A Study of the Moderating Mediation Model of Pay Equity on Job Performance

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Abstracts: With the development of the commercial economy, the continuous intensification of market competition, the continuous transparency of marketing methods, so that the development of enterprises cannot be limited to market competition, more and more enterprises pay attention to the competition of talents, so enterprises will pay more attention to the management of human resources, salary management is an important part of human resources, while salary management is also one of the core elements of enterprise management talents and talent absorption. However, because salary management is the most difficult to grasp in human resources, it is also the sector that needs to be repeatedly demonstrated and studied, in the development of enterprises, there are many enterprises do not have a complete salary system, resulting in management chaos and unclear incentive means, and when implemented at the grassroots level, because the implementation of grassroots managers is not in place, the fairness of salary is not fully displayed, resulting in employees dissatisfied with the salary system, and the development of enterprises has also been affected a lot. This situation has attracted the attention of many experts and scholars, who have begun to do more research and exploration on pay equity. A total of 400 valid survey questionnaires were sent out in this survey, a total of 238 valid survey questionnaires were returned, and finally screened, a total of 200 valid research questionnaires were selected, and the overall validity of the questionnaire exceeded 84%. Background variables include gender, age, education, etc. Through research, the authors found that employees' emotional intelligence has a mediating role between perceived pay equity and job performance, and this paper concludes that employees need to further strengthen their emotional intelligence, the higher the emotional intelligence of employees, the more flexible they will be when dealing with conflicts between employees in the organization, which is conducive to the formation of good employee relationships and the improvement of employee cohesion perception.

Keywords: M Education Group Employees, Pay Equity, Employee Engagement, Job Performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the development of business economy, the market competition is intensifying, the marketing method is transparent, so that the development of enterprises can not be limited to the market competition, more and more enterprises focus on the competition of talents, so enterprises will pay more attention to the management of human resources, payroll management is an important segment of human resources, at the same time, payroll management is also one of the core elements of enterprise management of talents and attracting talents. However, because salary management is the most difficult to grasp in human resources, so it is also the most need to repeatedly argue and study the board, in the development of enterprises there are many enterprises do not have a complete salary system, resulting in management chaos and unclear incentives, the implementation to the grassroots due to the implementation of grassroots managers are not in place, not fully demonstrate the fairness of the salary, resulting in staff dissatisfaction with the salary system, the development of enterprises are also affected by many This has led to the dissatisfaction of employees with the compensation system and the development of the company. Such a situation has attracted the attention of many experts and scholars, who began to do more research and exploration on pay equity. Chai ae al. (2020) put pay equity and employee engagement together to explore their relationship. He believes that pay equity is an important factor in determining employee engagement, and employee engagement is an important criterion for enterprises to evaluate employees' behavior.

In the human resource management of enterprises, the core is the management of people, and the development of enterprises is inseparable from the hard work of employees, and the pursuit of efficiency in enterprise operation requires each employee to shine in his or her own position. The stronger the fairness, the higher the individual performance, which indicates that the employee's dedication has a role that cannot be ignored for the development of the enterprise and the company's performance.

Ude and Coker (2012) started to study the influence of the incentive scheme in the salary system on the

employees' motivation from the salary system of state-owned enterprises, and through verification, he concluded that if there is a complete and feasible incentive scheme in the salary system of an enterprise, the employees will have higher motivation, and this incentive system plays an important role in the salary management of the enterprise.

Understanding the importance of pay equity and the fact that employee engagement is an important stabilizing factor for corporate development, many scholars have begun to focus on the link between pay equity and employee engagement, and the influence of other factors on both. For example, Tekleab et al. (2005) explored the fairness of compensation and divided it into two parts, one is procedural fairness and the other is distributional fairness, and by exploring the two aspects of fairness, they concluded that the higher the fairness of compensation, the more confident the employees are in the management of the company and the more confident the employees are in the commitment given by the company.

