

A study on Behavioural Approach Theory of Organizational Performance in Retail Environment

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ABSTRACT

Organization is a coalition of people whose relationship is structured and defined and are linked together by a common goal. The evaluation of any organization is possible through identifying the performance (organizational performance) of the organization. The behavioral theory of the firm (Cyert and March 1963) confirms that the organizational performance needs to be assessed considering all the stakeholders of the firm. Hence following the roots of the behavioral theory of firm, organizational performance is considered as an outcome of the behavior of the individuals comprising the organization. Behavioural approach framework of the organizational performance in this study conceptualised organizational performance as the outcome of the behavior of the stakeholders comprising employees, customers etc based on their ability, attitude towards job, and the customers attitude towards the firm. Emotional intelligence (ability of the employees), job satisfaction (job attitude of employees) and retail service quality (attitude of the customers) were taken to test the behavioural approach framework. The sample respondents consisted of 240 customers of a retail store (super market) and 55 employees. The theory was tested by developing a theoretical model relating the four constructs (Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, retail service quality and organizational performance) and tested using Structural Equation Modeling.

Introduction

Organization is a coalition of people whose relationship is structured and defined and are linked together by a common goal. They are open and are linked with the external environment operating around it. The members of the organization are rewarded for their contribution to the organization. The ultimate aim of any organization is to meet its defined objectives. The evaluation of an organization is important for its survival. The evaluation of any organization is

possible through identifying the performance (organizational performance) of the organization. Normally Organizational performance is measured through financial indicators like profits; return on assets, etc. Organizational performance measurement is comparing the expected results with the actual ones, investigating deviations from plans, assessing individual performance and examining progress made towards meeting the targeted objectives (Ngah *et al.* 2010). Organizational performance is a financial performance where considerations of budgets,

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assets, operations, products, services, markets and human resources are crucial in determining the overall bottom-line of an organization. (Dixon, 1999; Thurbin, 1994 and Smith, 1999). Organizational performance is “a vital sign of the organization, showing how well activities within a process or the outputs of a process achieve a specific goal”. (Pit *et al.* (2008). Organizational performance encompassed three specific areas of firm outcomes: (a) financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc.); (b) product market performance (sales, market share, etc.); and (c) shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc.). (Richard *et al.* (2009). It shows the actual output derived from an organization in relation with the defined goals. Organizational performance analysis is also the method to identify the growth of any organization with its planned goals and objectives. It also projects the sound health of the organization. The above discussion proved that the organizational performance is a crucial element in determining the success of any organization. It is generally defined by the financial performance of the organization. Besides measuring the organizational performance, it is also important to identify the factors which determine the organizational performance. This will help in enhancing the organizational performance by altering the factors influencing organizational performance. This article tries to define a new framework of organizational performance and test it.

Theoretical Framework of the study

“Organizational performance is an important component of empirical research in the field of business policy” (Dess and Robinson 1984). The important issue to be considered in the research of organizational performance is the conceptual framework for defining organizational

performance. Three frameworks of organizational performance viz: goal approach, systems approach and constituency approach are examined and discussed by Ford and Schellenberg (1982). The goal approach of organizational performance is based on the goals inferred from the behavior of the members of the organization. (Etzioni 1964). The systems resource approach assesses organizational performance based on the external and internal factors acting on the organization. (Yuchtman and Seashore 1967). The constituency approach evaluates organizational performance by its ability to satisfy the needs of all the constituencies of the organization as it views that the organization works for the well being of many constituencies. (Thompson 1967). The 21st century business organizations has turbulent business environment which is not constant and is subject to change. Hence different approach is needed besides the financial indicators of the organizational performance. The traditional profit theory is no more valid as it is mainly concerned with the share holders of the company. But the present business organization is highly influenced by the customers, employees and the society as a whole. The behavioral theory of the firm (Cyert and March 1963) defines the company as the coalition of individuals or group of individuals. This confirms that the organizational performance needs to be assessed considering all the stakeholders of the firm. Hence following the roots of the behavioral theory of firm, organizational performance is considered as an outcome of the behavior of the individuals comprising the organization. Behaviour is the response of an individual or group to an environment or the surroundings or stimulus. Skinner (1938, 1953, and 1957) has done a lot of behavior analysis. He has demonstrated the events occurring before and after behavior. The

