"Emotional Intelligence Is A Game-Changer" - The Effect Of Emotional Intelligence On Job Performance

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ABSTRACT

In the turbulent era, competitive advantage in the market can only be reaped through firm's human resources. Recently, increasing numbers of scholars have argued that emotional intelligence (EI) is a core variable that affects the performance of employees. There has been increasing tendency in the exploration of emotional intelligence and its potential benefit for both individual and firm. Lucidly, there are contradiction findings on the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee job performance. Therefore, the present study was designed to investigate of the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee's job performance. Data were garnered with a self-administrated questionnaire from randomly selected 81employees working in World Vision Lanka in Sri Lanka. The results of the multiple regression analysis revealed that individual components of the emotional intelligence, namely, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills, have a significant positive impact on employees' job performance. The study has clearly explained the theoretical and practical implications.

Keywords: Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Self-motivation, Empathy, Social skills, Job performance.

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon, Emotional intelligence has become a vigilant one in psychological research (Aqqad, Obeidat, Tarhini, and Masa'deh, 2019; Rahman, Shah, and Jan, 2019; Tănăsescu, and Ramona-Diana, 2019; Rahman, and Haleem, 2018). Emotional intelligence (EI) could be known as the "abilities to perceive, appraise, and express emotion; to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and to regulate emotions to promote educational and intellectual growth" (Mayer and Salovey, 1989). Working environment or development of intellectual capital in an organization is closely related to emotional intelligence (Kengatharan, 2019). According to Smigla and Pastoria (2000) EI is prominent element for creating productive working condition. It is not merely good for others, but to deal with people with fully constructive way when a problem arises. Emotional intelligence promotes relationships, teamwork, and collaboration (Druskat and Wheeler, 2003; Druskat and Wolff, 2001; Goleman, 2000; Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, 2002; Wolff et al., 2002). There are a number of studies that supports the notion that emotional intelligence may be related to organizational performance outcomes. Thus, EI emphases on one's personal development and effectiveness, as well as on one's relationships with others. Specifically, EI focuses on the relationship between two individuals in terms of how they use intentional and conscious emotional and intellectual knowledge to result in desired behaviors (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Goleman Boyatzis and McKee, 2002).

Research problem

There are ambiguous research findings on the impact of EI and job performance, studies suggested that EI and job performance are positively correlated (Chong, Falahat, and Lee, 2020; Druskat and Wolff, 2001; Gong, Chen, and Wang, 2019; Oh and Jang, 2020; Udayar, Fiori, and Bausseron, 2020). Conversely, some studies have also suggested that there is no significant relation between EI and job performance (Boyatzis, Stubbs and Taylor, 2002). The relationship between EI and job performance is conflicting. Moreover, there is inadequate research in this field and lack of attention is paid among the non-government sector employees. Notably, emotional intelligence is subject to cultural variation (Zawawi, Tsang, Mustaffa, and Rodriguez, 2019). Individuals vary in terms of thinking, behaving and capacity to make decisions (Zawawi, Tsang, Mustaffa, and Rodriguez, 2019). Therefore, it is essential to conduct the study on the impact of EI on employee's job performance in Non-Government organization/NGOs. Hence, the research question of the study is *"Does emotional intelligence predict employee job performance?"*

Objectives of the study

1. The focal objective of the present study is to identify the extent to which emotional intelligence predicts employee performance.
2. To identify whether age and the service periods make differences in emotional intelligence.

2. Theoretical Background

Emotional Intelligence

One of the most provocative ideas to emerge from recent discussions of management concerns the possibility that a new form of intelligence pertaining to emotions is related to performance of organization members (Goleman, 1998, Mayer, Caruso and Salovey, 2004). Several organizations have incorporated emotional intelligence in to their employee development programs (Fast company, 2000), and some business schools have added the training of emotional competencies to their curriculums (Boyatzis, Stubbs, and Taylor, 2002).

