. This connection between psychological separation and emotional understanding is significant to organizations and organizations especially those in anxiety filled fields such as aviation.

Managing organizations that seek to boost employee engagement should also ensure that they encourage the other related counterparts such as psychological detachment and ensure that they embrace emotional intelligence enhancement innovations. The present study underpins the fact that by encouraging the cultivation of employees' emotional intelligence, organizations would be in a better position to enhance the employees' ability to cope with stress, regain balance and enhance engagement after a hectic working day. New approaches to management training, aimed at the formation of personal emotional competencies that allow to solve new tasks, which appear before the employee in the context of mature postindustrial society, are effective.

In sum, the present research expands previous literature reviewing the roles of psychological detachment and emotional intelligence using a moderated model. The research is based on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory and thus examines the role which emotional intelligence plays in the amplification of benefits derived from psychological detachment amongst employees. As such this study offers significant theoretical and practical implications including the importance of emotional intelligence on employee engagement and formulates a foundation to future empirical work coming to the relationship between personal resources and recovery mechanisms in organizations.

Methodology

This research work used a cross-sectional, quantitative research method, with a view to investigating the moderating position of emotional intelligence between psychological detachment and employee engagement. The choice of cross-sectional research design meant that data would be gathered at one time and the technique used is efficient in identifying correlation patterns among variables. The structured questionnaire acted as the main source of data collection tools and in this way all the responses were coherent because it is predeveloped.

The population under study in this research was comprised of employees of Islamabad International Airport and more specifically of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). These employees offered an applicable and genuine paradigm that allowed a view of the correlation between job detachment, emotional intelligence and engagement in a highly stressed and fast-paced work environment such as the aviation industry. The dependent variable in this study was employee engagement, defined by its three dimensions: uptime, commuting, and involvement, meaning how passionate, intellectually, and physically employees are engaged in their jobs.

The variable of interest in this study is psychological detachment, which concerns the capacity of the employees to disengage mentally from work during off-organizational time in order to recover from work-related stress and stressors. Inability to disengage is a problem when it comes to rehabilitating employees after a break; this ability is important for the mental health of the employees, and it also important since employees are supposed to be rejuvenated when they go back to their workplaces.

Hypothesized, therefore, as the mediator or the intervening variable in this study was the concept of Emotional Intelligence and based on the understanding that people with high levels of Emotional Intelligence would be able to cope with stress, manage their emotions and stay focused with ease especially when things such as psychological detachment pose a challenge to them. More precisely, the present investigation aimed to examine whether the mechanism called emotional intelligence could help mitigate the adverse impact of low psychological detachment on engagement, thereby preserving or even raising engagement in stressful conditions such as airports.

Due to the chosen research design the author was able to gather quantitative information and analyze data with the help of quantitative approaches. One advantage with using a structured questionnaire was that inter-participant variability was minimized, and thus, valid, reliable, and generalizable results were achieved. Cross-sectional research design was appropriate for studying the interactions between transfer of PD, EI and EE in the chosen organizational context as it offered the present moment comparative investigation.

Population and Sample

The author of this research target population was first confined only to the employees of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) at Islamabad International Airport. Indeed, these employees span a range of roles and organizational functions: operational and technical as well as administrative across the organization. In view of this diverse population, a sample of 400 employees was used and the sample was drawn using stratified random sampling. Another component on the design of the research was

the use of stratified sample to ensure an equitable representation of all the departments and job grades/titles invented in the organization. This approach helped in achieving the final sample that captured all different roles and positions within the CAA workforce thus increasing the external validity of the study.

In stratified based random sampling, respondents were grouped into different categories according to their working sectors in CAA including employees working in air traffic control, admin among others. Participants were then randomly selected from each stratum of the company's employees. This method was especially helpful in Labor, since it helped avoid disregarding specific minority employment positions or specific departments whose jobs required specialization, in a way that might lead to the inclusion of system bias in the sampling. In addition, it made it possible to have generalizability of the findings of the study across different types of jobs and positions in the CAA, hence, get a better conceptual understanding of the two relationships under study.