The article mainly intends to analyze the relationship between pay equity, employee engagement and job performance, and employee emotional intelligence as a moderating role. In the enterprise compensation management, whether pay equity and employee engagement, whether there is a certain correlation, whether there is a certain relationship between job performance and employee input in the work, whether there is a positive effect of employee emotional intelligence as the regulating role of the three, through continuous exploration and research on the mediating role of employee engagement and the regulating role of employee emotional intelligence.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Relevant research on pay equity

Milkovich & Newman (1999) mentioned the definition of pay is the relevant reward that employees receive from their work as a member of the company is a party in the company. Pay equity is an important plank of organizational equity and has a very important impact on members within the organization. The level of pay equity has a direct impact on employees' work behavior, work attitude and work results, so pay equity has a profound impact on the development of corporate compensation management, and issues related to pay equity are also the key issues to be addressed by corporate human resource management.

Salimäki and Jämsén (2010) proposed in their research on the concept of pay equity that pay equity is a single worker intuitive feeling about the reward and punishment mechanisms of the enterprise, and the degree of such feelings represents pay equity, and this argument of his is mainly elaborated from the perspective of distributive equity of the enterprise. In the study of Meng and Wu (2015), they also argue that pay equity is mainly reflected in the subjective feelings of employees, and they believe that employees will compare the pay system with the gains that employees themselves get in the enterprise, and the vital feeling after this comparison is pay equity.

2.2 Research related to employee engagement

Anitha (2014), in her study of employee engagement, stated that employee engagement is the degree to which employees give to the company at work, and that a high degree of giving means a high level of engagement and a low degree of giving means a low level of engagement. Robinson et al. (2004) argues that engagement should be a work attitude that focuses on the high level of enthusiasm that employees show in their work, whether they have full energy and actively use their knowledge and strengths to complete their work efficiently.

Markos and Sridevi (2010) believes that engagement is a comprehensive concept, which is mainly reflected in multiple aspects, including job satisfaction, worker commitment, and employee behavior, and is a psychological bridge between companies and workers, as well as an important factor affecting company performance. Gupta and Sharma (2016), in their study of engagement, argue that engagement not only has an impact on corporate performance but also brings benefits to the workers themselves, and that employees with high engagement can grow over time, both at the intellectual and emotional levels, so he argues that engagement is used to measure the degree of employee commitment to the organization in terms of emotion and behavior, and is a key factor in

unlocking employee potential, improving employee performance, and increasing the value of corporate human capital. It is the main indicator to enhance employee performance and corporate human capital value.

Through the above research, we found that the study of employee engagement has gone through a process from shallow to deep, from single to complex, from the beginning of thinking only from the employees' perspective to the later inclusion of the enterprise perspective; from the beginning of considering only the personal emotional input of employees to the impact of the indirect role played by the enterprise, from the behavioral aspects of enterprise workers to the spiritual level of enterprise workers.

2.3 Related studies on job performance

Job performance is an attainable and achievable goal for employees, as well as the result of the achievement of milestones by workers in a company.

Katz and Kahn (1978) divided job performance into three dimensions namely, continuous involvement, project performance, and spontaneous behavior. Campbell et al. (1990) divided job performance into multiple dimensions, but it is worth mentioning that he made a distinction between job-specific and non-job-specific performance, which provided more ideas for later scholars who studied job performance dimensions. Welbourne et al. (1998) divided job performance into six dimensions, which include role task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, team behavior, professional skills, learning and training, and innovation performance. Huang and Park (2022) divided the dimensions of job performance by understanding the job performance of specific occupations He believed that job performance should be divided into three dimensions, which are basic performance, corporate worker behavior and continuous giving. By organizing the existing literatures we can understand that most scholars will study performance in two dimensions, which is also reflected in the measurement models that have been established. According to the research elements and research methods in this paper the author believes that dividing job performance into two dimensions, task performance and relationship performance, is the most appropriate division for this study.

