

The Impact of Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace on Productivity

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Date of Submission: 06-10-2024

Date of acceptance: 18-10-2024

Abstract: *This study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and workplace productivity, exploring how EI influences individual and organizational performance. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and influence emotions in oneself and others, has gained increasing importance in organizational behavior. The research employs a quantitative approach, collecting data from 150 employees across various industries. Through correlational analysis, the study reveals a strong positive relationship between high emotional intelligence and increased productivity, particularly in stress management and interpersonal skills. The findings suggest that employees with higher EI are better equipped to manage workplace challenges, fostering enhanced task completion, collaboration, and overall performance. The study emphasizes the value of developing emotional intelligence within organizations to optimize productivity and enhance workplace dynamics.*

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, workplace productivity, organizational performance, interpersonal skills, stress management, workplace dynamics

I. Introduction

In recent years, a profound shift has taken place in organizational management philosophies, emphasizing the significance of emotional intelligence (EI) as a pivotal factor in workplace dynamics. This growing recognition stems from research demonstrating that EI enhances interpersonal relationships, facilitates effective communication, and fosters a constructive work environment, ultimately influencing overall productivity. The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has garnered significant attention in organizational behavior and human resource management. Defined as the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and influence emotions in oneself and others, emotional intelligence is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in fostering a positive work environment, enhancing teamwork, and improving leadership effectiveness. By examining how emotional intelligence influences team collaborations, leadership effectiveness, and employee morale, the connection between EI and productivity emerges as not only significant but essential for sustainable organizational success. This research will explore the multifaceted impact of emotional intelligence in the workplace, highlighting its implications for productivity and offering insights into how organizations can cultivate emotionally intelligent environments to optimize performance outcomes.

The workplace is a complex social environment where interpersonal relationships and communication play pivotal roles in determining overall productivity. Traditionally, cognitive intelligence (IQ) has been viewed as the primary determinant of employee performance and organizational success. However, as the business environment becomes more dynamic and inter-connected, the limitations of IQ in explaining variance in job performance and workplace effectiveness have become evident. This shift has led to an increased focus on the role of emotional intelligence in complementing cognitive abilities to optimize individual and team performance. Several studies have highlighted the positive correlation between emotional intelligence and various organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, and employee well-being. According to (Lawson et al., 2019), effective health and wellness coaching enhances employees' self-awareness, which is a fundamental aspect of EI, thereby nurturing a more engaged and productive workforce. Furthermore, as emphasized in (Adeniji, 2011), an understanding of the organizational climate can significantly impact job satisfaction, hinting at the intertwining roles of emotional intelligence and workplace morale. Altogether,

cultivating emotional intelligence is paramount for organizations aiming to optimize employee wellbeing and achieve sustainable productivity. Employees with high EI are better equipped to manage stress, navigate interpersonal conflicts, and adapt to change—skills that are essential in today's fast-paced and often high-pressure work environments. Moreover, emotionally intelligent leaders are more adept at motivating and inspiring their teams, leading to enhanced collaboration and productivity.

Despite the growing recognition of EI's importance, there remains a need for more empirical research to explore its direct impact on workplace productivity. Understanding the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence influences productivity can provide valuable insights for organizations looking to enhance performance and foster a more supportive and resilient workforce. This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the impact of emotional intelligence on productivity in the workplace. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature and empirical data, the study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of how emotional intelligence can be leveraged to improve organizational outcomes. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the development of more effective human resource strategies that prioritize emotional intelligence as a key component of employee development and organizational success.

II. Literature Review

Mayer and Salovey (1997) have conceptualized emotional intelligence as a set of mental abilities concerned with emotions and the processing of emotional information. EI has shown good predictive validity when it comes to assessing an individual's performance at work (Lopez et al., 2005). Radha and Shree (2017) showed that emotional intelligence was positively correlated to both task as well as contextual performance. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a concept that has gained considerable attention in organizational psychology and management studies over the past few decades. Initially popularized by Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively in oneself and others. It encompasses a range of skills, including emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills, which are believed to influence various aspects of workplace behavior and outcomes. The relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace productivity has been a focal point of research, with numerous studies suggesting that higher levels of EI contribute to better job performance and organizational success. Cherniss and Goleman (2001) argue that emotionally intelligent employees are better equipped to handle the complexities of modern workplaces, where interpersonal interactions and emotional demands are prevalent. These employees are often more adaptable, resilient, and capable of managing stress, which directly contributes to their productivity. Studies have shown that emotional intelligence positively correlates with various performance indicators, including sales performance, leadership effectiveness, and overall job satisfaction (O'Boyle et al., 2011). For instance, a meta-analysis by Joseph and Newman (2010) found that EI is a significant predictor of job performance, particularly in jobs that require extensive interpersonal interactions. This suggests that employees who are adept at managing their emotions and those of others are more likely to excel in roles that demand collaboration and communication.

