



The Structural Relationship among Emotional Intelligence, Empowerment, Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Service Quality: Focusing on specialized hospital services

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Received: November, 22 2020. Revised: December, 15, 2020. Accepted: December, 22, 2020.

Abstract

Purpose - This study is aiming to understand the critical role of employees' organizational citizenship behavior in evaluation of employee service quality. This paper examined what emotional intelligence and empowerment affect to their organizational citizenship behavior and service quality. **Research design** - Data were collected by questionnaires through specialized hospital services. Survey was conducted on patients who have been treated at a spine specialized hospital. **Results** - Emotional intelligence and empowerment have direct effects on organizational citizenship. Service quality is a function of organizational citizenship. The results showed that emotional and motivated capabilities of individuals influenced organizational citizenship behavior. Managerially, this study contributes to the understanding of the role of organizational citizenship behavior in service sector. **Conclusions** - The relationship between service quality and organizational citizenship behavior and also examined the effect of combination of creative and voluntary behavioral attributes such as emotional intelligence and psychological empowerment have on voluntary organizational citizenship behavior. The results showed that in order to induce organizational citizenship behavior, emotional intelligence should be facilitated and empowerment enlarged.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Empowerment, Organizational citizenship behavior, Service quality

JEL Classification Code: M31, M54

1. Introduction

Today's business management needs to respond appropriately uncertain environment and requires bold innovation to secure sustainable competitive advantage. In a business environment where consumer sovereignty is strengthening and uncertainty rising firms' require their members to act responsibly and exert themselves without individual selfishness. In this perspective, organizational citizenship behavior not only makes manager's duty easier but also enables members raise their performance and success, and an important factor to be considered where behavior within assigned roles and outside roles are hard to distinguish.

Contact point employees contribute to superior service quality by providing services beyond their job description, relaying commitments of the firm and creating favorable image, promote products and services, and providing services that are superior to that of competitors (Bowen & Schneider, 1985; Schneider & Bowen, 1993). They also carry out decisive role in fundamental strategy for firm's survival (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

In a service situation, not only actions specified in roles but actions in nonspecified roles can be an important factor in determining service quality. Non specified behaviors such as unofficially and personally providing guidance to new or unskilled employees, helping out other employees are organizational citizenship behavior that can contribute to better services to customers. v

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oluntary suggestions proposals by contact point employees who are positioned between the company and customers can directly or indirectly contribute to improvement in service quality and customer value.

Issue of organizational citizenship have been discussed widely for a long time (MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Ahearne 1988; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter 1991; Podsakoff & MacKenzie 1994). Most studies thus far on organizational citizenship begins with a premise that actions of organizational members will improve effectiveness of an organization (Podsakoff and Mackenzie, 1997). Specific reasons why organizational citizenship affects validity of an organization are improvement in labor productivity, induction of cooperation among employees, attraction and maintaining talents (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Since organizational citizenship are voluntary commitments without calculated interests, examination in emotional perspective as well as cognitive perspective is needed. In this regard, need for comprehensive study on identification of antecedents and consequences of organizational citizenship in terms of cognitive, emotional and motivational factors is called for. In this study, emotional intelligence as emotional antecedent of contact point employees and empowerment as internal motivational antecedent are presented.

Emotional intelligence refers to ability to evaluate and express his/her own emotions and others' emotions, ability to effectively control one's and others' emotion and ability to utilize emotions to plan one's life and achieve one's goal (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). An employee with higher emotional intelligence better understand coworker's feelings and are more likely act in altruistic way.

Meanwhile, it is important to increase the commitment to one's duty and organization with flexibility and positivity in a rapidly changing environment. An essential factor that induce job execution with responsibility is empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995). Firms constantly seek change and innovation in response to rapidly changing environment and from a firm's perspective empowerment is important in service contact point management. According to precedent studies employees who perceive higher empowerment positively affect organizational performance (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kanter, 1979, 1983).

Outcomes of organizational citizenship in most prior studies focus on sales, productivity or financial performance (Podsakoff and Mackenzie, 1994; Podsakoff et al., 1997; Mackenzie et al., 1998), other studies mention relationship between psychological and behavioral factors such as job satisfaction which indicate job attitude (Carmeli, 2003; Brown & Peterson, 1993), organizational commitment (Van Dyne et al., 1994; Williams & Anderson, 1991) and turnover intention (Chen et al., 1998). However examination on relationship between voluntary organizational behavior and service quality which is a major factor of behavioral outcomes is somewhat lacking.