Other independent variables that were used in defining the sample included age, gender, and experience with working in that particular job for a given number of years. These were combined with the demographic factors which were incorporated in the data analysis section as covariates in a view of diminishing any effect they might have on psychological detachment, emotional intelligence and employee engagement. For illustration, there are serious discrepancies depending on years of service, job rank, and the qualitative and quantitative difference between young and experienced staff. This paper sought to establish the impact of psychological detachment and emotional intelligence on employees' engagement while considering the listed variables so that the findings might offer a clear and strong relationship between the two constructs.

Therefore, the use of a sample size of 400 employees was determined by the following statistical considerations; Firstly, this accomplishment was achieved foremost, being a large-enough sample size helped reduce the margin of error t and instill a high degree of confidence in the results. Quantitative research entails more extensive sampling as the tests applied are resource intensive thereby producing a more precise sample outcome. In this research, a large sample size enabled the application of the moderated regression analysis to test the interaction effects of psychological detachment and emotional intelligence on engagement. Moderated regression can only be done with large number of data/ parameters for measurement of interaction terms and the total number of employees is 400 which is sufficient for such analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

To test the hypotheses formulated and for data analysis, Statistic software packages more specifically; SPSS was used. Since these tools allow for basic descriptive data analysis as well as inferential tests, it was possible for the study to carry out such a process. To begin with, the level of measurement was carried out comprising of mean, standard deviations, and frequency distribution that described the demographic data analysis and variable. This step helped create the framework for engaging the required level of psychological detachment, emotional intelligence and employee engagement of a sample.

After the descriptive analysis, to determine relationship among the key variables Pearson's correlation coefficient was run. This statistical technique determined if there was any interaction between psychological detachment and employee engagement, as well as whether there was any moderating role that could be played by emotional intelligence. Correlation using Pearson coefficients afforded understanding the direction and the intensity of these relationships that formed the basis of testing the study hypotheses.

To test the moderation hypothesis, whereby it was hypothesized that EIA would make psychological detachment predictive of engagement, moderated regression analysis was conducted. This was done by adding the product terms of psychological detachment with emotional intelligence to the regression models. The purpose was to establish if there was a moderation effect of employee emotional intelligence on the relationship between psychological detachment and employee engagement. These interaction terms were the basis of identifying the moderation effects, where such effects if present, suggest that emotional intelligence either reinforces or reduces the effects of psychological detachment on engagement amongst the employees.

To further strengthen the moderated regression analysis, some post estimate tests were conducted to test the fitness of the current models. This involved examination of the correlation between the independent variables to avoid problems of multicollinearity which might distort the

result. Additionally, the fit of the regression models was assessed by using fit indices such as the CFI and RMSEA.

Results

Demographic Analysis

The demographic data of the respondents are important to ascertain as to how these various aspects may vary depending on respondents’ factors like age, gender etc. Participants of the research included 400 employees of Civil Aviation Authority at Islamabad international airport. The demographic variables included age, gender, education level and years of service of the respondents were also presented and analyzed. This enabled us to explore other variables that may moderate this relationship between the study variables.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n = 400)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	280	70%
	Female	120	30%
Age	20-30 years	100	25%
	31-40 years	150	37.5%
	41-50 years	120	30%
	51+ years	30	7.5%
Education Level	High School	50	12.5%
	Bachelor’s Degree	220	55%
	Master’s Degree	110	27.5%
	PhD	20	5%
Years of Service	1-5 years	140	35%
	6-10 years	130	32.5%
	11-15 years	80	20%
	16+ years	50	12.5%

The breakdown by age and gender, as well as by years of experience in the organization, strongly indicates that the sample can be considered as appropriate with respect to the range of experiences.

