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Navigating Emotional Intelligence: A Comprehensive Review of Theories, Models and Applications

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the foundational theories, models, and assessment tools of emotional intelligence (EI), focusing on their practical applications in organizational settings. The research conducts a thorough narrative review, analyzing existing literature from key academic databases to identify the strengths and limitations of different EI models. The findings highlight ExzI's significant role in enhancing leadership, teamwork, and employee well-being. By critically evaluating various measurement tools, the study underscores the importance of selecting appropriate EI assessments to inform academic and professional frameworks. The outcomes of this research offer valuable insights for improving EI training programs and integrating emotional competencies into leadership development and organizational strategies.

Keywords: *Emotional Competence, Emotional Intelligence, Evolution of Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence Models and Theories, Emotional Intelligence Measures*

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) has become a critical factor in personal and organizational success, particularly in areas such as leadership, team collaboration, and employee well-being. Initially popularized by Goleman (1995), EI is now recognized as an essential skill for navigating complex interpersonal dynamics and enhancing decision-making in both professional and educational settings. As organizations continue to evolve, the demand for emotionally intelligent leaders has intensified, driven by the need for adaptive leadership in increasingly diverse and remote workplaces (Sehgal, 2023).

Despite the growing recognition of EI's value, its integration into leadership development and organizational practices remains inconsistent. Various EI models, such as the ability-based model (Mayer and Salovey, 1997) and the trait-based model (Petrides and Furnham, 2001), offer different perspectives on how to assess and apply EI in real-world contexts. However, these models often lead to confusion in their practical application, and there remains a gap in understanding how organizations can effectively combine different EI frameworks to enhance both individual and team performance. Mancini et al. (2022), argue that different measurement approaches can lead to varying results, making it challenging to theorize what EI truly is or what it predicts.

This review aims to bridge these gaps by synthesizing the major EI theories, models, and assessment tools, and providing actionable insights into their application in leadership development, team dynamics, and overall organizational well-being. By addressing the challenges in selecting appropriate EI measurement tools and exploring the broader implications of EI in contemporary settings, this study offers a comprehensive framework for integrating EI into leadership and training programs. The findings of this review are especially timely as organizations seek to rebuild and adapt to the changing demands of a post-pandemic world, where EI is more crucial than ever for fostering collaboration, resilience, and innovation.

2. Literature Review

The Development of the Concept of Emotional Intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) traces its origins back nearly a century, beginning with Edward Thorndike's work in 1920, which introduced the idea of "social intelligence" as a distinct dimension of intelligence. Thorndike defined social intelligence as the ability to "understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, to act wisely in human relations" (Thorndike, 1920, p. 228). This framework highlighted skills related to understanding and managing people. However, Thorndike's model of social intelligence did not gain significant traction at the time, with limited subsequent research in the area (Landy, 2005). In the 1940s, Wechsler expanded the understanding of intelligence by suggesting that factors influencing intelligent behavior needed further exploration to create comprehensive intelligence models (Bar-On, 2006).

In 1983, Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences introduced seven forms of intelligence, including interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence. These two types focused on understanding and managing others' emotions and one's own emotions, respectively, highlighting their importance alongside cognitive intelligence (Petrides, 2011). Building on this foundation, Wayne Leon Payne 1985 conceptualized EI in his doctoral dissertation, viewing it as a creative relationship with emotions such as fear, pain, and desire (Payne, 1985, cited in Petrides and Furnham, 2001).

Further contributions came from Reuven Bar-On, who, in 1987, developed the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), a multidimensional tool to measure emotional intelligence. The concept was later formalized by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in a series of publications from 1990 to 1995, which distinguished emotional intelligence from general intelligence. They described EI as the ability to perceive, assess, and express emotions accurately, use emotions to facilitate thinking, understand emotional nuances, and regulate emotions for personal and intellectual growth (Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

Emotional intelligence entered mainstream awareness in 1995 with the publication of Daniel Goleman's book, Emotional Intelligence: Why It Matters More Than IQ. Goleman's theory focused on recognizing and managing one's own emotions and those of others, motivating oneself, and fostering effective interpersonal relationships (Goleman, 1998). He argued that emotional competencies often surpass cognitive intelligence in predicting success and happiness, particularly in the workplace and relational contexts (Goleman, 1995).