Therefore, in this study, effect of voluntary organizational citizenship of employees on service quality evaluation is examined. In addition to discussion on relationship between organizational citizenship and service quality, empowerment of cognitive perspective and emotional intelligence as emotional perspective as antecedents of organizational citizenship is presented. In other words, by analyzing causal relationship among emotional intelligence, empowerment, organizational citizenship and service quality, research model is evaluated. Through hypothesis testing, managerial implications are presented that could enhance customer oriented mindset of contact point employees who can provide competitive quality service and respond to rapidly changing service industry.

2. Theoretical background and hypothesis

2.1. Organizational citizenship behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior refers to the voluntary behavior exhibited by employees that promotes higher service quality and service organizational function without any expectation of direct or explicit compensation (Organ, 1990).

Upon examining empirical studies and theoretical studies on conceptual validity of organizational citizenship behavior, organizational citizenship behavior is not a construct but a concept with multiple lower dimensions. Graham (1991) categorized organizational citizenship behavior into 3 categories of obedience, loyalty and participation. Organ (1990) who led the study in organizational citizenship behavior identified 5 dimensions of altruism, conscientiousness, courtesy, civic virtue and sportsmanship. In the study by Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1994), organizational citizenship behavior is analyzed through 3 dimensions of helping behavior, sportsmanship, civic virtue and in the study by Van Der Veegt et al. (2003), helping behavior and organizational loyalty are discussed as a major dimension. Therefore, based on the study by Van Der Veegt et al. (2003), this study examines lower dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior of helping behavior which moderates socio-psychological effect of employees and also organizational loyalty.

Upon examining above discussions, organizational citizenship behavior can be considered to have multiple lower dimensions rather than one construct. Relationship between antecedents including helping behavior, loyalty and outcome of service quality will be identified in this study.

2.2. Antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior

2.2.1. Emotional intelligence

Studies on emotional intelligence are drawing much attention because among many personal attributes for success, more emphasis is placed on emotional intelligence. According to Salovey and Mayer(1990), emotional intelligence is a form of social intelligence which is ability to evaluate and express his/her own emotions and others' emotions, ability to effectively control one's and others' emotion and ability to utilize emotions to plan one's life and achieve one's goal. Mayer and Salovey(1997) expanded the concept as an ability to acknowledge and evaluate his/her own feelings, ability to emotionally approach others to accept his/her opinion, ability to comprehend feelings and sentimental knowledge and ability to moderate in order to stimulate one's emotional and intellectual growth.

From theory of performance perspective, emotional intelligence positively affects task and organizational validity and is an effective concept in service contact point and organizational leadership field. In addition, since a person with high emotional intelligence can perceive and comprehend feelings of others and utilize it, a person with high emotional intelligence positively affects organizational performance through cooperation with others.

Upon examining above discussions, this study can define emotional intelligence as an ability to evaluate and express feelings of oneself and others, an ability to effectively control feelings of oneself and others, and an ability to utilize emotional intelligence to plan and achieve one's life and is a concept that is distinguishable from cognitive ability(Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

2.2.2. Relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior

In prior studies there are not as many studies on effect of emotional aspect on organizational citizenship behavior compared to cognitive aspect on organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore studies on cognitive antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior is needed. According to Organ and Ryan(1995) conscientiousness and agreeableness had positive relationship with altruism and obedience. In addition, positive mood had positive relationship with altruism. However negative mood had negative relationship with obedience. In other words, an employee with higher emotional intelligence had better understanding of others' mood and more likely to show altruistic behavior.

Van Dyne et al.(1994) explained the reason why there is a high relationship between a person with high emotional intelligence and altruistic behavior. First, maintaining positive mood is expressed and enforced as altruistic mind and enables to maintain psychological stability. Second, an employee with positive mood facilitates mutual social interaction with others. Third, an employee with a positive reaction and satisfaction on duty is more active in helping out others. Thus an employee with higher emotional intelligence facilitates altruistic behavior of helping other coworkers. Loyalty sacrifices personal interest and is a will to develop organization and an employee with high loyalty will cooperate with other members to achieve organizational goal. Therefore following hypothesis is presented.

