Original Article

Emotional Intelligence: Concept, Theoretical Perspectives and Its Relevance on Job Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of emotional intelligence by reflecting on its conceptual framework, analysing the theoretical foundations that support it and evaluating its relevance in relation to job performance in workplace settings. Through this investigation, the study aims to enhance the current comprehension of emotional intelligence, shedding light on its theoretical basis and practical implications for enhancing performance in professional environments. By pursuing these aims, the study endeavours to offer valuable contributions to the field, advancing understanding of emotional intelligence and its impact on achieving success within organisational contexts. The study examines three prominent models of emotional intelligence. The first model, developed by Salovey and Mayer, establishes a foundational framework for understanding emotional intelligence as a multifaceted concept. This model outlines essential components integral to emotional intelligence, offering valuable insights into the core abilities within this domain. The Bar-On model of emotional intelligence, proposed by Reuven Bar-On, offers a comprehensive framework that emphasises the role of emotional and social factors in overall well-being and success. Bar-On's model encompasses various facets, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. On the other hand, Daniel Goleman's model of emotional intelligence, popularised by the author Daniel Goleman, highlights the significance of emotional competencies in personal and professional success. Goleman's model revolves around five key components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The paper provides the affirmative link between emotional intelligence (EI) and diverse aspects of job performance, accentuating the significance of organisations' acknowledging and nurturing the emotional competencies of their employees. Amidst the ongoing evolution of workplaces, the strategic incorporation of EI emerges as a pivotal strategy for fostering employee well-being and securing organisational prosperity.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence assumes a paramount role as a vital behavioural factor with a profound impact on performance (Freshman et al., 2015; Pandey & Karve, 2018). Its significance reverberates across various dimensions of individual and collective success, influencing how individuals navigate interpersonal relationships, foster effective teamwork, and adapt to the dynamic demands of diverse workplace settings (Shah Hosseini, 2012). As a crucial element in behavioural dynamics, emotional intelligence shapes the quality of interactions and decision-making processes, contributing to an overall enhancement of performance in various professional domains.

Various dimensions of intelligence beyond the traditional scope significantly influence our success. Qualities such as resilience, determination, and foresight play crucial roles in shaping our outcomes. As the landscape of success evolves, attention is increasingly directed toward emotional intelligence, often quantified as an Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EQ) (Hoai & Duong, 2023). This form of intelligence holds heightened relevance in key work-related aspects, including individual performance, organisational productivity, and personnel development.

The principles of emotional intelligence provide a fresh and comprehensive perspective for understanding and assessing various facets such as behaviours, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills, and individual potential (Mohapatra, 2010; Pandey & Karve, 2018). Its expanding importance is evident in a range of human resource practices, including strategic planning, job profiling, recruitment interviews, and selection processes. Furthermore, emotional intelligence is gaining prominence in learning and development initiatives, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of human capabilities (Gül, 2021).

In addition to its impact on internal organisational dynamics, emotional intelligence is proving essential in fostering positive external relationships. This includes its role in enhancing client relations and customer service, among other critical areas. As the recognition of emotional intelligence continues to grow, its application extends beyond conventional metrics, shaping diverse aspects of personal and professional interactions (Kanwal et al., 2018).

Embracing emotional intelligence involves acknowledging that emotions are an integral part of our human experience, exerting influence across various dimensions of our lives. It encompasses more than merely comprehending and managing our individual emotions; it also entails being attuned to the emotions of those in our immediate surroundings.

This heightened awareness serves as the foundation for nurturing meaningful interpersonal connections. By recognising and responding to the emotional states of others, individuals can create an environment conducive to open and authentic communication. In doing so, emotional intelligence becomes a catalyst for building trust and understanding among individuals, fostering a deeper level of connection (Hoai & Duong, 2023).

Moreover, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in facilitating prosperous collaboration. When individuals are attuned to the emotions of their colleagues and collaborators, they can

navigate interpersonal dynamics with empathy and consideration. This ability to navigate emotional nuances contributes to a positive and cooperative work environment where team members feel heard and valued.

The focus of this conceptual paper is to provide a comprehensive understanding of emotional intelligence. The paper involves the theoretical frameworks and models that form the foundation of emotional intelligence and subsequently explores its significance in the context of job performance within a workplace setting.

Conceptualising Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a multifaceted trait encompassing the capacity, skill, or self-awareness needed to recognise, evaluate, and navigate both one's personal emotions and those of others or groups (Cherniss, 2018; Singh et al., 2022). This holistic ability contributes to enhanced interpersonal dynamics and effective communication. Individuals with elevated emotional intelligence exhibit a profound understanding of their own emotional landscape. This self-awareness allows them to navigate their feelings with adeptness and authenticity. Moreover, their heightened sensitivity to the emotions of others enables them to cultivate meaningful connections and respond empathetically to varying emotional cues (Ackley, 2016).

