

# The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on the Political and Work Skills of DENR Employee in the Post-Pandemic Era

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of emotional intelligence on the political and work skills of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) employees in Region XI during the post-pandemic era. The study objectives are to determine the levels of political skills, work engagement, and emotional intelligence among DENR employees in Region XI, and to examine whether emotional intelligence plays a mediating role in the relationship between political skills and work engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a descriptive-correlational analysis, data was collected from a sample of 282 DENR employees, with the sample size determined using Taro Yamane's formula. The findings revealed that interpersonal influence had the highest mean among the indicators of political skills, indicating its frequent manifestation among DENR employees. Additionally, self-awareness exhibited the highest mean among the indicators of emotional intelligence, highlighting its significant presence. Moreover, emotional work engagement obtained the highest mean, demonstrating its consistent occurrence along with the other indicators. Significant correlations were observed between political skills and work engagement, emotional intelligence and political skills, and emotional intelligence and work engagement, rejecting the null hypothesis. Furthermore, the study uncovered a significant mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between political skills and work engagement, suggesting that employees with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to be actively engaged in their work. Such heightened emotional intelligence enables DENR employees to effectively manage their own emotions and understand the emotions of others, thereby facilitating the navigation of complex social and political dynamics through a deeper comprehension of diverse perspectives and motivations. Based on these findings, it is recommended that DENR employees engage in self-assessments of their emotional intelligence skills, reflecting on their behaviors, attitudes, and interactions with others. Furthermore, comprehensive training courses, seminars, and workshops led by professionals should be provided to actively enhance emotional intelligence competencies.

**Keywords**— Emotional Intelligence, Political Skill, Work engagement

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on workers' internal characteristics, such as their mental well-being and cognitive abilities (Ojo, Fawehinmi, & Yusliza, 2021). Recent studies have revealed a rise in cases of mental burnout during the pandemic, with the prevalent mental stress negatively affecting aspects related to one's sense of self (Wang, C., et al., 2021). It is suggested that employees may experience a loss of perceived meaning in their work due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic.

Furthermore, the stress induced by the pandemic can also influence internal factors like political skill and emotional intelligence, leading to psychosocial consequences and impacting work engagement (Gómez-Salgado et al., 2021). Psychosocial risks and work-related stress pose significant challenges that have profound implications for individuals, organizations, and economies (Giménez-Espert et al., 2020). While research has explored political skills, emotional intelligence, and work engagement, there is a gap in

studying the mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between work engagement and political skill, particularly in the local setting. This study aims to fill that gap in the literature.

In the Philippines, studies raise concerns about the pandemic's impact on the mental and psychological well-being of Filipinos, with high levels of stress and anxiety reported (Tee et al., 2020). Social exclusion, stigma, insufficient information, and unfavorable social perceptions worsen the situation, leading to mental health challenges and potential economic losses. The concept of pandemic fatigue explains the lack of motivation for protective behaviors and feelings of complacency or hopelessness (Michie, West, & Harvey, 2020).

Given the significance of emotional intelligence, political skill, and psychological well-being, this study focuses on documenting the well-being of the workforce in Davao, one of the Philippines' most populated regions. It aims to understand the interplay between emotional intelligence, mental health, and political ability in the field of Public Administration. The analysis of these variables will help develop frameworks and safety nets to improve workers' mental health and work motivation, ultimately enabling the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to better serve the country and uphold its mission and vision.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Assessing employees' emotional intelligence level is integral in any organization, much more in the field of public service. By analyzing the inter-relatedness of emotional intelligence to the political skills and work engagement among the employees of the DENR, the agency and the academe will be able to conceptualize frameworks and safety nets that can improve the work processes in the department. Correspondingly, this study seeks to determine the level of political skills, work engagement, and emotional intelligence of the DENR employees in Region XI and If emotional intelligence has a mediating effect in the connection between political skills and work engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, it will answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of Political Skill of DENR Employees in Region XI in terms of:

Networking Ability;

Interpersonal Influence;

Social Astuteness; and

Apparent Sincerity?

2. What is the level of Work Engagement of DENR Employees in Region XI in terms of:

Cognitive Engagement,

Emotional Engagement, and

Physical Engagement?

3. What is the level of Emotional Intelligence of DENR Employees in Region XI in terms of:

Self-Awareness;

Self-Management;

Internal Motivation;

Empathy; and

Employee Relationship Management?

4. Is there a significant relationship between:

Political Skill and Work Engagement;

Political Skill and Emotional Intelligence; and

Emotional Intelligence and Work Engagement?

5. Is there a significant mediating effect of Emotional Intelligence on the relationship between Political Skill and Work Engagement of DENR employees in Region XI amid the COVID-19 pandemic?

### **Hypothesis**

The following null hypotheses will be tested at a 95% confidence level and 0.05 level of significance. They are as follows:

1. There is no significant relationship between Political Skill and Work Engagement,
2. There is no significant relationship between Political Skill and Emotional Intelligence,
3. There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Work Engagement
4. Emotional Intelligence does not significantly mediate the relationship between Political Skill and Work Engagement of DENR employees in Region XI amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was anchored to the theory of Henry Murray (1938), the Trait Activation Theory (TAT), which suggested that emotional intelligence can mediate the relationships between political skill and work engagement (Saracho, 2019). Specifically, emotional intelligence may activate or enhance the positive effects of political skills on work engagement by helping employees manage their emotions better and navigate interpersonal relationships. Because certain traits (such as emotional intelligence and political skill) may be activated in certain situations, leading to specific behaviors and outcomes.

Emotional intelligence may enhance the relationship between political skill and work engagement by activating positive emotions and behaviors in DENR employees. This is supported by Bandura's (1960) by his theory of social cognition that people's behavior is shaped by their personal factors (Devi et al., 2017) (such as work engagement and political skill), political skill, and the interaction between the two. It suggests that emotional intelligence may influence work engagement by affecting individuals' self-efficacy, motivation, and goal-setting.

According to Bakker and Demerouti (2012), in their Job demands-resources model, the work engagement at work of employees is influenced by job demands (workload, time pressure) and job resources (social support, autonomy). Emotional intelligence may act as a resource that helps individuals cope with job demands and enhance their work engagement.

