

DEVOLVING THE THOUGHT ON WORKPLACE EMOTIONS FOR GAINFUL RESEARCH: A THEORETICAL REFLECTION

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Abstract *The present paper presents a critical and analytical discussion on emotional intelligence in the workplace. The paper chronicles major scholastic attempts that have propagated academic consciousness on the study and intricacies of emotions at the workplace. It identifies emotional intelligence as central to workplace harmony and proposes emotional capital theorising to develop both individual and organisational emotional assets. The paper views workplace emotions as occurring in the abstract or in the soul state of man therefore, requiring dominantly life occurring data for its research. Thus, the ideographic research methodology deriving its justification from subjectivism as a suitable research philosophical assumption is deemed appropriate for inquiry into the universe of human emotions. The paper also contends that the foregoing being dominant may be supported by primed nomothetic research instrument to produce data triangulation for evidences that may be closer to the truth.*

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Competencies, Social Intelligence, Alexithymia, Intelligent Quotients*

INTRODUCTION

Humans are emotional beings and so their actions are largely influenced by their emotions. However, most position holders with man management responsibilities are erroneously quick to presuming that humans can be easily dealt with set objectives achieved through them, without any recourse to their emotional harmony. Unfortunately, the reverse appears to be the case, as the human emotion equation does not take any definite or strict predictive characteristics. Also, humans are fondly bearers of their emotions, even across workplace, domestic and religious boundaries, thus knowledge of on-the-spot, specific environment alone may not offer adequate and gainful discoveries of man's emotional reality. Strictly speaking, the emotional fit conveyed at any point in time influences the morale with which responsibilities are performed and how environmental stimuli are responded to.

Theoretically, studies on emotions attracted enormous attention as evidenced in Salovey, Brackett, and Mayer (2004); Morrison (2007); Goleman (1995); Bar-on (1997, 2003); Petrides, Pita, and Kokkinaki (2007); Hein (2005, 2007); etc. However, there has not been any comprehensive attempt to produce these views to guide empirical search

for correlates, predictors or their interior values, or upon which methodological research paradigms are offered for gainful inquiries. Nevertheless, fragmented attempts abound where associated constructs and concepts have been abused, misused or misunderstood.

This paper critically examines the associated theoretical models on emotional intelligence to reflect its critical nature in the workplace harmonious co-existence, and in pursuit of both individual and collective goals. This is done with a view to identify and develop research paradigms in the emotional universe of man at work. This is necessary for better understanding of humans in the universe of work, because the complex and diverse nature of humans play out in their emotional dynamics that if not understood, tends to constitute an unidentified distraction to people at work.

Considering the research concerns on the foregoing, the paper has identified and discussed some notable theoretical models on the emotional domain of man and further presented methodological assumptions and implications upon which gainful research can be made to address the almost redundant tendency that appears to characterise the development of the frontiers of knowledge on emotional capital in the modern day workplace.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) has received a lot of attention in the applied and scholarly literatures (Montemayor & Spee, 2004). EI construct is derived from two words: emotion and intelligence. Soanes (2007) defines emotion as a strong feeling. Goleman (1995) defines emotion as a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and range of propensities to act. He lists some examples of emotions to include anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, love, surprise, disgust, and shame. Intelligence on the other hand, has been defined as the aggregate capacity of an individual to and purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment (Wechsler in Salovey *et al.*, 2004). Soanes (2007) defines intelligence as the ability to gain and apply knowledge and skills. Emotional intelligence therefore, can be said to be the ability to learn, understand and apply emotional knowledge and skills. General intelligence is made up of cognitive intelligence and emotional and social intelligence. A major difference is that cognitive intelligence relates primarily to higher order mental processes such as reasoning, while emotional and social intelligence focuses more on perceiving immediate processing and application of emotional and social content, information and knowledge (Bar-On, Tranel, Denburg, & Bechara, 2003). Considering the importance of emotional intelligence, Goleman (1995) notes that academic intelligence provides only a narrow standard for success and believes that the time has come, to broaden the notion of the spectrum of talents and that there are hundreds and hundreds of ways to succeed, and that many different abilities leads to success. Emotional intelligence is vital to most of these routes to success, and this element of intelligence contributes to man being truly human (Goleman in Wille, 2005).