One notable characteristic of individuals with heightened emotional intelligence is their ability to exude friendliness. Their atonement for the emotional states of those around them fosters an environment of warmth and approachability (Gül, 2021). This, in turn, contributes to the establishment of positive relationships in both personal and professional spheres. Resilience is another hallmark of individuals with elevated emotional intelligence. Their capacity to navigate and understand their own emotions equips them with the tools to bounce back from setbacks and adversities (Rathore, 2021). This resilience not only benefits their individual well-being but also positively influences the broader social and professional contexts in which they operate.

Optimism, a key attribute associated with heightened emotional intelligence, reflects a positive outlook on both personal and interpersonal aspects of life. Individuals with this quality tend to approach challenges with a constructive mindset, fostering a culture of positivity and proactive problem-solving (Freshman et al., 2015; Kaur & Sharma, 2019; Suprayogi & Andestia, 2023)

In the foundational work of Salovey and Mayer (1990), EI was initially conceptualised as a subset of social intelligence, with a particular focus on its crucial role in navigating the intricacies of social interactions. Their definition portrayed EI as the capacity to observe and comprehend one's own and others' emotions, distinguish between them, and leverage this emotional insight to guide one's thoughts and actions (Rathore, 2021). This characterisation underscores the intricate and multifaceted nature of emotional intelligence, emphasising its significance in interpersonal dynamics and the decision-making process.

Expanding on their earlier contributions, Mayer and Salovey (1997) went deeper into the elements of emotional intelligence, highlighting its tangible applications across various facets of life, especially in professional environments. Their research not only built upon the initial framework but also paved the way for acknowledging emotional intelligence as a valuable set of skills that surpass conventional measures of cognitive intelligence.

However, it was Daniel Goleman who brought emotional intelligence into mainstream discussions with his 1995 bestseller, "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ." Goleman not only made the concept widely known but also broadened its horizons by incorporating additional components like self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Ackley, 2016; Singh et al., 2022). This more comprehensive view encouraged extensive exploration of the practical applications of emotional intelligence, with noteworthy implications in fields such as education, business, and psychology.

THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer's model (Ability Model of EI)

In the pivotal year of 1990, Mayer and Salovey reshaped our comprehension of human behavior with their seminal article "Emotional Intelligence," a work that fundamentally established the framework for modern theories on emotional intelligence (EQ) .

The emotional intelligence model crafted by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer serves as a foundational framework, providing a thorough depiction of emotional intelligence as an intricate construct with multiple crucial facets (Ackley, 2016; Rathore, 2021). At the heart of their model, Salovey and Mayer point out four distinct components that play essential roles in defining the fundamental abilities linked to emotional intelligence.

The initial component focuses on emotion recognition, underscoring the significance of precisely perceiving and comprehending both one's own emotions and those of others (Ackley, 2016; Chaidi et al., 2023; Dhani & Sharma, 2016; Hoai & Duong, 2023). This foundational skill serves as the basis for the subsequent components, establishing the groundwork for an understanding of the emotional landscape. Expanding on this groundwork, the second component entails emotional understanding, necessitating individuals to go more deeply into the intricacies and complexities of emotional states (Chaidi et al., 2023). This surpasses mere recognition, highlighting the capacity to comprehend the factors influencing emotions and their broader implications in various situations

The third component concentrates on emotional regulation, highlighting the vital skill of adeptly managing and controlling one's own emotions. This aspect recognises the dynamic nature of emotions and underscores the importance of maintaining emotional balance in diverse circumstances, contributing to personal well-being and effective interpersonal interactions. The final component underscores the application of emotional intelligence in problem-solving and decision-making (Rathore, 2021). This entails using emotional information to guide one's thoughts and actions, illustrating how emotional intelligence extends beyond interpersonal interactions to impact cognitive processes and problem-solving capabilities.

Within the realm of emotional intelligence, Mayer and Salovey, acknowledged as influential figures, delineate it as the ability to engage in deliberate processes concerning emotions and leverage emotions to augment cognitive functions. This encompasses skills such as accurately perceiving emotions, channelling and generating emotions to aid in thinking, comprehending emotions and emotional knowledge, and introspectively regulating emotions to promote both emotional and intellectual development (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Bar-On model (The Mixed Model of EI)

In 1997, Dr. Reuven Bar-On introduced a groundbreaking departure from Mayer and Salovey's established emotional intelligence framework. Unlike the earlier model, Bar-On's concept does not rigidly tie emotional intelligence to emotions or cognitive abilities. Instead, it suggests that emotional intelligence can encompass a broad spectrum of "personality characteristics that could predict success in both professional and everyday spheres" (Bar-On et al., 2022).