H1 : Employee's emotional intelligence will positively affect organizational citizenship behavior.

2.2.3. Empowerment

Empowerment is a concept introduced when the CEO delegates his/her authority and responsibility to his junior officers and subordinate organizations as the size of a business expands and the chief executive officer(CEO) cannot manage all aspects of business in order to facilitate managerial activities. Empowerment means giving power and power implies energy. Thus empowerment is an act of giving power, energizing someone and increasing motivation. Empowerment has been defined in various ways(Bowen & Lawyer, 1992) but concept of autonomy is considered to be focal concept.

Spreitzer(1995) presents 4 factors of empowerment as meaningfulness, competence, selfdetermination and impact. First, meaningfulness can be defined as value of business goal as reflected in personal ideal, norm, belief and values. Thus meaningfulness implies how much employee's business goal corresponds with his/her ideal, norm, belief and values. Second, competence is a similar concept to self-efficacy and is a belief that he/she has the appropriate ability and skills to carry out his/her job. Higher he/she thinks of his/her competence more motivated he/she will be. Third, selfdetermination implies how much autonomy he/she has in control of his/her work. This relates to how much influence he/she has in execution and completion of work. Last, impact implies his/her perception of how much influence he/she has in strategic, administrative and job results(Ashforth, 1989).

Therefore, empowerment can be defined as increase in internal motivation that makes proactive approach to one's work, exert all one's potential to work and psychological self-control that can counter ambiguity and complexity of work.

2.2.4. Relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior

In order for work system that is based on employee decision making and involvement to succeed, employee behavior like organizational citizenship behavior is needed(Cappelli & Rogovsky, 1998). An employee who at least had involvement in job p

performance decision perceives the result as fairer than an employee who had no power to involve. Employee involvement can facilitate faith in organization fairness and procedural fairness (Organ & Konovsky, 1989). As with influence on work related issues, involvement in participation can exert potential influence on organizational citizenship behavior (Cappelli & Rogovsky, 1998).

In addition, empowerment can also mean delegation of authority in work (Nyhan, 1994). Delegation of authority in work makes both decision makers and employees to seek more innovative strategy (Sitkin & Pablo, 1992). According to Vogt and Murrell (1990) empowered members utilize latest managerial methods such as self-management or cross function team to make achievement within their organization. By means of sponsorship, authorization and legality empowered members enhance empowerment through cross empathy of mutual trust.

Empowerment based on motivation and autonomy of organization members leads to improvement in productivity and customer service (Ugboro & Obeng, 2000). Thus empowerment can lead to prosocial customer oriented behavior among employees in customer service contact points and also teams with empowerment show responsibility in checking service quality and solving customer complaints (Wellings et al., 1991). Empowered members are expected to have responsibility at service contact points and respond better to customer needs and complaint. Based on such discussion, following hypothesis is presented.

H2 : Employee's perceived empowerment will have positive effect of organizational citizenship behavior.

2.3. Determinants of organizational citizenship behavior

2.3.1. Service quality

Bettencourt (1997) stated that behaviors such as loyalty and helping behavior that contribute to the interest of organization interaction between employees and customers at the service contact point and lead to rise in service quality and consequently organization performance. Wayne, Shore and Linden (2002) explained that voluntary behaviors and related organizational citizenship behavior affects service quality in a positive way. Employee's loyalty and helping behavior at the service contact points not only improves relationship with coworkers but also familiarity and empathy thus leading to strengthening of mutual relationship and interdependence. Familiarity and interdependence enables close interaction with partners and positively affect customer experience in service and consequently lead to improvement in service quality.

Organizational citizenship behavior affects service quality. From internal marketing perspective, helping behavior plays important role in securing service quality to customers. If employees consider coworkers as customers and help out each other, this will lead to improvement in relationship among coworkers and increase in job satisfaction. Furthermore employee satisfaction will lead to better provision of service to external customers. Loyalty not only affects employee interaction but positively affect service quality to external customers. Employees with high loyalty have positive attitude and refrain from unnecessary complaints. When customers are exposed to such behavior, they will experience higher service quality (Morrison, 1996). Thus following hypothesis can be presented.