events occurring before behavior are termed as antecedents and the events occurring after behavior are termed as consequences. Antecedents and consequences are jointly termed as behavioural contingencies. Skinner further quoted that behavioural contingencies can be manipulated to influence the probability of occurrence of the behavior.(Pershing 2006) This served as a basis for considering organizational performance as the consequence of individual behavior in the organization. Thus behavioural approach theory was formulated and tested in this study.

Behavioural approach theory of organizational performance

Organizational performance is considered as the consequence and the antecedents are presumed as ability and attitude. Ability is defined as the capacity of an individual to perform. Attitude is the statement about anything (person, event, etc.). An attitude can be defined as a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, event, activities, ideas, or just about anything in your environment (Zimbardo *et al.*, 1999).

The ability and attitude of the employees play a major role in deciding the performance of the organization. Attitude of the customers of the organization decides the performance of the organization. Hence ability and attitude brings the positive or negative behavior and the organizational performance is the consequence of the positive or negative behavior. The ability and attitude can be modified to eliminate negative behavior and they can be maintained to retain the positive behavior. As the employees of the organization are considered as the main stakeholder, ability of the employee and job attitudes of the employees are considered for attitude. Customers of the organization served to be important stakeholder of the organization. So their attitude was also considered. This background conceptualized organizational performance in this study as the outcome of the behavior of the stakeholders comprising employees, customers etc based on their ability, attitude towards job, and the customers attitude towards the firm.(fig 1). This is termed as the behavioural approach framework of the organizational performance