Bar-On's model broadens the scope of emotional intelligence by incorporating a wide range of personality traits and characteristics, transcending the traditional focus on emotions and cognitive processes (Singh et al., 2022). This inclusive perspective suggests that a blend of diverse personality traits can forecast success across various life domains, encompassing both professional and personal aspects.

Shifting the focus from emotions alone to a more encompassing examination of personality characteristics, Bar-On's model offers a comprehensive perspective on emotional

intelligence. This expanded framework proposes that traits such as interpersonal skills, adaptability, and resilience, among others, are integral components that influence an individual's emotional intelligence and overall success (Bar-on, 2014; Bar-on et al., 2022).

In the Bar-On model, emotional intelligence (EI) is described as a spectrum of non-cognitive capacities, competencies, and skills that impact an individual's effectiveness in dealing with environmental challenges and stresses (Bar-on & Bar-on, 2006). The model aims to address the question of why some individuals are more prone to achieving success than others. When reassessing EI, the model closely examines the personal characteristics most closely associated with life accomplishments, categorising these traits into five distinct groups: intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management, and overall mood (Bar-on, 2014).

As per the Bar-On model, emotional intelligence extends beyond the emotional domain and necessitates a robust social component. This broadened viewpoint includes diverse aspects such as interpersonal skills, adaptability, and stress management, all intricately connected with the social milieu. The model introduces the notion of emotional-social intelligence, characterising it as "an intersection of interconnected emotional and social competencies, skills, and facilitators that govern our proficiency in comprehending and articulating ourselves, understanding and engaging with others, and managing the challenges of daily life" (Bar-On, 2006).

Furthermore, emotional-social intelligence surpasses individual emotional experiences and stretches into the domain of social interactions. It underscores the interplay between emotional and social competencies, acknowledging their combined impact on an individual's capacity to navigate both personal and interpersonal challenges (Bar-on, 2014; Bar-on & Bar-on, 2006; Chaidi et al., 2023).

Interpersonal skills, a pivotal element of emotional-social intelligence, encompass the ability to engage effectively with others, nurturing positive relationships and communication. Another essential aspect is adaptability, which reflects an individual's capacity to adjust and respond flexibly to changing circumstances within the social context. Stress management, as per the Bar-On model, is integral to emotional-social intelligence, underscoring the significance of effectively handling challenges and pressures in social situations (Bar-on et al., 2022). This skill contributes to an individual's overall resilience and well-being within the dynamic social environment. Lacking these skills, individuals would encounter difficulties in "understanding and expressing oneself," navigating successful interactions with others, and effectively addressing daily tasks and challenges. Managing and regulating emotions is crucial, preventing situations where emotions take control and potentially lead to undesirable outcomes.

The capability to understand and express oneself, as highlighted by the Bar-On model, is fundamental for effective communication and self-expression. This skill not only contributes to individual well-being but also plays a significant role in establishing meaningful connections with others. Navigating successful interactions with others demands a combination of interpersonal skills, adaptability, and stress management, all of which are encompassed by emotional-social intelligence (Ackley, 2016; Bar-on & Bar-on, 2006; Chaidi et al., 2023). Developing these competencies is essential for building positive relationships, fostering teamwork, and thriving in various social contexts. Effectively managing daily tasks and challenges, another aspect emphasised by the Bar-On model, underscores the practical application of emotional-social intelligence in real-life situations. This involves making sound decisions, problem-solving, and adapting to changing circumstances, all of which contribute to personal and professional success.

Daniel Goleman's model (The Competence Model of EI)

In 1995, psychologist and behavioral science journalist Dr. Daniel Goleman popularized the

term "emotional intelligence" in his groundbreaking book titled "Emotional Intelligence." Dr. Goleman's work shed light on a crucial aspect of human behavior, defining emotional intelligence as the capacity to effectively manage one's emotions, ensuring they are expressed appropriately and constructively. This concept has since become a cornerstone in understanding personal development, interpersonal relationships, and overall well-being.