According to Mayer and Salovey (1993) the awareness of one's own and others emotions enables individuals to establish sound interpersonal relationships with others. EI have three theories that dominated the academic literature and informed the course of research in the past four decades. These theories conceptualize EI as a set of interrelated emotional and social competencies that determine how people understand and express themselves, understand others and relate with the demands of daily life (Bar-On,1997).

At the present time, there are three main models of EI, (1) The ability model; focuses emotion of self and others as useful sources of information that facilitate one to make sense of the social environment and to navigate it (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1998). (2) The trait model; alludes to an individual's self-perceptions of their emotional abilities (Goleman, 1998; Freshman and Rubino, 2002). (3) The mixed model features a framework of five competencies that enforce effective every day and behavior. These competencies were developed by Goleman (1995) based on the framework of Salovey and Mayer (1990).

Performance

Performance can be defined as the accomplishment, execution, carrying out, and working out of anything ordered or undertaken. Employee performance has been defined as the degree to which employees perform job tasks assigned to them by their employers (Kahya, 2007; Mozael, 2015). An organization's success is dependent on the performance of every employee. Thus, measurement of performance is essential for checking the achievement of organizational success.

Schuler and Youngblood (1986) analyzing effective performance management define performance appraisals as a system of measuring, evaluating and influencing an employee's job-related attributes, behaviors, and outcomes, and level of absenteeism to discover at what level the employee is presently performing on the job.

Emotional intelligence and job performance

Research has provided empirical evidence for various aspects of this study. The following section deals with the proved relationship between EI and other variables including employees' performance. The awareness of one's own and others emotions enables individuals to establish sound interpersonal relationships with others (Mayer and Salovey, 1990, 1993). People with this ability, therefore, should be able to recognize and understand what their emotions are and know how to apply them in improving their relationships with others (Mayer et al. 1997). Such improved relationships may in turn lead to improved job

performance. Brackett et al. (2006) suggested that this ability may allow individuals to better control their personal feelings in dealing with stress, because of conflict issues. High levels of EI have also been shown to affect individual communication skills (Goleman,1998; MacCann et al., 2003).

Goleman (1998) asserts that emotional intelligence, not IQ, predicts workplace success and who transpires as a leader. In a study of Harvard graduates in the fields of law, medicine, teaching, and businesses, scores on entrance exams had zero or negative correlation with their eventual career success (Goleman, 1998). A multitude of studies suggest that EI is a strong predictor of job performance (Aqqad, Obeidat, Tarhini, and Masa'deh, 2019; Rahman, Shah, and Jan, 2019; Tănăsescu, and Ramona-Diana, 2019; Rahman, and Haleem, 2018). In a study that examined workers in a cigarette factory in China, EI was found to predict employee performance (Song et al,. 2010). In addition, people with high emotional awareness may be more successful in dealing with uncertainty within their environment (Bar-On, 1997; MacCann et al., 2003). That ability has been found to have significant effects in successfully managing stress (Bar-On, 1997; Brackett et al., 2006).
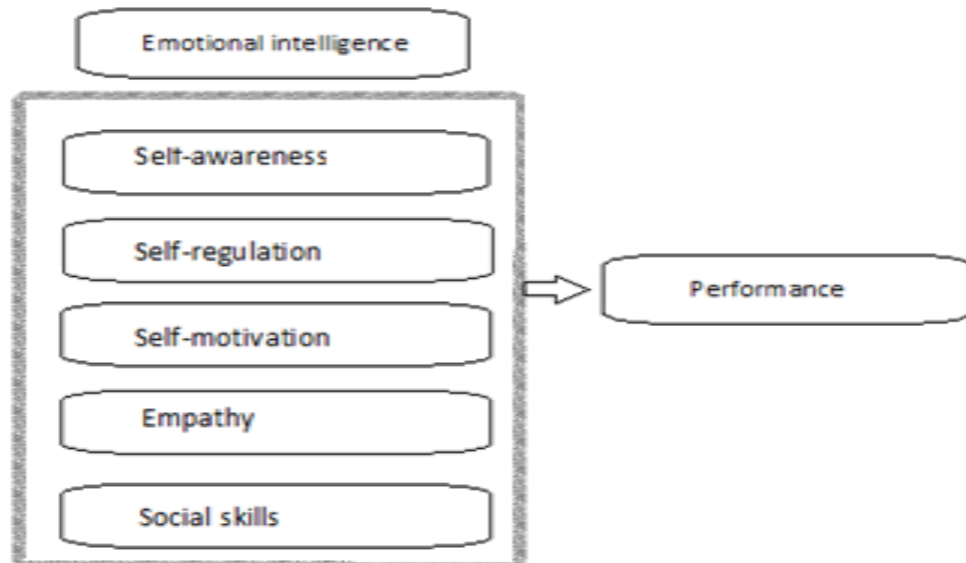
Empirical studies on Emotional intelligence and job performance