In 2000, Petrides and Furnham developed the trait EI model, which combined self-perceived emotional abilities and behavioral tendencies. They differentiated this construct from ability EI, which focuses on measurable emotional abilities assessed through performance tasks. While trait EI aligns with personality hierarchies, ability EI is more closely related to cognitive ability frameworks, illustrating the conceptual, methodological, and empirical distinctions between the two (Petrides and Furnham, 2000, 2001).

Emotional Intelligence Models

EI is a research area marked by ongoing debates and competing concepts, lacking a unified theory. While various models and theories of EI exist, the following sections focus on the four most prominent and widely used ones.

- Ability model of EI (Mayer and Salovey, 1997)
- Emotional competencies model (Goleman, 1995)
- Bar-On's emotional-social intelligence model (Bar-On, 1997b)
- Trait model of EI (Petrides and Furnham, 2000)

These four models can be grouped into three well-established scientific concepts of EI: (a) the ability model, (b) the mixed model, and (c) the trait model. The ability model of EI sees it as a traditional intelligence, focusing on cognitive-emotional abilities separate from personality traits (Petrides and Furnham, 2001). Mixed models add non-cognitive aspects like motivations and empathy, often using self-report or 360-degree assessments (Bar-On, 1997b, 2006). The trait model highlights the subjective nature of emotional experiences, allowing flexibility in interpreting various EI assessments and extending to social intelligence (Petrides, 2010).

The Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence (Mayer and Salovey, 1997)

Initially proposed by Salovey and Mayer in 1990 and revised in 1997, the ability model defines EI as a set of mental abilities that involve processing emotional information. The revised model introduced the Four-Branch Model, which organizes EI into four key components:

- Perceiving Emotions: The ability to accurately identify emotions in oneself and others, including subtle emotional expressions.
- Using Emotions to Facilitate Thought: Emotions play a role in prioritizing thinking, allowing individuals to use emotions to enhance reasoning and problem-solving.
- Understanding Emotions: The capacity to comprehend emotional language and transitions between different emotions.

- Regulating Emotions: The ability to manage and control emotions in oneself and others to achieve specific goals, such as maintaining a positive mood or reducing negative emotions.

This model treats EI as a cognitive ability separate from personality traits, and it is often measured using tasks that require individuals to solve emotion-related problems (Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey, 2016). This model has gained significant attention in research due to its solid theoretical foundation and empirical support. In education, the ability model of EI is especially beneficial for students who find it challenging to build strong relationships with their teachers. For these students, EI plays a crucial role in enhancing their well-being and academic performance (Sánchez-Alvarez, Berrios Martos, and Extremera, 2020). Chamizo-Nieto, Arrivillaga, Rey, and Extremera (2021) found that students with higher EI reported better academic performance through increased flourishing (a sense of personal well-being and life satisfaction). EI enables students to cope with stress, adapt to academic pressures, and remain motivated in their studies.

The Emotional Competencies Mixed Model (Goleman, 1995)
Daniel Goleman's mixed model combines cognitive abilities and personality traits, proposing that EI consists of emotional and social competencies that contribute to personal and professional success. Goleman initially identified five dimensions of EI:

- Self-awareness: Recognizing one's own emotions.
- Self-management: Controlling emotions and adapting to changing circumstances.
- Motivation: Harnessing emotions to drive toward goals.
- Empathy: Understanding the emotions of others.
- Social skills: Managing relationships and handling interactions.

In 1998, Goleman refined his model, grouping these competencies into personal competencies (self-awareness, self-management) and social competencies (social awareness, relationship management). His framework emphasizes that emotional competencies can be learned and developed over time, making it practical for workplace applications. This model is widely used in organizational settings due to its focus on performance and leadership.