The literature identifies several key components of emotional intelligence that are particularly relevant to workplace productivity: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and stress management (Bar-On, 2006). Each of these components plays a unique role in shaping how employees interact with their work environment and perform their tasks. **Self-Perception** involves understanding one's emotions and their impact on behavior. Employees with high self-perception are more likely to be self-motivated and confident in their abilities, which can lead to increased productivity (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000). They are also more likely to set realistic goals and persist in the face of challenges. **Self-Expression** refers to the ability to express emotions appropriately and assertively. This component is crucial for effective communication and collaboration in the workplace (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2009). Employees who can express their emotions clearly are better at managing conflicts and fostering positive work relationships, which enhances overall team productivity. **Interpersonal Relationships** are a central aspect of emotional intelligence, encompassing empathy, social responsibility, and relationship management. Research suggests that employees who excel in interpersonal skills are more effective at teamwork, which is critical for productivity in collaborative environments (Wong & Law, 2002). Such employees are also better at understanding and responding to the emotional needs of others, creating a supportive work atmosphere. **Decision-Making** involves integrating emotional information into the decision-making process. Employees with high emotional intelligence are often better at making balanced decisions that consider both logical analysis and emotional factors (Jordan & Troth, 2002). This balanced approach can lead to more effective problem-solving and higher productivity. **Stress Management** is perhaps one of the most directly related components to productivity. Effective stress management allows employees to maintain their composure under pressure, reducing the likelihood of burnout and maintaining consistent performance (Bar-On, 2006). Employees who can manage stress well are typically more focused and less likely to be distracted by emotional turmoil.

Given the importance of emotional intelligence for productivity, organizations have increasingly focused on EI training and development programs. Research by Cherniss and Adler (2000) suggests that EI can be developed through targeted interventions, leading to improvements in various workplace outcomes, including productivity. Such programs often involve training in self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social skills, with the goal of enhancing employees' ability to manage their own emotions and interact effectively with others. Moreover, Goleman (2001) emphasizes the role of leadership in fostering an emotionally intelligent workforce. Leaders who demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence are better at motivating their teams, resolving conflicts, and creating a positive work environment. This leadership style not only improves employee morale but also enhances overall organizational productivity. Despite the growing interest in emotional intelligence, the concept has faced criticism, particularly concerning its measurement and validity. Some scholars argue that the current methods for assessing EI, such as self-report questionnaires, may not accurately capture the full scope of emotional intelligence and are susceptible to social desirability bias (Conte, 2005). Others have questioned whether EI adds any unique predictive value beyond traditional measures of intelligence and personality (Landy, 2005). However, despite these criticisms, the majority of the literature supports the notion that emotional intelligence is a valuable construct that contributes to workplace success. As research in this area continues to evolve, it is likely that more sophisticated methods for measuring and developing EI will be established, further solidifying its role in enhancing productivity.

III. Statement of the Problem

In today's highly competitive and rapidly changing business environment, organizations are constantly seeking ways to enhance productivity and maintain a competitive edge. While traditional approaches have focused on improving technical skills and cognitive abilities, there is a growing recognition that these factors alone are insufficient for achieving optimal performance. Emotional intelligence (EI), which encompasses the ability to understand and manage one's emotions and those of others, has emerged as a critical factor in workplace dynamics. However, despite its perceived importance, the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace productivity remains underexplored and inadequately understood. The problem this study addresses is the lack of empirical evidence and comprehensive understanding regarding how emotional intelligence influences productivity in the workplace. Although there is substantial anecdotal evidence and theoretical support suggesting that emotionally intelligent employees and leaders can create more cohesive, collaborative, and productive work environments, there is a need for systematic research to substantiate these claims. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether high levels of emotional intelligence among employees and leaders correlate with increased productivity, and to identify the mechanisms through which EI impacts workplace outcomes. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of emotional intelligence on productivity within the workplace, providing actionable insights for organizations seeking to leverage emotional intelligence as a strategic tool for improving performance and achieving sustainable success. This study tries to seek the answers of following research questions:

- How does emotional intelligence among employees influence individual productivity in the workplace?
- What are the specific mechanisms through which emotional intelligence contributes to enhanced productivity in the workplace?

