

Mental Health and HR: Building Emotionally Intelligent Workplaces

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of the working professionals by a correlational methodology. The data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires that were developed to measure emotional intelligence and effectiveness of full-time employees working in various sectors. The results showed that there was a high positive correlation between emotional intelligence and employee effectiveness and emotional intelligence is a key predictor of the effectiveness of employees at work. The emotional intelligence between male employees and female employees showed no significant differences. The research identifies the role of emotional intelligence in improving work performance and recommends that human resource managers should incorporate emotional intelligence training in their organisational activities to improve the wellbeing and performance of employees.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Employee Wellbeing, Stress Management, Workplace Effectiveness, Psychological Wellbeing, Interpersonal Competence, HR Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The contemporary work environment has experienced significant changes, whereby it has emphasized more on human behavior, wellbeing and performance. Previously, cognitive intelligence (IQ) was considered to be the key to professional success, however, recent studies demonstrate that emotional intelligence (EI) capacity to identify, comprehend and control own feelings as well as the feelings of others is also very important. Such factors as the global competition and complex interpersonal relations have led organizations to technological disruption, which today force employees to handle uncertainty, work in different teams and have heavy workloads. EI has become a significant competence, which facilitates psychological wellness, stress management and general effectiveness. The management of human resources has also developed to no longer be administrative but engagement, wellbeing, and culture building. Employees and leaders with EI help to create healthy workplaces, better relations, and performance. Other models by Mayer and Salovey (1990, 1997), Goleman (1995, 1998), and Bar-On (2000) also emphasize the concept of EI in the contexts of leadership, resiliency, and mental health at work.

1.2 Research Problem

Even though the significance of EI has gained a universal status, it seems that its direct effects on employee performance and mental health are still neglected by numerous organizations. Although previous researchers associate EI with leadership and coping with stress, a lack of empirical evidence on its effects in diverse organizational environments exists. It is also lacked the research that would help understand how demographic factors like gender, age, marital status, and family type influence the EI and employee effectiveness. The organizations are not sure on whether interventions to do with EI should be tailored to suit these differences or they should be crosscutting. The present research will fill in these gaps as it will analyze the correlation between EI, employee effectiveness, and important demographic and organizational variables.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study is guided by the following objectives:

- To find out the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Effectiveness in service sectors.
- To study the effect of Emotional Intelligence on effectiveness of employees working in sector organizations.
- To study the emotional intelligence between male and female employees.

1.4 Significance of the Study

- **Theoretical Significance:** It increases the existing knowledge by providing empirical support to the significance of EI as a predictor of employee effectiveness and wellbeing. It also enhances the literature on organizational behaviour by demonstrating that EI is a general acquireable skill and not a demographic attribute.
- **Practical Significance:** The results can be used by managers and HR professionals to develop EI-based programs like training, recruitment-based, leadership-development as well as wellbeing programs. The practicality of these insights will result in supportive work settings, minimized stress, improved productivity, and increased organizational commitment. In sum, EI management is not just an individual skill, but a talent in the organization in the present-day fast-paced, emotionally charged workplace.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

According to the research objectives, the hypotheses of the study are the following:

- H1: There is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and employee effectiveness.
- H2: Emotional Intelligence will predict employee effectiveness.
- H3: There is a significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between male and female employees.

1.6 Scope of the Research

This paper discusses the relationship between emotional intelligence and the wellbeing of employees with references to self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy. It relies on survey information about working professionals and compares correlational analysis to establish the strength and nature of such a relationship. The research does not delve into causation, industry comparisons and specific HR interventions. Rather, it gives a general presentation of the contribution of EI to healthier workplaces and HR programs that can be used to provide a stable mental and employee welfare.

This study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee wellbeing, focusing on self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy. It uses survey data from working professionals and employs correlational analysis to assess the strength and nature of this relationship. The study does not explore causation, industry comparisons, or specific HR interventions. Instead, it provides a broad understanding of how EI contributes to healthier workplaces and supports HR initiatives related to mental wellness and employee welfare.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Foundations of Emotional Intelligence

Mayer and Salovey (1990, 1997) conceptualized emotional intelligence as an individual's ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions. They positioned EI as a distinct cognitive capability that enhances one's resilience, emotional stability, and capacity to navigate workplace stressors. Their framework established EI as a central psychological resource influencing how employees interpret emotional cues and sustain effective performance in emotionally demanding contexts.