In alignment with Goleman's (1998) emphasis on the learnability of emotional competencies, recent research by Hsieh, Li, Liang, and Chiu (2024) demonstrates the significant role of principals' EI in empowering teachers. Principals with high EI foster trust and encourage organizational citizenship behavior among teachers, which leads to enhanced performance and collaboration within the school environment. This highlights the real-world application of Goleman's model in educational leadership, showing how emotional competencies drive organizational success.

Similarly, Namugumya, Munene, Mafabi, and Kagaari (2023) apply Goleman's model of EI to explain how tertiary institutional managers, such as deans and HR managers, handle talent management. It emphasizes that self-awareness is crucial for managers in critical roles, as it helps them regulate emotions, relate well to others, and make sound decisions. These leaders are mindful of their impact on others, remain composed in difficult situations, learn from feedback, and create positive working environments that support effective talent management and organizational success.

The Emotional-Social Intelligence Mixed Model (Bar-On, 1997)
In 1997, Reuven Bar-On introduced the EQ-i, the first self-report tool designed to measure emotional and social intelligence. Drawing inspiration from Darwin's theories on emotional expression and adaptation, Bar-On's model conceptualizes EI as a blend of emotional and social competencies that enable individuals to effectively manage environmental challenges (Bar-On, 2004; Bar-On, 2007). The model includes five main components:

- Intrapersonal Skills: Understanding and expressing one's own emotions.
- Interpersonal Skills: Understanding and interacting with others.
- Stress Management: Handling stress and controlling emotions.
- Adaptability: Being flexible and realistic when solving problems.
- General Mood: Maintaining a positive outlook and emotional well-being.

Bar-On's model of EI emphasizes the importance of psychological well-being and adaptability across various aspects of life, from personal relationships to professional success. While it shares similarities with Goleman's model, which focuses more on workplace performance, Bar-On's framework places a greater emphasis on emotional and social adaptation as key to overall life success. This holistic approach makes it relevant for both personal development and professional achievements (Bar-On, 2006).

In line with Bar-On's emphasis on emotional and social adaptation, a study assessing the development of EI among pharmacy students demonstrates how EI evolves through different stages of education. Using the EQ-i, the study found that fourth-year students displayed significantly higher EI scores compared to their second and third-year counterparts (Biju, Wanat, El-Desoky, Vu, and Varkey, 2023). This indicates that as students gain more clinical experience, take on leadership responsibilities, and interact with patients, their emotional skills such as empathy, stress management, and interpersonal communication improve. The findings underscore the importance of EI not only for workplace performance but also for adapting to complex social and emotional challenges in healthcare settings, reflecting Bar-On's broader view of EI as a key to life success.

Trait Model of Emotional Intelligence (Petrides and Furnham, 2001)
Petrides and Furnham introduced the trait EI model, which focuses on self-perceived emotional abilities and behavioral dispositions, categorizing EI as a personality trait rather than a cognitive ability. Trait EI encompasses four key factors:

- Self-control: Managing stress, controlling impulses, and emotional regulation.
- Well-being: Maintaining self-esteem, happiness, and optimism.
- Emotionality: Perceiving and expressing emotions, building relationships, and empathy.
- Sociability: Managing social interactions, assertiveness, and adaptability.

Trait EI is measured through self-report instruments like the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) and is considered to be independent of cognitive intelligence (Petrides, 2009). This model posits that different profiles of trait EI will be advantageous in different contexts, and it has been associated with various organizational behaviors, including work engagement, leadership, job stress and work performance (Dåderman, Kajonius, Hallberg, Skog, and Hellström, 2023; Hjalmarsson and Dåderman, 2022; Gong et al., 2020; Lea, Davis, Mahoney, and Qualter, 2019).

