EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A STRATEGIC RESOURCE: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19647537

Abstract. *Within the contemporary knowledge-based economy, intangible assets have become central determinants of organizational competitiveness and long-term sustainability. Among these assets, emotional intelligence (EI) has received growing attention as a critical factor influencing employee behavior, leadership effectiveness, and organizational performance. This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical aspects of emotional intelligence and examines its relevance in modern management. The study is grounded in a critical review of dominant EI models, including the ability-based approach and mixed competency models. The findings indicate that emotional intelligence enhances communication efficiency, decision-making processes, and overall organizational effectiveness. Additionally, integrating EI into human resource management is associated with increased employee engagement and productivity.*

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, strategic resource, organizational performance, management.*

1 Introduction

The global economic environment has become increasingly complex due to rapid technological advancements, fierce competition, and the expanding significance of service-oriented industries. Consequently, managerial focus has shifted toward intangible drivers of organizational performance. In this context, human capital is widely regarded as a key strategic asset, and its qualitative attributes have become a central concern in contemporary management research.

Traditional management approaches have primarily emphasized cognitive intelligence and technical competencies. However, recent theoretical and empirical studies highlight the importance of emotional and social capabilities in shaping employees' performance and organizational outcomes [3,7]. Emotional intelligence, as a multidimensional construct, offers a valuable framework for understanding how individuals perceive, interpret, and regulate emotions in professional contexts [9].

Emotional intelligence is highly relevant in industries where interpersonal interactions are central to value creation. In these sectors, employees' capacity to manage emotions directly influences customers' satisfaction, service quality, and organizational reputation [5].

This paper aims to examine the theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence and analyze its implications for organizational performance in the context of human resource management.

2 Theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence has seen significant theoretical development since its formalization in the early 1990s. Salovey and Mayer proposed one of the most influential frameworks, conceptualizing EI as a set of cognitive abilities for processing emotional information

[9]. Their ability-based model identifies four key dimensions: emotional perception, facilitation of thinking, emotional understanding, and emotional regulation [7]. This approach places emotional intelligence within the broader domain of cognitive intelligence and focuses on how it can be measured and developed.

In contrast, Goleman introduced a mixed model that integrates emotional competencies with behavioral and personality-related attributes [3, 4]. This framework broadens the concept of emotional intelligence to encompass self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Owing to its practical orientation, the model has been widely used in organizational and leadership research, particularly in studies of managerial effectiveness.

Another significant contribution to the field of emotional intelligence was made by Bar-On. He conceptualized emotional intelligence as a set of emotional and social competencies that determine how effectively individuals understand and express themselves, relate to others, and cope with environmental demands [2]. This model emphasizes factors such as stress tolerance, adaptability, and interpersonal functioning, thereby broadening the scope of emotional intelligence beyond cognitive processes.

Although theoretical perspectives vary, a growing consensus indicates that emotional intelligence significantly influences individual behavior, decision-making, and social interaction [7]. From a management perspective, these models offer a conceptual foundation for incorporating emotional intelligence into organizational practices and performance frameworks.

3 Emotional intelligence in the context of management and organizational performance

Within contemporary management frameworks, emotional intelligence is widely recognized as a critical determinant of effective leadership and organizational success [4]. Managers with high emotional intelligence demonstrate greater ability to recognize employee needs, manage interpersonal relationships, and cultivate a positive organizational climate.

Recent empirical studies demonstrate that emotional intelligence positively influences leadership effectiveness, employee engagement, and organizational performance [5, 6]. Leaders with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to inspire employees, facilitate collaboration, and navigate a complex organizational environment marked by uncertainty and change [6].

Emotional intelligence has been identified as a key predictor of adaptive performance and resilience in the workplace, particularly in dynamic, service-oriented industries [7]. Individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence are better able to manage stress, regulate emotional responses, and sustain productivity under pressure.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence has substantial implications for human resource management. Contemporary HR practices increasingly integrate emotional intelligence into recruitment, training, and talent development strategies, acknowledging its contribution to improved interpersonal effectiveness and sustained employability [10]. Consequently, these practices result in greater employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Emotional intelligence plays a critical role in service-oriented sectors, where interactions between employees and customers directly affect customers' perceptions of service quality. Recent studies indicate that emotional labor and emotional regulation are closely linked to customer satisfaction and service performance [1, 4]. An employee's capacity to manage both their own emotions and those of customers is a key determinant of organizational success.

Consequently, emotional intelligence should be regarded not only as an individual attribute but also as a strategic organizational capacity that contributes to sustainable competitive advantage in contemporary organizations [5, 10].

3 Conclusion

The analysis of theoretical approaches to emotional intelligence highlights its increasing significance in management and organizational studies. Emotional intelligence offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how emotions influence human behavior and performance in professional settings [7, 9]. Integrating emotional intelligence into management strategies and human resource practices has considerable potential to enhance organizational effectiveness. Fostering emotionally competent employees and leaders enables organizations to improve communication, strengthen teamwork, and achieve greater productivity and customer satisfaction [4].Therefore, emotional intelligence should be recognized as a strategic resource that supports long-term organizational success.

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