Consequently, one public policy theory that may support the study is the Organizational Learning Theory of Max Weber (1922). Organizations can learn and adapt to changes in their environment by acquiring and integrating new knowledge and skills. In this context, emotional intelligence and political skill are essential components of organizational learning, as they enable employees to manage interpersonal relationships and communicate effectively within the organization (Katz & Sosa, 2015).

Furthermore, work engagement is closely linked to organizational learning, as engaged employees are more likely to be motivated to learn and acquire new skills to contribute to the organization’s success. As such, understanding the mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between political skill and work engagement among DENR employees in Region XI can provide valuable insights into how organizations can support employee learning and development. By examining the role of emotional intelligence in facilitating effective communication and relationship-building within the organization, the study can provide insights into how DENR can create a supportive learning environment that encourages the development of these essential skills. This leads to increased work engagement and a more motivated, productive workforce, ultimately supporting the organization’s goals and contributing to achieving public policy objectives related to environmental protection and sustainability.

Moreover, DENR employees with high levels of emotional intelligence may be better able to regulate their emotions in response to stressful or challenging situations at work, which could help them maintain a positive attitude and remain engaged in their work. Additionally, employees with high emotional intelligence may be better equipped to understand and respond to the emotions of others, which could facilitate their ability to build relationships and positively influence others. Thus, TAT provides a theoretical framework for understanding how emotional intelligence may mediate the relationship between political skill and work engagement among DENR employees in Region XI.

### Conceptual Framework

The figure below explains how the variables are integrated to establish the conceptual framework of this study. The interplay of variables is illustrated through a path analysis conceptual framework presented in Figure 1.

This path analysis aims to investigate the mediation effect of Emotional Intelligence (EI) to distinguish the “direct” or “indirect” relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) to Political Skills (PS), between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Work Engagement (WE), and between Political Skills (PS) and Work Engagement.

Path A is the relationship between EI and PS, where EI serves as the independent variable and has the following indicators: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Internal Motivation, Empathy, and Employee Relationship Management, while the PS is composed of the following indicators: Networking Ability, Interpersonal Influence, Social Astuteness, and Apparent Sincerity. On the other hand, Path B explains the relationship between EI and Work Engagement WE. WE are composed of indicators such as Cognitive Engagement, Emotional Engagement, and Physical Engagement. While Path C is the relationship between PS and WE, where both are dependent variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

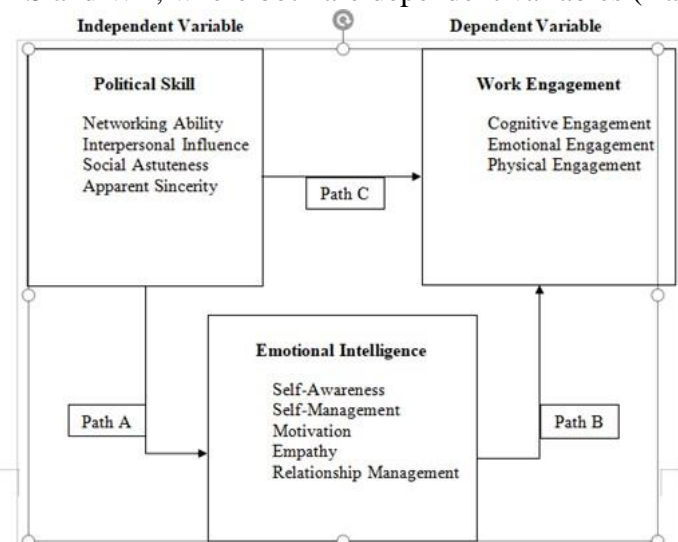


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

The first has a domain under the independent variable, which is Political Skill. It is the Networking Ability. It refers to the capacity of an individual to build his connection with others. Interpersonal Influence. It refers to the ability to influence others' thoughts and communicate effectively. Social Astuteness. It refers to the ability to observe people around and act accordingly based on observation. Apparently Sincere. It refers to the genuineness and truthfulness of communication of a person towards others, and also, it is an ability to make people believe you are genuine and sincere (Ferris et al., 1999).

On the other hand, the dependent variable's first domain, Work Engagement, is Cognitive Engagement. It refers to an individual's character for being hardworking and mindful of their work. Emotional Engagement. It refers to the emotional bond of an individual towards their work and tells about his feelings inside the workplace. Physical Engagement. It refers to the physical attribute of an individual to their work and the level of energy they put into doing their work (Taormina, 2017).

Lastly, the mediator variable is Emotional Intelligent, and its first domain is Self-Awareness. It refers to the consciousness and apprehension of an individual on their own self. Self-Management. It refers to an ability of an individual to control his emotion and own self. Motivation. It refers to the direction of an individual toward his career, objectives, and goals. Empathy. It refers to the understanding of an individual toward their colleagues or the people around them (Goleman, 1998).

## RELATED STUDIES AND LITERATURE

### Emotional Intelligence

Research on emotional intelligence has gained significant attention in the fields of psychology and leadership. Emotional intelligence involves accurate knowledge of one's own feelings and the mental states of others and the ability to regulate one's emotions (Katz & Sosa, 2015). It is a multi-dimensional component that includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills [13]. Many studies attested that high levels of emotional intelligence are crucial for executives to display self-confidence and earn respect from subordinates.

Emotional intelligence has expanded from impacting individual behaviors to becoming essential in organizational decision-making and strategic planning (Brunetto et al., 2012). It is defined as a mental process that combines thinking and feeling, allowing individuals to harmonize with the world and communicate effectively with others (Miners, Côté, & Lievens, 2018). Further studies by Goleman (2011) have shown that emotional intelligence better predicts job performance and management success than IQ. It is vital in people-oriented services such as recruiting, sales, management, and customer service.

Emotional intelligence is a distinct form of intelligence that involves reasoning about emotions and has a significant impact on various elements of business, including employee growth, performance, and productivity (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013). Research has also highlighted the importance of assessing emotional intelligence in officers and providing training to enhance their understanding and application of emotional intelligence principles [18]. Leadership training is an effective method for enhancing emotional intelligence (Carter, 2015).