However, the benefits of TEIQue go beyond promoting positive outcomes as it also plays a critical role in mitigating negative impacts like burnout. For instance, studies such as the one conducted by Taylor et al. (2024) in healthcare settings show that high scores on the TEIQue are linked to lower levels of burnout. This suggests that individuals with higher EI are better equipped to handle stress and emotional demands, thereby reducing the risk of burnout. As such, the TEIQue not only fosters positive work behaviors but also serves as a protective factor against the emotional strain and fatigue common in high-pressure environments.

Each of the EI models employs different methods for measuring EI. Detailed explanations of each model's measurement approaches will be provided below.

Measures of Emotional Intelligence
Assessing EI involves using diverse models and tools that shed light on how emotions impact thoughts and behaviors. Measurement approaches can be categorized into three main streams: ability-based assessments, self-report ability tests, and mixed models. Each stream offers a unique perspective on EI, ranging from evaluating cognitive-emotional abilities to capturing self-perceived emotional skills and integrating personality traits.

Stream 1: The Ability Model
Stream 1 is based on the ability model of EI (Bucich and MacCann, 2019), which defines EI as a set of cognitive-emotional abilities. In this approach, EI is measured using performance-based tests, where individuals are asked to solve emotion-related tasks, similar to how intelligence quotient (IQ) tests assess cognitive abilities.

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is a widely recognized ability-based assessment of EI, grounded in the Four-Branch Model of EI (Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, 2002; Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, and Sitarenios, 2003). It evaluates how individuals perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions through a series of objective, performance-based tasks. One major advantage of the MSCEIT is that it avoids the biases inherent in self-report methods, as it measures actual emotional abilities rather than self-perceptions. This makes it more reliable in providing a true assessment of emotional competencies, particularly in areas like decision-making, interpersonal relationships, and emotional regulation (Fiori et al., 2014).

Research by Nguyen, Nham, and Takahashi (2019) supports the robustness of the MSCEIT in objectively measuring EI. Their study investigates the relationship between ability-based EI, cognitive intelligence, and job performance, highlighting the MSCEIT's utility in providing an unbiased assessment of emotional abilities, which is crucial for accurately understanding EI's role in various psychological and organizational outcomes.

However, the MSCEIT also has some disadvantages. One common criticism is that it can be time-consuming and expensive, which may limit its practicality in large-scale or everyday applications (O'Connor et al., 2019). Moreover, the cultural bias in its items has been pointed out, with some researchers arguing that the test may not be equally effective across different cultural contexts, especially outside of Western societies (Maul, 2012). Additionally, while it is a robust tool for assessing ability EI, it does not account for the broader traits associated with EI that are included in other models, such as the mixed model of EI.

Stream 2: Self-Report Ability Test

Stream 2 also embraces the ability model, but the distinction lies in the measurement technique (Bucich and MacCann, 2019). Instead of relying on performance-based assessments, stream 2 employs self-report ability tests. In these tests, individuals evaluate their emotional abilities based on their perception of how well they can handle emotions. This approach assesses self-perceived EI rather than objective performance.

The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) (Wong and Law, 2002) is a notable example used in Stream 2. This scale measures individuals' self-reported abilities in understanding and managing their emotions and the emotions of others. It is commonly used due to its ease of application and relevance in workplace contexts. The WLEIS is short, consisting of only 16 items, making it easy and quick to administer compared to more extensive tools like the MSCEIT. The WLEIS has been validated across various cultural contexts, including Asian countries, which makes it more adaptable than tools like the MSCEIT that have been criticized for cultural biases. Since it is a self-report instrument, it is relatively inexpensive compared to ability-based EI tests that require more resources for administration and scoring (Law, Wong, and Song, 2004).

Recent research by Pong and Leung (2023) further supports the adaptability of the WLEIS across different cultural contexts. Their study explored the relationship between trait EI and career adaptability among Chinese youths, using the WLEIS as a primary assessment tool. The findings indicated a positive association between all domains of trait EI measured by the WLEIS and career adaptability, highlighting the instrument's relevance and reliability in non-Western settings. This validation underscores the scale's utility in diverse cultural contexts and reinforces its practicality in both academic and workplace environments.