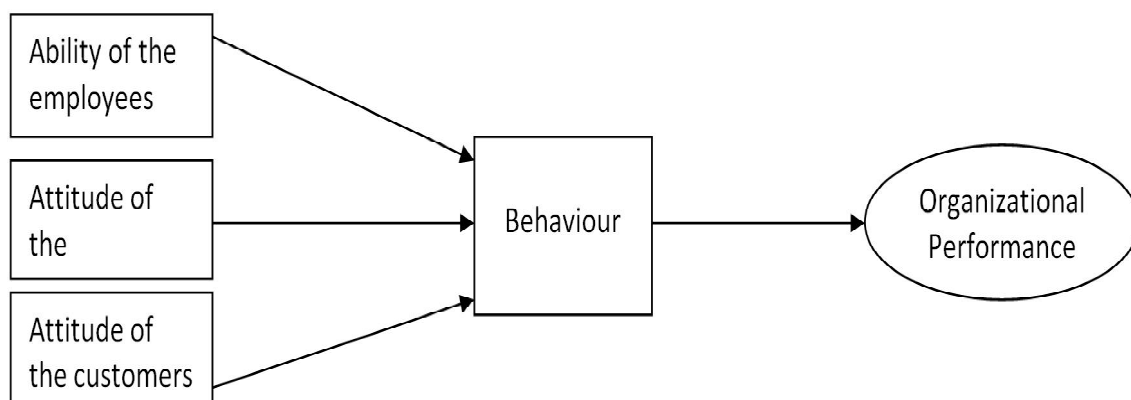


Fig 1 : Behavioural approach theory of organizational performance

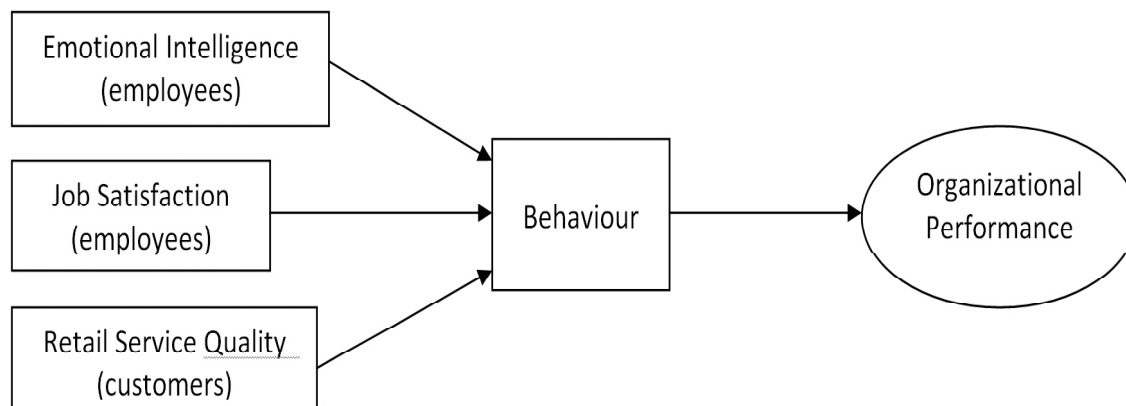


Fig 2 : Conceptual model of the study

Research study

The present study tested the behavioural approach framework of organizational performance in a retail environment. Attitude and ability are a common term and there are different types of ability and attitudes. The job attitude of the employees and their emotional knowledge is the basis for an employee to express a positive or negative behavior in an organization. High performance, less attrition, increased turn over indicate the positive behavior of the employee and low performance, high attrition depict the negative behavior of the employees. Job satisfaction is the positive or negative attitude of an employee towards a job. Hartar *et.al*(2002) found that there exist a positive relationship between job satisfaction and business unit outcomes like productivity, profit, employee turnover etc. Schneider *et al.* (2003) found that there exist a consistent and significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and market performance. Employee's job satisfaction contributes to the organizational performance of a company(Lu li Ru 2006) . Hence job satisfaction was identified as attitude of the employees.

Emotional intelligence is an ability to understand emotions and managing them. It was found that

emotional intelligence serve as a catalyst in leveraging intellectual capital which increases the organizational performance (Hussain & Mallik 2010).Chipian (2003) found that emotional intelligence increases sales performance. So emotional intelligence was substituted for ability of the employees. The service rendered by an organization is its behavior towards its customers and service quality is the attitude of the customers towards the firm. Service Quality is a global judgment or attitude, relating to the overall superiority of the service (Parasuraman, *et al.*, 1988). Good service indicates the positive behavior of the firm towards its customers and the poor service shows the bad behavior. Service quality mediates the relationship between market orientation and organizational performance and influences organizational performance(Ramayah *et.al* 2011). Service quality found to be the strongest predictor of organizational performance (Ali *et.al* 2009). Service quality in retailing was however different from any other product/service environment (Finn *et al.*, 1991; Gagliano *et al.*, 1994). Hence Dabholkar *et al.* (1996) created a new construct called Retail Service Quality (RSQ) exclusively for the retail firms. Thus emotional intelligence (ability of the employees), job satisfaction (job attitude of employees) and

retail service quality (attitude of the customers) were considered as the antecedents for the organizational performance of a firm. (Fig 2) Besides, identifying the interrelationship among job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, and service quality will be useful in studying the behavioural approach framework.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is found to be an important psychological construct which measures the emotional component of individuals. It is found to be related with job performance, job satisfaction, customer satisfaction etc. Emotional intelligence is a skill of self control, zeal, persistence and the ability to motivate oneself. (Goleman 1995). Emotional intelligence is “the ability to perceive, accurately appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth”. (Mayer and Salovey 1997). Emotional intelligence is the “ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions. (Kulkarni *et al* 2009). Ranganath *et al* (2011) saw emotional intelligence as the ability of an individual to perceive various emotional stimuli associated with his/her self and his/her environment, appraise and regulate them, in order to produce appropriate behavioral responses, resulting in improved intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes. Mood directed attention is a facet of emotional intelligence (Salovey *et al* (1990). which captures the behavior of the individuals. There exist a moderate relationship between job satisfaction and emotional intelligence (Bar-on (1997). Emotional intelligent individuals have the capacity to