H3 : Employee's organizational citizenship behavior will positively affect service quality.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Model

The research model to test proposed hypotheses is shown in <figure 1>. The research model illustrates a relationship to identify effects of emotional intelligence, an emotional aspect, and empowerment, an internal motivation factor, on organizational citizenship behavior and service quality.

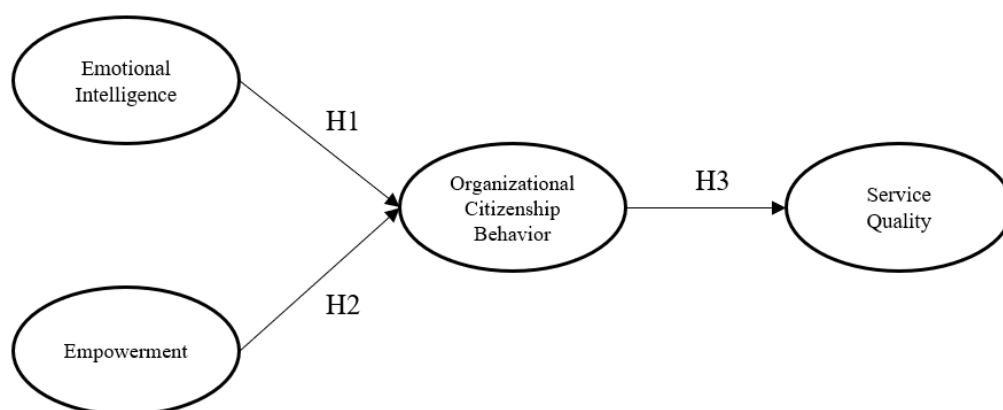


Figure 1: Research Model

3.2. Data collection

Data were collected by questionnaires through specialty hospitals. Korean Ministry of Health and Welfare designates small and medium sized hospitals as specialty hospital in order to ease financial difficulties and to provide standardized quality medical service. These hospitals strive to fulfil requirements to obtain and maintain certification and to manage patients through good service. In this study, survey was conducted on patients who have been treated at a spine specialty hospital. The hospital has over 300 beds. The survey was conducted for about 2 weeks and the respondents were helped by survey takers who had prior training. The respondents were asked to fill in the survey in person with the help of survey takers. Total of 400 copies of surveys were distributed with 363 copies collected making the response rate 90.5%. After discarding 9 surveys with incomplete responses, total of 353 copies were used in this study.

49.0% of the sample were male and 51.0% female. 64.2% were aged 40 or under, 22.4% were aged 50 or under and 13.4% were above age 50. 8.7% had high school diplomas, 25.2% associate degrees, 59.6% undergraduate degrees and 6.5% had graduate degrees. As for their job position, 44.9% were clerks, 28.0% were assistant managers or subsection chiefs. 23.9% were managers or deputy general managers and 3.2% were general manager or in higher position.

3.3. Measurement of variables

Measurement for constructs were made on the scale with reliability and validity tested on prior studies. The scale was modified to suit this study. Most items were 5 scale Likert scale with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree”.

Emotional intelligence was defined as an ability to evaluate his/her own and others’ emotions and an ability to effectively control it. Items from studies by Salovey and Mayer(1990) and Schutte et al.(1998) were modified and used. 4 items comprising of ability to evaluate emotions and to express them, ability to control his/her own emotions and others’, ability to use these emotions to plan and achieve his/her life, and ability to emotionally approach and generalize someone to accept his/her idea were measured.

As for empowerment, items were comprised of 4 motivational dimensions related to psychological and work related motivational aspects. 4 items from Spreitzer(1995) study was modified and used including terms for meaningfulness, competence, self-determination and impact. 4 items measured were; my current work will help me achieve my future goal, belief in his/her competence in executing a job, self-determination in work execution and exert of influence in method or change in work execution.

Organizational citizenship behavior was defined as an individual voluntary behavior that facilitates functions of an organization without direct recognition from formal compensation system(Organ, 1988). Based on study by Van Der Veegt et al.(2003), loyalty and help giving, important lower dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior that moderate socio-psychological effect, were modified and used. 4 items include degree of enduring predicaments and emphasizing positive aspects of organization, and degree of showing interest and giving help to coworkers.

