

Full length article

## The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job-Based and Organizational Psychological Ownership of Employees in the Public Sector of Mauritius

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of Emotional Intelligence on Psychological Ownership of employees in the public sector of Mauritius. A quantitative method has been used in this study using questionnaire as instrument. A sample of 155 employees working in the public sector of Mauritius using snowball sampling method were targeted to participate in this study. Data collection took place during August 2017. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics, a Pearson correlation analysis and a multiple regression analysis. The key findings are moderate levels of Emotional Intelligence and job-based and organizational Psychological Ownership. A significant positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and job-based Psychological Ownership has been obtained. No relationship was found between Emotional Intelligence and organization-based Psychological Ownership. Furthermore, the impact of Emotional Intelligence and job-based Psychological Ownership was computed. Managing others' emotions and utilization of emotions dimensions of Emotional Intelligence were found to have the largest impact on job-based Psychological Ownership.

### 1. Introduction

The study of intelligence has existed since the dawn of time, as early as Charles Darwin's scientific research in the late 1800s, which contributed significantly on the vast study of intelligence, development of theories and models by various researchers. Although the study of intelligence was mainly limited to the cognitive aspect in the early 1900s (Wechsler, 1939 and Piaget, 1972), recently, some researchers (Gardner, 1983 and Sternberg, 1988) have brushed on the aspect of intelligence being more than just about the mind. However, the researchers Salovey and Mayer (1990) came up with a totally new face of intelligence, namely emotional intelligence (EI). Salovey and Mayer (1990) theory of EI refers to mainly emotions of individuals, thus describing it as "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 actions" (p. 189). Yet, EI became most popular with Goleman (1995) best-seller book, "Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More than IQ" as he developed in detail every aspect of emotions and linked to every aspect of life (personal growth, education, health, marriage, life success). Later, in 1998, Goleman came up with another book relating EI to the workplace, many professionals including educators, psychologists, human resource professionals, and corporate executives started to integrate EI in the work context. Therefore, EI became part of organizational psychology – the study of human behaviour in the workplace.

Furthermore, research in organizational psychology and human resources management are extensive on the human element as the latter is considered a major source of competitive advantage for organizations (Brackett, Rivers and Salovey, 2011; Jorfi, Yaccob and Shah, 2013; Gunu and Oladepo, 2014; Badawi and Magdy, 2015; Kannaiah and Shanthi, 2015). The public sector, as well, is a significant entity bringing the human capital component into the overall development of a country (Batool, 2013 and Johar and Shah, 2014). Civil servants working in ministries have a high frequency communication with the population of a country, both directly and indirectly according to Johar and Shah (2014). Various policies, systems and transformations are constantly being introduced in the public sector so that public servants achieve the quality of work that they are expected to, so that they can be more proactive in delivery their tasks (Ibrahim and Abdul Karim, 2004).

In Mauritius, the human capital development is one of the highest priorities of the Government which is stated in the "Vision 2030" article. It has been mentioned that human capital and skills development are strategically being focused on so that Mauritius is able to achieve a high growth economy in the years to come (Garavan et al., 2016). Moreover, several researches have been carried out in Mauritius on the human capital so that ultimately, Mauritius being a small Island developing state, is able to enhance its competitiveness to thrive in its development (Preiyag and Hosany, 2013; Padachi and Lukea, 2015; Dusoge and Oogarah, 2016; Garavan et al., 2016). Undoubtedly, the human capital is a source of competitive advantage for organizations and to understand employee behaviours and employee attitudes contribute to that competitiveness (Neeliah and Seetanah 2016 and Garavan et al., 2016). The contemporary work environment has been studied to explore the various organizational behaviours so that employees can be retained within an organization (Oginska-Bulik, 2005; Jorfi, Yaccob and Shah, 2011; Naz and Liaquat, 2015). Organizational sciences broadly study the behaviour of employees in organizations so that ultimately, employees are retained in their work environment. Researchers like Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2001), Van Dyne and Pierce (2004), Pierce et al. (2004) and Avey et al. (2009) explain that research in organizational behaviours have shown employees are able to develop feelings for their job or their organization in some situations.

Therefore, one of the most important predictor of behaviours of employees in an organization is the psychological ownership (PO), which is the feeling of possession, in this case, towards the organization. As described by Furby (1978), the essence of PO refers to "a sense of possession" towards an object, an idea, and feeling that it is "mine". Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) explain that a strong relationship connects the terms "possession" and "feelings of ownership" in the work environment in general, or specifically towards one's job or work. Thus, ownership can be targeted at various aspects of the work environment which is different for each individual which is why some employees possess PO for their job, while others for their organization as a whole.

PO is said to be different from other work-related attitudes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction and self-concept since it possesses its own unique explanatory power, which is the emotional attachment to the job or the organization (Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004). A person feels as though he has a personal stake in the job he is performing, as though his performance is being reflected on his own identity as an individual (Pierce et al., 2001). Although, PO does not necessarily mean satisfaction for an employee, however, it might enhance it. Therefore, in an organization where employees possess PO, although it does not guarantee employee retention, however, it is able to increase a sense of accountability and commitment in employees (Pickford et al., 2016).