prioritize the tasks given to them and they try to attend the task which is of high priority (Abraham 2000). It was found that emotional intelligence through job control predicted a large amount of variance in job satisfaction. Highly emotional intelligent employees need autonomy in decision making for them to thrive in the organization. Organizational learning capacity served to be the instigating agent in a working condition where emotional intelligent employees establish competencies to perform well and attain the job satisfaction. (Chiva *et al*. 2008). Emotional intelligence positively affect the service performance of the employees and it was essential in jobs demanding emotional labour (Prentice *et al* 2011). A positive and significant relationship was found between all the three facets of job satisfaction viz; superiors, co workers and nature of work and emotional intelligence (Hajj *et al* 2010). Emotional intelligence of sales person also affects the quality of service perceived by the customers and a positive relationship between the sales person and the customers help to maintain positive experiences in the retail environment. Salespersons’ emotional intelligence affects positive emotional expression as a whole, and salespersons’ positive emotional expression at service encounters had significant effects on the quality of service perceived by customers (Kim 2010).

Job satisfaction

Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences”. Spector (1997) believed that job satisfaction can be considered as a global feeling about the job or as a related constellation of attitudes about various aspects or facets of the job. Job satisfaction was related to retail store

performance and sales were found to be inversely proportional to the job satisfaction and directly related to anxiety stress and propensity to leave in stores with high sales. (Donnelly J.H *et.al* 1977). Job satisfaction leads to firm performance through effort (Profit sharing, fixed compensation, job factors and problems with role perceptions) and job performance (Christen *et.al*, 2006).

Retail Service Quality

Retail Service Quality is the overall opinion of the customers about the services rendered by the individual stores. A service is an application of specialized capabilities by an economic agent (service provider) for the benefit of another economic agent (customer) (Ahn, *et.al* 2009) . Similarly, it is also the customers' perception of how well a service meets or exceeds their expectations (Czepiel, 1990).

The review of work suggests that the emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and retail service quality influences the organizational performance of the firm. Moreover, it was also found that all the three were interrelated among themselves.

Hence the following hypotheses were framed for the study.

H1: Emotional intelligence influences the retail service quality of the firm

(employee & customer perception)

H2: Emotional intelligence influences the job satisfaction of the employees (employee perception)

H3: Emotional intelligence influences the organizational performance of the firm

(employee perception)

H4: Job satisfaction influences the retail service equality of the firm (employee & customer perception)

H5: Job satisfaction influences the organizational performance of the firm (employee perception)

H6: Retail service quality of the firm influences the organizational performance of the firm

(customer perception)