Emotional intelligence encompasses several key elements: self-awareness, self-management, empathy, and relationship management. Self-awareness involves perceiving and comprehending one's own emotions and their impact on others (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2016). Self-management focuses on regulating one's emotions, managing negative impacts, and fostering positive outcomes (Lumpkin, & Achen, 2018). Empathy involves recognizing and understanding others' emotions and effectively communicating and building positive relationships. Relationship management includes understanding emotions, modifying behavior and interactions, and effectively leading and managing others (Momeni, 2009).



## Political Skills

Several scholarly works focused on political skills in organizational psychology have highlighted the importance of possessing political acumen to succeed in today's professional world. Political skills may involve understanding colleagues and peers and using this knowledge of their behavior to influence them for personal and organizational goals (Shaughnessy et al., 2017). These skills are crucial for individuals to navigate organizational dynamics with integrity and honor. Scholars argue that organizations are inherently political, making political skills essential for progress (Nourbakhsh, Sepasi, & Barpa, 2016).

Studies have found that political skills, including social intelligence, interpersonal impact, networking potential, and clear integrity, contribute to managerial effectiveness and productivity (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2014). Political skills require understanding others, building relationships, and interacting respectfully (Braddy & Campbell, 2014). Political competence involves persuading others to align with personal and organizational objectives. Effective political skills can enhance trustworthiness and professionalism (Rutner et al., 2015). The development of political skills can be facilitated through preparation, experience, training, and interactions that foster growth.

Networking abilities are crucial for individuals to establish relationships and access key resources for personal and team success (Braddy & Campbell, 2014). However, leaders should avoid isolating themselves within their networks to ensure exposure to diverse perspectives. Interpersonal influence, social astuteness, and apparent sincerity are key components of political skills. They involve adapting behavior to elicit desired responses, understanding social dynamics, and effectively communicating with others.

Thus, political skills are essential for professionals to navigate the political nature of organizations and advance their personal and organizational goals. Developing political skills requires understanding colleagues, influencing them with integrity, and building strong networks. These skills encompass interpersonal influence, social astuteness, and apparent sincerity. By cultivating these abilities, individuals can enhance their effectiveness, productivity, and professional relationships in the workplace.

## Work Engagement

Being engaged at work refers to highly motivated individuals, emotionally connected to their team and organization and committed to contributing their best efforts to meet organizational goals and ultimately the company's success (Whittington, Meskelis, Asare, & Beldona, 2017). On the other hand, disengaged workers exhibit ineffectivity in their jobs and detachment behavior from their roles. In most cases, they have higher absenteeism and are more likely to leave the organization. Thus, positive work engagement is associated with high levels of service quality performance.

Young, Glerum, Wang, & Joseph (2018) argued that work engagement is measured by three qualities: energy, devotion, and absorption. Vigor reflects high energy levels, mental resilience, and willingness to exert effort, even in challenging situations. Dedication involves enthusiasm, pride, and a readiness to take on challenges. Absorption refers to being fully engaged and focused on work. Work engagement plays a crucial role in job performance, positively influencing service quality. Gutermann et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of prioritizing employee involvement as an organizational value, as it is linked to improved performance.

To enhance productivity, organizations should support employee motivation and engagement, as low levels of engagement can have significant consequences. Previous research has also demonstrated the impact of work engagement on employee performance. Kahn (1990) proposed a multidimensional perspective of work engagement, considering cognitive, emotional, and physical states as influencing factors. This view suggests that work engagement involves conscious cognitive, emotional, and physical attachment to goals, tasks, or

organizational activities. It encompasses positive thinking about improving effectiveness, experiencing positive emotions related to task performance, and willingly investing energy and effort to achieve goals.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the interactions between emotional intelligence, political skills, and work engagement among employees in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) – Regional Office XI. The objective was to provide a systematic and accurate description of the variables without inferring causality. Additionally, the study explored the potential mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between political skills and work engagement, particularly during the challenging circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To ensure robust data collection, a sample size of 282 regular employees was determined using Taro Yamane's formula, with a 95% significance level. The researchers followed a seven-step data collection process, starting with presenting the research idea to a panel of experts and obtaining necessary approvals. The study utilized an adapted questionnaire sourced from reputable web platforms, consisting of three parts: the Emotional Intelligence scale, Political Skills scale, and Work Engagement scale. These instruments were carefully customized to align with the research objectives and captured responses using a 5-point Likert scale.

In the subsequent stages of analysis, the researchers utilized SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to analyze the collected data. Descriptive statistics, such as means, were used to assess the levels of emotional intelligence, political skills, and work engagement exhibited by DENR employees. Furthermore, correlation analysis was conducted to quantify the relationships between these variables, providing insights into their magnitude and direction. The study also employed mediation analysis, specifically the Sobel z-test, to investigate the potential mediating effect of emotional intelligence on the link between political skills and work engagement. This comprehensive methodological framework facilitated a rigorous examination of the intricate dynamics among emotional intelligence, political skills, and work engagement, offering valuable insights into the experiences of DENR employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

The demographic profile of the respondents in terms of their age, years of service, and office assignment by salary grade. The study employed Taro Yamane's formula stipulated in Chapter 2 to determine the sample size. The distribution of respondents by age bracket, with the highest number of respondents falling in the age bracket of 31-35 years old, represented 20.4 percent of the sample. In terms of the years of service of the respondents, the majority have 6-10 years of service, representing 34.9 percent of the population. It also found out that the respondents' office assignments by salary grade, with CENRO having the most number of respondents that had SG 4-14, followed by the Regional Office.

### **Political Skill**

#### **Networking Ability**

Presented in table 1 was the political skill of DENR employees in terms of networking ability. The overall mean was 3.37 and described as moderate, which means it was sometimes evident the networking ability of the DENR employees is.

**Table 1. The Level of Political Skill in terms of Networking Ability**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others	3.41	High
2. I am good at building relationships with influential people at work	3.36	Moderate
3. At work, I know a lot of important people and am well-connected	3.33	Moderate
4. I spend a lot of time at work developing connections with others	3.28	Moderate
5. I am good at using my connections and network to make things happen at work	3.31	Moderate
6. I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work who I can call on for support when I really need to get things done	3.53	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.37	Moderate

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It was found that item 6 was the highest mean score of 3.53 and described as high which implied that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work who can call on for support when to get things done. The next was item 1 which had a mean score of 3.41 and was described as high, which implied that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others. The third highest mean score of 3.36 and described as moderate was item number 2 which implied that it was sometimes evident that the DENR employees were good at building rapport and relationships with influential people at work. Then item 3 was next with a mean of 3.33 and was described as moderate which was sometimes evident that the DENR employees know a lot of important people and they were well connected with them.