One major limitation of the WLEIS is that it relies on self-reporting, which can introduce bias (Joseph and Newman, 2010). Individuals may overestimate or underestimate their emotional abilities, leading to inaccurate results. Unlike the MSCEIT, which assesses EI through performance-based tasks, the WLEIS evaluates self-perceived emotional abilities, which may not always reflect actual emotional competence.

Stream 3: The Mixed Model

The mixed model of emotional intelligence (EI), as outlined in Stream 3, combines emotional abilities with personality traits (Bucich & MacCann, 2019). This model includes elements such as motivation, social competence, and various attributes linked to emotional functioning. A prominent tool based on this model is the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) (Bar-On, 1997). The EQ-i evaluates EI across five key domains: intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, stress management, adaptability, and general mood.

This makes it more comprehensive than ability-based models, offering insights into broader personality traits and how individuals manage emotions in everyday life. One major criticism of the EQ-i is that it blurs the lines between EI and personality traits. Researchers like Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts (2002) have raised concerns that the EQ-i measures general personality factors rather than EI itself, which can lead to confusion about what is being assessed. The inclusion of traits such as optimism, independence, and self-actualization within the EQ-i framework stretches the definition of EI beyond its emotional core, mixing it with personal characteristics unrelated to emotional skills.

The Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI) is a comprehensive 360-degree assessment tool created by Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis, rooted in Goleman's mixed model of emotional intelligence (Boyatzis & Goleman, 2007). This tool assesses emotional and social competencies essential for effective leadership and workplace performance. Drawing on Goleman's framework, the ECI evaluates key areas such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. It highlights emotional competencies as skills that can be cultivated and enhanced, reinforcing the idea that emotional intelligence is not fixed but can be developed over time.

A key strength of the ECI is its use of 360-degree feedback, which gathers evaluations from multiple perspectives, such as supervisors, peers, and subordinates (Haricharan, 2022). This comprehensive approach offers a more well-rounded and accurate view of an individual's emotional competencies, helping to minimize the biases often present in self-assessments. However, the process of collecting and analyzing feedback from multiple sources can be time-intensive, especially in larger organizations, potentially affecting the efficiency of its implementation.

One of the practical applications of EI models, as highlighted by Karimi et al. (2021), is their role in enhancing employee well-being and organizational outcomes. Their study found that EI not only predicts employee well-being and psychological empowerment but also contributes to higher quality of patient care in healthcare settings. This suggests that models like the EQ-i and ECI, despite their criticisms, can play a crucial role in fostering better performance and well-being, making them valuable tools for both personal and professional development in various sectors.

As shown in Table 1, the various EI models differ in their key features, measurement tools, strengths, and limitations, providing a comprehensive overview of the theoretical approaches to understanding EI.

Table 1: Comparison of Key Emotional Intelligence Models, Features, and Measurement Tools

Model	Authors	Key Features	Measurement Tools	Strengths	Limitations
Ability Model	Mayer and Salovey (1997)	Cognitive-emotional abilities (e.g., perceiving, understanding, regulating emotions)	MSCEIT	Performance-based and objective	Time-consuming; cultural biases
Emotional Competencies Model	Goleman (1995)	Combines cognitive and social competencies	ECI	Practical focus on leadership	Overlaps with personality traits
Emotional-Social Intelligence	Bar-On (1997)	Emotional and social adaptation, stress management	EQ-i	Comprehensive self-report tool	Blurs EI and personality traits
Trait Model	Petrides and Furnham (2000)	Self-perceived emotional abilities and behavioral dispositions	TEIQue	Integration with personality	Lacks connection to cognitive abilities

3. Methodology

This study adopts a narrative review methodology to evaluate and synthesize the prevailing theories, models, and assessment tools within the field of emotional intelligence (EI). The primary objective is to systematically examine and compare significant theoretical frameworks and measurement approaches, with a particular focus on their application in organizational settings. The literature review utilized key academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, PsycINFO, and Web of Science, targeting peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference proceedings published between 1990 and 2023. Keywords such as Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence Models, Ability EI Model, Trait Emotional Intelligence, and Emotional Competence guided the search strategy. Foundational works, notably by Goleman (1995), Mayer and Salovey (1997), and Bar-On (1997), were prioritized due to their significant contributions to the discipline. The selection criteria emphasized literature relevant to the practical and organizational applications of EI. The collected materials were critically reviewed to elucidate key theoretical constructs, explore their practical relevance, and identify existing gaps for future research.

