

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Team Performance in Higher Education Institutes

Zainab Naseer¹, Saeed-ul-Hassan Chishti², Fazalur Rahman³ and Nabi Bux Jumani⁴

Abstract

Claims about the positive influence of emotional intelligence (EI) on work team performance are very numerous, both in commercial and scientific literature. In this study, EI was assessed using the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). Paper examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance of 15 teams selected from higher education institutes of Pakistan. A single questionnaire was used to gather data from the teams, each team consisting of 5-15 members. Simple and multiple regression was applied to investigate the relationships between emotional intelligence as a whole and team performance and then between different dimensions of emotional intelligence. Results indicated that emotional intelligence had positive impact on team performance. The study recommended that experimental study may be conducted to compare the performance of teams before and after providing the training on emotional intelligence so that a clear picture may emerge.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; appraisal and expression of emotion; team performance

Introduction

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) was first proposed by Mayer & Salovey (1990) which was then popularized by Goleman: "Why it can matter more than IQ". Since then, this area has got much attention in the field of leadership, Human resource management and organizational behavior. EI came up from the work of social intelligence by Thorndike (1920) & Gardner's (1983) concept of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. In 1927,

¹ SZABIST, Islamabad. Pakistan

²International Islamic University Islamabad Pakistan lpd.iiui@iiu.edu.pk

³Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad Pakistan fazalaiou@yahoo.com

⁴International Islamic University Islamabad. Pakistan. nbjumani@yahoo.com

Thorndike classified Intelligence into three types: Abstract Intelligence which is related to verbal concepts, Concrete Intelligence which is related to shapes and matter and thirdly Social Intelligence now termed as Emotional Intelligence. It shows that it is not a new concept. The researchers have defined EI as a distinct psychological skill that can be consistently gauged. Salovey & Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as “the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 189). Their model includes features of intelligence, adjustability and encouragement.

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence comprises four abilities, Appraisal and Expression of Emotion (own and others), Use of Emotions and Emotional Management (own and others) (Wong & Law, 2002).

Appraisal and expression of emotions. The first factor of EI is the ability to properly determine and express one’s own emotions as well as to be sympathetic, appraise and express emotions of others. Every individual’s ability varies in precisely identifying, appraising and expressing his own emotions as well as the emotions experienced by others. Some people are attentive of their feelings they experience and can express their emotions whereas, some people cannot express their feelings and emotions or they are unaware of their emotions (Zhou, George, 2003).

The research indicated that there is a positive relationship between job performance and team members having high EI because they are highly proficient at appraising and regulating their own emotions which results in a higher level of faith in themselves and have power over them which lead them to make realistic actions resulting in high performance and less supervisory interference. But where team members have low EI, they are less proficient at appraising and regulating their emotions, so they have to get assistance from their managers

in helping them to better manage and control their emotions which lead to teamwork, coordination, creativity and adaptability (Sy, Tram, O'Hara, 2006).

Use of emotions. Another factor includes the ability of the individual to use emotions to aid the cognitive processes. Emotions and cognitions are highly interconnected and EI allows people with the ability to use emotions to aid the effective cognitive processing of information. Emotions can be used to emphasize on important matters like selecting among competing and similar options, increase the flexibility of information processing, and engage in certain kinds of information processing. Therefore, individuals vary not only in awareness, appraisal and expression of emotions but also in their ability to use emotions in collaboration with their cognitive processes to enhance effective functioning. For adjusting in changing situations, emotions play an important role in the effective development of information for the individuals who are high on EI. On the contrary, individuals with low EI cannot effectively use their emotions to aid cognitive processes and may find it difficult to coordinate among how they feel and what are they doing (Zhou, George, 2003).