Moreover, it was followed by item 5 with a mean score of 3.31 and described as moderate, which implied that it was sometimes evident that the DENR employees were good at using their connections and network to make things happen to work. Lastly, item 3 with a mean of 3.28 and is described as moderate. This indicates that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees spent their time developing and building connections with other people.

This is supported by Ferris et al., (2017) that in political skill networking ability refers to a person’s ability to effectively build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including influential individuals and groups, in order to achieve their goals or advance their interests within a political or organizational context. It involves developing strong interpersonal skills, being able to read and understand people and their motivations, and knowing how to navigate complex social and political networks. According to Braddy and Campbell (2016), when it came to getting things done professionally and procuring essential resources for themselves and their teams, workers with excellent networking skills also excelled in these areas.

**Interpersonal Influence**

Presented in table 2 was the level of political skill of DENR employees in terms of interpersonal influence. The overall mean was 3.88 and described as high, which means interpersonal influence was oftentimes evident to the DENR employees.



**Table 2 The Level of Political Skill in terms of Interpersonal Influence**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work whom I can call on for support when I really need to get things done	4.01	High
2. I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me	4.00	High
3. I am able to communicate easily and effectively with others	3.92	High
4. It is easy for me to develop a good rapport with most people	3.57	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.88	High

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It was found that item 1 was the highest mean of 4.01 and was described as high, which implied that it was often evident that the DENR employees cultivate a sizable professional network at their place of employment, consisting of coworkers and associates that they can depend on the assistance in times of extreme need. It is followed by item 2 in the mean score of 4.00 and described as high, which implied that it was often evident that the DENR employees can make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me.

The next item 3, was described as high, with a mean of 3.92, which implied that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees were able to communicate quickly and effectively with others oftentimes. The lowest item was item 4, but it was also described as high with a mean score of 3.57 which conveyed that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees were having ease in developing a good rapport with most of the people.

This is supported by Braddy and Campbell (2014), who mentioned that interpersonal influence was made to be an ability to effectively navigate the complex social and political landscape of an organization or society to achieve one’s goals. It entails the application of strategies, including persuasion, negotiation, and networking, to forge alliances, resolve disputes, and win over others. A person with this skill also uses their enthusiastic or engaging interpersonal style to influence others. Their attempts to control others are typically successful because of their ability to build rapport, form ties with others, win people over, and conduct well around others.

**Social Astuteness**

Presented in table 3 was the level of political skill of DENR employees in terms of social astuteness. The overall mean was 3.64 and described as high, which means that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees have interpersonal influence.

**Table 3 Level of Political Skill in terms of Social Astuteness**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I understand people very well	3.70	High
2. I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others	3.51	High
3. I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to others	3.60	High

4. I always seem to instinctively know the right things to say or do to influence others	3.57	High
5. I pay close attention to people’s facial expressions	3.83	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.64	High

It was found that the highest mean score was an item with a mean score of 3.83 and described as high, which implied that it was oftentimes evident that DENR employees were paying close attention to people’s facial expressions. The next item with the highest mean was item 1, with a mean score of 3.70 and described as high, which implied that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees understand people very well. It was followed by item 3 with a mean score of 3.60 and described as high, which inferred that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees have a good intuition or savvy about how to present themselves to others. Moreover, item 4 had a mean of 3.57 and was described as high, which implied that it was often evident that the DENR employees instinctively know the right things to say or do to influence others. Lastly, item 2, with a mean score of 3.51 and described as high, conveyed that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees were often particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others.

Furthermore, social astuteness is a component of political skill and refers to understanding and interpreting social cues, norms, and expectations in social situations. People who are socially astute can accurately read the emotions and intentions of others and adjust their own behavior accordingly. The employees were skilled at decoding nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. Furthermore, according to Goleman (2017), leadership should preserve common sense, tolerance, and understanding. This often required keeping one’s cool while treating detainees with compassion, respect, and decency in trying situations.

In addition, the research conducted by Braddy and Campbell (2014) found that socially conscious professionals typically understand what words to say and what actions to take to benefit their coworkers. This is because they have a natural ability to comprehend individuals within the context of social settings. They are also talented in boosting the confidence and self-esteem of others around them. They aim to persuade or influence people by demonstrating how the theory contributes to the individuals’ own personal objectives or interests.

**Apparent Sincerity**

Presented in table 4 was the level of political skill of DENR employees in terms of apparent sincerity. The overall mean was 3.78 and described as high, which means apparent sincerity was oftentimes evident by the DENR employees.

**Table 4. The Level of Political Skill in terms of Apparent Sincerity**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. When communicating with others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do	3.75	High
2. It is important that people believe I am sincere in what I say and do	3.73	High
3. I try to show a genuine interest in other people	3.87	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.78	High

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It was found that item 3 was the highest mean of 3.87 and was described as high, which implied that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees often tried to show that they had a genuine interest in other people. It was followed by item 1, which had a mean of 3.75, which it described as high, which indicates that it was oftentimes evident that the DENR employees when communicating with others, try to be genuine in what they say and do. Lastly, item 2 had the lowest mean score of 3.73, but it was also described as high, and it implied that it was often evident that it's important to the DENR employees that people believe in them and in what they do and speak.

Moreover, apparent sincerity was a key aspect of political skill that refers to the ability to appear genuine and trustworthy, even if one's actual motives and intentions are less than pure. Employees with high levels of political skill and apparent sincerity were able to persuade and influence others by presenting themselves as trustworthy and honest, even if their true motives were more self-serving. According to Treadway et al., (2007), this political skill set was essential if leverage attempts were to be successful since it focuses on the ostensible reasons behind the action of the employees. It was also supported by Braddy and Campbell (2014) that government employees must show genuine interest in other people too. Because these workers are not considered deceptive or have hidden motives, they are usually respected and better positioned to influence others using various techniques, such as interpersonal control. Building trusting relationships is essential in guiding others expertly.