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to understand one's own and others emotions, to discriminate between them and to use such information to guide thinking and action (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). It refers to a set of abilities that enable an individual to motivate oneself, persist in the face of frustrations, control impulse and delay gratification, regulate one's moods to avoid allowing distress to swamp the ability to think, and to empathise and hope (Goleman, 1995). Although other aptitudes like technical skill or emotional quotient (EQ) are vital in getting one into a work place, EI offers an added advantage for success in the place (Goleman, 1995). It is being viewed as critical for individual's success in both work and social life, as much as the cognitive intelligence (Dulewicz & Higgs, 1999).

EI therefore, answers the question of why some persons adapt better to tasks of daily life than others (Flores &

Tovar, 2008). It equally explains why some people function better than others, assume positions of leadership and are able to undertake highly stressful and dangerous tasks, yet, other lack the ability to emotionally and socially deal with the demands of daily life in a more intelligent and effective way (Bar-On, Handley, & Fund, 2002). The complexity of today's organisations thus requires leadership and staff that possess the elements of emotional intelligence in dealing with its stakeholders, be it customers, suppliers, partners or even competitors. EI relates to non-cognitive skills, abilities and competencies that enable managers to deal effectively with daily demand and pressures (Polychroniou, 2000; Bar-On, 2006). It is an important element for general success in leadership and without it, the leader will probably lack the vital quality of being able to listen and understand the unspoken words (Marques, 2007). Emotional intelligence has been postulated to have four major constructs: self-awareness, self-management, social skills, and relationship management (Goleman, 1995). Self-awareness refers to the ability to understand one's emotions (Goleman, 1995, Salovey & Mayer, 1990, Bar-On, 2002). Self-management deals with controlling emotions and impulses as well as adapting to changing circumstances; social awareness entails the ability to sense, understand and react to the emotions of others, while comprehending social networks; and relationship management deals with inspiring, influencing, and developing others in managing conflict (Goleman, 1998).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) provide one of the earliest definitions of EI as, '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' (Salovey & Mayer in Morrison, 2007). Goleman (1995) defines EI as 'abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathise and to hope'. Goldman (1995) contended that EI as the capacity to recognise our own and other's feelings, to motivate ourselves, and to manage emotions, both within ourselves and within our relationships. Bar-On (2003) with a slight variation defines EI as an array of emotional and social abilities, competencies and skills that enable individuals to cope with daily demands and be more effective in their personal and social life. It is concerned with effective understanding of oneself and others, relating well to people, and adapting to, and coping with the immediate surroundings, so as to be more successful in dealing with environmental demands (Bar-On, 1997). Thus EI is also considered as an individual difference which facilitates motivation to achieve, get along with others, and find meaning (Shaffer & Shaffer, 2005). Since research concerning EI is evolving and the field is fast growing, confusion still exists about the exact meaning of the construct. As a result, the researchers are revising and

amending their own definitions. For example, Salovey and Mayer (2004) provide the next two modified definitions of EI as (i) the process of recognition, use, understanding and management of one's own and other's emotional states to solve emotion-laden problems and to regulate behaviour; and (ii) a set of skills which pertains to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and others, the use of emotions, and the effective regulation of emotion in self and others.

Generally, most of the conceptualisations of EI in literature cover one or more of the following (Bar-On *et al.*, 2003):

- i. Ability to be aware of one's emotions and express them;
- ii. Ability to be aware of the feelings of others and to establish interpersonal relationships;
- iii. Ability to manage and regulate emotions;
- iv. The ability to be realist and flexible in coping with the immediate situation and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature as they arise; and
- v. Ability to generate positive affect so as to be sufficiently self-motivated to achieve personal goals.