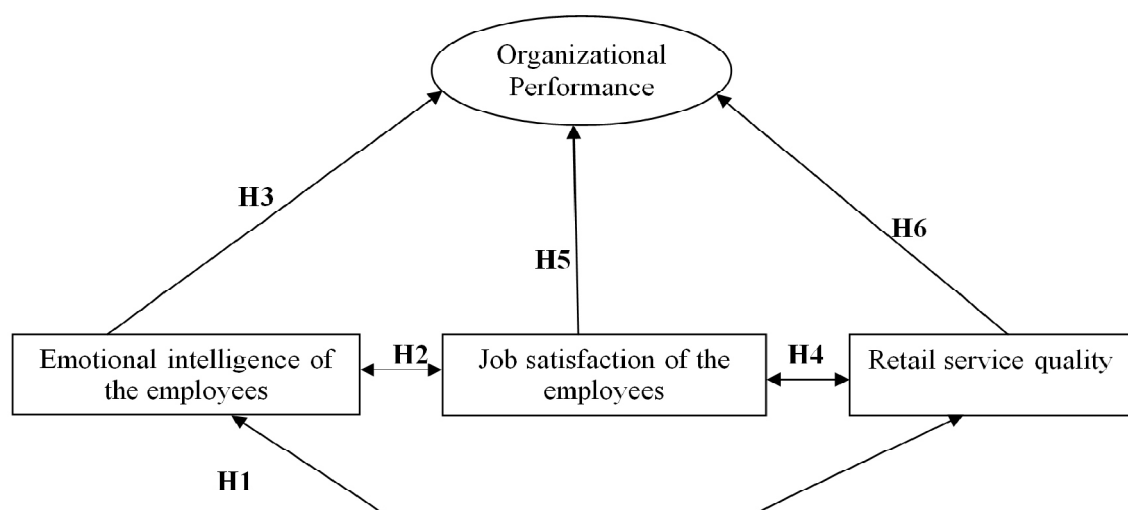


Fig 3 : Behavioural components of Organizational performance in a retail environment

Methodology

Behavioural approach theory of organizational performance was tested by conducting a study in retail environment. The sample respondents consisted of 240 customers of a retail store (super market) and 55 employees. The primary data required for the study was collected through personal interview technique. Separate questionnaires were designed for the customers and employees. Besides, the day to day activities of the stores were observed and the behavior of the store employees with customers was systematically documented. Suitable instruments were used to measure emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. There were many instruments for measuring Emotional Intelligence (EI). Two published measures, MSCEIT (Mayer *et.al.* 2002) and the EQ-I (Bar-On, 1997), were marketed for assessing EI. MSCEIT was designed to measure how well individuals perform emotion-related tasks and composed of four scales viz. Emotional Management, Emotional Understanding, Emotional Facilitation, and Emotional Perception. EQ-I was a self-report inventory that consists of 133 items assessing 15 subscales that are classified under five main factors namely Intrapersonal Functioning (emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, and independence), Interpersonal Skills (empathy, interpersonal relationships, and social responsibility), Adaptability (problem solving, reality testing, and flexibility), General Mood (happiness and optimism), and Stress Management (stress tolerance and impulse control)

Heider, (1991), Lutz, (1988), and Potter (1988) suggested that cultural contexts and heritages affect individuals' emotional responses. The interpretation and evaluation of emotions was

intimately related to any cultural perspectives (Wouters, 1989; Mesquite *et.al.* 1992). In order to bring in the cultural contexts in the estimations, the instruments available in Indian context, Deepa Krishnaveni Emotional Intelligence Test (DKEIT) developed by Ranganath *et.al.* (2011) was used for the study. DKEIT consists of three constituents namely Emotional perception, (the ability of an individual to interpret the various emotional stimuli triggered by the entities of his/her environment and organize them for further processing) Emotional appraisal (the ability of an individual to understand the emotional information supplied by the perception process and evaluate it cognitively, with respect to his/her environment, so as to decide the appropriate responses to the stimuli), Emotional regulation (the ability of an individual to regulate the response fed by the appraisal mechanism according to the person/object/situation in order to elicit positive outcomes). This instrument consisted of eighteen items.

Job satisfaction is measured using Job descriptive Index (JDI) This index measured the five facets of job satisfaction namely job itself (work on present job), pay, promotion (opportunities for promotion), co worker (people on your present job), and supervision. JDI instrument has totally 72 items. Job itself, co-worker and supervision had 18 items each. Pay and promotion each contained nine items. Besides, a global scale namely job in general with eighteen items was also included in the JDI scale.

Retail Service Quality was measured using a Modified version of the Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) developed by Dabholkar, *et.al.* (1996). The modified scale consisted of 18 items measuring six constructs namely physical appearance, inspiring confidence, courteousness, problem solving, policy and product related

services. The theory was tested by developing a theoretical model relating the four constructs (Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, retail service quality and organizational performance) and tested using Structural Equation Modeling. The model was a full SEM model linking the four latent variables (Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, retail service quality and organizational performance) and includes three measurement models emotional intelligence, retail service quality and job satisfaction.