Furthermore, it is understood through literature that the higher the level of EI in a person, the better he can utilize emotions to bring out positive outcomes. Goleman (1998) explains that EI involves being able to adapt and adaptation

creates emotional attachment. Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) also suggest that emotional attachment is what PO consists of. Therefore, although there has been very little effort in finding strong empirical evidence that there is a significant relationship between EI and PO, there is some theoretical evidence relating EI and PO such as emotional attachment.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The relationship between EI and PO has been generally quite overlooked in literature. Very limited studies have brought light over the relationship of these two variables. Literature has studied the mediating role of PO between leadership and job performance (Ghafoor et al., 2011), the effect of PO on job performance and job satisfaction (Murali, 2010), the relationship between PO and employee attitudes and organizational citizenship behaviour (Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004). However, insignificant empirical evidence exists for the relationship between EI and PO. Therefore, this research is going to find the relationship between EI and PO of civil servants of Mauritius. According to the researcher, almost no study has analysed the relationship of these two variables in Mauritius previously.

The impact of EI has been studied vastly in literature, especially in the organizational context in the 1990s by Salovey and Mayer (1990,1997), Goleman (1995), Schutte et al. (1998). Mostly, the impacts of EI have been linked to various work-related factors such as job satisfaction (Lopes et al., 2006) job performance (Vratckikh, 2015), job commitment (Johar and Shah, 2014), team working skills (Arfara and Samanta, 2016), leadership capabilities (Al Zu'bi, 2015), entrepreneurship skills (Khatoon, 2013). While these researches have been mainly done in India (Khatoon, 2013; Naz and Liaquat, 2015; Ramesh, Thavaraj and Ramkumar, 2016; Tiwari, 2016), Middle East (Alhashemi, 2013; Al-Zu'bi, 2015; Gorgi et al., 2015; Arfara and Samanta, 2016; Arslan and Yigit, 2016; Masa'deh, 2016) and Malaysia (Kaur et al., 2013; Johar and Shah, 2014; Mubeen, Ashraf and Nisar, 2016), insignificant research has been done in the Mauritian context, to the researcher's knowledge. Therefore, the area of research about EI of civil servants would be the first research done in the Mauritian context. In addition, research carried out on EI involved the following samples; students (Slaff, 2011; Venkatappa et al., 2012; Alhashemi, 2013; Al Asmari, 2014; Orak et al., 2016; Ramesh, Thavaraj and Ramkumar, 2016; Tiwari, 2016), employees of private sectors (Aghdasi et al., 2011; Jorfi, Yaccob and Shah, 2011; Krishnakumar and Lalitha, 2014; Gunu and Oladepo, 2014; Al-Zu'bi, 2015; Kannaiah and Shanthi, 2015; Sakkijha et al., 2015; Mubeen, Ashraf and Nisar, 2016), teachers (Mayuran, 2013; Badawy and Magdy, 2015; Arslan and Yigit, 2016), nurses (Deshpande and Joseph, 2008; Kaur et al., 2013; Dharmanegara and Pradesa, 2015). Only few research has been done among civil servants (Johar, 2014; Johar and Shah, 2014; Naz and Liaquat, 2015; Arfara and Samanta, 2016), among which none has been done in the Mauritian context, according to the researcher's knowledge.

Furthermore, this research aims to fulfil a practical gap which currently exists in the Mauritian society. According to Bhiwajee and Garavan (2016), the Mauritian Government has embarked on several reforms with the main objective of empowering public sectors officers almost two decades ago, however, presently, citizens of Mauritius feel dissatisfied, helpless and even angry towards the public service due to insensitive treatment given by civil servants towards the citizens. Bhiwajee and Garavan (2016) conducted an in-depth research and found that civil servants are provided with various courses in public sector management by the Government, but while these management courses were supposed to help them bring about change and innovation, they failed in doing so. The main reason was that the course "went by the book and was too theoretical and officers wished they were more practice-oriented" (Bhiwajee and Garavan, 2016). This clearly shows that civil servants, not only do not possess PO, but they are also not taught about how to develop EI, thus, this could help fill a practical gap and induce a new type of education and reform in Mauritius.

Lastly, the proposed study will examine the impact of EI on two types of PO (job-based and organizational-based) whilst literature has shown that most studies were conducted on either job-based PO (Pierce et al., 2004; Bullock, 2015; Mustafa et al., 2016) or organization-based PO (Pierce et al., 2001; Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004; Avey et al., 2009; Dirik and Eryilmaz, 2016; Qian, 2016), but not both. Thus, this research will not only fill this literature gap, but also study the differences between job-based and organization-based PO.

The **specific objectives** of this research are:

1. To identify the level of overall EI and its dimensions (Perception of Emotions, Managing Own Emotions, Managing Others' Emotions, Utilization of Emotion) among employees.
2. To identify the level of job-based PO and organization-based PO among employees.
3. To examine the relationship between overall EI and job-based PO and organization-based PO among employees.
4. To examine the relationship between the dimensions of EI (Perception of Emotions, Managing Own Emotions, Managing Others' Emotions, Utilization of Emotion) and job-based PO and organization-based PO among employees.
5. To examine the effect of the dimensions of EI (Perception of Emotions, Managing Own Emotions, Managing Others' Emotions, Utilization of Emotion) on job-based PO and organization-based PO among employees.