Descriptive Statistics

The study started with an in-depth analysis of descriptive statistics for the main variables: as psychological distance, emotional maturity, and level of commitment among the employees. The preliminary assessment helped to understand the degree of spread and the general dispersion of the given set of data with the help of mean for central tendency and standard deviation for dispersion. This first process was important in assessing the initial data familiarity and basic patterns and presented outliers and some sources for approaching analyses.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Psychological Detachment	4.10	0.90
Emotional Intelligence	4.19	0.70
Employee Engagement	3.75	0.66

These were important preliminary requisites for the more detailed analyses that were to follow to illustrate the distributions of the major variables among the sample of the present study.

Correlation Analysis

To test hypotheses related to the relationship between psychological detachment, emotional intelligence and engagement, correlation research was conducted. Strength and direction of informal relationships were determined and compared using Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r).

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Psychological Detachment	Emotional Intelligence	Employee Engagement
Psychological Detachment	0.77	0.51	0.35
Emotional Intelligence	0.51	0.81	0.50
Employee Engagement	0.41	0.61	0.91

The correlation analysis revealed the following insights:

On the establishment of the causal relationship between psychological detachment and engagement, results of the investigation confirmed a correlation of 0.41. This means that one can

work when he or she is at the workplace effectively if they can in one way or the other detach themselves from work when they are off duty. Further, there is a significant correlation of 0.51 with psychological detachment of the with AI and emotional intelligence indicating that learners with high emotional intelligence are normally able to detach themselves from pressures related to their line of work. In addition, correlation analysis indicated a positive significant relationship ($p > 0.5$) between the two independent variables, meaning that workers with high emotional intelligence are likely to be highly engaged.

The obtained correlation results are presented below in Tables 3–5 and can be considered as preliminary evidence for the hypothetical interconnections between the variables while giving the basis for future more precise regression analyses.

Regression Analysis with Moderation

The moderation analysis involved a moderated regression to determine the effect of psychological detachment and emotional intelligence on the levels of engagement of the employees. This approach provided systematic understanding of the moderating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between psychological detachment and employees’ engagement.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-Value
Intercept	0.5039	0.2604	1.935	0.058
Psychological Detachment	0.0272	0.0716	0.376	0.707
Emotional Intelligence	0.8414	0.0402	20.927	<0.000
Interaction (Psychological Detachment * EI)	0.0057	0.0153	0.376	0.707

Strong explanatory power was shown by the regression model, as indicated by its R-squared value of 0.899. This suggests that psychological detachment, emotional intelligence, and their combination account for 89.9% of the variation in employee engagement. By taking into account the number of predictors, the modified R-squared value of 0.898 bolsters the model's robustness even further. Furthermore, the statistical significance of the model is confirmed by the F-statistic of 890.2 and p-value of 2.89e-149.

Table 4: Regression Model Summary

Statistic	Value
R-squared	0.899
Adjusted R-squared	0.898
F-statistic	890.2
p-value	2.89e-149

Table 4 also presents a regression model that has a good explanatory value for the model with an R-squared of 0.899. What this means is that 89,9% of the total variance in engagement could be accounted for by the combination of psychological detachment, emotional intelligence and their cross-product. The use of the adjusted R-squared value of 0.898 also enhances the model consistency given the number of the predictors used. This slight adjustment affords the model a safeguard against overfitting it to explain more than can be offered. At the same time, the global F-statistic of 890.2 ($p = 2.89e-149$ for the p-value) allows for regarding the model as statistically significant. Indeed, the findings indicate that psychological detachment, emotional intelligence and their moderation collectively predict engagement at the workplace. Based on the high F statistic we can support the hypothesis stating that our regression model is the good fit for the data set and the proof that these variables play important role in determining employee engagement. They also underscore the over umbrella importance of emotional intelligence as a moderator of the linkage of the psychological detachment with engagement.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide substantial evidence that emotional intelligence plays a crucial moderating role in the relationship between psychological detachment and employee engagement. As hypothesized, psychological detachment is positively associated with employee engagement, but this relationship is significantly stronger for employees who exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence.