Results and discussion

The theoretical model was tested using AMOS version 20. The analysis resulted in the values viz: CMIN or χ^2 (329.7), NFI (0.505), CFI (0.676) and RMSEA (0.036). (Fig 3) The results showed an RMSEA value of 0.036 and PCLOSE at 1.000. This indicated that the model was a good fit with the sample. PCLOSE value of 1 indicates that this relationship could be felt in the entire population. The values of CFI (0.676) and NFI (0.505) alone were not significant as the value above 0.95 was considered as the fit. But the RMSEA was considered as important than the other two i.e. CFI and NFI. As per Rigdon (1996) RMSEA, a recently originated index, was fit in confirmatory than CFI. Hence RMSEA value of 0.036 in the present study, despite the low value of CFI and NFI indicated the fitness of the model. The model fitness indicated that emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and retail service quality can bring out an increased or decreased organizational performance. So emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and retail service quality served as antecedents for the organizational performance, especially in a retail environment. Hypothesis testing using the results from confirmatory factor analysis elaborates the interrelationship among the three and their relationship with organizational performance .

Hypothesis testing

The standardized regression weights or the path coefficients captured the impact of each construct on the organizational performance of the retail firm and thus helped in testing the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1

The standard regression weight between emotional intelligence and retail service quality was -0.070. Hence the Hypothesis 1 stating the influence of emotional intelligence on retail service quality is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

The study found a moderate impact of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction (0.456). This result was similar with the study by Bar-on (1997), Chiva *et.al*, (2008) Hajj *et.al* (2010) where they found only a moderate relationship between job satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Hence Hypothesis 2 stating the influence of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction is supported.

Hypothesis 3

The standard regression weight between emotional intelligence and organizational performance was 0.001. This indicated a negligible direct influence of emotional intelligence on organizational performance. This showed that the impact of emotional intelligence on organizational performance is indirect through the other constructs like job satisfaction and retail service quality. Hence Hypothesis 3 stating the influence of emotional intelligence on organizational performance is rejected.

Hypothesis 4

The standard regression weight between job satisfaction and retail service quality was -0.087. Hence Hypothesis 4 stating the influence of job satisfaction on retail service quality is rejected. The minimum impact of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction on retail service quality confirmed that besides these two factors there could be some other factors which also influenced the retail service quality of the firm

Hypothesis 5

However, the present study found a strong direct relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance as the standard regression weight between job satisfaction and organizational performance was 0.970. This proved that satisfied employees contribute much to the performance of the organization. Hence Hypothesis 5 stating the influence of job satisfaction on organizational performance is supported.

Hypothesis 6

The result showed a negligible direct influence of emotional intelligence on the organizational performance as the standard regression weight between retail service quality and organizational performance is 0.199. Hence Hypothesis 6 stating the influence of retail service quality on organizational performance is rejected. This indicated that the individual impact of retail service quality on organizational performance was negligible.

As the theoretical model linking emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and the retail service quality with organizational performance was found to be a good fit, the three constructs jointly

affect the organizational performance. Job satisfaction, retail service quality and emotional intelligence through job satisfaction jointly influence the organizational performance of the retail firm.

Conclusion

The study of organizational performance through the behavioural approach was found valid through the study. It was found that ability of the employees (emotional intelligence) contributed indirectly to the organizational performance and their job attitude (job satisfaction) highly influenced the organizational performance but the impact of the attitude of the customers to the firm (retail service quality) is less. But all the three, ability of the employees (emotional intelligence) their job attitude (job satisfaction) and attitude of the customers to the firm (retail service quality) jointly influence the organizational performance of the firm. Hence organizational performance can be depicted as the consequence of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and service quality of the firm. This gives a new direction in the study of organizational performance which assures that organizational performance can be enhanced by altering the causes of a negative behavior which may be a negative attitude towards the job, low emotional intelligence and poor service quality. The behavioural approach of organizational performance was thus proved in a retail environment which is a service sector. Hence it can be concluded that this theory was more appropriate for a service organization and can be tested in varied sectors. Future studies can select other forms of attitude, and ability for testing the behavioural approach theory of organizational performance.

