

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS- EVOLUTIONARY AND QUALITATIVE THEORIES

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Abstract. *Emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly recognized as a crucial factor in achieving professional success. This article explores the relationship between emotional intelligence and various aspects of professional life, focusing on motivation, satisfaction, and engagement in the workplace. Drawing from contemporary research and theoretical frameworks, the article delves into how individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to experience greater motivation, job satisfaction, and overall engagement in their work. The article examines how emotional intelligence influences an individual's ability to understand and manage their emotions effectively, navigate social interactions, and adapt to diverse workplace environments. Moreover, it discusses the impact of emotional intelligence on interpersonal relationships, communication skills, and leadership effectiveness within organizational settings. Furthermore, the article explores practical strategies for enhancing emotional intelligence in the workplace and fostering a positive organizational culture conducive to professional growth and fulfillment. By recognizing the significance of emotional intelligence in driving motivation, satisfaction, and engagement, organizations can implement targeted interventions and initiatives to support employees' development in this area. Overall, this article highlights the integral role of emotional intelligence in promoting individual and organizational success, emphasizing the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence competencies for thriving in today's dynamic work environments.*

Key words: emotional intelligence, motivation, job satisfaction, work engagement, professional success

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INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) has garnered significant attention in the realm of professional development, with mounting evidence suggesting its pivotal role in achieving success in the workplace. This study aims to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and

key aspects of professional life, namely motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement in work. By delving into this relationship, we seek to gain insights into how emotional intelligence influences individuals' experiences and outcomes in their professional endeavors.

Intelligence as a Biological Construct

Most intelligence researchers have studied it using the classical method, by constructing a test and correlating the performances achieved with school grades or other indices of intellectual performance, or performances on other tests claiming to measure intelligence. In contrast, a small number of psychologists have investigated intelligence starting from the properties of the brain itself.

Intelligent behavior requires the brain to be well-organized and to achieve good synchronization of electrical activity between brain cells. Neurons must transmit precisely calibrated electrochemical impulses specific to sensations, perceptions, higher thought processes that occur, etc. The collective electrical activity of brain cells can be measured using electrodes placed on the scalp. Recording the brain's electrical activity is very complex, but predictions of responses to certain stimuli have been demonstrated. For example, after projecting a flash of light into a subject's eyes, a pattern of brain waves will be observed, which can be measured and recorded. An average evoked potential (AEP) can be calculated for each individual from thousands of recordings. A precise and specific pattern for different types of reactions to different stimuli can thus be obtained.

J.P. Ertl and E.W.P. Schafer (1969) were among the first to study the correlation between intelligence and brain waves. They discovered a significant relationship between the shape of brain bio currents and the intelligence quotient (IQ) [1]. Subsequently, it was found that the length of the MPE wave zigzag significantly correlates with IQ scores ($r = .77$) [2]. Thus, a biological measurement can be an excellent predictor of intelligence level as measured by IQ. However, criticisms of this practice have also emerged, arguing that correlational studies in this case are not sufficient; a more explicit theoretical orientation is needed that allows intelligence as a psychological trait to be linked to information processing at the neural level. These experiments are promising and may open up new horizons in deciphering the mechanisms of intelligent actions.

Sternberg's Triarchic Theory of Intelligence

Robert J. Sternberg (1985; 1986) proposed a different structure of intelligence. His theory emphasizes that mental activities can be separated into components and that different kinds of these can be used to acquire information by performing specific mental tasks, planning, monitoring, and evaluating general mental processes [3]. The theory suggests that adaptation to the environment is a critical measure of intelligence, an aspect also emphasized by many predecessors. R.J. Sternberg names his theory "triarchic" because it deals with three facets of intelligence:

- Componential intelligence (how intelligent behavior is generated; it refers to the fundamental cognitive processes involved in knowledge acquisition and performance);

- Experiential intelligence (when a certain behavior is intelligent);

- Contextual intelligence (which behavior is intelligent, in what context).

Cognitive theories of intelligence, such as Sternberg's, have a significant impact on the design and testing of intelligence. They can modify how we design, interpret, and use tests that measure general intelligence [4].

Evolutionary and Qualitative Perspectives

Adherents of these perspectives start from a broader, more extensive, and more complex reference point than previous models.