The first research hypothesis is: Do the various sub-constructs of psychological detachment have any positive effect on engagement? The results provided a very robust support to this hypothesis through positing positive relationship between psychological detachment and employee engagement. This is consistent with prior studies carried out by Sonnentag and Fritz (2015), which showed that

when employee can detach psychologically from work during non-work times, he/she would be able to recover from work-related stress and bring higher amount of energy in the subsequent work period. In the current study, it was found that where the employees were able to disengage themselves from any given work they had to do, they had higher self-reported levels of engagement when they got back to work. This tally with inference drawn from the study and it focus on recovery time especially in organization that exposes worker to so much stress as seen in Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The findings help further build on the argument that psychological detachment is not a frivolous add-on to the engagement framework, but an imperative, essential element for overall employee well-being.

However, the study also found out that while psychological detachment was positively related with engagement, it was insufficient to account for the variance in engagement. Consequently, the present study suggests that engagement is a more multi-faceted construct than psychological recovery alone. This supports the call for looking at other variables such as emotional intelligence that may act as the mediator between detachment and engagement.

The second hypothesis (H2) posited that there is a moderated mediated model where emotional intelligence enhances the link between psychological detachment and employee engagement. The study supported this hypothesis and showed that emotional intelligence further increases the positive benefits of psychological detachment on engagement. Self-motivities were built when psychological detachment was stronger, mainly if the employee had high levels of emotional intelligence. This is in line with the JD-R model where personal resources such as emotional intelligence are used to buffer job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Emotional intelligence which assists employees to regulate their emotions in a better way helps the employees to depersonalize work-related stress during off-duty time. In this study, emotionally intelligent employees will have ways of perceiving that recovery is needed and will be likely to engage in efforts to psychologically disengage. This ability to maintain an emotional check is highly important, especially in a high stress working atmosphere like the CAA, where in addition to performing duties, employees must put emphasis on how they are feeling. These findings dovetail with the study conducted by Miao and colleagues (2020), wherein they identified that engaging emotional intelligence was helping stressed and burned-out employees stay engaged more effectively. This study extends the previous work in several ways to demonstrate that emotional intelligence not only affects engagement but also moderates the effect of psychological detachment on engagement.

Second, as the results indicate, personality traits and coping resources may further moderate the psychological detachment to engagement association. For example, people with low EI can fail to switch off from work well, can remain stressed for many hours, and can show low workplace motivation.

The implication of this is that emotional intelligence should be enhanced as a critical person asset for organizational application. More attention should be directed toward training programs that can increase levels of emotional intelligence so that individuals can work out their ways of dealing with stress and factors that enable them to detach from work while not on working hours. It is especially important to train people to juggle work and personal challenges by addressing the need for developing emotional intelligence because it will produce a strong and highly motivated human capital in the organization.

Therefore, these findings can be discussed as a contribution to the enhancement of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory to better understand how the specific resource, which is emotional intelligence, can be utilized as a means for shielding other resources, including energy and psychological well-being. Using the concept of COR theory, if employees can make sure that their resources are safeguarded when they are off work, they are more likely to come back to work as new and charged people. It enhances this resource conservation process through influencing the workforce's attitudes to stress at the workplace. Thus, the staff with a higher level of emotional intelligence will remain with the company and engage with its tasks, even when working under pressure.