Emotional and Social Competencies Framework

Goleman (1995, 1998) expanded the EI construct by framing it as a set of emotional and social competencies, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship management. His work demonstrated that these competencies significantly predict job performance, conflict resolution, and overall morale. Goleman's model underscored that while intellectual ability may facilitate entry into a role, sustained success is largely driven by emotional and relational effectiveness.

Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management

Parrott (1993) and Mayer and Salovey (1997) provided empirical evidence that individuals with higher EI are better equipped to manage negative emotions, thereby reducing the psychological impact of occupational stress. Salovey et al. (1999) further noted that emotionally intelligent individuals develop stronger social support networks, which function as buffers during high-stress situations and help mitigate fatigue.

Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

Boyatzis (1982) and Spencer and Spencer (1993) identified notable distinctions between high performers and average employees based on emotional competencies. Cherniss and Goleman (1998) observed that low EI contributes to conflict, reduced morale, and burnout, whereas EI-focused developmental interventions improve productivity and strengthen organizational climate. Their findings positioned EI as a core determinant of performance quality and workplace effectiveness.

Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment

Cooper (1997) argued that individuals with elevated EI report higher job satisfaction due to their ability to maintain emotional control in challenging circumstances. Wong and Law (2002) and Abraham (2000) found that EI enhances interpersonal relationships, fostering stronger affective commitment and reducing anxiety and emotional exhaustion. These outcomes highlight EI as a predictor of more positive work attitudes and psychological wellbeing.

Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Strength in Stressful Environments

Slaski and Cartwright (2002) demonstrated that managers with higher EI experience lower stress levels and better overall health. Gillespie et al. (2001) reported that employees capable of managing emotional demands encounter fewer psychological and physiological stress reactions. Similarly, Spector and Goh (2001) identified EI as a protective factor that moderates the adverse emotional effects associated with high-pressure environments.

Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness

Cavallo and Brienza (2002) and Zaccaro (2001) established that emotionally intelligent leaders foster trust, psychological safety, and open communication within teams. Their research suggested that such leaders effectively navigate team dynamics through empathy and interpersonal sensitivity. These behaviors promote healthier climates characterized by reduced conflict and enhanced employee wellbeing.

Emotional Intelligence and Team Functioning

Rapisarda (2002) emphasized the role of EI in strengthening team cohesion, cooperation, and optimism. His findings indicated that high-EI teams cultivate positive interpersonal climates that lower conflict and enhance overall performance. EI-driven team environments therefore contribute to better psychological wellbeing and reduced stress among team members.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research employed a non-experimental research design to identify the existence of correlation between employee effectiveness and emotional intelligence (EI). An existing level of EI and effectiveness among working professionals were captured using a descriptive approach, and the strength and direction of the relationship between the two parameters were analyzed using a correlational design. The design was aimed at the natural conditions, where the variables were not manipulated.

3.2 Sampling Strategy

The population of target was working professionals in different organizations. There were 60 full-time employees involved, which represented a broad industry and demographic range. To qualify as a respondent in the research, the respondents were required to be working full time, to be over 18 years old and to be willing to take the entire questionnaire. To eliminate the possibility of having incomplete responses, students, freelancers, part-timers, interns and the unemployed were omitted to guarantee that quality of data would be upheld.

3.3 Tools for Data Collection

- The data were gathered with the help of a structured questionnaire which included the EI and employee effectiveness scales as primary data.

- **EI Scale:** The scale was created by a researcher, and 10 items on a 5-point Likert scale were used to measure self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and management of relationships. The scores that were higher indicated the strength of EI.
- **Employee Effectiveness Scale:** This is a 10 items Likert scale that assesses performance, flexibility, collaboration, and contribution to organizational objectives.
- **Demographic Information:** Age, gender, marital status, family, education, monthly income, promotions and work experience. The analysis was done using descriptive statistics, t -tests, correlation, and regression.

Independent Variable: Emotional Intelligence

Dependent Variable: Employee Effectiveness

Demographic Variables:The variables such as gender, age, marital status, family structure, education income, promotions and work experiences have been included to assess the variation in EI and employee effectiveness across personal and professional characteristics.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CORRELATION

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Intelligence and Employee Effectiveness

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Emotional Intelligence	36.9000	6.46686	60
Employee Effectiveness	37.3333	7.27118	60

Source: Primary Data

The descriptive statistics show a mean EI score of 36.90 (SD = 6.47) and a mean Employee Effectiveness score of 37.33 (SD = 7.27), indicating moderately high levels with some variability in both measures. These results provide a clear overview of the data distribution and confirm suitability for further statistical analysis.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Effectiveness

		Emotional Intelligence	Employee Effectiveness
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.694**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Employee Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.694**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

Source: Primary Data

The Pearson correlation ($r = 0.694$, $p < 0.01$) shows a strong, significant positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Effectiveness. Higher EI is clearly associated with better workplace performance.