## **2. Literature review**

### ***Psychological Ownership***

Although ownership has mainly been attributed to the legal field of research, it can also exist as a form of psychological aspect (Etzioni 1991; Pierce, Kostova and Dirks, 2001; Brown, Crossley and Robinson, 2014; Matilainen et al., 2017). The core meaning of PO refers to the sense of possession. Thus, PO has been defined as a "cognitive-affective construct" (Avey et al., 2009, p.174). The cognitive aspect reflects the individual's thoughts and beliefs of the target of ownership, which is the job or the organization (Bullock, 2015) whilst, the affective aspect the feeling of pleasure derived from "owning" the target and the emotional attachment felt for the target (Pierce and Jussila, 2011). Therefore, the definition of PO is "the state in which individuals feel as though the target of ownership or a piece of that target is theirs," and reflects "an individual's awareness, thoughts, and beliefs regarding the target of ownership" (Pierce, Kostova and Dirks, 2003, p.86). Pierce et al. (2003) further distinguishes PO and legal ownership, stating that PO can exist without legally owning an organization, or an individual may actually legally own an organization, but never claim it as their own.

Literature has shown that PO falls under the category of organizational behaviour, which positively affects the motivation for accomplishment and success (Pierce et al., 2001; Mattila and Ikavalko, 2003; Pierce et al., 2003; Luthans, Youssef and Avolio, 2007; Pierce and Jussila, 2010; Brown et al., 2014). PO has also been integrated in many other fields of research recently namely consumer behaviour (Asatryan and Oh, 2008), entrepreneurial behaviour (Townsend et al., 2009), medical studies (Karnilowicz, 2011).

### ***Dimensions of Psychological Ownership***

While many scholars believe that humans have an inborn characteristic to have feelings of possession, Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2001) drew on the work of many of those scholars such as Weil (1952), Porteous (1976), Dreyfus (1991), Dittmar (1992) to establish three determinants of PO namely "self-efficacy", "self-identity" and "sense of belonging".

Moreover, the work of Avey et al. (2009) takes its roots from the work of Higgins (1997 and 1998) who came up with the regulatory focus theory. Basically, the theory stated that humans have two ways of self-regulation; promotion and prevention (Cited in Avey et al., 2009). The former relates to accomplishments and aspirations while the latter relates to duties and obligations, and they all describe how a person select his or her goals. Avey et al. (2009) extends the literature by stating that PO, too, can be promotion-based or prevention-based. Building on the three dimensions of PO (self-efficacy, self-identity, sense of belongingness) by Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2001), Avey et al. (2009) further added two more dimensions which are “territoriality” and “accountability”.

Furthermore, the researchers Olckers and Du Plessis (2012) have expanded to the existing five dimensions of PO, suggesting that “autonomy” and “responsibility” can be added to the model. Basing their research on SDT (Self-Determination Theory), the authors stated that employees feeling autonomous and independent tend to have a higher sense of possession towards their company. Also, feelings of responsibility caused employees to invest more time and energy into their work, which induces feelings of ownership for their job (Olckers and Du Plessis, 2012).

In a nutshell, Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2001) originally built three dimensions of PO which are self-efficacy, self-identity and sense of belongingness. Following, Avey et al. (2009) extended their research by proposing that PO can be divided into two types: promotion-based and prevention-based, and further added two more dimensions which are territoriality and accountability. Finally, Olckers and Du Plessis (2012) added two more dimensions which are autonomy and responsibility, making it a seven dimensions construct, as described by Figure 1 which follows.

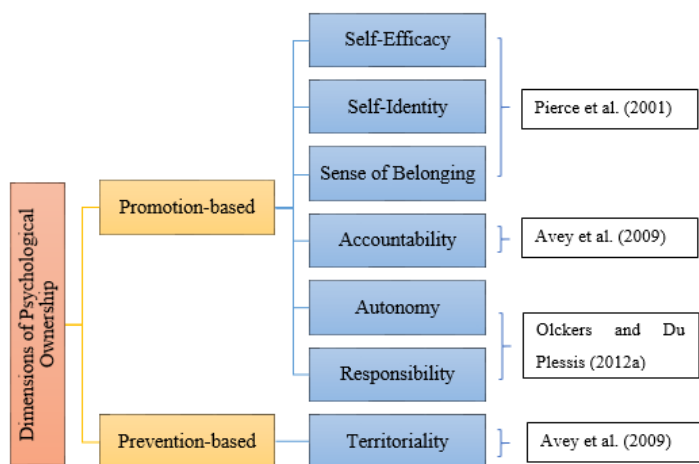


Figure 1: Dimensions of Psychological Ownership  
 Source: Olckers and Du Plessis (2012)