Regulation of emotions. The fourth element of EI is about the regulation of emotions of the people. People not only understand the emotions of others but also make an effort to manage these emotions. Some individuals are much competent in managing emotional management process for themselves as well as for other, as compared to other people. For example, if there occur any breach in quality, it may raise up a negative emotional reaction when the manager tries to determine the reason of the problem i.e. anger. Though the manager, instead of being obsessed with blaming others and seeking revenge, s/he should manage his/her anger to effectively solve the problem. It is significantly important for leaders to manage the emotions of others. Emotional reactions provide a useful insight of where interest should be focused, whereas unmanaged emotions can hinder the effective information processing. So to avoid this unduly hindrance, EI allows managers to not only use emotions but also to manage them effectively (Zhou, George, 2003).

The management of emotion enables an individual to join or un-join himself from an emotion in a given situation depending on its utility at that given time. This is apparent in the individual's ability to have control on his immediate reactions and postpone his/her judgment and then to communicate them in a measured and careful manner. The suggestion to 'think and then act', caution to 'count to 10 before replying' and listening practice like 'pause, breathe and relax then respond' are all efforts for managing emotions by conveying your feelings and emotions in a proper way when communicating. Even small children are often taught to "count to 10" before getting mad or to "smile for Grandpa". Delaying instantaneous responses clearly indicates it is as emotional management ability (Zhou, George, 2003).

Mayer & Salovey (1997) also stated four skills of EI which includes emotional awareness of own and others, emotional management of own and others, emotional understanding and emotional facilitation. They also developed an inventory to measure emotional intelligence (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test, 2002)

Goleman (1998) stated that emotional intelligence play a major role in improving performance at work as well as achievements in personal life. He claimed that approximately 90 % of the performance between high and average individuals at senior leader positions was due to emotional intelligence features rather than cognitive ones (as cited Cha, Cichy & Kim, 2009).

Concept of Team

Ayoko & Callan (2009) defined teams as groups composed of autonomous individuals who are wholly identified as team, having a shared liability and are together accountable for accomplishment of tasks identified by the organization. Teams are said to be necessary for organizational effectiveness. To extract maximum performance from team it requires the selection of people with suitable and adequate skills and knowledge who can understand and cater to team needs. Mostly required skills include emotional intelligence skill set because it accounts for eighty percent of success of an individual (Goleman, 1995).

Relationship of Emotional Intelligence with Team Performance

As emotional intelligence is critical to high performance, a person who knows how to stay motivated under stress, motivate others, manage complex interpersonal relationships, his/her others and build teams who are recognized specialists on a product or service are likely to get will get better results (Goleman, 2005). Emotional intelligence is a multi-dimensional concept that links emotion and cognition to improve human interactions. It has been linked to improved workplace behaviour and specifically team behaviour and team performance. (Jordan, Peter, Lawrence & Sandra, 2009). In recent research, it was found that team performance is positively and significantly influenced if team is able to recognize emotions of teammates (Stough, Saklofske & Parker, 2009).

Though there are many claims regarding the positive impact of emotional intelligence on job performance, but the studies examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and individual level performance show that the perceived potential benefits of using emotional intelligence in the workplace may be absent.

Quoidbach & Hansenne (2000) and Jordan & Troth (2004) have found a link between emotional intelligence and performance on a purely cognitive task at group level, although this relationship did not appear at individual level. Further, Sy, Tram & O'Hara(2006) found that employees having high emotional intelligence are more skilled to regulate their own as well as manage others' emotions to promote positive interactions which would lead to higher performance through organizational citizenship behavior. Similarly, Weiss & Cropanzano (1996) revealed that managers having high emotional intelligence exhibit optimistic work attitudes and unselfish behaviors which resultantly lead to employees' higher satisfaction and performance at job. In majority of teams, the role of leadership is revolved so it is predicted that teams with emotional intelligence perform well (Jordan, Ashkanasy, Hartel & Hooper, 2002).

Research Objectives

- To investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and team performance.
- To identify the dimensions of emotional intelligence and their magnitude on the performance of teams.
- To measure the emotional intelligence level of the team members and its overall impact on their team performance.

Research Methodology

The study was relational for exploring relationship among Emotional Intelligence (EI), Self Emotion Appraisal (SEA), Other Emotion Appraisal (OEA), Using Emotions (UE) and Regulation of Emotions (RE). These variables were tested. A causal study was conducted to explore the association among EI, its dimensions and team performance.