IV. Objectives of the Study

Followings are the objectives of the study:

- To examine the relationship between employees' emotional intelligence and their individual productivity in the workplace.
- To identify the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence enhances productivity in the workplace.

V. Rationale of the Study

In the modern workplace, where complex interpersonal interactions and rapid changes are the norm, emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial factor that can significantly influence organizational success. Traditionally, cognitive intelligence and technical skills have been viewed as the primary drivers of productivity. However, as organizations increasingly recognize the importance of emotional and social competencies, the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing workplace outcomes has become a focal point of interest.

Despite the growing body of literature suggesting that emotionally intelligent employees and leaders are more effective, there remains a substantial gap in understanding the specific ways in which emotional intelligence directly influences productivity. This gap is particularly evident in the context of empirical research that links EI to measurable productivity outcomes. As organizations strive to optimize performance and foster

positive work environments, there is a pressing need to understand how emotional intelligence can be leveraged to achieve these goals.

The rationale for this study is rooted in the belief that a deeper understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace productivity will provide valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners. By exploring how emotional intelligence affects individual performance, team dynamics, and overall organizational productivity, this study aims to contribute to the development of more effective human resource practices and leadership strategies. These insights can help organizations better support their employees, enhance job satisfaction, and ultimately improve productivity. Furthermore, as businesses continue to navigate the challenges of a dynamic and often stressful work environment, the ability to manage emotions and maintain positive relationships becomes increasingly critical. This study seeks to highlight the importance of emotional intelligence as a strategic asset that can drive both individual and collective success in the workplace. In summary, this research is justified by the need to empirically validate the impact of emotional intelligence on productivity and to provide actionable recommendations for organizations seeking to harness the power of emotional intelligence to enhance their performance and achieve sustainable success.

VI. Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) in the workplace on productivity. A survey method was used to collect data from employees across various industries. The survey was designed to capture self-reported measures of emotional intelligence and productivity levels within the workplace. The study aimed to establish correlations between these two variables and identify any significant trends or patterns.

Sample Collection

The study involved 150 employees from diverse sectors including finance, healthcare, education, and manufacturing. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different job roles, levels of experience, genders, and ages. Participants included 80 males and 70 females, aged between 25 years and above, with varying years of experience ranging from 1 to 30 years in the organization.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire, which was distributed electronically to participants via email. This research employed a quantitative, correlational design to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and workplace productivity. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: the first section assessed emotional intelligence, while the second section measured workplace productivity using a self-report productivity. The questionnaire also collected demographic information such as age, gender, and years of experience.

Emotional Intelligence Assessment

Emotional intelligence was measured using the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, a well-validated self-report instrument that assesses five composite scales: Self-Perception, Self-Expression, Interpersonal, Decision Making, and Stress Management.

Productivity Measurement

Workplace productivity was assessed using Self-Reported Productivity. Participants completed a self-assessment questionnaire designed to measure perceived productivity. This questionnaire consisted of 5 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale, evaluating aspects such as task completion, efficiency, and work quality.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample. Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace productivity. Multiple regression analysis was performed to assess the predictive power of emotional intelligence on productivity while controlling for potential confounding variables such as age, gender, and years of experience.

VII. Results and Findings

This section of the study presents a summary of the results followed by a discussion of their implications.