**Job-based and Organization-based Psychological Ownership**

Literature has shown that PO of employees has been constrained to two organizational targets namely job-based PO and organization-based PO (Peng and Pierce, 2015). Given that there exists a significant distinction between jobs and organizations, Peng and Pierce (2015) suggest that the feeling of ownership can manifest itself among employees both towards their job and the organization they work for. They tend to express feelings like “this job is MINE; I feel this is MY organization” (Peng and Pierce, 2015, p.153)

Moreover, the researchers explain that there is a relation between job-based and organization-based PO whereby employees first experience a strong control over their job, which leads to job-based PO which, in turns, strengthens into organization-based PO (Pierce and Jussila, 2011). The relationship between job and organization started way back in literature with the work of Katz and Kahn (1978) who stated that an employee's role in an organization is defined by their job which founded the organizational life. Thus, it has been suggested that is why job-based PO can successfully turn into organization-based PO. Pierce et al. (2004) previously noted employees having a strong PO towards the organization depended majorly on the nature of his/her job since the job is the most proximal source of organizational experience. Moreover, Gotts et al., (2012) and Grill-Spector et al. (2006) concluded that job-based PO is more frequently and easily achieved than the organization-based PO.

Furthermore, Peng and Pierce (2015) argue that although the job-based PO exist, an employee might not feel an ownership over all aspects of the organization for example, structure, processes or culture, especially in a large organization with a steep hierarchy. This is also because of each individual's roles and responsibilities in an organization differ. Thus, Peng and Pierce (2015) comment that the job is described as "central and more proximal" while the organization is "more abstract and distal" (p.155). Consequently, job-based PO might have a stronger impact than does organization-based PO. However, it was found that in smaller firms, organization-based PO had a stronger effect than job-based PO on organizational citizenship behaviours which intends to make an organizational environment and functions progress than job-based PO does (O'Driscoll et al., 2006 and Bernhard and O'Driscoll, 2011).

### ***Factors influencing Psychological Ownership***

Employees' feelings of ownership for the organization they work for which refers to the employees' PO. The relationship between an individual's PO in the workplace has been researched only recently (O'Driscoll and Coghlan, 2004; Pierce et al., 2003; Pierce et al., 2004; Chi and Han, 2008; Avey et al., 2009, Pierce and Jussila, 2009). Sierger et al., (2013) have found that PO is present at all organizational levels without owning a legal share in the organization. PO has been found to be related to organizational behaviours such as commitment (Vandewalle et al., 1995 and Avey et al., 2009), job satisfaction (Mustafa et al., 2016), entrepreneurship capabilities (Sieger, Zellweger and Aquino, 2013).

Additionally, literature has shown that several factors influence PO in an individual. Olzer, Yilmaz and Olzer (2008) have analysed the factors triggering PO in a group of academic and administrative staffs and found that organizational climate is a factor influencing PO in those employees, such as being participative in their work environment, being autonomous and getting support from peers (Pierce, O'Driscoll and Coghlan, 2004). These factors helped developed self-development which is also related to job control in an individual. Bauman (2001) research on PO extended the aspect of autonomy to job control. He explained that job control is often attributed to power and influence which are all factors influencing PO in a person. Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2001, 2003) empirical studies indeed showed that there is a causal relationship between control and ownership. Thus, giving employees a sense of control over their job can foster positive organizational values which will increase PO (Mustafa, Martin and Hughes, 2016).

Furthermore, Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2001) stated that a sense of having a place in their organization and what Avey et al. (2009) describe as employees feeling a sense of belongingness to their work suggest that PO through the feeling of attachment is present in individuals whether it is job-based or organization-based. Drawing on this concept, Stuman (2003) and Zampetakis Beldekos and Moustakis (2009) found that organizational tenure significantly affects organizational behaviour. Mustafa, Martin and Hughes (2016) suggest that organizational tenure could represent the "having a place" (Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2001) and the "sense of belongingness" (Avey et al., 2009) aspects of PO.

Additionally, Olzer, Yilmaz and Olzer (2008) found that employees with a longer experience with an organization exhibit higher PO than the those recently employed since long term employment was related to job satisfaction.

### ***Background and Definition of Emotional Intelligence***

Until the 1990s, intelligence was referred to as *general intelligence*, as it was believed that only one type of intelligence existed, and thus an individual's intelligence was commonly measured by its IQ (Intelligence Quotient) which was first coined by William Stern (1912). As research on intelligence unfolded, many researches started to discover that intelligence was not limited to the cognitive aspect, but rather included non-intellective factors which refer to affective and conative aspects (Thorndike, 1920 and Wechsler, 1940;1943).

However, it was only after a few decades that light was drawn on the many types of intelligences possessed by human beings by the researcher Gardner (1983) who introduced the "theory of intelligences". The latter revealed that there exist eight types of intelligences namely "linguistic intelligence", "logical-mathematical intelligence", "spatial intelligence", "musical intelligence", "bodily-kinesthetic intelligence", "naturalistic intelligence", "interpersonal intelligence" and "intrapersonal intelligence" (Gardner, 1999) cited by Gardner and Moran (2006, p.228). Out of the eight types of intelligences, only two of them namely the linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences refer to the cognitive intelligence which have been vastly studied by cognitive-oriented researchers while the other types of intelligence divert completely from the traditional form of intelligence (Davis et al., 2011). Strong critics started being formed about the fact that individuals are not necessarily intelligent in the same exact way which used to be measured only by the IQ, but rather, they can have a mixture of different types of intelligence, not necessarily cognitive (Gardner, 2005; Nelavoy, 2013).