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2. Methodology

This study adopts quantitative research technique to test the hypotheses. Structured questionnaire was used to collect the data through simple random sampling. The participants of the study were project officers of World Vision Lanka (Sri Lanka). The accessible population was made up of staff working in World Vision Lanka in Sri Lanka. In addition, the accessible population did not include workers who were unwilling or unable to participate. Questionnaires were distributed to the staff of World Vision Lanka located in Sri Lanka. Altogether 81 participants returned the completed questionnaires out of which 100.

Conceptual framework

Hypotheses

H1: Emotional intelligence has positive impact on employees' performance.

H2 a: Self-awareness has positive impact on employees' performance.

H2 b: Self-regulation has positive impact on employees' performance.

H2 c: Self-motivation has positive impact on employees' performance.

H2 d: Empathy has positive impact on employees' performance.

H2 e: Social skill has positive impact on employees' performance.

H3. Emotional intelligence differs in regards to Age of employees.

H4. Emotional intelligence differs in among people with different level of service period.

Data collection Method

The study relies on primary data collection technique. The questionnaires used in this study have been validated in previous studies; the emotional intelligence was measured with 33 items and job performance with 15 items (Schutte et al., 1998; Spector, Bauer, and Fox, 2010; Tseng and Huang, 2011). All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 as 'Strongly Disagree' to 5 as 'Strongly Agree'. Demographic variables, such as gender, were included as a categorical variable while age, educational background and experience were counted in as ordinal variables. For the purpose of primary data collection, the researcher has directly handover the questionnaire to the project staffs, Notwithstanding, the researcher has not intervened in filling the questionnaire in order to eradicate the personal prejudices.

Measures

A questionnaire, consists of three pans are used to measure variables namely emotional intelligence and job performance of employees the part one of the questionnaire deals with demographic data, part two deals with emotional intelligence & the final pan deals with job performance of employees.

Demographic/ personal data

Demographic data of the respondents are collected through the part one of the questionnaires. This part consists six questions. Through these questions, the personal data for this research are collected. They are forced choice questions and the respondent should select the appropriate answer.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage people. For this study, part two of the questionnaire collects information regarding emotional intelligence. There are twenty questions in the questionnaire and they are designed to measure each components of emotional intelligence.

Questions 2, 4, 14 & 12 are used to measure self-regulation of employees. Questions 1, 9, 11 & 19 are used to measure self-awareness of employees. Questions 6, 10, 20 & 16 are used to measure social skills of employees. Questions 3, 7, 13 & 17 are used to measure the self-motivation of employees. Finally, question 5, 8, 15 & 18 are used to measure empathy skills of employees. The Likert five rating scales are given to choose as appropriate. In this way four questions are used to measure each components of emotional intelligence. The high scale is 5 and the low scale is 1. The respondent should choose the appropriate scale for each question. The questionnaire which was developed by Goleman.D (1995) is used for this study purpose and this questionnaire is translated in to Tamil to make the respondent understand well. The five components of emotional intelligence namely self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills are measured from this questionnaire. For the purpose of analysis, the emotional intelligence of employees will be categorized as follows:

Range	Emotional intelligence
0- 2.33	Low level
2.33- 3.60	Moderate level
3.66- 5	High level