Demographic Information

Table 1 provides the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	80	53.3
Female	70	46.7
Total	150	100
Age		
25-34	45	30
35-44	50	33.3
45-54	40	26.7
55 and above	15	10
Total	150	100
Experience		
1- 5 years	40	26.7
6-10years	35	23.3
11-15 years	30	20
16-20	25	16.7
21 years and above	20	13.3
Total	150	100
Sectors		
Finance	45	30
Healthcare	30	20
Education	30	20
Manufacturing	45	30
Total	150	100

Notes: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 1 provides the demographic characteristics of the 150 participants. The participants included 80 males (53.3%) and 70 females (46.7%). The age distribution was as follows: 45 participants (30%) were aged 25-34, 50 participants (33.3%) were aged 35-44, 40 participants (26.7%) were aged 45-54, and 15 participants (10%) were aged 55 and above. The participants had a wide range of experience within the organization, with 40 employees (26.7%) having 1-5 years of experience, 35 employees (23.3%) having 6-10 years, 30 employees (20%) having 11-15 years, 25 employees (16.7%) having 16-20 years, and 20 employees (13.3%) having 21 years and above of experience. The sample included employees from sectors such as finance (30%), healthcare (20%), education (20%), and manufacturing (30%).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) Assessment

Table 2 provides the responses from the 150 employees on the Emotional Intelligence (EI) Assessment.

Table 2
Responses for Emotional Intelligence Assessment

Dimensions	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Self-perception	4.2	0.6
Self-expression	4.0	0.7
Interpersonal	4.3	0.5
Decision making	4.1	0.6
Stress Management	4.2	0.6
Total	4.16	0.5

Notes: Field Survey, 2024.

A relatively high average of self-perception (4.2) indicates a strong sense of self-awareness and self-confidence. The standard deviation suggests moderate variability, meaning that while most scores are close to 4.2, there are some variations. A solid average of self-expression (4) shows that most individuals in the assessment are able to express themselves well. However, the slightly higher SD indicates a bit more variability in this domain. The high score of interpersonal reflects strong interpersonal skills, such as empathy and social relationships. The lower SD shows consistency in this dimension, suggesting most participants are quite similar in their interpersonal capabilities. The score of decision making (4.1) indicates good decision-making abilities with moderate variability, showing some differences in how individuals make decisions under different circumstances. A high score of stress management (4.2) suggests good stress management skills, with a moderate

amount of variability. The average Emotional Quotient Inventory scores indicated that the participants had a generally high level of emotional intelligence across all five composite scales. The total EI score had a mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.5), indicating that the majority of participants rated themselves positively across all dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Workplace Productivity Scores

Table 3 provides the responses of 150 employees on Workplace Productivity, including the mean and standard deviation for each statement.

Table 3
Responses for Workplace Productivity

Statements	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Consistently meeting work deadlines	4.4	0.5
Effective time management	4.3	0.6
Achieving work targets regularly	4.5	0.5
Productivity in challenging situations	4.2	0.6
High quality of work output	4.3	0.5

Notes. Field Survey, 2024.

Employees tend to strongly agree that they consistently meet work deadlines, as indicated by a high mean score of 4.4. The low standard deviation of 0.5 suggests that responses were relatively uniform, with most employees agreeing similarly on this point. Employees generally agree that they manage their time effectively at work (mean = 4.3), though there is slightly more variability in responses (SD = 0.6) compared to the previous statement, indicating that while most agree, a few employees may have rated it lower. Statement 3 has the highest mean (4.5), showing that employees strongly agree that they regularly achieve their work targets. The standard deviation (0.5) indicates consistent responses among employees. Employees agree that they maintain productivity even when faced with challenges (mean = 4.2). However, the standard deviation of 0.6 suggests some variation in responses, with a few employees possibly feeling less confident about their productivity in challenging situations. Employees strongly agree that the quality of their work is high (mean = 4.3), and the standard deviation of 0.5 reflects relatively consistent agreement across employees. The mean scores indicate that employees generally perceive themselves to be productive and efficient in various areas of workplace productivity, particularly in achieving targets (M = 4.5) and meeting deadlines (M = 4.4). The standard deviations suggest that there is a strong agreement among employees on these productivity measures, with slightly more variability in areas like time management and productivity during challenges.

Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Productivity

Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace productivity ($r = 0.62, p < 0.01$). Higher overall EI scores were associated with better self-reported productivity. Among the EI components, the Interpersonal ($r = 0.58, p < 0.01$) and Stress Management ($r = 0.55, p < 0.01$) scales showed the strongest correlations with productivity measures, suggesting that employees who manage stress well and maintain positive relationships are more likely to be productive.