Although different researchers might have defined EI in their own unique way, the core concepts of EI refers to being able to understand, analyse, manage emotions so that ultimately, all aspects of quality of life can be improved (Gayathri and Meenakshi, 2013). Hence, studies have been conducted on EI as a vital human mental ability which allows human beings to adopt a rational way of thinking by using emotions to enhance the perception, thoughts and reactions towards other people (Vratskikh et al., 2015).

### ***Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence***

For this research, the researcher has based the measurement of EI on 'The Assessing Emotions Scale' which has four dimensions (perception of emotions, managing own emotions, managing others' emotions and utilization of emotion) developed by Schutte, Malouff and Bhullar (2008). The work of Schutte, Malouff and Bhullar (2008) took its roots from the Salovey and Mayer (1990) which stated that EI was a mixed of traits and abilities. However, Schutte, Malouff and Bhullar (2008) based on concepts developed by the Salovey and Mayer (1990), but also from research done by Petrides and Furnham (2000), Ciarrochi et al. (2001), and Saklofske et al. (2003), thus considered a pure trait measure of EI. Schutte, Malouff and Bhullar (2008) have made a simplified measure of EI for facilitation of research in the organizational context.

### ***Perception of Emotions***

An individual able to perceive emotions is said to have the ability of detecting and deciphering different emotions in faces, images, bodily expressions or even vocally, according to Salovey and Grewal (2005). Being able to accurately differentiate diverse types of emotions in oneself and in others is a basic quality of high emotional intelligence and it helps to process emotional information in general. Brackett, Rivers and Salovey (2011) comment that an individual

who can discriminate between true and fake emotions given out by other people is a unique perceiving ability, and is the ground for complex problem-solving.

### ***Managing Own Emotions and Others' Emotions***

Managing emotions refers to “the ability to regulate emotions in both ourselves and in others” (Salovey and Grewal, 2005, p.282). In everyone, emotions are managed according to one’s goals, knowledge of oneself, and social awareness. An adult can manage his or her own emotions by avoiding certain feelings or reframe assessments of situations for self-reassurance (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2004). Being able to manage emotions in others refers to the use of emotions to induce the same emotions in others. For example, “an emotionally intelligent politician might increase her own anger and use it to deliver a powerful speech in order to arouse righteous anger in others” (Salovey and Grewal, 2005, p.282). Therefore, that person can employ emotions and manage them to accomplish intended objectives.

### ***Utilization of Emotion***

Isen et al. (1985) stated that a happy mood helps in the stimulation of creativity-like thoughts and innovative thinking. The utilization of emotions basically aims to use emotions for problem-solving (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Thus, a person with high EI can make use of positive emotions to fight the challenges in the way of their goals (Melillo, 2014). Salovey and Grewal (2005) definition of utilizing emotions is “the ability to harness emotions to facilitate various cognitive activities, such as thinking and problem solving.” (p.281). Therefore, a highly emotionally intelligent person can capitalize wholly on the fact that his or her different moods are making him or her very productive.

### ***Impact of Emotional Intelligence***

Literature has shown that research has been conducted based on mainly these models, and has identified the relationship between emotion and intelligence. It is built on the foundation that when humans can identify, understand, express and manage their own emotions and other people’s behaviours, meaning they can understand their own behaviours as well as others’ behaviours, therefore, they are able to enhance their interactions and improve outcomes (Beck, 2013 and Vratskikh et al., 2015). Research done since the 1990s on the area of EI is vast, since EI is believed to have many implications and affects several aspects of life on a daily basis. The many aspects of life which has been studied in terms of EI include the physical health condition whereby EI was found to be able to predict a better physical health (Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Salovey, 2001; Lam and Kirby, 2002; Zeidner et al., 2002; Schutte et al., 2007), EI impact on mental health (Zeidner et al., 2002 and Lopes et al., 2006). Moreover, EI has shown to have an impact on social behaviour (Salovey and Mayer, 2008), interpersonal relationships (Schutte et al., 2010), academic performance (Elias et al., 1997; Offermann, 2004; Venkatappa et al., 2012; Alhashemi, 2013; Ramesh, Thavaraj and Ramkumar, 2016; Tiwari, 2016), stress management (Gohm et al., 2005; Jorfi, Yaccob and Shah, 2011; Mayuran, 2013; Krishnakumar and Lalitha, 2014).