In the pursuit of a fulfilling and successful life, Daniel Goleman asserts that Emotional Intelligence (EI) holds greater significance than IQ (Kumari, 2022). Key indicators of success encompass a diverse array of factors, ranging from career advancement to the establishment and maintenance of stable and fruitful relationships with others. Goleman's model challenges the overemphasis on IQ, as encapsulated in one of his chapter headings, "When smart is dumb" (Goleman, 1998). Despite obtaining a PhD from Harvard University, Goleman shifted his focus to journalism and spent twelve years as a columnist at the New York Times. Throughout this period, he focused on the exploration of the brain and emotions (Chaidi et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2022).

After reviewing a paper on emotional intelligence by Mayer and Salovey, Goleman felt driven to write a book with the aspiration of attaining literary success: "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ." In this book, Goleman provides a comprehensive exploration of emotional intelligence and its profound societal implications (Ackley, 2016; Razzaq & Aftab, 2019; Saxena et al., 2017). At the heart of his argument is the idea that "emotional illiteracy" contributes to a variety of social issues, spanning from emotional instability and crime to educational failure.

Moreover, Goleman argues that many individuals in the workplace fall short of reaching their full potential due to insufficient management of their emotions. This inadequacy leads to diminished job satisfaction and productivity, marked by unnecessary conflicts with colleagues, an inability to assert genuine needs, and a lack of effective expression of emotions to others. Goleman approaches the concept of intelligence from various perspectives (Goleman, 2010).

Goleman's model outlines two main divisions that distinguish various aspects of Emotional Intelligence (EI). Firstly, it separates individual capabilities, like self-awareness, from social competencies, such as empathy. Secondly, the model distinguishes facets of EI related to awareness from those involving the management and regulation of emotions. For instance, recognising someone's distress differs from the ability to uplift that person. Nevertheless, both "reading" emotions and effectively influencing them are crucial components of the overarching concept of EI (Kumari, 2022; Saxena et al., 2017). In his first book, Goleman outlined a set of attractive qualities that encompass self-confidence, sensitivity, self-awareness, self-control, empathy, optimism, and social skills.

Self-awareness involves the ability to recognise and understand one's own moods, emotions, and their impact on others. It encompasses qualities such as self-confidence, realistic self-evaluation, and a sense of humour. Attaining self-awareness relies on the capacity to monitor one's emotional state and accurately identify and label one's emotions (Chaidi et al., 2023; Saxena et al., 2017).

Self-management pertains to the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods, as well as the inclination to suspend judgment and think before acting. Characteristics linked with self-management encompass reliability, integrity, comfort with ambiguity, and openness to change. Internal motivation involves a willingness to work for intrinsic reasons that go beyond external rewards, such as economic gain and status (Ackley, 2016; Chaidi et al., 2023). It encompasses an internal vision of what is important in life, a sense of accomplishment in completing tasks, and a curiosity for learning. Internal motivation is demonstrated as a tendency to pursue goals with energy and perseverance, marked by a strong drive to achieve, optimism in

the face of failure, and organisational commitment.

Empathy refers to the ability to comprehend the emotional makeup of other individuals, to understand people through their emotional responses, and to connect with them. Indicators of empathy include proficiency in building and maintaining relationships and a dedication to serving customers and clients (Chaidi et al., 2023; Kumari, 2022; Saxena et al., 2017). Social skills indicate proficiency in managing relationships, building social connections, and the ability to find common ground and build rapport. Indications of social skills encompass effectiveness in leading change, persuasion, skill-building, and team leadership.

Goleman (1998) contends that the qualities listed represent emotional abilities. Accordingly, these can be defined as learning skills rooted in Emotional Intelligence (EI) that lead to outstanding performance in work or diverse contexts. This definition emphasises the notion that emotional intelligence is contingent on the learning process. In contrast, traditional theories of intelligence have often portrayed mental capacity as an aptitude—an inherent ability to acquire specific mental skills through learning. Consequently, IQ test scores are commonly viewed as indicators of an individual's potential to acquire academic knowledge rather than the knowledge itself (Jensen, 2005). Conversely, Goleman perceives emotional intelligence as a collection of acquired skills that can contribute to success in various social domains, including the workplace (Goleman et al., 2010).

As an example, proficiency in empathy empowers team leaders to understand the emotions of team members, enhancing overall team effectiveness. This same skill allows sales representatives to successfully close deals by skilfully discerning customers' emotional responses to a given product.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Job Performance

Job performance can be described as the overall anticipated value to the organisation derived from the specific behavioural actions an individual undertakes within a typical timeframe (Kell, 2018; Yongxing et al., 2017). This refined definition builds upon an earlier publication's depiction of performance in relation to a theory addressing variances in both task-oriented and contextual performance (Knight & Parker, 2020).