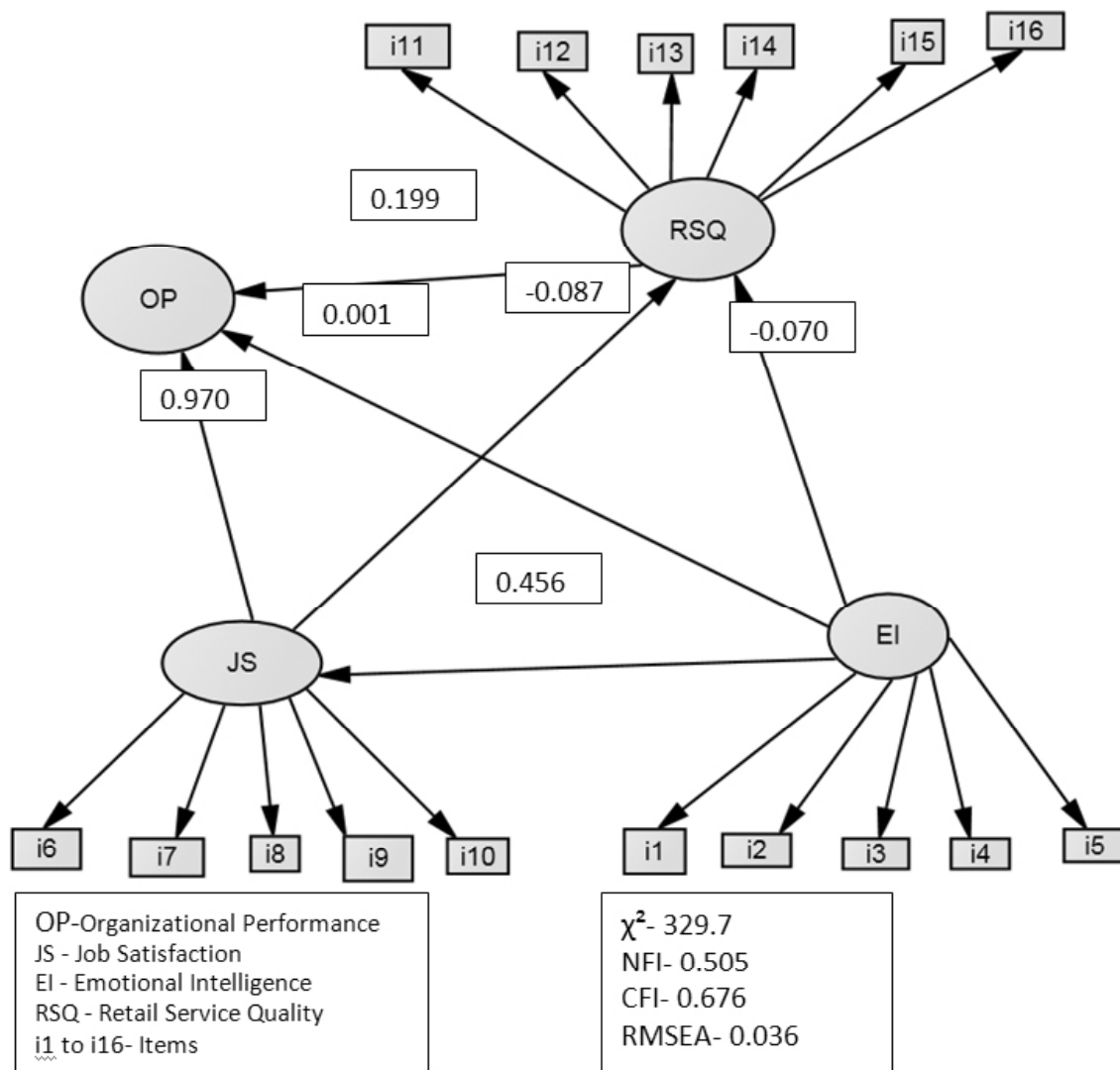


Fig. 3 : Result of the Behavioural approach theory of organizational performance in a retail sector

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