Performance

Job performance is defined as how well or poorly, employees perform their duties compare to expectations for the job. The data relating to performance are collected by part three of the questionnaire. The questionnaire which was developed by the researcher is used to collect and measure the employees' performance details. There are fifteen questions and divided in to five categories. In this study, performance consists of five variables such as quality of work, timeliness, problem-solving, knowledge of work and

training, first three questions measure the quality of work of employees. The second three questions measure the employees' timeless of work. The third three questions arc used to measure problem solving ability of employees. The fourth three questions are used to measure knowledge of work of employees and the final three question measure training status of employees.

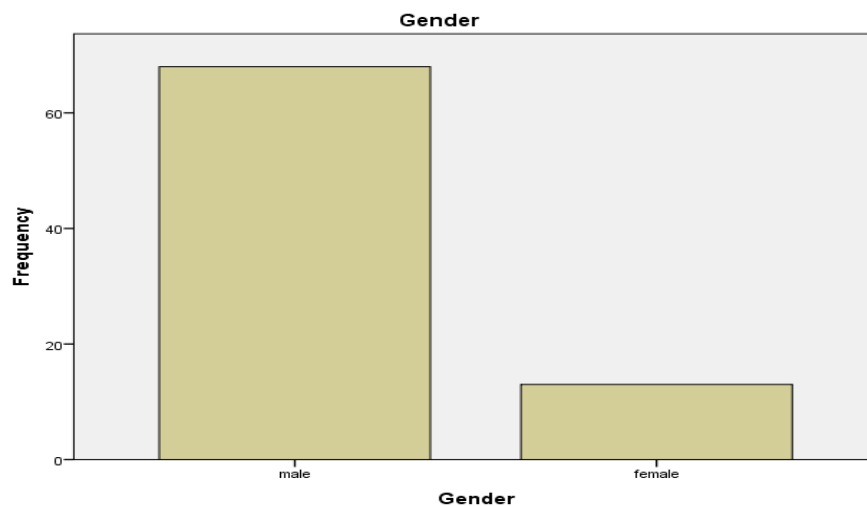For the purpose of analysis, performance of employees will be categorized as follows

Range	Performance
0- 2.33	Low level
2.33- 3.60	Moderate level
3.66- 5	High level

Personal variables and respondents

The personal variables of respondent's such as gender, civil status, age and experience were analyzed and expressed in charts, tables and diagrams.

Respondents based on sex

Sex is an important factor in classifying respondents. Thus, for the purpose of the studydata was collected both from male and female staff
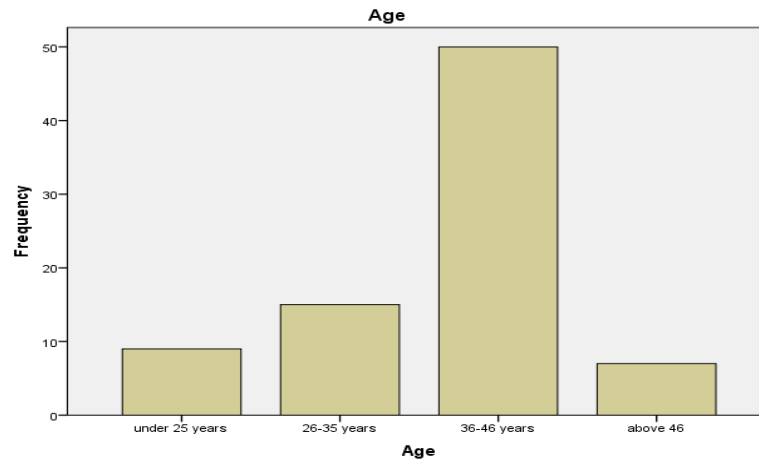

Source: Data Survey

The above figures that move of respondents are female 13% compare with their counterparts.

Respondents based on age

Age is a parameter for all aspects of everybody's life. To equip the perception of age, information about age is collected and categorized in to four clusters.