Morrison (2007) notes that the above definitions of EI show an individual phenomenon. He believes that an interesting departure from this lies in the work of an organisation called Antidote, which has been using EI principles to work with troubled schools. In his opinion, Antidote's definition of EI is a collective definition, which states that:

EI is the practice of thinking individually and collectively, about how emotions shape our actions and of using emotional understanding to enrich our thinking. EI involves using whatever relationships are available to help transform feelings that incapacitate to feelings that empower' (Antidote in Morrison, 2007:252).

Morrison (2007) views Antidote's definition of EI to be placing emotions alongside thinking and action, in essence, showing that EI is not an end 'in itself but a means to enriching thinking, action, service delivery and outcomes. However, it should be observed that although Antidote's definition includes the term collective thinking, yet, it should not be seen to connote a group activity like brainstorming, rather, it more reasonably relates to one's thinking while relating to other people. In this light, therefore, Antidote's definition is still very similar to the earlier conceptualisation, as provided by Salovey and Mayer in Morrison (2007). EI also describes the ability, capacity, skill or, in the case of the trait EI model, a self-perceived ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of one's self, of others, and of groups (Mayer *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, the concept of EI is closely related to that of social intelligence (SI). This is seen in the definition of social intelligence by Thorndike in Bar-On *et al.* (2003) as the ability to perceive one's own

and others' internal states, motives and behaviours, and to relate with them optimally on the basis of that information, It should also be observed that this definition is very similar to that of Salovey and Mayer's earliest definition of EI. Thus, this similarity between the concepts of EI and SI explains why some authors suggest that the two (EI and SI) seem to relate to different aspects of the same construct and could be referred to as emotional and social intelligence (Bar-On *et al.*, 2003).

HISTORIC PERSPECTIVES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

It has long been established that there are forms of intelligence not captured by intelligent quotient (IQ) and which are important in life skills and life chances. Thorndike (1920) coined the term social intelligence to describe the idea of acting wisely in human relationships (Morrison, 2007). Wechsler in Bar-On (2006) stated that there are non-intellective factors that influence intelligent behaviour, and argued that our models of intelligence would not be complete until we can adequately describe these factors. Gardner (1983) came up with the idea of multiple intelligences. This includes interpersonal intelligence (the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people) and intrapersonal intelligence (the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations). He argued that traditional types of intelligence, like intelligent quotient (IQ), do not fully explain cognitive ability (Smith, 2002). It could therefore be seen that although these authors used different terms to explain their concepts, the central notion is that there are other types of intelligence other than intelligent quotient (IQ), which are necessary in fully explaining performance outcomes.

The first use of the term 'emotional intelligence' is attributed to Wayne Payne's doctoral thesis, "A Study of Emotion: Developing Emotional Intelligence". In another view, Morrison (2007) stated that Salovey and Mayer were the first to use the term emotional intelligence, to describe a form of social intelligence. However, it is generally agreed in the literature that the term emotional intelligence became popularised by Daniel Goleman's publication of the book titled 'Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ', (Goldman, 1995).

THEORETICAL MODELS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology describes three major conceptual models of EI: the Salovey-Mayer model, the Goleman model, and the Bar-On model (Bar-On *et al.*, 2002). The three main models of EI are ability-based model (Mayer-Salovey model), mixed models of EI (including

Goleman Model and Bar-On Model) and trait EI model. Each of these models provides a different view in the definition and approach in the study of EI. The models are discussed below.

Salovey and Mayer's (Ability-Based) EI Model

Salovey and Mayer's model views EI as a type of intelligence, based on a set of abilities. Through Continuous research, the authors revised their earlier definition of the EI to the ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion, to facilitate thought, understand emotions and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth (Salovey & Mayer, 2004). They posit that life tasks are loaded with affective information, which must be processed and that individuals may differ in the skill with which they do so. According to Salovey and Grewal (2005), the ability-based EI model indicates that EI consists of four types of abilities;

1. Perceiving Emotions: Ability to detect and interpret emotions in faces, pictures, voices, and cultural artifacts and to identify one's own emotions.
2. Using Emotions: Ability to harness emotions to facilitate cognitive activities like thinking and problem solving.
3. Understanding Emotions: Ability to comprehend emotional language and to appreciate complicated relationships among emotions.
4. Managing Emotions: Ability to regulate emotions in both, oneself and others.