## Work engagement

### Cognitive Work Engagement

**Table 5. The Level of Work Engagement in terms of Cognitive Work Engagement**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. My mind is often full of ideas about my work	3.95	High
2. Wherever I am, things happen that often remind me of my work	3.87	High
3. My mind is fully engaged with my work	3.84	High
4. I rarely think about time when I am working	3.88	High
5. My thoughts are fully focused when thinking about my work	4.00	High
6. I give a lot of mental attention to my work	4.02	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.93	High

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

Presented in table 5 was the level of work engagement of DENR employees in terms of cognitive work engagement. The overall mean was 3.93 and described as high, which means the DENR employee's cognitive work engagement was observed.

It was found that item 6 was the highest mean of 4.02 and was described as high, which indicated that it observed that DENR employees were mentally focused on their work. The second highest mean was item 5, with a mean score of 4.00 and described as high, which implied that it observed that the DENR employees were fully focused when they are thinking about their work. It was followed by item 1 with a mean score of 3.95 and described as high, which conveyed that the DENR employees that their mind was often full of ideas about their work.

The next item was item 4, with a mean score of 3.88 and described as high, which means that it observed that the DENR employees were often thinking about the time when they were on duty and work. The fifth item was item 2, with a mean score of 3.87 and described as high, which implied that it was observed that

the DENR employees often think about their work wherever they are. Last, item 3 had the lowest mean value was item 3 with a mean score of 3.84 and described as high, which indicated that it observed that the DENR employees engaged their minds oftentimes in their work.

Accordingly, work engagement refers to the positive and fulfilling state of mind that individuals experience when they are fully absorbed and invested in their work. Cognitive work engagement specifically refers to the mental aspects of work engagement, including an employee’s level of focus, attention, and absorption in their work. Based on the study of Parkinson (1997) that work cognition involves the formation of cognitive patterns or schemas that have the characteristics, elements, emotions, and ideas related to previous and current employment.

**Emotional Work Engagement**

Presented in table 6 was the level of work engagement of DENR employees in terms of emotional work engagement. The overall mean was 4.14 and described as high, which means the DENR employees often manifested emotional work engagement.

**Table 6. The Level of Work Engagement in terms of Emotional Work Engagement**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. My mind is often full of ideas about my work	4.06	High
2. Wherever I am, things happen that often remind me of my work	4.14	High
3. My mind is fully engaged with my work	4.21	High
4. I rarely think about time when I am working	4.13	High
5. My thoughts are fully focused when thinking about my work	4.14	High
6. I give a lot of mental attention to my work	4.14	High
Overall Weighted Mean	4.14	High

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It found that item 3 had the highest mean score of 4.21 and was described as very high, indicating that it was always observed that the DENR employees’ minds were always fully engaged with their duty and work. Moreover, items 2, 5, and 6 had the same mean score of 4.14, which implied that the DENR employees were oftentimes observed thinking about their work wherever they were, often focused on their work, and often gave mental focus and attention to their work. It was followed by item 4 with a mean score of 4.13 which implied that DENR employees oftentimes observed that they think about the time at work. Lastly, item 1 was the lowest mean of 4.06 which inferred that it was oftentimes observed that the DENR employees were often full of ideas regarding their work.

Furthermore, emotional work engagement refers to the emotional aspect of work engagement, which focuses on the feelings and emotions associated with work. Emotional work engagement involves a deep emotional connection to one’s work, including feelings of enthusiasm, excitement, and passion. Based on the study by Demerouti, Bakker, A. & Gevers (2015) that an employee who is highly engaged at work means he/she has a positive feeling, is fulfilled, and has a work-related/state of mind. They added that those employees who were very vigorous were the ones who were happy and interested in the work. Individuals who were emotionally engaged in their work tend to experience a sense of fulfillment and purpose in their job, which can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and well-being.

## Physical Work Engagement

Presented in table 7 was the level of work engagement of DENR employees in terms of emotional work engagement. The overall mean was 3.82 and described as high, which means that it observed that the DENR employees show apparent sincerity in the work.

**Table 7. The Level of Work Engagement in terms of Physical Work Engagement**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. No matter how much I work, I have a high level of energy	3.75	High
2. I have a great deal of stamina for my work	3.88	High
3. I always have a lot of energy for my work	3.86	High
4. I am often physically driven by my work	3.86	High
5. I am frequently energized by my work	3.88	High
6. I find my work to be physically invigorating	3.70	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.82	High

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It was found that items 2 and 5 had the highest mean score of 3.88 and both were described as high, meaning that it observed that the DENR employees were often energized by their work and put a massive energy when performing their duty. The next highest mean were items 3 and 4 both with a mean score of 3.86 and described as high which implied that the DENR employees had a lot of energy for the work oftentimes and often physically driven by their work. It was followed by item 1 with a mean of 3.75 and described as high which indicated that it observed that the DENR employees often had high-level energy for this work. Lastly, item 6 was the lowest mean score of 3.70 which is described as high also. This indicated that the DENR employees were found oftentimes that their work was invigorating.

Accordingly, physical work engagement was the amount of physical effort and energy that the employees invested in their duties and work. As Stevens (2022) stated, physical work engagement was about the presence whether an employee was actively involved in their work and taking steps to advance their skills and career, or whether they are passively experiencing their employment and feeling disengaged. This can be explained by employees' level of participation at work.

## 4.3 Emotional Intelligence

### 4.3.1 Self-awareness

Presented in table 8 is the emotional intelligence of the DENR employees in terms of self-awareness. The overall mean was 4.11, which means that self-awareness was oftentimes manifested that the DENR employee's political skills and work engagement.