Depending on the approach - evolutionary or qualitative - the authors are grouped as follows:

- Evolutionary Approach

- Jean Piaget

- Lev Semion Vygotsky

- Jerome Bruner

- Qualitative Approach

- Hans J. Eysenck

- D.A. White

- R.B. Cattell

The development of higher mental processes is the result of a construction process; however, evolutionarily, these processes always appear first in the plan of interpersonal relationships and, consequently, are mediated by the cultural models dominant in the social group in which the individual develops. Thus, the process of personal development opposes specific learning but is closely linked to and influenced by it at the same time. Dealing with the origin of intelligence, Jean Piaget identifies it in the basic functions of the organism, such as perception and, especially, motor skills [5].

There are two possible applications of Piaget's model in relation to general intelligence: on the one hand, its correlation with the stage of evolution, and on the other hand, using Piaget's stages as an alternative to Binet's model of intelligence measurement, in other words, associating a higher level of intelligence with a faster development speed. The parallelism between Piaget and Binet risks resorting to exaggerated assumptions, given that in Piaget's works and especially in those of his collaborators, the relationship between the speed of reaching a specific stage and general intelligence is not sufficiently clear.

Piaget's theory targeted various educational applications, the most important being:

a. The instruction to which children are subjected must match the type of intellectual functioning they are capable of, and

b. The general approach chosen must stimulate the process of self-regulation or the constructive one.

When Piaget's theory in the US was confronted with the theory of learning, the "gaps" of the former theory and those in the works of Piaget's successors were discovered.

The theory of fluid and crystallized intelligence has already reached a high level of development. By crystallized intelligence, we understand the value of verbal education, while fluid intelligence denotes the value of analytical thinking, especially in new situations. There is a hypothesis that fluid intelligence is the one that is most easily inherited. Vandenberg (1969) conducted studies on the hereditary transmission of intelligence. This author demonstrated that there is a variation in genetic inheritance, depending on the type of capacity under consideration.

Thus, a classification of factors susceptible to genetic transmission, in decreasing order of their likelihood of occurrence, would look as follows:

- Word fluency;
- Verbal abilities;
- Grammar and spelling;
- Spatial visualization;
- Mathematical abilities;
- Thinking;
- Memory;
- Speed and precision.

Among these somewhat unexpected results from the perspective of fluid and crystallized intelligence, particularly the verbal factor seems to have the highest potential for genetic transmission (although it is a factor of crystallized intelligence), while thinking (fluid intelligence) is not heavily subject to genetic inheritance. Comparing these results with observations regarding the level of visual memory and visual perception and with the Stanford-Binet model, it is noted that simple measures such as reaction time and its variability can correlate up to 0.7 and 0.8 with Binet's IQ measures [6]. These results strongly support Spearman's theory of the existence of a general factor of intelligence, Eysenck, 1988 [7].

Theory of Multiple Intelligences

A theory that is at the center of attention of specialists in the field of cognitive sciences is the one created by Howard Gardner, an American psychologist specializing in developmental psychology, and a professor at Harvard University. His theory is considered innovative and contrary to the classical theories elaborated by Spearman. The theory was formulated in the work "Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences", first published in 1993. This theory insists that intelligence is

not a one-dimensional construct but is a set of seven independent intelligences. Of course, their independence is relative. Consequently, individuals must diversify their ways of adapting to the demands of the environment in which they live. The seven types of intelligence are:

1. Verbal-linguistic intelligence is the ability to use words efficiently both in oral settings (performances such as TV moderators, storytellers, orators) and in writing (performances such as journalists, poets, playwrights).

2. Emotional intelligence includes the ability to use both types of reasoning, inductive and deductive, to solve abstract problems, to understand relationships between concepts. Its skills have applicability in various fields of knowledge (studies, social, literature, technology). The prevalence of this type of intelligence allows for classification, setting priorities, understanding and establishing causality relationships.

3. Visual/spatial intelligence is the ability to accurately perceive the environment visually and to recreate one's own visual experiences. People who excel in this direction achieve accomplishments such as graphic designers, painters, cartographers, and designers. In all these domains of human achievement, images are transferred to a mental object created or enhanced.

4. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, or intelligence at the level of the body and hands, is the ability that allows us to control and interpret body movements, to achieve harmony between body and spirit. This type of intelligence is manifested not only in sports but also in the fine movements of the surgeon as well as in pilots who finely adjust equipment.

5. Rhythmic/musical intelligence is the ability manifested by the degree of sensitivity that the individual has in relation to sounds and the ability to respond emotionally to this type of stimuli. People who excel with this aptitude are able to create variations starting from a limited inventory of sounds, play an instrument, compose.