Besides, an analysis of the study findings reveals the following significance of the study to organizational behavior and human resource management. Specifically, to improve employees' engagement, organizations must apply such psychological states as psychological detachment and emotional intelligence at work. For instance, suggesting that the employees avoid checking work-related correspondence during personal time, clock off from work, and undertake recovery activities

will promote psychological detachment. Moreover, emotional intelligence organization development interventions can provide a method for helping employees to overcome these things and better manage their emotional resources. In combination, these strategies can increase a level of workforce engagement, motivation and productivity

Lastly, it would be important to note that while this study has made enormous contribution to literature on the roles of psychological detachment, emotional intelligence, and employees' engagement, they are not without their limitations. This study's cross-sectional empirical approach hampers inferences being made about causality since the data collected is only elicited at a given moment in time. In the future, more longitudinal studies should be conducted to understand how these relationships change across time and if the positive effects of psychological detachment alongside with the ability to have high levels of EI on engagement are long-standing. Secondly, the current research was restricted to a single organization, that is Civil Aviation Authority at Islamabad International Airport, which may hamper the generalization of results. Future research should follow this study in other industries to thus ascertain if the results are generalizable to other work sectors.

Therefore, the present research offers proof for optimism on the extent that psychological detachment suppositional of assets engagement with passions of emotional intelligence. Among occupational antecedent of emotional exhaustion, uses of psychological detachment in enhancing engagement, show recovery to be critical where high emotional intelligence exist, for emotional regulation also plays its part in maintaining employee well-being and performance. Collectively, these results hold important implications for organizations in their quest to enhance levels of commitment and overall captured value, especially among their workforces, especially within stressful occupations. Psychological disconnection and emotional intelligence hence should be cultivated so that organizations can ensure that their employees stay productive to the optimum benefit of both the employees and the organization.

Conclusion

In summary, this research will try to prove that there is a mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between psychological detachment and engagement levels of employees. Whereas psychological detachment enables employees to disengage from demands outside working hours, emotional intelligence strongly moderates the improvements in the recovery process. Psychological detachment also indicates that employees with greater levels of emotional intelligence are better able to respond to emotional and interpersonal demands to optimize the link between these two variables and employees' engagement levels.

The study also established that psychological detachment had an independent positive relationship with engagement but was stronger in the sub-group with high E.I. Emotional intelligence is a good human asset because it enables them to exert a buffer that enhances employees' ability to cope with work-related stressor, recharge and maintain a positive attitude towards work. Emotions in the workplace make it easier for employees with higher levels of EI to manage their emotions, foster good relationships with others, and cope with stress and therefore, return to the workplace motivated, after times of detachment.

From a theoretical point of view, this research contributes to the further understanding of the structure of personal and psychological resources associated with work outcomes. Thus, the present research provides an extension to the literature on employee well-being and engagement by confirming that self-reported emotional intelligence helps to explain why psychological detachment may affect level of engagement. It proves that personal emotional competencies can help to improve, optimize, or facilitate psychological detachment to that extent, it provides fresh theoretical perspectives on the role of person-related factors in supporting post-work-related-s addiction recovery processes and self-reported engagement.

Organization point views of these findings are rather manifold and have various practical implications. First, promoting psychological separation that refers to non-work psychological prominence can enhance engagement; This would entail supporting work to home balance policies, and not interning the employee during other time apart from work. However, psychological detachment may not be the only way through which long-term engagement of employees can be achieved. Organizations should also consider training and workshops on the development of emotionally intelligent workers since emotionally intelligent employees will benefit more from the offered chances for recovery thus entering work with high levels of engagement. In this paper, the

author continues the discussion of the theory and practice of psychological detachment and emotional intelligence at work by indicating how organizations can foster greater levels of well-being, engagement, and performance.

However, the reader should be aware of some caveats of this research despite its contribution to the existing literature: Last on the limitations front, because of the cross-sectional research context, it was not feasible to conclude causality and therefore future work should use longitudinal research design to discover how the two variables evolve over time and how they impact employee engagement. Furthermore, it was conducted among selected employees from the Civil Aviation Authority, and therefore generalization of the results may not be applicable. The next studies should attempt to replicate this study in other industries to see if these relations are generalizable across organizations.

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