Furthermore, numerous research has been done on the impact of EI on numerous factors influencing organizational performance. EI has been found to be a predictor in stress level in the workplace (Nikalaou and Tsaousis, 2002; Ogińska-Bulik, 2005; Singh and Sharma, 2012; Yamani et al., 2014)), leadership capabilities (Gardner and Stough, 2002; Batool, 2013; Al-Zu’bi, 2015); managerial capabilities (Srivastava and Nair, 2010 and Masa’deh; 2016), job commitment (Gunu and Oladepo, 2014 and Johar and Shah, 2014), job performance (Lam and Kirby, 2002; Gunu and Oladepo, 2014; Vratskikh et al., 2015), job satisfaction (Lopes et al., 2006, Badawi and Magdy, 2015; Naz and Liaquat, 2015; Hamid,



2016). Therefore, it can be concluded that research done in the past decade unveils the nature of EI being a multi-dimensional concept.

### ***Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Ownership***

Moreover, Avey et al. (2009) explain that self-efficacy roots from the innate desire to make an impact on outcomes and being able to make an influence on tasks, projects, or the organization itself. The authors further link self-efficacy to behaviours like “I need to do this task, I can do it, and I therefore own the responsibility for achieving success”. Pierce et al. (2001) states that an individual can feel self-efficacy and therefore this leads to PO, or the other way around is also possible, further arguing that when an individual feels the sense of ownership towards something, he has the ability to change and manipulate it. As it has been found in literature, self-efficacy could be a trait of EI (Petrides and Furnham, 2003), therefore suggesting that individuals having high EI believe that they are able to achieve the desired outcomes in the emotional realm (Schutte, Malouff and Bhullar, 2008). This suggests that self-efficacy is a common trait linking EI and PO.

Furthermore, Pierce et al. (2004) describes how an individual feels the sense of ownership towards his job, by exercising and achieving a control over the job. The control gives the person autonomy, makes him highly responsible and makes him able to make a significant impact on what his job entails. Theoretical propositions have also found that one of the dimensions of EI refers to “managing emotions” also called emotion management in oneself (Brackett, Rivers and Salovey, 2011). Kaur et al. (2013) also agree that being able to manage one’s emotions entails a sufficient control over one’s job and thus, the sense of control contributes to their PO. Finally, Brackett, Rivers and Salovey (2011) explain that individuals who showed high emotion management in the workplace, especially managers, could conduct themselves in such a way that their conduct showed control of their emotions translated into supporting the goals of the organization they work in.

### ***Gap in the literature***

While doing a research on the link between EI and PO, the researcher found that the literature lacked significant empirical evidence about the relationship between the two variables as well as the impact that EI has on PO. Few studies such as Kaur et al. (2013) brought light upon the influence that EI has on PO among nurses in Malaysia, and Naz and Liaquat (2015) explored the relationship between EI and PO among employees in India. However, more research could be done to analyze the impact of EI on both job-based and organization-based PO, which would add empirical evidence to the literature as well as explore to which extent EI can impact PO among employees; a concept which is not popular yet in Mauritius according to the researcher.

## **3. Methodology**

Figure 2 below is a representation of the research framework of this research, describing the independent and dependent variables.