Sample

The sample was chosen by using convenience sampling where the data was collected from the employees of higher education who were easily available to provide it. The targeted population for this research is the higher education sector of Pakistan. Total number of teams among which questionnaires were distributed was 20 teams out of those only 15 teams returned back the filled questionnaires. Those 15 work teams comprised of 5-15 members. The respondents working in a team currently were included. 72% of the participants in teams were male and 28% were female.

Instrumentation

Primary data was gathered through questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of 32 items (see Appendix). The performance of team was measured by 16 items, adopted from Senior (1996). Emotional Intelligence was assessed using Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS, 2002). This scale also consisted of 16 items. The WLEIS was designed as a short

measure of Emotional Intelligence for use in organizational research. It measures four dimensions: Self-Emotion Appraisal, Emotion Appraisal of Others, Use of Emotion, and Regulation of Emotion. Wong and Law (2002) report good internal consistency reliabilities for their measure. In terms of validity, they present data showing that scores on the WLEIS are related to job performance and job satisfaction. All the items related to emotional intelligence as well as team performance were measured on a 7-point likert scale (7 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree).

Data Analysis and Results

Data was collected from 15 different teams of higher education. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS Version 18. The linear regression was run on the data. By running reliability analysis to the data, Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be 0.934 which shows that instrument was 93% reliable as mentioned in table 1.

Table 1. Reliability statistics

Cronbach Alpha	No of Items
0.93	32

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

N=100	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	3	7	5.4	0.87
Team performance	2	7	5.6	0.90

Table 2 indicates that the mean score of emotional intelligence of the employees was 5.4 which mean that the teams had somewhat high level of correlation. A maximum of 7 shows that some of the respondents had very high levels of emotional intelligence and a minimum of 3 shows that some of the teams members did not possess high level of emotional intelligence. It further indicates that the overall teams were performing well. The table further

indicated a maximum value of 7 shows that some teams' performance was very good and a minimum value of 2 shows that some teams were performing not very well.

Table 3. Inter-item correlation matrix

Variables	Self emotion appraisal	Other emotional Appraisal	Use of emotion	Regulation of emotion	Team performance	Emotional intelligence
Self emotion appraisal	1.0	0.42	0.60	0.42	0.56	0.79
other emotional Appraisal	0.42	1.0	0.40	0.34	0.36	0.70
Use of emotion	0.60	0.40	1.0	0.43	0.70	0.80
Regulation of emotion	0.42	0.34	0.43	1.0	0.37	0.75
Team performance	0.56	0.36	0.70	0.39	1.0	0.65
Emotional intelligence	0.79	0.70	0.80	0.75	0.65	1.0

Correlation finds the connection between two variables and determines the extent to which values of two variables are proportional to each other (Carver & Nash, 2006). The above table shows that the self emotion appraisal and use of emotion are highly correlated with team performance, whereas other emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion were although positively correlated but having weak relationship with team performance.

Table 4. ANOVA^b results

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
1	Regression	33.87	1	33.87	71.72	.000
	Residual	46.29	98	0.47		
	Total	80.16	99			

- a. Predictors: (constant),emotional intelligence
- b. Dependent variable: team performance

As indicated in the above table sig value is less than 0.05 that revealed significant linear regression ($F(1) = 71.72, p < 0.05$)

Table 5. Coefficients

Model		Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
		B	Std error	Beta	t	sig
1	Constant	1.92	0.44		4.39	.000
	Emotional intelligence	0.67	0.08	0.65	8.47	.000

a. Dependent variable: team performance
 Regression equation can be formed as $TP=1.92+0.67EI$

It means that with 1% change in independent variable, it will cause dependent variable to change by 67 %. From the above table and the formed equation we can conclude that Emotional Intelligence is the significantly influencing variable. It means that Emotional Intelligence plays a significant role in the performance of the team.