This definition provides two key concepts: firstly, that performance is an attribute of behaviour, specifically a composite of various discrete actions occurring within a defined timeframe. Secondly, it emphasises that performance is assessed based on its anticipated value to the organisation (Koopmans et al., 2011, 2012). Therefore, the performance construct, as defined here, serves as a metric to differentiate between behaviours exhibited by different individuals and by the same individual across different periods. This distinction hinges on the extent to which these behaviour sets, when considered together, are predicted to enhance or diminish organisational effectiveness. In essence, variability in performance reflects the divergence in the expected organisational contribution of behaviour.

Job performance stands as a key variable within organisational behaviour, subject to extensive and ongoing research worldwide. Its measurement encompasses job results, job behaviours, and personality traits, extending to encompass employee performance in customer service (Ramos-Villagrasa et al., 2019; Sekhar & Patwardhan, 2017). Employee performance can be categorised into in-role behaviour, termed task performance, and extra-role behaviour, known as contextual performance. Role expectations, varying among members of the role set, are crucial mental constructs in this context.

Task performance encompasses outcomes and behaviours aligning with organisational

objectives, which may differ across various job roles within the same organisation. It primarily focuses on employee behaviours rather than monetary incentives, with proficiency in knowledge, skills, and abilities being vital for task accomplishment (Bhardwaj, 2021). On the other hand, contextual performance involves supporting roles that contribute to the work environment where task performance occurs. It is influenced by employee predispositions and volition, with behaviours such as volunteering and helping being indicative of volition and predisposition, including person-organisation fit. Job performance is enhanced through both effort and ability (Kell, 2018).

The Relevance of Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

In today's increasingly complex and competitive business landscape, business leaders face the imperative of enhancing organisational efficacy and efficiency through the optimisation of employee performance. This endeavour is crucial for ensuring the survival and success of businesses amidst constant change and intense competition (Pandey & Karve, 2018).

Employees who demonstrate higher job performance not only contribute more effectively to organisational goals but also significantly influence corporate revenues. Consequently, addressing employee performance within corporate policies becomes paramount (Mahdinezhad et al., 2017; Shahhosseini, 2012). Implementing policies aimed at measuring and improving employee job performance is essential for organisations seeking to thrive in the modern business environment. Such measures not only enhance organisational performance but also strengthen the competitive position of businesses in today's dynamic market landscape.

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in fostering innovational creativity among individuals, consequently contributing to the enhancement of their job performance. Its significance extends further to facilitating communication within organisations, a crucial function that aids in the seamless flow of information and collaboration (Ferdausy, 2018; Pekaar et al., 2017). Moreover, emotional intelligence serves as a key explanatory factor in understanding workplace performance. Its influence transcends mere individual behaviour, impacting organisational dynamics and outcomes. It affects change initiatives, management effectiveness, training strategies, and overall organisational performance across various sectors such as banking, education, and corporate entities (Kaur & Sharma, 2019). By cultivating emotional intelligence among employees, organisations can foster a more conducive work environment characterised by enhanced creativity, communication, and overall performance. Recognising its multifaceted impact, organisations can strategically leverage emotional intelligence to drive positive organisational change and success (Freshman et al., 2015; Saxena et al., 2017).

Employees who possess higher emotional intelligence scores demonstrate a heightened ability to effectively utilise both their own emotions and those of others to improve their performance outcomes. This capacity is increasingly recognised as a valuable asset in the modern workplace.

Job performance, which encompasses organisational behaviours that positively contribute to achieving organisational goals, has become a focal point across diverse corporate sectors and within the realm of Human Resource Management (Ferdausy, 2018; Mohapatra, 2010; Shah Hosseini, 2012). Understanding and evaluating job performance play crucial roles in shaping organisational strategies and practices that enhance productivity and success.

CONCLUSION

This paper aims to conduct a thorough examination of the conceptual, theoretical perspectives, and practical implications of emotional intelligence (EI) concerning individuals' job performance within the workplace environment. EI has emerged as a critical factor significantly influencing various facets of work performance across diverse fields. Extensive

literature has inquired into the detailed relationship between EI and leadership, job effectiveness, and employee satisfaction. The profound impact of EI on both individual and team performance has been substantiated, providing its pivotal role in fostering meaningful relationships, facilitating efficient teamwork, and promoting adaptability in various workplace contexts.

In today's rapidly evolving work landscape, where interpersonal dynamics play a crucial role, the significance of EI cannot be overstated. Organisations that prioritise the development of emotional competencies among their employees are better positioned to navigate challenges, enhance resilience, and foster an environment conducive to both individual and collective success. As workplaces continue to evolve, the strategic integration of EI remains a valuable asset in cultivating resilient and high-performing teams.

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