Table 3: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1	.694 ^a	.481	.472	5.28345
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Source: Primary Data

The model summary shows that Emotional Intelligence explains 48.1% of the variance in Employee Effectiveness, indicating a substantial predictive impact. The correlation value ($R = 0.694$) and adjusted R^2 of 0.472 further confirm the model's strength. Overall, EI emerges as a strong predictor of workplace performance.

Table 4: Anova for Regression Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square F	Sig.	
Regression	1500.274	1	1500.274	53.745	.000 ^b
Residual	1619.059	58	27.915		
Total	3119.333	59			

Source: Primary Data

The ANOVA results show that the regression model is significant ($F = 53.745$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that EI meaningfully explains variance in employee effectiveness. The high F-value and very low p-value confirm the strength and reliability of EI as a predictor.

Table 5: Coefficients Table

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
1	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	8.560	3.984	2.149	.036	
1	Emotional Intelligence	.780	.106	.694	7.331	.000

Source: Primary Data

The coefficient table shows that Emotional Intelligence strongly predicts Employee Effectiveness, with each one-unit increase in EI leading to a 0.78-unit rise in effectiveness ($B = 0.780$). The result is highly significant ($p < 0.001$), and the standardized beta ($\beta = 0.694$) confirms a strong effect size. This establishes EI as a robust predictor of workplace performance.

Table 6: Residual Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	16.3576	47.5483	37.3333	5.04266	60
Residual	-12.41131	16.60660	.00000	5.23848	60
Std. Predicted Value	-4.160	2.026	.000	1.000	60

Std. Residual	-2.349	3.143	.000	.991	60
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Source: Primary Data

The residual statistics show that predicted values are centered around the mean (37.33) and that residuals average to zero, indicating a well-fitting model with no systematic bias. The standardized residuals fall within the acceptable ± 3 range, confirming reliability and minimal outliers.

Chart 1: Histogram of Regression Standardized Residuals for Employee Effectiveness **Chart 2: Normal Probability Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals for Employee Effectiveness**

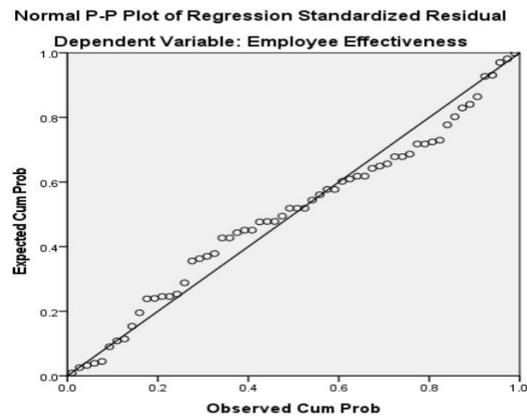
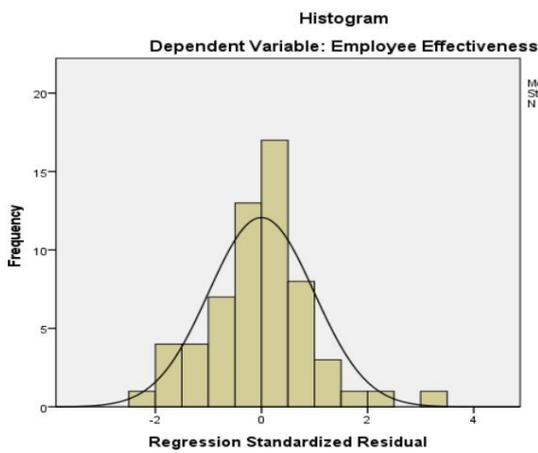
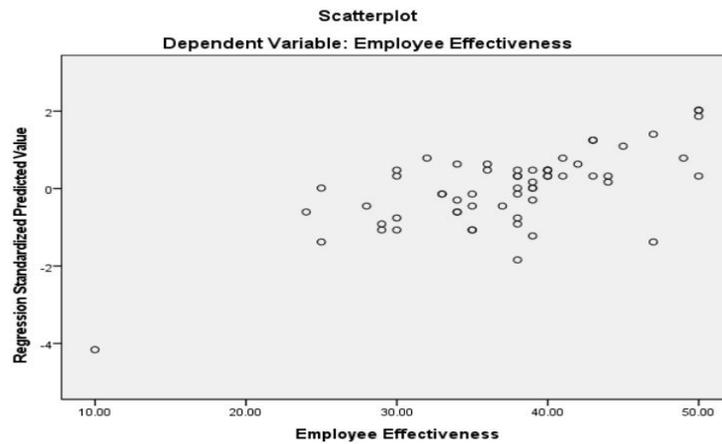