2.4 Studies related to emotional intelligence

Matthews, Zeidner and Roberts (2004), who believes that emotional intelligence is a brain-processed intelligence, which requires individuals to sort out and filter out unwanted emotions in their brain when they receive information, and finally present an emotional state. The first stage is the processing of emotions, the second stage is the processing of others' emotions, and the third stage is the release of processed emotions, and emotional intelligence is a combination of the three. Petrides & Furnham (2001), who considered emotional intelligence as a personality combination consisting of a set of personality traits. The third one is Takeuchi et al. (2011) who defines emotional intelligence in terms of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance and states that emotional intelligence is a continuous emotional state that can have an uninterrupted effect and has a strong correlation with the output of job performance in a particular job type. Joseph & Newman (2010), who state that emotional intelligence is an external need, and that it does not exist to satisfy the provider's own needs, and that it is a skill that the provider should have but is mostly generated in response to external circumstances.

To date, many scholars have shown that emotional intelligence has an impact on personal development and job performance. McKeown and Bates (2013) found that the improvement of emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the potential ability to motivate employees and also helps in the management ability of employees, which can give employees in their career development path.

In a study of employees' perceptions of job insecurity, Jordan, Ashkanasy & Hartel (2002) noted that employees with low emotional intelligence were more negative about job insecurity than those with high emotional intelligence and were more likely to respond in a non-polarizing manner. Therefore, they suggest that emotional intelligence can be viewed as an "individual difference variable" that moderates the relationship between stimuli and behavior.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Model

This study focuses on the effects of pay equity and teacher engagement on job performance, as well as further analyzing the mediating role of emotional intelligence in, while exploring the contextual variables teacher gender, age, and educational attainment on the three variables. In the research framework of this paper, pay equity and employee engagement are the independent variables, job performance is the dependent variable, and emotional intelligence is the mediating variable. Based on the research objectives and research questions, this study proposes the following research hypotheses by reviewing the literature.

H1: There are differences in perceived pay equity among employees of Education Group M with different background variables (gender, age, and education level).

H1a: There are differences in perceived pay equity among employees of M Education Group by gender.

H1b: There is a difference in perceived pay equity between employees of Education Group M by age.

H1c: Differences in perceived pay equity among MEG employees by education level.

H2: There are differences in employee engagement among M Education Group employees with different background variables (gender, age, and education level).

H2a: There are differences in employee engagement among M Education Group employees by gender.

H2b: There is a difference in employee engagement among M Education Group employees by age.

H2c: There is a difference in employee engagement among MEG employees by education level.

H3: There are differences in emotional intelligence among M Education Group employees with different background variables (gender, age, and education level).

H3a: There are differences in emotional intelligence among employees of M Education Group by gender.

H3b: Differences in emotional intelligence among MEG employees by age.

H3c: Differences in emotional intelligence among MEG employees with different levels of education.

H4: There is a difference in job performance among M Education Group employees with different background variables (gender, age, education level).

H4a: There are differences in job performance among employees of M education group by gender.

H4b: There is a difference in job performance of M Education Group employees by age.

H4c: There is a difference in the job performance of MEG employees by education level.

H5: There is a positive and significant effect of perceived pay equity on job performance among M Education Group employees.

H6: There is a positive and significant effect of employee engagement on job performance among M Education Group employees.

H7: M Education Group employees' emotional intelligence has a mediating role between perceived pay equity and job performance.