Source: Data Survey

As shown the above figure, the majority of respondents are from the age group of 36-46 which is 61.7% and other respondents on each group are almost the same.

Respondents based on marital status

Marital status is another important criterion on the basis of that, data were collected both from married and unmarried employees and presented.
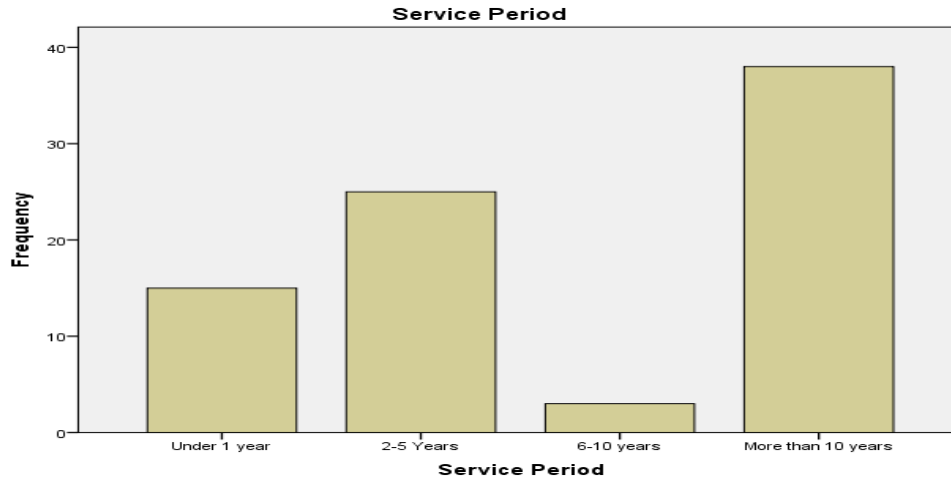

Source: Data Survey

As shown in the above figure, 72.8% of respondents are married & other 27.2% of respondents are unmarried.

Respondents based on service period

Experience plays an important role in the performance of employees. Thus, for the purpose of the study service period of employees' are clustered in to five.

Source: Data Survey

The above figure shows the service period of respondents. Accordingly, most respondents have More than 10years experience in their service.

4. Data Analysis

Our sample made up of predominatly males employees. The hypothesis testing has been done using multiple regression analysis and ANOVA tests.

Table 1: Results of the hypothesis Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	*Sig.*
Vraiables	**B**	**Std.Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	4.942	1.101		4.490	.000
Self-Awareness	.578	.095	.563	6.060	.000
Self-regulation	.576	.085	.605	6.749	.000
Self-motivation	.068	.165	.046	.414	.040
Empathy	.366	.085	.387	4.286	.000
Social Skills	.140	.100	.155	1.399	.0456

According the above table, the regression value of Emotional Intelligence (0.666) which is significant at 0.009 significant levels. Therefore, it is clear that there is slide positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and performance. Thus, the hypothesis, H1: *Emotional Intelligence has positive impact on employees' performance is accepted*. Self-Awareness which indicates 0.578 which is significant at 0.00. Therefore, it is highlighted that self-awareness has high significant impact on employee's performance hence hypothesis, H2b: *Self-awareness has positive impact on employees' performance is accepted*. Moreover, Self-regulation (0.576) which is significant at 0.00. Therefore, it is underlined that self-regulation has positive impact on job performance. Therefore, hypothesis, H2. b: *Self-regulation has*

positive impact on employee's performance is accepted. Self-motivation (0.068) which is significant at 0.040. henceforth, Hypostasis H2.c: *Self-motivation has positive impact on employees' performance is accepted.* Empathy (0.366) which is significant at 0.00. Hence, the facet empathy has positive impact on performance. Thus, the hypothesis H2. d: *Empathy has positive impact on employees' performance is accepted.* Social Skills is 0.140, which is significant at 0.0456. Thus, the hypothesis, H2. e: *Social skill has positive impact on employees' performance is accepted.*

H3- Emotional intelligence differ regards to age To test the above hypothesis, **ANOVA** analysis was performed and the results were tabulated in the Table 2.