Chart 3: Regression Scatterplot for Employee Effectiveness



The scatterplot shows a clear upward trend between predicted Emotional Intelligence and actual Employee Effectiveness, indicating a linear and positive relationship. Employees with higher EI scores consistently show higher effectiveness. This visual pattern supports the statistical results that EI significantly enhances performance.

Table 7: Group Statistics (Gender-wise EI)

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Emotional Intelligence	Male	36	36.4167	6.98723	1.16454
	Female	24	37.6250	5.66310	1.15597

Source: Primary Data

Women reported slightly lower EI scores than men, but the difference was minimal and statistically insignificant. This small gap reflects normal variation rather than a true gender effect. Overall, both groups demonstrated comparable levels of emotional intelligence.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study has examined the correlation between EI and Employee Effectiveness. It has also investigated whether EI is correlated with such demographic factors as gender and family type. The descriptive findings revealed satisfactorily high EI ($M = 36.90$) and Employee Effectiveness ($M = 37.33$), which points to the characteristics of the respondents which are consistent in the aspects of emotional awareness and work performance. The correlation analysis revealed that there is a strong and significant positive correlation between EI and Employee Effectiveness ($r = 0.694$, $p < 0.01$) which implies that highly EI employees are more effective. The regression outcomes further indicated that EI predicts 48.1 percent of the variance in effectiveness with significant coefficient ($b = 0.780$, $p < 0.001$), which once again indicated that EI is indeed a strong predictor of job performance. The demographic analysis did not indicate any significant gender differences in EI ($p = 0.483$) thereby supporting the argument that EI is a skill that can be learnt as opposed to the gender-based argument. In general, the results highlight that EI will become a key success factor in the workplace and will be extremely useful in the employment process, leadership skills training, and performance management. In this way, the companies investing in the training based on EI will be able to produce a more adaptive, productive, and stable workforce.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research employed a cross-sectional survey which only took the responses at a single time, thereby preventing any opportunity to track any change in either EI or effectiveness over a period of time, and consequently could not be compared to a causal relationship. The sample consisted of an assortment of different industry workers and the analysis of any industry-specific differences was not done but this could affect both the EI needs and stressors in the workplace. The demographic variables were all limited to gender, age, family type and education; this excluded the other potential influencing factors, including the personality traits, cultural background, and organizational climate. It is impossible to determine the cause-effect relationships of the direct impact of EI on the effectiveness of the employees due to the correlational and non-experimental design. The analysis concentrated on selection of components and dimensions of EI and effectiveness alone and omitted other pertinent components that may supplement the knowledge about the two constructs.

7. CONCLUSION

The research paper discussed here has shown that EI plays an important role in defining performance and wellbeing in the workplace. The positive correlation and the corresponding regression outcomes indicated that EI is a good predictor of nearly half of the variance in employee effectiveness in regard to dealing with stress, relationship, and demands at work. Gender and family type did not exert a strong effect on EI to ratify the stand that EI is a skill, which can be trained and not a demographic factor. The paper has highlighted why EI should be incorporated in the recruitment, training, leadership development, and performance management procedures to have healthier, more engaged, and resilient workforces in organizations.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Companies ought to offer formal EI trainings that will allow both employees and managers to improve their self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and interpersonal skills. Also, the HR departments can incorporate EI testing in the hiring, upgrading, and performance review processes to assist in identifying talent that is emotionally competent. Once again, psychological resilience could be created through the introduction of employee wellbeing programmes such as stress management workshops, peer support groups, and mindfulness. Likewise, develop emotionally enabling cultures associated with open communication, empathy, and healthy conflict resolution to improve performance even more. Continuous monitoring and feedback systems should be set to evaluate the progress of EI and refine the interventions to become sustainable in the performance of the employees.

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