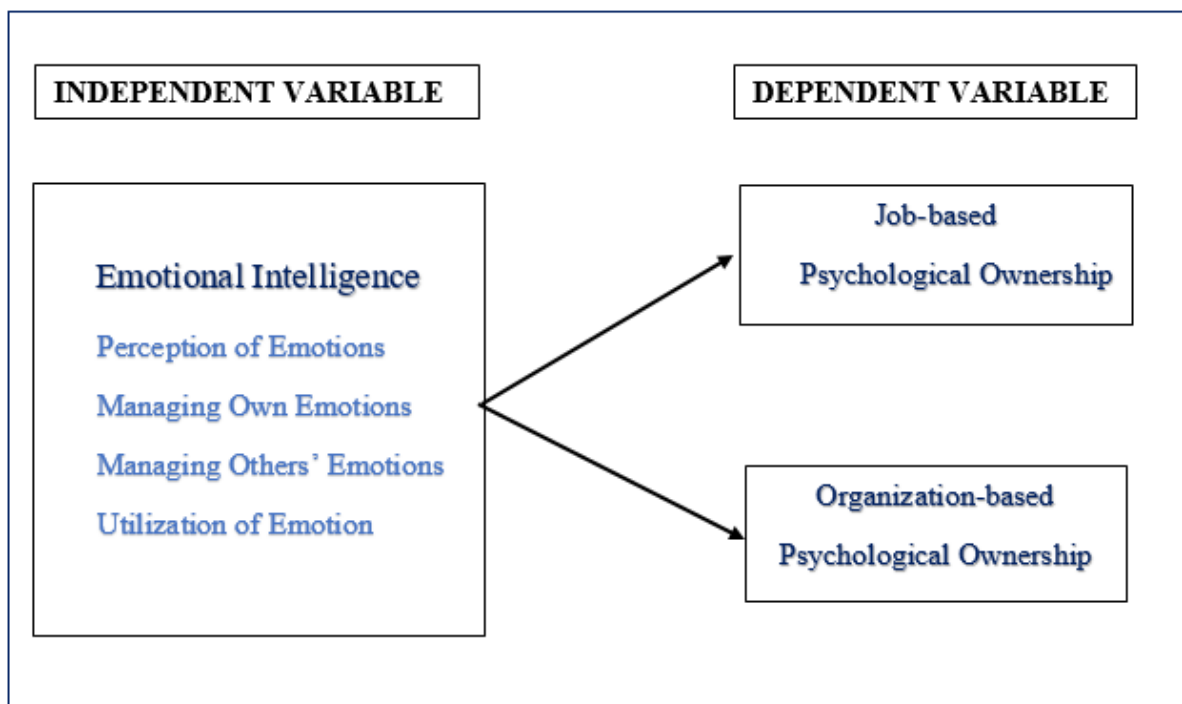


Figure 2: Research Framework

### **Population**

This research is confined to the labour force in the public sector in the capital city of Mauritius, Port Louis. According to the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS) 2016, the total number of employees in Mauritius is 427,700, which comprises of all employees (private and public sector) throughout Mauritius. However, this research has targeted only employees in the public sector, working in the capital city of Mauritius, Port Louis. The employees targeted are of working age, which is 18 years to 65 years old.

### **Sampling**

Since time and cost are the major critical limitations in this research, also because a sampling frame is not available, it does not matter which elements of the population are being used. Therefore, a non-probability sampling has been selected.

The type of non-probability sampling chosen is known as snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is mostly used when elements of a population is difficult to identify according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009). Venette (2013) has explained that “snowball sampling can happen in a number of ways, but generally it is when a group of people recommends potential participants for a study, or directly recruits them for the study. Those participants then recommend additional participants, and so on, thus building up like a snowball rolling down a hill.”

### **Data collection;**

Data collection took place in the capital city of Mauritius, Port Louis. Questionnaires were handed out to employees working in various departments of the public sectors. In addition to manual distribution of questionnaires, Google Form was used to create an e-version of the questionnaire so that more people could be reached. Due to time as a constraint in this research, cross-sectional data collection was done. Data collection process took place for five weeks.

The researcher distributed 160 questionnaires to the employees randomly across different divisions of the public sector in Mauritius. At the end of the five weeks, a total of 160 questionnaires were obtained from the respondents, out of which 155 were considered usable since 4 questionnaires were incompletely filled and 1 questionnaire was left blank. Therefore, the effective response rate was 96.88%.

#### 4. Empirical Findings

Table1: Descriptive Statistics of Overall Emotional Intelligence

Dimension	N	Mean	St. deviation
Perception of Emotions	155	3.23	0.722
Managing Own Emotions	155	3.80	0.443
Managing Others' Emotions	155	3.66	0.572
Utilization of Emotion	155	3.53	0.712
<b>Overall Emotional Intelligence</b>	155	<b>3.55</b>	0.465

#### *Job-based Psychological Ownership*

Table2: Descriptive Statistics of Job-based Psychological Ownership

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
J1	155	3.50	0.956
J2	155	3.35	1.004
J3	155	3.51	1.028
J4	155	3.41	0.997
J5	155	3.66	0.950
J6	155	3.58	0.932
Job-based Psychological Ownership	155	<b>3.49</b>	0.721

#### *Organization-based Psychological Ownership*

Table3: Descriptive Statistics of Organization-based Psychological Ownership

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
O1	155	3.15	1.033
O2	155	3.55	0.927
O3	155	3.38	1.828
O4	155	3.12	1.000

O5	155	3.61	0.976
O6	155	3.22	1.147
O7	155	3.14	1.090
Organization-based Psychological Ownership	155	<b>3.31</b>	0.760

For this study, the researcher has conducted a Pearson correlation analysis using SPSS to examine the relationship between the dimensions of EI (perception of emotions, managing own emotions, managing others’ emotions, utilization of emotion) and overall EI and job-based PO and organization-based PO.

Table **Error! No text of specified style in document.**: Pearson correlation analysis among overall EI, its dimensions and job-based PO and organization-based PO

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Perception of Emotions	1					
2. Managing Own Emotions	<b>0.254**</b>	1				
3. Managing Others’ Emotions	<b>0.124</b>	<b>0.715**</b>	1			
4. Utilization of Emotion	<b>0.672**</b>	<b>0.487**</b>	<b>0.343**</b>	1		
5. Overall EI	<b>0.744**</b>	<b>0.743**</b>	<b>0.657**</b>	<b>0.866**</b>	1	
6. Job-based PO	<b>0.298**</b>	<b>0.317**</b>	<b>0.365**</b>	<b>0.429**</b>	<b>0.468**</b>	1
7. Organization-based PO	- 0.058	0. 145	0. 191	0. 066	0. 096	<b>0.393**</b>

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results obtained from the Pearson product correlation matrix can determine whether there is a positive or negative relationship between two variables, and whether the relationship is significant or not. This corresponds to achieving the third objective of this research, which is to examine whether there is a relationship between the variables of this study.

**Multivariate analysis**

Multivariate analysis has been conducted only among the variables which have found to be significantly positively correlated with the dependent variables of current study. The findings of the Pearson correlation found a significant positive relationship between the dimensions of EI and job-based PO. However, there was no significant relationship

between the dimensions of EI and organization-based PO. Therefore, multiple regression analysis will only be conducted between the dimensions of EI and job-based PO.