4. Results and Discussion

The measurement of the emotional intelligence (EI) construct has been a topic of ongoing discussion and debate (Mortillaro and Schlegel, 2023). Some researchers suggest that the method of measurement, rather than the theoretical framework, should guide the choice of the EI model being evaluated. In contrast, Nafukho, Muyia, Farnia, Kacirek, and Lynham (2016) emphasize that the selection of an EI model for training purposes in human resource development should be guided by the specific skills targeted, the methodology and duration of the training, and the type of assessment used. This highlights the importance of aligning the model choice with the practical requirements and objectives of the training context.

A critical decision for researchers and practitioners when integrating EI measures into their work is selecting the most suitable approach, whether to use an ability-based, mixed, or trait-based measure of EI (O'Connor et al., 2019). Goleman's Emotional Competencies Model offers practical insights into personal and professional effectiveness but is often termed "mixed models" due to their inclusion of constructs overlapping with personality traits (e.g., conscientiousness and optimism), emotion regulation skills (e.g., empathy, emotional control), and various performance outcomes (e.g., teamwork and leadership). Critics argue that this lack of theoretical clarity reduces the validity of these models. They note that such models fail to provide precise definitions, clear content, and well-defined boundaries, making the constructs overly flexible (Hughes and Evans, 2018).

Bar-On's Emotional-Social Intelligence Model emphasizes well-being and adaptability by combining emotional and social skills, but blurred distinctions between components and biases from self-report measures limit its clarity. The Trait Model by Petrides and Furnham integrates EI with personality traits, offering a broad perspective, but excluding cognitive elements may limit its empirical validation. Despite their unique focuses, each model's limitations highlight the need for a more comprehensive approach to fully understand EI.
Recent research by Mancini et al. (2022) supports this need for a more comprehensive understanding of EI. Their paper, titled "Emotional Intelligence: Current Research and Future Perspectives on Mental Health and Individual Differences," provides a detailed overview of the state of EI research. The authors discuss the confusion created by multiple EI models and measures, highlighting the inconsistencies and conflicting results that emerge from these varied approaches. They contrast the ability model, which focuses on measurable emotional abilities, with the trait model which assesses emotional perceptions through questionnaires.

Despite some researchers questioning the validity or usefulness of EI theory, its practical applications and benefits in the workplace have led to its widespread adoption in business settings. Many other researchers support and validate the importance of EI in individual and working environment success. The study by Urquijo, Extremera, and Azanza (2019) underscores the vital role of EI in the workplace. It reveals that EI significantly enhances job satisfaction, which is crucial for employee retention and overall workplace morale. By demonstrating that EI contributes to career success beyond traditional personality traits, the study highlights the added value of emotional competencies in professional development. Furthermore, the ability of employees with high EI to navigate workplace challenges effectively and maintain positive relationships fosters

a collaborative and productive work environment. The study also links EI to improved psychological well-being, suggesting that emotionally intelligent employees are better equipped to manage stress and maintain a positive outlook, thereby boosting performance and effectiveness at work.