Service quality was defined as a service quality perceived by the employees and 4 items of outcome quality, procedural quality, environmental quality and overall service quality used in studies by Brady and Cronin(2001) were used.

4. Empirical analysis

4.1. Reliability and validity tests of variables

In order to test validity of multi-item scale, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. As for the input data for model testing, correlation data was used and model's goodness of fit was tested after convergent validity and discriminant validity were tested.

4.1.1. Convergent validity and reliability test

Result of analysis on measurement model of all research units are shown in <table 1>. Confirmatory factor analysis showed $\chi^2=121.96$, $df=112(p=.41)$, $GFI=.97$, $AGFI=.95$, $NFI=.97$, $RMR=.03$ and thus confirmed to satisfy model's goodness of fit and convergent validity. Testing showed as in <table 1> that t-values of parameter estimates were statistically significant. Composite reliability calculated from estimated factor loading through confirmatory factor analysis on structural equation showed values of .82 ~ .94 and average variance extracted values were .64 ~ .80 which all satisfy acceptable standards. Thus we can determine that reliability is secured.

Table 1: Result of confirmatory factor analysis on research variables

research variables	Factor loading	t-value	composite reliability	variance extracted
emotional intelligence				
X1	0.89	14.82	0.93	0.75
X2	0.85	14.02		
X3	0.82	14.01		
X4	0.89	15.87		
empowerment				
X5	0.63	12.56	0.83	0.66
X6	0.79	12.80		
X7	0.83	13.56		
X8	0.73	12.47		
organizational citizenship behavior				
Y1	0.89	13.22	0.94	0.80
Y2	0.90	14.92		
Y3	0.91	14.72		
Y4	0.86	13.98		
service quality				
Y5	0.52	11.05	0.82	0.64
Y6	0.77	12.58		
Y7	0.88	14.56		
Y8	0.71	13.47		

d.f.=113, $\chi^2=275.60$ ($p=0.0000$), $RMSR=0.038$, $GFI=0.91$, $AGFI=0.89$, $NFI=0.94$, $NNFI=0.95$.

Table 2: Matrix of relationship between constructs(Φ matrix)

	emotional intelligence	empowerment	organizational citizenship	service quality
emotional intelligence	1.00			
empowerment	0.42**	1.00		
organizational citizenship	0.46**	0.55**	1.00	
service quality	0.21*	0.28*	0.43**	1.00
* significant at $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$				

4.1.2. Hypothesis testing

In this study, Φ matrix between constructs were used to analyze structural relationship between variables. Values for Chi-square, simplicity and goodness of fit are shown in <table 3>.

Table 3: Results of hypotheses testing and relationship between research units

Hypo.	path	name of path	coefficient	t-value	accept
H1	emotional intelligence(ξ_1) → organizational citizenship behavior(η_1)	γ_{11}	.21	4.68	○
H2	empowerment(ξ_2) → organizational citizenship behavior(η_1)	γ_{21}	.34	7.49	○
H3	organizational citizenship behavior(η_1) → service quality(η_2)	β_{11}	.51	8.49	○

<goodness of fit of covariance structure analysis>

$\chi^2(50 \text{ d.f}) = 122.47(p = .00)$, GFI = .94, AGFI = .91

RMR = .045, NFI = .95, CFI = .97

* $p < .01$

Results of hypotheses tests are shown in <table 3>.

First, when hypothesis 1 “employee’s emotional intelligence will positively affect organizational citizenship behavior” was tested, it showed emotional intelligence has positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior ($\gamma_{11} = 0.21$, $t = 4.68$, $p < .01$). This result corresponds with the study result of Salovey and Mayer (1990) that showed employee with an ability to effectively control and utilize his/her own emotions and others’ emotions positively affect organizational citizenship behavior.

Second, test of hypothesis 2 “employee’s perceived empowerment will have positive effect of organizational citizenship behavior” showed that empowerment has positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior ($\gamma_{21} = 0.34$, $t = 7.49$, $p < .01$). This outcome corresponds with the study result of Vogt and Murrell (1990) that showed empowerment perceived by the employee positively affects organizational citizenship behavior.