Based on the research objectives and research questions, this study proposes the following research hypotheses for several of these variables and research framework are shown in Figure 1.
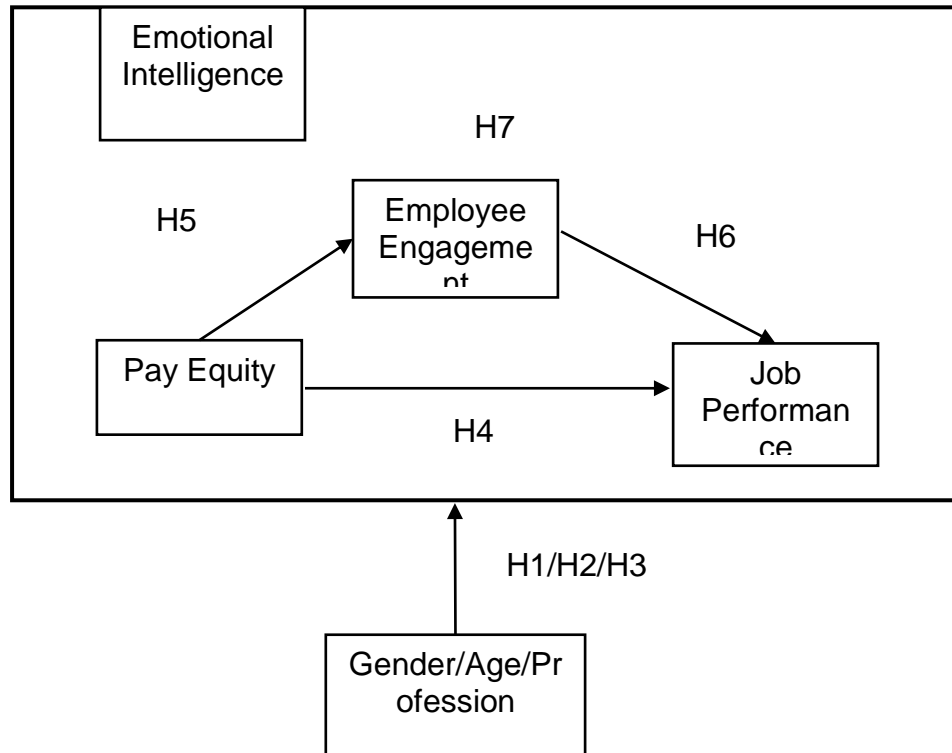
Figure 1 Research architecture diagram

3.2 Methodology & Sampling

Convenience sampling was adopted and the data needed for the study were obtained from questionnaires, which were distributed and collected mainly by sending questionnaires within the employee group Star online questionnaires. Considering that there will be invalid questionnaires, 120 questionnaires are planned to be distributed in the pretest phase to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

3.3 Research Tools

In this study, a questionnaire was used as the research instrument, and the research variables were pay equity, employee engagement, job performance, and emotional intelligence, which were measured by the Employee Perceived Pay Equity Scale, Employee Engagement Scale, Emotional Intelligence Scale, and Job Performance Scale. In this study, the established questionnaires that are widely used in the academic field were selected, and the final questionnaire used in this study was formed by pre-testing for reliability testing.

4. Data Analysis & Discussion

4.1 Background information analysis and descriptive statistical analysis

A total of 400 valid research questionnaires were sent out, and a total of 238 valid research responses were returned, which were finally screened again, and a total of 200 valid research responses were picked out, with an overall questionnaire validity of over 84%. The background variables included gender, age, and education level.

Table 1 Analysis of background information (n = 200)

	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	80	40%
	Women	120	60%

Age	Under 25 years old	68	34%
	26-35 years old	66	33%
	36-45 years old	52	26%
	45 years old or above	14	7.0%
Education level	Bachelor and below	130	65%
	Master	54	27%
	Doctor	16	8%

4.2 Descriptive statistical analysis

From Table 2, the scale is measured on a 5-point scale, so the minimum value is 1 and the maximum value is 5. The mean value of emotional intelligence is clearly skewed towards the minimum value, indicating that most people disagree with the description of the items, while the mean value of perceived pay equity is 3.862, which is close to the maximum value of 5, indicating that most employees agree with the description of the items on the perceived pay equity scale. When the absolute value of skewness coefficient is less than 3 and the absolute value of kurtosis coefficient is less than 3, it is considered as normal distribution. Therefore, by observing that the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis of the three variables are less than 3, the prerequisites for regression analysis are met, and further regression analysis can be performed.

Table 2 Descriptive statistical analysis

Variables	Average value	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Perceived Pay Equity	3.862	0.645	-.014	-.636
Employee dedication	2.155	0.593	.182	-.101
Job Performance	2.168	0.600	.003	-.098
Emotional Intelligence	2.148	0.581	.105	.486

4.2 Correlation analysis

In order to explore the effect of pay equity and employee engagement on job performance, as well as to further analyze the mediating role of emotional intelligence in This study uses Pearson correlation analysis to test the correlation between perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance. As shown in Table 3, there is a significant positive correlation between perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence and job performance. The absolute value of the correlation coefficient analysis between variables is equal to zero.75, so we can only make a preliminary guess that multiple collinearity may exist and occur in the next regression analysis, and the specific performance of collinearity will be tested by variance inflation factor (VIF) in the regression analysis.