Nguyen, Nham, and Takahashi (2019), highlight the importance of EI in the workplace and suggest that organizations should consider EI when hiring and developing employees. The study supports the idea that EI can enhance job performance by improving interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and stress management. Furthermore, EI contributes to essential workplace dynamics, including improved morale, teamwork, cooperation, motivation, and the creation of a positive organizational culture (Arfara and Samanta, 2016; Makkar and Basu, 2017; Perry and Clough, 2017; Rezvani, Barrett, and Khosravi, 2019; Trigueros et al., 2019). The capacity to effectively collaborate with colleagues and manage personal emotions has become a critical factor for individual and organizational success. Therefore, EI turns into an acceptable and appropriate theory in the organization. Selecting the right EI measurement tool requires balancing theoretical rigor, practical use, and the specific needs of the assessment.

To address these concerns, the authors recommend clearly defining the EI construct being studied and aligning it with appropriate measurement tools. They suggest using multiple methods, such as combining ability-based and self-report measures, to improve accuracy and focus on enhancing psychometric properties for better reliability and validity. For practitioners, caution is advised when interpreting EI assessments, especially self-reports, and they should avoid over-relying on EI for outcomes like job performance without considering other factors. The choice of EI measurement tools should align with the assessment's context and objectives.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

It is important for researchers and practitioners to carefully select EI measurement tools that align with their specific objectives, whether they aim to assess emotional abilities, emotional traits, or both. To enhance the accuracy of EI assessments, it is recommended to combine different methods, particularly ability-based and self-report measures. Ability-based tools provide an objective assessment of how individuals handle emotional tasks, while self-report measures offer insights into personal perceptions of emotional traits, though these may be biased. By integrating both approaches, a balance can be achieved between objective performance and subjective emotional tendencies, thereby improving the reliability and validity of EI assessments. This comprehensive method provides a fuller understanding of EI, which is particularly useful in practical applications such as organizational training and leadership development where emotional skills and traits contribute to success.

In contemporary organizational psychology, a common approach is to integrate the ability EI model, which emphasizes emotional reasoning and cognitive processing, with the trait EI model, which evaluates emotional dispositions and self-perceived competencies. This combined approach is particularly useful in workplace assessments, as it addresses both emotional processing skills and self-regulation. For instance, a manager may be evaluated on their ability to regulate emotions during decision-making (ability EI) while also reflecting on their perceived emotional resilience and stress tolerance in high-pressure situations (trait EI). By combining these models, organizations can gain insights into both the cognitive and behavioral aspects of EI, leading to more informed assessments and interventions.

The 2022 study by Çağlar Doğru, titled “A Meta-Analysis of the Relationships Between Emotional Intelligence and Employee Outcomes” provides compelling evidence supporting this integrated approach. The study highlights that both ability EI and trait EI are positively associated with crucial employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, job performance, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior while being negatively associated with job stress. By combining ability and trait EI models, organizations can achieve a more holistic understanding of an employee's EI, thereby leading to more effective assessments and interventions in the workplace (Doğru, 2022).

The Emotional Competencies model (Goleman) is frequently applied in leadership development programs, focusing on essential emotional and social skills such as empathy, motivation, and relationship management, which are critical traits for effective leadership. For example, Livesey (2017) emphasizes that project managers

who possess strong EI are better equipped to manage complex stakeholder relationships, foster team cohesion, and navigate the uncertainties of large projects. This reinforces the idea that Goleman's model not only contributes to general leadership development but also plays a critical role in more specific leadership contexts, such as managing large-scale projects with high complexity. On the other hand, the Emotional-Social model (Bar-On) is more suited for assessing team dynamics, as it emphasizes adaptability and interpersonal skills, which are key to collaboration and team performance. By combining these two models, organizations can develop comprehensive EI assessments that address both leadership development and team cohesion. This integrated approach enables organizations to use multiple EI frameworks, offering actionable insights into both individual and group emotional functioning, ultimately improving overall organizational performance.

Building on this integrated approach to EI, a recommended method for assessment is to first administer an ability-based test like the MSCEIT, which evaluates an individual's capacity to process and reason with emotional information objectively. Following this, participants could complete a self-report questionnaire, such as the TEIQue, to gather subjective data on their emotional experiences and self-perceived abilities. This combination of methods allows organizations to capture both actual emotional competencies and individuals' perceptions of their emotional abilities, ensuring a more holistic view of EI that supports both leadership development and team collaboration.