### **Standard multiple regression**

Simply said, Pallant (2013) describes a multiple regression analysis as an analysis “based on correlation, but allows a more sophisticated exploration of the interrelationship among a set of variables” (p. 154). Thus, multiple regression analysis will allow the researcher to identify the relative contribution of each dimensions of EI on job-based PO, and will also analyze all the dimensions of EI as one model. Standard multiple regression test is the most commonly used analysis which would explain the predictive power of each dimension of EI on job-based PO.

Table 5: Multiple regression analysis among dimensions of EI and job-based PO

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.492 <sup>a</sup>	<b>0.242</b>	0.222	0.636

Predictors: (Constant), Utilization of Emotion, Managing Others' Emotions, Perception of Emotions, Managing Own Emotions.

Dependent Variable: Job-based PO

Table 6. regression coefficients

	Beta	t-stat	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.183	2.561	0.011		
Perception of Emotions	0.067	0.686	0.494	0.535	1.868
Managing Own Emotions	-0.063	-0.575	0.566	0.423	2.363
Managing Others' Emotions	<b>0.294</b>	2.881	<b>0.005</b>	0.484	2.066
Utilization of Emotion	<b>0.313</b>	2.925	<b>0.004</b>	0.440	2.273

Dependent Variable: Job-based PO

According to the results of the standard multiple regression computed and summarized in table 6 above, the Sig. value should be less than 0.05 for a variable to make a significant contribution to job-based PO. Also, given that the Sig. value is less than 0.05, the higher the Beta value (B), the higher the influence of that variable on job-based PO. Thus, according to table 6, two dimensions of EI make a significant contribution to job-based PO, managing others' emotions (B=0.294, Sig.=0.005) and utilization of emotion (B=0.313, Sig.=0.004).

However, **utilization of emotion** dimension of EI has a slightly higher impact on job-based PO than managing others' emotions dimension of EI does among employees in the public sector of Mauritius, given that the former has a slightly higher Beta value.

## **5. Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter was to achieve all the objectives of this research listed out in chapter 1. The aim has successfully been achieved. Firstly, the descriptive statistics have shown that the level of overall EI of employees in the public sector of Mauritius is considered to be moderate. The level of each of the dimensions of EI of employees in the public sector of Mauritius is also moderate. The level of job-based PO and organization-based PO of employees in the public sector of Mauritius is moderate as well.

Furthermore, the inferential statistics have shown that there is a positive relationship between perception of emotions and job-based PO, there is a significant relationship between managing own emotions and job-based PO, there is a significant relationship between managing others' emotions and job-based PO, there is a significant relationship between utilization of emotion and job-based PO, there is a significant relationship between overall EI and job-based PO, all of which are of moderate strength among employees in the public sector of Mauritius. However, there was no relationship between overall EI, dimensions of EI and organization-based PO.

Finally, two of the dimensions of EI showed that they have the most significant impact on job-based PO, which are managing others' emotions and utilization of emotions. However, utilization of emotions is the dimension of EI which made the strongest unique contribution to job-based PO among employees in the public sector of Mauritius.

### **Practical Contributions**

The findings can be useful in fulfilling a practical gap which currently exists among civil servants who should be empowered to bring about change in their quality of work. Since Mauritius has been embarked on several reforms two decades ago, to improve the work being done by civil servants according to Bhiwajee and Garavan (2016) the reforms were almost a failure as change and innovation couldn't take place. According to the researchers, the Mauritian culture in the public sector is ingrained and laid back. Thus, a new type of reform could include the use of EI as a new way of changing the working culture.

Moreover, since EI is a trait characteristic, this suggests that humans are able to learn EI and apply it. In the public sector, findings from Bhiwajee and Garavan (2016) have indicated that civil servants think that the management should think of new ways to induce reforms, and that the internal leaders should themselves change first, to bring about change down the hierarchy. Specialized courses about EI should thus be provided to all internal leaders in each public sector and more emphasis can be laid on two aspects of EI which are managing others' emotions and utilization of emotions which have the highest impact on job-based PO. By educating the superiors first, it would be easier to implement EI in the public sector. Employees can then be taught how to manage others' emotions at the workplace, such as developing a control on how they react to another people behavior. Being able to influence someone else to be more positive and calm is also a characteristic of managing other's emotions.

Finally, since EI has a significant positive impact on job-based PO, this suggest that inculcating EI in everyday life will increased the level of possessiveness towards one's job, and may make civil servants more self-disciplined, self-motivated and have a good control on their job, which can decrease the level of laid back culture which currently prevails in the public sector. The policy makers in Mauritius should thus re-design the framework of forming civil servants by implementing aspects of EI such as emotion management, utilization of emotions for them to start building strong interpersonal relationships among team members, and good relationships with customers. Moreover, people skills can immensely be increased through emotion management, therefore could help change how citizens of Mauritius feel about the service given to them by civil servant. It is thus worthwhile to harness positive emotions at work since that will result in higher efficiency.

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