Table 6. Model summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of Estimate
1	0.65 ^a	0.42	0.42	0.69

a. Predictors: (constant), emotional intelligence

Model Summary reports a statistics that measures 'goodness of fit'. R is measuring the simple relation between independent variables and dependent variable. R² measures the variation of dependent variable by independent variables. It can range from 0 to 1 and indicates the extent to which the line fits the points. The R² value shows that 65% of the variation in the team performance can be explained by the difference in the value of emotional intelligence.

Table 7. Regression analysis showing relation between emotional intelligence & team performance

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson
	0.72 ^a	0.52	0.49	0.64	1.68

a. Predictors: (constant) , Regulation of emotion, other emotion appraisal, use of emotion, self emotion appraisal

b. Dependent variable: Team performance

The model summary table 11 measures “goodness of fit”. This table includes the multiple correlation coefficients R it’s square R² and an adjusted version of this coefficient. The multiple correlation coefficient, R = 0.72 indicates that there was a moderate correlation between dimensions of emotional intelligence and team performance. In terms of variability, observed team performance accounted for the fitted model, this amounts to a proportion of R² =0.52, or 52 %. It means that there was 52 % of the variation in team performance (dependent variable) was explained by the dimensions of EI (independent variable). This shows a strong relationship between the two variables (emotional intelligence and team performance). The value of Durbin Watson value should range from 1.5 to 2.5. Our value of Durbin Watson is 1.68 which means there is no issue of multicollinearity.

Table 8. ANOVA ^b

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
1	Regression	41.49	4	10.37	25.48	0.000
	Residual	38.67	95	0.41		
	Total	80.16	99			

a. Predictors: constant, Regulation of emotion, other emotional appraisal, use of emotion, self emotion appraisal

b. Dependent variable: Team performance

From ‘ANOVA’ table, it is evident that Sig (p value) = 0.000 which is less than 0.05; so the model fits the data properly. The F-test for the null hypothesis that the four dimensions of Emotional Intelligence (EI) does not have positive relation with team's performance, or in

other words, that R² is zero. Here the null hypothesis is rejected (F (4) = 25.48, p < 0.05), so it was concluded that regulation of emotion, other emotional appraisal, use of emotion, self emotion appraisal were positively related to team performance.

Table 9. Coefficients

Model	Un- standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std error	Beta	t	Sig	Tolerance	Vf
1							
Constant	1.96	0.41		4.75	0.000	0.58	1.72
Self emotion appraisal	0.18	0.08	0.20	2.17	0.03	0.58	1.72
Other emotional appraisal	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.56	0.58	0.77	1.30
Use of emotion,	0.41	0.07	0.54	5.82	0.000	0.59	1.71
Regulation of emotion	0.02	0.06	0.03	0.39	0.70	0.75	1.33

a. Dependent variable: Team performance

The above given 'coefficients' table provides regression coefficients, standard errors of the estimates, t-tests and tolerance and VIF values. The estimated regression coefficients are given under the heading 'un-standardized Coefficients B, these give, for each of the independent variables, the predicted change in the dependent variable when the independent variable is increased by one unit based on a condition that all the other variables in the model will remain constant. For example, here we estimate that team's performance increases by 18 % with a one unit change in team member's self emotion appraisal assuming that there is no change in the rest of variables. One unit increase in others' emotion appraisal brings a 4% change in the performance of teams. Similarly, one unit increase in the use of emotion of an employee brings a 41% variation in teams' performance. At the end, a unit change in the team member's regulation of emotion will cause team performance to change by 2%. EI dimensions with a high t value are more influential as compared to those having lower t value. The use of

emotion is showing the greatest level of influence on team performance. Tolerance values for all IVs are in acceptable range i.e. none of them is approaching to zero. VIF value is also in acceptable range i.e. all values are below 2. The researchers have developed the following regression equation with the help of above coefficient table.

$$TP = B_0 + B_1 \text{ SEA} + B_2 \text{ OEA} + B_3 \text{ UE} + B_4 \text{ RE}$$

$TP = 1.96 + .18 \text{ SEA} + .04 \text{ OEA} + 0.41 \text{ UE} + 0.02 \text{ RE}$ (Where, SEA= Self Emotion Appraisal, OEA= Others Emotion Appraisal, UE= Using Emotions, RE= Regulation of Emotions). The results indicated that SEA, OEA, UE, RE and Emotional Intelligence have a positive impact on performance of teams.