6. Interpersonal intelligence is represented by the ability to perceive and evaluate with People endowed in this regard notice facial expressions, voice inflections, they also have the ability to distinguish between different types of interpersonal relationships and the ability to react efficiently to those situations. It involves "verbal and nonverbal communication skills. People with this type of intelligence achieve performance in the field of social functions by highlighting collaboration skills, conflict resolution ability, consensual group work, trust, respect, leadership, motivating others to achieve mutually beneficial goals. At a simple level, this type of intelligence is noticeable in a child who observes and reacts to the states and moods of the adults around him/her. At a complex level, it translates into the ability of an adult to "read" and interpret the hidden intentions of others.

7. Intrapersonal intelligence assumes the ability to have a correct self-representation (to know one's own qualities and weaknesses), to be aware of inner

states, one's own intentions, motivations, to know one's temperament and desires; also, the ability for self-discipline, self-understanding, and self-assessment.

8. Naturalistic intelligence. This is noticeable in children who learn best through direct contact with nature. For these children, the most suitable lessons are those outdoors. These students like to create projects in natural sciences, such as bird watching, insect collections, tree or animal care. They prefer ecology, zoology, botany.

According to Gardner, each person possesses each type of intelligence, albeit in very proportionate proportions and supported by experimental studies.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence, which appears under several acronyms in English-language scientific literature such as Emotional Intelligence (EI), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EIQ), is a relatively recent concept proposed in 1990 by psychologists Peter Salovey (Yale University) and John Mayer (University of New Hampshire). It denotes the ability to recognize, understand, and control one's own emotions and to recognize the emotions of others. It is a concept somewhat akin to that of social intelligence. However, despite having written scholarly works on this subject and having developed the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) in collaboration, the popularization of the concept is credited to Daniel Goleman, an American writer, psychologist, and science journalist, starting from 1995 [8].

Several tests have been developed to investigate and validate the concept of emotional intelligence, an activity considered to be of great utility, given that human intelligence had previously been defined in terms of cognitive abilities and psychometric approaches. In a relatively short time, a significant amount of research has accumulated to explore, assess, and validate this new concept. These studies suggest that high scores on emotional intelligence tests are correlated with certain social performances and risky behaviors in adolescents and students. There is also a strong correlation with professional success in adults. In general, emotional intelligence tests highlight the following capacities:

- The ability to assess one's own emotions (to feel and decode one's own emotions, also known as emotional self-awareness)
- The ability to evaluate the emotions of others
- The ability to manage one's own emotions (to control the effects of emotions and their impact on oneself)
- The ability to manage the impact of one's own emotions on others
- The ability to use one's own emotions to solve problems.

American professors who introduced the concept into scientific discourse, Salovey and Mayer, provide a clear definition of emotional intelligence, which is widely accepted by many researchers:

"An intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions." [9]

Their new definition is generally accepted and adopted by many researchers. According to this definition, emotional intelligence is "the ability to perceive and express emotions, to assimilate emotion in thought, to understand and reason with emotion, and to regulate emotion in oneself and others" [10]

Regarding the tools for investigating emotional intelligence, we will revisit this topic in the practical chapter.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study employed a quantitative research design, utilizing validated measures to assess emotional intelligence, motivation, job satisfaction, and work engagement among a sample of employees across various industries. Data collection was conducted through self-reported surveys distributed electronically to participants, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. Statistical analyses, including correlation and regression analyses, were employed to examine the associations between emotional intelligence and the variables of interest [11].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results revealed a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and motivation, job satisfaction, and work engagement. Individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence demonstrated greater intrinsic motivation, reported higher levels of job satisfaction, and exhibited increased levels of engagement in their work. Furthermore, regression analyses indicated that emotional intelligence significantly predicted motivation, job satisfaction, and work engagement, even after controlling for relevant demographic variables.

These findings underscore the importance of emotional intelligence as a predictor of various aspects of professional success and well-being. The discussion delves into potential mechanisms underlying these relationships, such as emotional regulation, interpersonal skills, and stress management. Additionally, implications for organizational practices, such as employee training and development programs, are discussed to harness the benefits of emotional intelligence in the workplace.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this study provides compelling evidence of the positive influence of emotional intelligence on motivation, job satisfaction, and work engagement. Investing in strategies to enhance emotional intelligence among employees holds promise for fostering a more productive, satisfied, and engaged workforce. By recognizing the importance of emotional intelligence in professional contexts, organizations can create supportive environments conducive to individual and organizational success.

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