**Table 8. The Level of Emotional Intelligence in terms of Self-Awareness**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I can explain my actions	4.37	Very High
2. Other people don't see me as I see myself.	3.42	High
3. I understood the feedback that others gave me	4.19	High
4. I can describe accurately what I am	4.22	Very High



5. Things that happen in my life make sense to me	4.34	Very High
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	4.11	High

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly Agree

The highest score of 4.37 was found on item 1 which implies that it was oftentimes evident that DENR employees can explain their actions. Moreover, the next was item 5 which had a mean score of 4.34 which means that it was manifested that the experience, happenings, and life-event were made sense to the DENR employees. It was followed by item 4 with a score mean of 4.22 which implies that it was manifested that the DENR employees know themselves very well. The next was item 3 with a mean score of 4.19 which was also described as high and implied that it was manifested that the DENR employees can understand others’ feedback towards them. Lastly, the lowest item had a mean score of 3.42 was item 2 but it was also described as high which also means that it was manifested that the other people can’t see the DENR employees as they can see themselves.

Accordingly, self-awareness was about how you saw and know yourself very well. According to Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (2016) that part of understanding self-emotion was an ability to identify what were the fake and true manifestations of feelings. This was an ability to interpret self-emotion and became conscious of it (2017). Moreover, emotional intelligence also uses self-awareness to understand and manage behaviors and interactions with other people.

#### 4.3.2 Self-management

Presented in table 9 was the emotional intelligence of DENR employees in terms of self-management. The overall mean was 2.59 and described as low, which means the DENR employees self-management are not observed.

**Table 9. The Level of Emotional Intelligence in terms of Self-management**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I can stay calm, even in difficult circumstances	3.99	High
2. I am prone to outbursts of rage	2.47	Low
3. I feel miserable	1.89	Low
4. I get irritated by things, other people, or myself]	2.28	Low
5. I get carried away and do things I regret	2.35	Low
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	2.59	Low

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly Agree

It was found that item 1 was the highest mean score of 3.99 described as high which implied that it was manifested that the DENR employees can stay relaxed and calm despite hard situations and circumstances. On the other hand, the next item that had the highest mean score was item 2 but it had only a 2.47 mean score and it was described as low which means that DENR employees seldom evident that they get outbursts of rage. Follows by item 5 with a scored mean of 2.35 and described as low which showed that it was seldom evident that the DENR employees get carried away and did things they regret. Lastly, item 4 with a score means 1.89 and was described as low which means that it was seldom evident that the DENR employees get irritated by other people and things in their selves.

Moreover, self-management was an important factor in emotional intelligence. It is essential for officers to have self-management to control their emotions as part of their work and it had a big role in performing a duty effectively. In addition, Whitman (2012) quoted that self-management includes managing the dampening distress, removing heartbreaking emotions, and preventing negative cognitive or behavioral actions. Because a person’s capacity to feel, recognize, and control their emotions is a measure of their emotional intelligence. People can nurture positive outcomes, avoid negative impacts from overpowering them, and cope with stress by managing their emotions (Afolabi, Awosola & Omole 2010).

**Motivation**

Presented in table 10 was the emotional intelligence of DENR employees in terms of motivation. The overall mean was 3.90, which means the DENR employees often manifested motivation.

**Table 10. Level of Emotional Intelligence in terms of Motivation**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I am clear about my goals for the future	4.25	Very High
2. My career is moving in the right direction	4.14	High
3. I find it hard to maintain my enthusiasm when I encounter setbacks	2.79	Moderate
4. I feel excited when I think of my goals	4.24	Very High
5. I act consistently to move towards my goals	4.08	High
Overall Weighted Mean	3.90	High

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It was found that item 1 had the highest mean score of 4.25, meaning that the goals for the future of the DENR employees were always evident. It was followed by item 4 with a mean score of 4.24 which implied it was manifested that the DENR employees were always excited if they think about their goals. The next item, 2, with a mean score of 4.14 and described as high, implied that it was evident that the DENR employees believed that their career was going in the right direction. Then item 5 was the next highest score with a mean score of 4.08 and was described as high which inferred that it manifested DENR employees often believed that they act consistently toward their goals. Lastly, item 3 was the lowest mean of 2.79 and was described as moderate inferred it was sometimes evident that the DENR employees were finding it hard to maintain their enthusiasm when they encountered seatbacks.

Moreover, emotional intelligence requires motivation to make an individual successful in conveying their thoughts, goals, articulative, expectations, and exciting ways associated with high-level emotional intelligence. Other emotional abilities, like emotional interpretation and understanding, also help people identify and interpret clues that lead to self-regulatory behavior so they may fulfill their purpose of contributing to the improvement of the firm[39]

**Empathy**

Presented in table 11 was the emotional intelligence of DENR employees in terms of empathy. The overall mean was 3.19, meaning the DENR employees sometimes showed empathy.

**Table 11. The Level of Emotional Intelligence in terms of Empathy**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. My colleagues are uncommunicative	2.12	Low
2. I get on well with each of my work colleagues	3.93	High
3. I find it easy to “read” other people’s emotions	3.57	High
4. It’s unpredictable how my colleagues will feel in any given situation	3.03	Moderate
5. People choose to work with me in preference to equally talented colleagues	3.30	Moderate
Overall Weighted Mean	3.19	Moderate

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It was found that item 2 was the highest mean score of 3.93 and was described as moderate, which implied it was manifested that the DENR employees get on well with their co-workers. It was followed by item 3 with a mean of 3.57 which conveyed that it was manifested that the DENR employees had ease of reading other emotions. The next was item 5, with a mean score of 3.30 which means that it was sometimes manifested that the DENR employees chose to work with their colleagues.

Then, item 4 scored 3.03, which implied that it was sometimes manifested that the DENR employees were unpredictable about how their colleagues felt in any given situation. Lastly, item 1 scored 2.12, which implied that it was seldom manifested that the DENR employee’s colleagues were seldom uncommunicative.

As a result, empathy was a crucial part of emotional intelligence, which is the capacity to identify, comprehend, and control one’s own emotions as well as those of others. Empathy is the capacity to understand another person’s feelings, thoughts, and experiences by placing oneself in their position. According to Chin et al., (2012), expressing one’s emotions is also essential to interpersonal interactions since it promotes and develops emotional ties and helps one better understand others. Additionally, by displaying empathy, individuals may feel more at ease and as if their issues were acknowledged, motivating them to complete a task (Gardner, 2015).

**Relationship Management**

Presented in table 16 was the emotional intelligence of DENR employees in terms of relationship management. The overall mean was 3.39, which means the DENR employees sometimes manifested relationship management.