Third, hypothesis 3 “employee’s organizational citizenship behavior will positively affect service quality” was tested. The result showed that organizational citizenship behavior positively affects service quality ($\beta_{11} = 0.51$, $t = 8.49$, $p < .01$). It has been empirically proven that in order to improve service quality competitiveness, organizational citizenship behavior with a premise of organization members’ voluntary participation must be preceded.

5. Conclusion

There have been many discussions in organization behavior and marketing areas of management studies on the importance of organizational citizenship behavior in evaluation of performance of sales person and managers. Much effort has been made on identifying causal variables of these voluntary behavior in personnel organization. The purpose of this study is to comprehend the role of organizational citizenship behavior of service employees who have frequent interactions with customers. In other words, this study examined the relationship between service quality and organizational citizenship behavior and also examined the effect of combination of creative and voluntary behavioral attributes such as emotional intelligence and psychological empowerment have on voluntary organizational citizenship behavior. The results showed that in order to induce organizational citizenship behavior, emotional intelligence should be facilitated and empowerment enlarged. The study also showed that service quality improves as a result of voluntary organizational citizenship behavior. Results of empirical analysis are as follows.

First, empirical studies on emotional intelligence is increasing but measuring tools for lower dimensions of emotional intelligence and empirical studies are not yet developed thus there lacks empirical studies on emotional intelligence. However empirical analysis was conducted on service industry to identify effects of emotional intelligence on organizational citizenship behavior. Emotional intelligence of emotional aspect proved to be the antecedent for organizational citizenship behavior.

Concept based on the studies by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and Schutte et al. (1988) on emotional intelligence from emotional aspect provided basis for this study and empirically confirmed that an employee with high emotional intelligence is more active in organizational citizenship behavior. An employee with higher level of positive emotions compared to negative emotions had tendencies to view diverse organizational situations in a positive way and voluntarily shows organizational citizenship behavior from confidence and loyalty. In order to select employees with high level of emotional response to oneself and others, introduction of personnel system that reflect leadership, followership and communication skills is needed and also degree of organizational citizenship behavior can be raised by encouraging inter-department activities and comradery among employees.

Second, it was confirmed that the higher the empowerment the employees perceive more strengthening of organizational citizenship behavior can be achieved. Therefore as relationship between superior officers and empowered coworker, who was empowered by intrinsic motivation, improves, overall service quality can be enhanced by voluntary behavior that are not prescribed.

ed in the job description. Thus in order to raise empowerment, granting of autonomy, enhancing compensation system and performance management system that take into account individual contribution must be considered.

Third, it was shown that organizational citizenship behavior has significant effect on service quality perceived by the employees. When an employee is active in his/her altruistic behaviors such as helping out coworkers who are having with their job or sharing professional knowledge and skills, these actions effectively contribute to service activity and consequently spread to service quality to external customers. When employees are cooperative and create positive organization atmosphere, such amicable atmosphere will be relayed to customers. In addition, participation in meetings and constructive suggestions for better service will not have immediate effect but in the long term it will contribute to service quality. Through this study, empirical significance of organizational citizenship behavior on service quality was confirmed. This indicates that evaluation of customer service quality is not only made through roles specified in the regulation that officially compensates for employee's deeds. Although not officially specified in job description, such non-specified behavior, if voluntary and proactive, positively affects service quality evaluation. Considering how important effect organizational citizenship behavior has on service quality, managers should note that social satisfaction or improvement in empowerment are attributed to voluntary behaviors that enhance organization performance rather than economic incentives or promotions.

This study, however, has following limitations.

First, since empirical study was conducted on medical service of specialty hospitals there are limitations in generalization and application. Therefore studies on hotels, banking, distribution, IT service and other service firms are called for in future studies.

Second, measurement of service quality was measured by service quality as perceived by the employee. But discrepancies can occur between service quality perceived by the actual customers and employees. In particular, employees could have responded higher level of service quality. In future studies, service quality perceived by the customers should be matched and analyzed with the service quality perceived by the service provider.

Third, there is a need to improve validity of emotional intelligence scale. Empirical analysis results show there are not any major errors in validity of scales but development of more detailed and strict scales is needed. In case of emotional intelligence, researchers proposed various constructs and many studies have not been conducted thus far. Follow up studies to improve reliability and validity of measurement tools are called for.

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