Promoting EI through evidence-based training modules and integrating it into educational and organizational strategies is essential for cultivating emotionally competent individuals and fostering resilient workforces. Policymakers should advocate for EI training programs grounded in empirical research and validated methods, focusing on key competencies such as emotional awareness, regulation, and interpersonal skills. Tailoring these modules to industry-specific needs ensures relevance and effectiveness. For example, healthcare workers can learn to manage emotional stress during patient care, educators can enhance teacher-student relationships, and corporate leaders can improve team dynamics and leadership. Embedding EI in organizational health and safety policies further aids in reducing workplace stress, improving collaboration, and preventing burnout, particularly in high-demand sectors like healthcare, education, and public services. These initiatives ultimately contribute to healthier, more adaptable workplaces that enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness.

Positioning EI as a core component of organizational strategies can foster resilience, innovation, and adaptability, especially in dynamic work environments. Incorporating EI assessments during recruitment and employee evaluations provides valuable insights into interpersonal and emotional skills, ensuring a better alignment between employees' competencies and organizational needs. Additionally, embedding EI in workplace health policies is crucial for mitigating stress and fostering psychological resilience. This becomes particularly important in high-pressure environments such as healthcare and education. As remote and hybrid work models gain prominence, EI training should address unique challenges like virtual team management, cross-cultural communication, and employee engagement. Furthermore, integrating EI development into educational curricula ensures students develop foundational emotional skills from an early age, preparing them for leadership roles and enabling them to navigate complex interpersonal relationships. By aligning organizational and educational policies with these recommendations, stakeholders can harness the transformative power of EI to drive innovation, enhance performance, and promote well-being across diverse workplaces and educational settings.

Conclusion and Future Research

This study provides significant insights into EI by thoroughly reviewing its theories, models, and assessment tools, with a particular focus on their applications in organizational settings. By synthesizing various EI models, the research clarifies the critical role that EI plays in leadership, team dynamics, and employee well-being. One of the key contributions of the study is its identification of practical strategies for selecting appropriate EI measurement tools to foster both personal and professional development. The findings offer valuable guidance for organizations and educators looking to incorporate EI into training and leadership programs. By implementing effective EI assessments, organizations can enhance essential emotional competencies, which are crucial for improving communication, conflict resolution, and productivity.

This study synthesizes various EI theories and models, such as the ability, trait, and mixed models, providing a unified framework for understanding EI's conceptual and practical aspects. It critically evaluates the strengths and limitations of popular assessment tools like the MSCEIT, TEIQue, and EQ-i, offering valuable guidance for researchers and practitioners on selecting appropriate measurement tools. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating EI assessments into workplace recruitment, training, and evaluation processes. It also proposes the inclusion of EI development in educational curricula, preparing future leaders to navigate complex interpersonal relationships and organizational challenges. By providing a comprehensive review of EI theories and applications, this study bridges the gap between theoretical frameworks and real-world organizational needs, aligning academic insights with practical applications.

From a policy standpoint, the study recommends integrating EI assessments into leadership development programs and educational curricula to cultivate emotional competencies in future leaders. Policymakers should consider developing frameworks that promote the use of evidence-based EI assessments for organizational training, leadership development, and employee well-being. Aligning EI training with organizational objectives can help create a healthier, more collaborative work environment, ultimately improving organizational performance.

By focusing on these contributions, the study highlights the importance of EI not just as a theoretical concept, but as a practical tool for enhancing workplace dynamics and leadership effectiveness. Future research should explore innovative methods for measuring EI across diverse settings, providing a broader understanding of its impact in various industries. Additionally, as artificial intelligence and digital technologies increasingly shape the workplace, there is a growing need to investigate how EI can be integrated into technology-driven environments. Future studies could examine how emotional competencies are utilized in virtual teams, remote work contexts, and AI-human interactions, and explore the development of technology-based EI assessments.

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