**Table 12. The Level of Emotional Intelligence in Relation Management**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I encounter difficult people	3.67	High
2. I am comfortable talking to anyone	3.68	High
3. I achieve win/win outcomes	3.91	High
4. I feel uncomfortable when other people get emotional	3.11	Moderate
5. I get impatient with incompetent people	2.60	Moderate
Overall Weighted Mean	3.39	Moderate

Legend: 1.0 – 1.79 – Strongly disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 – Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 – Neutral; 3.40 – 4.19 – Agree; 4.20 – 5.0 – Strongly agree

It discovered that the highest mean score of 3.91 was item 3, which implied that it was manifested that the DENR employees achieved win-and-win outcomes. The second highest mean was item 2, with a mean of 3.68, and it conveyed that it was manifested that the DENR employees were often comfortable talking with anyone. The next highest mean score of 3.67 was item 3, implying that it was manifested that the DENR employees encounter difficulty with people. Then it was followed by item 4 with a mean score of 3.11 which implied that it was sometimes manifested that the DENR employees felt uncomfortable when someone was getting emotional. Lastly, item 5 got a mean score of 2.60 and was described as average, which means that it was sometimes manifested that the DENR employees get impatient with incompetent people.

According to Braddy & Campbell (2014) relationship management is a skill that emphasizes emotional awareness in the sense that it relates to identifying emotions, understanding how they are connected to one another, and understanding how they influence and uplift others. This result was supported by Daus and Ashkanasy's (2015) findings. Emotional intelligence makes it feasible to comprehend one's staff members' points of view and guide them effectively while maintaining empathy for their circumstances. According to the research conducted by Goleman (2014), emotional intelligence at work can be developed through management training. In addition, to successfully manage relationships, it was necessary to have emotional awareness, which included their ability to recognize emotions, determine their causes and effects, account for intense emotions, and contribute to managing these emotions (Gardner, 2015).

**4.4 Correlations of Emotional Intelligence towards Political Skills and Work Engagement and Political skills and Work Engagement**

Revealed in table 13 was the correlation between emotional intelligence toward political skills and work engagement and political skills towards work engagement. The finding revealed a moderate positive correlation between emotional intelligence and political skills. The result indicated an overall computed R-value of 0.539 and a P-value of .001, suggesting this context's null hypothesis was rejected. Also, a low positive correlation was observed between emotional intelligence and work engagement, with an R-value of 0.467 and a P-value of 0.001, suggesting this context's null hypothesis was rejected.

**Table 13. Correlations of Emotional Intelligence towards Political Skills and Work Engagement**

Pearson's Correlations				
Variable		Emotional Intelligence	Political Skills	Work Engagement
1. Emotional Intelligence	Pearson's r	—		
	p-value	—		
2. Political Skills	Pearson's r	0.539***	—	
	p-value	< .001	—	
3. Work Engagement	Pearson's r	0.467***	0.562***	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—
p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001				

On the other hand, political skills and work engagement show a moderate positive correlation with an R-value of 0.562 and a P-value of 0.001. Therefore, it suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis in this context. Moreover, this result was supported by Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee (2013), who stated that emotional intelligence was put to the test in connection to many factors. A lack of political and emotional intelligence caused poor employee performance and adverse organizational outcomes. Coonen (2016) also discovered that the employee's level of sportsmanship, courtesies, altruism, and helping behavior, which impacts the institution's success, lowers when they lack political skills and emotional intelligence. In addition, simultaneously searching for Emotional Intelligence and Political Skills is the crucial start for the organizational structure.

Sumathy, Madhavi, & Felix (2016) found that emotional intelligence was considered the foundation of many integral skills related to an organizational structure. They added that competent officer in the workplace must have the political skills to influence people while utilizing emotional intelligence. Emotional Intelligence has been shown to significantly influence outcomes at the individual level, including at work. Organizational members' conduct, satisfaction, and connection to the work completed. As a result, the relationship between emotional intelligence and each of the three outcomes—turnover behavior, negligence, and job satisfaction—was found to be mediated by perceived organizational politics.

#### 4.5 Mediation Analysis

It can be observed in table 18 the direct effect of political skill (IV) on problem-solving skills (DV). The result yielded an estimate of 0.789 and a standard error (SE) of 0.112 with  $p < 0.05$  or significant. Also, the table shows that the direct effect is positive since the 95% confidence interval is [0.371, 1.008], which does not include zero.

**Table 14. Direct Effects**

					95% Confidence	
	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
IV → DV	0.789	0.112	7.042	< .001	0.569	1.008

Additionally, it is also observed that every unit increase in the independent variable will entice a 0.789 increase in the dependent variable. This signifies that the independent variable is significantly influencing the dependent variable, which is work engagement

**Table 15. Indirect Effects**

					95% Confidence Interval	
	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
IV → MV → DV	0.250	0.065	3.884	< .001	0.122	0.377

It can be noticed in table 19 the indirect effect of Political Skill (IV) on Emotional Intelligence (MV) and Work Engagement (DV). The result yielded a beta of 0.250 and a standard error (SE) of 0.065 with  $p < 0.05$  or significant. Also, I can conclude that there is mediation in this model since the 95% confidence level of the indirect effect is [0.122, 0.377], which does not include zero.

Furthermore, every unit increase in the independent variable will entice a 0.250 increase in the dependent variable as it goes through the mediating variable, which is much lesser than the unit increase in table 9, which is 0.789. This announces that even in the presence of the mediating variable, which is political skill, the independent variable still significantly influences the dependent variable, which is work engagement.