Table 2: Emotional intelligence differ regards to age.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	.897	3	.299	1.674	.178
Within Groups	17.150	96	.179		
Total	18.048	99			

From the ANOVA a result, the F value is 1.674, which is insignificant at 0.05 significant levels Thus, the hypothesis.H3: Emotional intelligence differ regards to age is rejected.

H4: Emotional intelligence differ regards to service periods To test the above hypothesis, **ANOVA** analysis was performed and the results were tabulated in the Table 3.

Table 3: Emotional intelligence differ regards to service periods.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	.556	4	.139	.888	.474
Within Groups	14.884	95	.157		
Total	15.440	99			

From the ANOVO result, F value is .888 which is insignificant at 0.05. Thus, the hypothesis, H4: Emotional intelligence differ regards to service period is rejected.

5. Findings and Conclusions

The regression result reveals that 48.8% of employee performance is accounted by their emotional intelligence. The regression value of self-awareness is positively impacted on performance at 0.01 significant levels (0.009 < 0.01). The regression value of self- management is positively impacted on performance at 0.01 significant levels (0.000 <0.01). The regression value of self- motivation is positively impacted on performance at 0.01 significant levels (0.04 < 0.01). The regression value of empathy is

positively impact on performance at 0.01 significant levels (0.000 < 0.01). The regression value of social skill is positively impact on performance at 0.01 significant levels. (0.045 < 0.05). Therefore, it can be concluded that components of emotional intelligences are positively impact on employee's performance at 0.01 significant levels. ANOVA test reveals that there are no significant differences on employees' emotional intelligence based on their age and service period. Further, it also reveals that components of intelligences are positively impact on performance of employees at 0.01 significant levels.

The following hypotheses which were developed for this study purpose were accepted

H1, H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d and H2e were accepted and H3, H4 were rejected based on the analysis

Based on the findings Emotional intelligence makes significant effect on employee's job performance in staff in World Vision Lanka. This consequence agrees with the idea that staff of World Vision Lanka in Sri Lanka can be improved by enhancing their EL level. Invariably, EI is competent that empower the staff to accomplish job role. Even though age and service period weren't affect the job performance based on this analysis.

6. Suggestions and Recommendations

The following suggestions are made on the basis of the findings that emotional intelligence positively impact performance of employees. In order to provide best services and enhance good governance of our country policy makers have to make some correct action specially to make changes in training programs in other words include emotional intelligence as a subject in their curriculums for staffs. Not only World Vision Lanka and other similar organizations throughout the industry but also all organizations which want to achieve sustainable competitive advantage through customer satisfaction (both internal as well as external) must inject their employees with emotional intelligence. It is also needed to improve employees' emotional intelligence by providing appropriate training program throughout their work life.

The findings of this study have a number of important implications in the workplace. Understanding the theory of Emotional intelligence can be used for different HRM practices such as recruitment, selection, training and development. Emotional intelligence is an essential quality to seek in a potential employee during recruiting process. Understanding Emotional intelligence can help HR manager place a new employee in a position that suits his or her capabilities the best. Furthermore, EI can be used in predicting Job Performance of current employees as well as it can provide insights for career development through capacity-building (Foote, 2001). It can be applied in situations in the workplace when one needs to give feedback, delegate when under pressure; and dealing with conflict and politics. Generally speaking, emotional intelligence is dealt with self-management, self-regulation and social awareness. The overriding importance of knowledge-based assets for a sustainable competitive advantage has been discussed in many studies (e.g. Kengathara, 2019). Nonetheless, the role of emotional intellegnce in developing knowledge-based assets has not been explored and therefore, the gap should be addressed by future scholars. On an equal footing, many factors are determental to job performance such as wrok-family conflict, leadership, motivation etc. (~~see~~ Kengatharan, 2017), nonetheless, they have not been adequately

studied. In summary, it can be recommended to develop professional Emotional intelligence training for employees to teach them how to be aware of their emotions and how to manage them in order to improve their job performance level.

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