Table 3 Correlation analysis

	Perceived Pay Equity	Employee Engagement	Emotional Intelligence	Job Performance
Perceived Pay Equity	1	/	/	/
Employee Engagement	0.852***	1	/	/
Emotional Intelligence	0.837***	0.902***	1	/
Job Performance	0.848***	0.891***	0.901***	1

Note: *** indicates P<0.001;

4.3 Analysis of variability

4.3.1 Variance analysis of Gender

The results of the analysis are shown in Table 4. The results from Table 4 show that the p-values of perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence and job performance are 0.024, 0.038, 0.015 and 0.036 respectively, which are less than the significance criterion of 0.05, so there are significant differences. It indicates that there are differences between employees of different genders in the four dimensions of perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance in the current study population. The results show that there are differences between employees of different genders in perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance at this stage.

In summary, if the differences in H1a, H2a, H3a, and H4a exist and hold, it means that at this stage, there are differences in perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance among employees of different genders.

Table 4 T-test of perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance among employees of different genders

Variables	Male		Women		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Perceived Pay Equity	1.583	1.156	1.437	.833	2.213*	.024
Employee Engagement	1.223	1.007	1.787	.867	2.160*	.038
Emotional Intelligence	3.838	1.078	3.070	.847	-2.441*	.015
Job Performance	1.218	1.017	1.785	.870	2.162*	.036

Note: * indicates P<0.05;

4.3.2 Variance analysis of Age

Whether there are significant differences in perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance among employees of different ages will be analyzed as mean, standard deviation with ANOVA one-way variance check. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5. The results show that the p-values of F-values for perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance are 0.198, 0.207, 0.106, and 0.201, respectively, for employees of different ages, with p is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference in this item.

Therefore, hypotheses H1b, H2b, H3b, and H4b are not valid, indicating that there are no significant differences in the perceptions of perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance among the employees representing different age groups in the current study.

Table 5 ANOVA test of perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence and job performance among employees of different ages

Variables	Perceived Pay Equity		Employee Engagement		Emotional Intelligence		Job Performance	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
A	3.9597	.73317	3.9000	.69970	3.8705	.73767	3.9602	.73320
B	3.9390	.50775	3.8730	.45271	3.7703	.50078	3.9401	.50800
C	4.0104	.49011	3.8843	.48923	3.8218	.48718	4.0095	.48998
D	4.2260	.29159	4.1474	.25200	4.1154	.35518	4.2260	.29159
P value	0.198		0.207		0.106		0.201	
F value	1.562		1.526		2.053		1.572	

Note: A: Under 25 years old; B: 26-35 years old; C: 36-45 years old; D: 45 years old and above

4.3.3 Comparison analysis of education level

Whether there are significant differences in perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance among employees with different levels of education will be analyzed as mean, standard deviation with ANOVA one-way variance check. The educational level will be divided into three types, respectively: undergraduate and below, master's and doctoral, and the findings of the study are shown in Table 6. The results show that there is a significant difference in this item because the p-values corresponding to the F-values are .027, .043, .016, .031, p < 0.05 for employees with different educational levels in emotional labor. This shows that H1c, H2c, H3c, and H4c hold, i.e., there are significant differences in perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and job performance among employees with different levels of education.