Discussions

The present study produced some important results having implications for both theory and practice. The regression result indicated that emotional intelligence had positive impact on team performance which is in line with the findings of previous researches.

A particularly interesting finding of the present study was that high emotional intelligence work teams performed at a higher level than low emotional intelligence teams. This study has implications for managers, suggesting that organizations could profit by identification of high and low emotional intelligence work teams; so that interventions can be focused on the low emotional intelligence teams where maximum benefits can be realized.

It is worth mentioning that this research has some limitations. Firstly, the survey was only conducted in 15 organizations of higher education, which may not be generalizable to the whole country. Secondly, self report measure of emotional intelligence (Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale, 2002) was used for this study. Thus only one instrument was used for collecting data. Future studies may also include other instruments/tools such as interviews and observations sheets which might offer deep insight into Emotional

Intelligence and performance of teams. Fourthly the survey included only higher education sector. It may also be replicated by involving other sectors for generalization.

Recommendations

Since Emotional Intelligence proves to be a key contributing factor to successful performance, organizations and managers take steps to become more emotionally intelligent to play their role in developing a more emotionally urbanized workforce. This can be done through introducing emotional learning programs in the organization on regular basis. This Emotional Intelligence training will be helpful to individual employees and managers too. Similarly, by acquiring emotional intelligence skill set, manager may be able to communicate to employees in a better way.

This study research did not consider the impact of team's internal structure like emotional intelligence of leader and similarities/dissimilarities of the teams. It is suggested that these aspects may be considered for future research. It is not possible to determine from the emotional intelligence alone whether the team's high performance is attributable to only this factor, or some other factors like the training they received, or the team members' increased familiarity gained over duration of task in the team. In future, these factors affecting the team's performance may also be explored. Further cause and effect relationship is also needed to compare the performance of teams before and after providing the training on emotional intelligence so that a clear picture may be found.

Concluding Remarks

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in improving team performance. Sometimes, employees are engaged in positive as well as negative emotions, it is important for them to perceive, analyze their own emotions as well as of others, use them in an effective way, and regulate them in such a way that it provides them maximum benefit instead of harm. Emotional reactions provide a useful insight of where interest may be focused, whereas unmanaged emotions can hinder the effective information processing.

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Appendix- Survey Questionnaire

I invite you to participate in my research project to find out **The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Team Performance**. By Emotional Intelligence, I mean an ability or capacity to observe, evaluate, and manage the emotions of one's self and of others.

I have attached a short survey about my study which I am hoping you will fill out and return it to me. It would take you about five minutes to complete. This study is conducted on teams so please mention your team name, sub-department and department properly. For each of the questions, please select the option that best reflects your answer.

Please note that your responses will be kept confidential and are for research information purposes only. Any of your information will not be shared with anyone outside my research group which consists of only me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Emotional Intelligence

I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have good understanding of my own emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I really understand what I feel.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I always know whether or not I am happy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I always know my team members' emotion from their behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am a good observer of other's emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I always tell myself that I am a competent person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am motivated to do a task without needing pressure from others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would always encourage myself to try my best.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties wisely.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can always calm down quickly when I am angry.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have good control of my own emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Team Performance

This team has clear objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Team objectives are made by keeping in mind the individual differences of team members.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is a constructive conflict management and counseling in the team.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The team members have openness and trust.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The whole team is aware of the process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The team members have clear roles and responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is a thorough operational planning with the involvement of team.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is an adequate communication among team members.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The members of this team are skilled.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is a lot of client feedback at organizational level.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In my team, each member has good individual performances	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
New ideas are welcomed from team members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is enjoyable work environment in this team.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Priorities are set about the tasks of the team.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Team members cooperate with each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is a lot of client feedback at organizational level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7