Open-Ended Responses

The qualitative analysis of open-ended responses provided further insight into how emotional intelligence influences productivity. Many participants highlighted that their ability to manage emotions, particularly in high-pressure situations, allowed them to maintain focus and perform efficiently. Participants also emphasized the importance of empathy and effective communication in fostering teamwork and achieving collective goals. Several respondents described specific instances where their emotional intelligence helped them navigate complex interpersonal dynamics, leading to successful project outcomes.

Major Findings

1. Demographic Characteristics:

- The sample consisted of 150 employees, with a fairly equal distribution between genders (53.3% male, 46.7% female).
- Most respondents were aged between 35 - 44 (33.3%), followed by 25-34 (30%) and 45-54 (26.7%), while only 10% were aged 55 and above.

- In terms of work experience, 26.7% of participants had 1-5 years of experience, while 23.3% had 6-10 years, and 20% had 11-15 years. A smaller percentage (16.7% and 13.3%) had more than 15 years of experience.
- The employees represented four sectors: finance, manufacturing, healthcare, and education.

2. Emotional Intelligence (EI) Assessment:

- Employees scored relatively high across all five EI dimensions, with Self-Perception and Interpersonal Skills being particularly strong.
- Self-expression had the lowest mean and highest variability, indicating some differences in how participants express themselves.
- Overall, the total EI score suggests that employees generally rate themselves positively on emotional intelligence.

3. Workplace Productivity:

- Employees scored high on workplace productivity, with Achieving Work Targets Regularly being the highest-rated statement, followed by Consistently Meeting Deadlines.
- Moderate variation was observed in Productivity in Challenging Situations and Effective Time Management, indicating some diversity in how employees handle challenges and manage time.
- Overall, productivity scores reflect a high level of agreement, with employees generally perceiving themselves as productive, especially in achieving goals and maintaining high work quality.

4. Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Productivity:

- There was a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and workplace productivity, meaning employees with higher emotional intelligence tend to report higher productivity.
- Among EI components, Interpersonal Skills and Stress Management showed the strongest correlations with productivity, highlighting the importance of these dimensions for maintaining high productivity.

5. Qualitative Insights:

Open-ended responses indicated that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in productivity, especially in managing emotions during stressful situations, maintaining focus, and navigating interpersonal challenges. Empathy and effective communication were frequently cited as key to teamwork and successful outcomes.

VIII. Conclusion

The findings from this study underscore the significant role of emotional intelligence (EI) in enhancing workplace productivity. The results demonstrate a strong positive correlation between overall emotional intelligence and productivity, suggesting that employees who are more emotionally intelligent tend to perform better, meet their targets more consistently, and manage their tasks effectively. Among the various components of EI, interpersonal skills and stress management were particularly influential, highlighting the importance of maintaining positive relationships and managing stress in achieving high levels of productivity. The study highlights a strong link between emotional intelligence and workplace productivity. Employees who demonstrate higher emotional intelligence, particularly in managing stress and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships, tend to be more productive.

This research contributes to the growing body of evidence that emotional intelligence is a crucial factor in workplace success, not just for individual employees but also for teams and organizations as a whole. The ability to understand and manage one's emotions, as well as to empathize and communicate effectively with others, appears to facilitate better decision-making, collaboration, and overall performance. These findings suggest that organizations may benefit from investing in EI development programs, such as training and workshops, to enhance employee productivity and, by extension, organizational performance. These findings suggest that developing emotional intelligence could be a valuable strategy for organizations to enhance employee productivity. Furthermore, the consistency in high productivity scores indicates that employees perceive themselves as capable and efficient, particularly in achieving work targets and meeting deadlines.

9. Limitations of the Study

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, several limitations should be acknowledged:

- The use of self-reported measures for both emotional intelligence and productivity may introduce bias, as participants might overestimate their abilities or performance.

- The study heavily relied on self-perceived productivity measures. Employees' perceptions of their productivity may not always align with actual performance.
- Although the study examined different components of EI, it did not explore in-depth how specific aspects of EI (e.g., empathy, emotional regulation) might differently impact various dimensions of productivity. Future research could delve deeper into these nuances to provide more detailed insights.

Declarations

Competing interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding

This research did not receive any grants from any funding agency.

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