Table 6 ANOVA test of perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence and job performance among employees with different education levels

Variables	Perceived Pay Equity		Employee Engagement		Emotional Intelligence		Job Performance	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
A	4.013	.697	3.969	.654	3.936	.686	4.021	.687
B	3.969	.654	3.863	.530	3.791	.564	3.980	.654
C	3.936	.686	3.762	.504	3.687	.552	3.956	.692
P value	.027		.043		.016		.031	
F value	1.253		2.954		4.206**		1.253	

Note: A: Undergraduate and below; B: Master; C: PhD; D: 45 years old and above

4.4 Regression analysis

From the Table 7, we can see that the coefficient of determination of the multivariate regression of the three independent variables and the dependent variable "job performance" is modified from R-squared=0.660 to R-squared=0.654, which indicates that the three different independent variables can resolve a total of 65.4% of the variation rate of the dependent variable, and the independent variables have good ability to resolve the dependent variable. The graph proves that at F=121.275, the significance P=0.000 is equal to 0.05, which is more significant than 0.05, indicating that the regression coefficient of at least one of the three independent variables is significant, and the VIF is less than 10, indicating that the overall regression of the model is significant at the 5% level. Then from the valuation analysis of individual regression coefficient parameters, the regression coefficients of the three independent variables are 0.018, 0.06, and 0.108, and the t-values of their regression significance tests are 2.356 (p=0.019 less than 0.05) 7.651 (p=0.000 less than 0.05) 13.764 (p=0.000 less than 0.05) All three variables reach significant level. It indicates that there is no common overlap problem among independent variables, so hypotheses H5, H6, and H7 are valid, that is, employees in M Education Group have a positive and significant effect on perceived pay equity on job performance, employees in M Education Group have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement on job performance, and emotional intelligence of employees in M Education Group has a mediating role between perceived pay equity and job performance.

Table 7 Regression analysis

Note: 1. *** p < 0.001; 2. β is the standardized regression coefficient.

Variables	Job Performance				
Models	Unstandardized factor B	t	Significance	Covariance statistics	
					VIF

(Constant)	.087	11.076	.000	
Perceived Pay Equity	.018	2.356	.019	1.083
Employee Engagement	.060	7.651	.000	1.072
Emotional intelligence on perceived pay equity	.108	13.764	.000	1.066
F	121.275（p=.000）			
R-side	0.660			
Adjusted R-side	0.654			
Predictor variables: (constant), perceived pay equity, employee engagement, emotional intelligence, dependent variable: job performance				

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the research analysis in Chapter 4, the research hypotheses were tested and the results are shown in Table 5.1 Research Implications

Table 5.1 Hypothesis testing

	Hypethesis	Validation results
H1	There are differences in perceived pay equity among M Education Group employees with different background variables (gender, age, education level).	Partially established
H2	There are differences in employee engagement among M Education Group employees with different background variables (gender, age, education level).	Partially established
H3	There are differences in emotional intelligence among Education Group M employees across background variables (gender, age, education).	Partially established
H4	There are differences in job performance among employees of M Education Group with different background variables (gender, age, education level).	Partially established
H5	There is a positive and significant effect of perceived pay equity on job performance among employees of M Education Group.	Established
H6	M Education Group employees in Employee Engagement has a positive and significant effect on job performance.	Established
H7	M Education Group employees' emotional intelligence has a mediating effect between perceived pay equity and job performance.	Established

5.2 Suggestions

Companies should focus on improving employee engagement. Whether managers treat employees equally and show full respect for them; the material aspect is whether workers receive reasonable pay and benefits. If these aspects are achieved, then the employees will pay more efforts in the work to give the enterprise returns, and at the same time improve the level of enterprise staff dedication, from the enterprise's payroll management aspects of the staff dedication impact, the rigor of the enterprise's payroll system and supervision can better enable employees to work, some companies have a performance system can strengthen the degree of employee participation in the work, which can improve employees' work efficiency to a great extent, so that employees can establish work confidence and improve their dedication.

We should pay attention to the cultivation and enhancement of the emotional intelligence of employees. Emotional intelligence has become the key ability of HR in the recruitment process, and the improvement of emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the potential ability of employees, and it also helps the management ability of employees, which can lick the bricks for employees in the career development path. The higher the emotional intelligence, the more it enables the enterprise workers to stabilize their own negative emotional state, not to affect the normal work, to create favorable conditions for their work is work can be completed successfully. The

higher the emotional intelligence of employees, the more flexible they will be in dealing with conflicts between employees in the organization, which is conducive to the formation of good employee relations and the improvement of the perception of employee cohesion.

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