**Table 16. Total Effects**

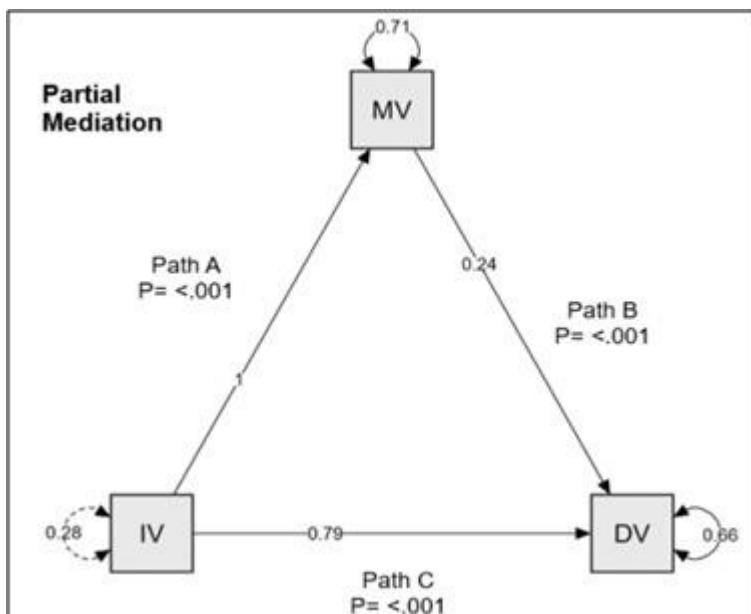
	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
IV ---> DV	1.038	0.097	10.687	<.001	0.848	1.229

It can be observed in Table 16 the total effects of Political Skill (IV) on Work Engagement (DV). The result yielded a beta of 1.189 which is from the sum of each beta in tables 8 and 9, and a standard error (SE) of 0.097 with  $p < 0.05$  or significant. Also, the table shows that the total effects are positive since the 95% confidence interval is [0.848, 1.219], which doesn't include zero.

Also, as shown in the results, it could be inferred that every unit increase in the independent variable will entice a 1.189 increase in the dependent variable. This means that the independent variable is significantly influencing the dependent variable, which is Work Engagement

The model in Figure 3 showed correlations between Political Skill and Work Engagement through the mediating effect of Emotional Intelligent. In Path A, Political Skill (IV) has a significant relationship with Work Engagement ( $p < .001$ ). In Path B, Emotional Intelligence was also reported to be significantly correlated with Work Engagement ( $p < .001$ ). In Path C, Political Skill positively predicted Work Engagement ( $p < .001$ ). These results suggested the relationship between Political Skill and Work Engagement was partially mediated by the indirect pathway through Emotional Intelligence.

Further, the result implies that Work Engagement, should not only be bounded and limited to the Political Skills of students. The Department Heads and Policy Makers should look into other factors that were affecting the Work Engagement of the DENR employees and not just their Political Skills. Perhaps, It should also consider the Emotional Intelligence of the DENR employees, as it partially mediated or significantly affect the relationship between Political Skill and Work Engagement.



**Figure 2. Medgraph Showing the Variables of the Study**

### **Implication to theory**

The result of this study might refine the theory, which can generate new insights and ideas that help enhance the theory to the more explanatory. Also, this might identify a specific condition that identifies where the theory emphasized and highlighted the exceptions that the theory was previously overlooked.

Moreover, the finding will support the theory, which provides evidence that the theory accurately explains the phenomena being studied. This will strengthen the theory's capability and credibility as well. The study will provide support for the Trait Activation Theory, suggesting that situational cues, such as the post-pandemic environment, can activate certain traits, leading to specific behaviors. The mediating role of EI suggests that emotions play a crucial role in this process. Overall, this study has important implications for theory, as it highlights the importance of developing emotional intelligence and political skill among employees to enhance work engagement, particularly in the face of challenging situations such as the post-pandemic environment.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusion**

Interpersonal influence becomes the highest domain level for Political skill. This highlights that the DENR employees are effective communicators who can persuade others to take actions that support the agency's goals. This could be particularly important for DENR employees working with other government agencies, public, and community groups to achieve environmental and natural resource management objectives. Moreover, the DENR employees showed a high level of emotional work engagement. Employees of the DENR are highly committed, enthusiastic, and passionate about their work. This can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction, improved performance, and better overall organizational outcomes, including better protection and preservation of the environment and natural resources.

Also, the DENR employee's emotional intelligence showed a high self-awareness. As public servants, DENR employees deeply understand their thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and how they relate to others. This trait enables them to identify their strengths and weaknesses, recognize their impact on others, receive feedback, and make better decisions based on their values and priorities. A valuable trait can lead to greater effectiveness and positive outcomes.

Moreover, Emotional Intelligence is significantly related to Political Skill and Work Engagement and Political Skill and Work engagement. This is implied on the Trait Activation Theory of Murray (1982) that DENR employees with high levels of emotional intelligence may be better able to regulate their emotions in response to stressful or challenging situations at work, which could help them maintain a positive attitude to communicate with others and remain engaged in their work. Additionally, employees with high emotional intelligence may be better equipped to understand and respond to the emotions of others, which could facilitate their ability to build relationships and positively influence others.

Moreover, the mediation analysis reveals that emotional intelligence has partially mediated or significantly affected the relationship between political skill and work engagement. Therefore, the employees should consider their political skills in working and self-awareness, self-management, internal motivation, empathy, and employee relationship management for better work engagement. Especially high self-awareness can build a good rapport between people and the working environment

### **Recommendation**

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) take the following actions to enhance employee performance and engagement:

DENR employees may conduct self-assessments of their emotional intelligence skills by reflecting on their behaviors, attitudes, and interactions with others. They can utilize online assessments or seek feedback from peers, mentors, or supervisors.

Moreover, it is essential to offer training courses that concentrate on enhancing emotional intelligence. Employees can improve their these competencies by attending seminars, coaching sessions, and workshops led by professionals in the subject. Aside from that, DENR employees should actively build positive relationships by proactively networking, collaborating with others, and engaging in constructive communication. Active listening, seeking feedback, and recognizing colleagues' contributions are also important aspects.

To navigate organizational politics effectively, employees should develop their political skills. This can be achieved by participating in cross-functional teams, engaging with stakeholders, and seeking mentorship from senior leaders.

To foster work engagement, employees should set clear goals, prioritize tasks, and seek challenging assignments. Practicing mindfulness, focusing on positive emotions, and taking regular breaks to reduce stress and burnout are essential for maintaining productivity. DENR should consider providing training programs, including emotional intelligence skills into performance measurements, creating mentoring programs, promoting employee engagement through happy work environments, and routinely tracking progress to execute these recommendations effectively.

By putting these strategies into practice, DENR can foster a culture of emotional intelligence, advance its political acumen and employee engagement, and ultimately improve employee performance and satisfaction.

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