Coleman's Emotional Competencies Model

Goleman (1998) introduced a model that views EI as a broad array of competencies and skills, which drive leadership performance. The model contains four main constructs of EI, namely:

1. Self-awareness: The ability to read one's emotions and recognise their impact, while using gut feelings to guide decisions.
2. Self-management: Involves controlling ones emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances.
3. Social Awareness: The ability to sense, understand, and react to others' emotions while comprehending social networks.
4. Social Skill: The ability to inspire, influence, and develop others while managing conflict.

Each of the above constructs in Goleman's model, further includes a set of emotional competencies, which are not innate talents, but learned capabilities that must be worked

on and be developed in order to achieve outstanding performance. He also opines that individuals are born with a general EI, which determines their potential for learning emotional competencies (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000).

Bar-On's Emotional and Social Intelligence (ESI) Model

According to ESI model, emotional-social intelligence is a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and also deal with daily demands and pressures (Bar-On *et al.*, 2002; Bar-On, 2005).

Bar-On *et al.* (2003) show that the ESI model comprises of five main components namely:

1. Intrapersonal EQ: It comprises self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence, and self-actualisation.
2. Interpersonal EQ: It comprises empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal relationship.
3. Stress Management EQ: It comprises stress tolerance and impulse control.
4. Adaptability EQ: It consists of reality-testing, flexibility, and problem-solving.
5. General Mood EQ: It comprises optimism and happiness.

Bar-On (2006) opines that EI develops over time and can be improved by training, programming, and therapy. He posits that individuals possessing above average emotional quotients (EQ) are generally more successful with regards to meeting environmental demands and pressures. In contrast, he believes that individuals who lack in the subscales of reality testing, problem solving, stress tolerance, and impulse control, normally experience problems in coping with their environment. Bar-On is of the view that emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence contribute equally to a person's general intelligence, which then offers an indication of one's potential for success in life (Bar-on, 2006).

Apart from the three major models of EI discussed above, there are other models like the trait EI model and Innate Potential model etc.

Trait EI Model

Petrides *et al.* (2007) proposed the trait EI model. They conceptualised EI in terms of 'personality traits and defines it as a constellation of emotional self-perceptions which is located at the lower levels of personality. Simply put, trait EI

refers to one's self perception of one's emotional abilities. This model is based on self-perceived abilities and is measured by a self-report and differs from the ability-based model that seeks to measure actual abilities

The Innate Potential Model of Emotional Intelligence

Hein (2005, 2007) proposes a model which defines EI as the innate potential to feel, use, communicate, recognise, remember, describe, identify, learn from, manage, understand, and also explain emotions. This model is based on the academic work of Salovey and Mayer (1990, 1997) but differs from their definition with its emphasis of emotional intelligence as an innate potential. The author posits that each child is born with a specific and unique potential for the following components of emotional intelligence: emotional sensitivity, emotional memory, emotional processing ability, and emotional learning ability. His view shares some similarities with that of Goleman (1995), who believes that an individual is born with a general emotional intelligence (comprising four components - self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management), but posits that the emotional competencies of each of the constructs are not innate but learned capabilities. Similarly, Hein (2005, 2007) believes that the four inborn components (emotional sensitivity, emotional memory, emotional processing ability, and emotional learning ability) for the foundation of one's emotional intelligence. He argues that there is an important distinction between the inborn potential and what actually happens in that potential over a person's life. He therefore notes that innate intelligence can be either developed or damaged with one's life experiences and refers to the developed skills' or competencies as EQ - a term he uses to signify the relative measure of a one's healthy or unhealthy development of their innate emotional intelligence.

MEASUREMENTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology proposes that the three most popular measures of emotional intelligence are the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT); the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI); and the Bar-On Emotional Quotient: Inventory (EQ-i).

Measurement of Ability-Based EI Model

The ability-based EI model of Salovey and Mayer is measured by the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligent Test (MSCEIT). MSCEIT is a series of emotion-based problem

solving items (Sovey *et al.*, 2005). Since the ability-based EI model sees EI as a type of intelligence, MSCEIT is modeled on an ability-based IQ tests designed to test the four branches of EI as by the model. Using MSCEIT, the test taker performs series of tasks that assesses the 'person's ability to perceive, identify, understand, and work with emotion (Morrison, 2007). Even though MSCEIT is promoted as an ability test, the items do not have objectively correct responses unlike that of standard IQ tests. The responses are considered to be emotionally intelligent only if the majority of the sample has endorsed them. This among other reasons explains why some cognitive ability experts criticised this instrument, by questioning its definition of EI as a genuine intelligence (Morrison, 2007).

Measurement of Emotional Competence Model

The Goleman's Emotional Competencies Model is measured by the Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI). The ECI is a 360-degree instrument in which colleagues are asked to score the individual on a range of EI measures, following which, a composite EI profile is constructed (Morrison, 2007:251).

Measurement of Bar-On's (ESI) Model

The Bar-On (2003) ESI model of EI is measured by the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). EQ-i is a self-report measure of emotional and social intelligent behaviour, and provides an estimate of one's underlying emotional and social intelligence. It comprises 133 items used to obtain a total EQ score (from the test taker's responses) and the five composite scale scores corresponding to the five main components of the Bar-On model give 15 subscale scores in all. The EQ-i has a built-in correction factor that automatically adjusts the scale scores based on scores obtained from its to validity indices (the positive impression and negative impression scales). The correction factor is necessary for self-report measures, because it lessens the distorting effects of response bias, and thus, increases the accuracy of the results obtained.

Measurement of Trait EI Model

The self-report instrument used to measure trait EI is the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue). The test comprises 15 sub-scales which are organised under four factors namely: well-being, self-control, emotionality, and sociability. TEIQue scores were reported to be globally normally distributed and reliably based on a study learned out on French-speaking population. Furthermore, the researchers found that TEIQue scores are not related to

non-verbal reasoning and explained that as supporting the personality view of EI, instead of the view of EI, as a form of intelligence. Expectedly, TEIQue scores were found to be positively related to some of the big five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness and neuroticism,) and inversely related to others including alexithymia and neuroticism (Morrison, 2007).

Schutte Measure of EI

Another measure of EI construct worth mentioning here is the framework developed by Schutte and his colleagues. These authors developed a 33-item self-report scale that is based on the theoretical model of emotional intelligence developed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It is a measure of individuals' current level of emotional intelligence (Schutte *et al.*, 1998: 168 - 171). It should be noted the major differences between the various approaches in the EI study as well as their different measures are based on whether EI is conceptualised as a personality trait or an ability; as a range of human functioning; whether it describes individual or collective phenomena; and the degree to which EI is asserted to be a distinct type of intelligence.

COMPARING ALEXITHYMIA AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Peter Sifneos used the term Alexithymia in 1973 to describe people who have deficiencies in understanding, processing, or describing emotions (Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Taylor, Bagby, & Parker, 1997). Alexithymia is inversely related to EI and represents its lower range (Parker, Taylor, & Bagby, 2001). An individual's alexithymia level can be measured by a self-scored questionnaire like 20-item Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20), Bermond-Vorst Alexithymia Questionnaire (BVAQ) or by an observer rated measures like Observer Alexithymia Scale (OAS) (Vorst & Bermond, 2001).

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

EI has a great importance in work excellence. In recent times, many organisational researchers are looking closely at the role of emotions at work and argue that emotions are vital and inseparable part of organisational life, and posit that adequate attention should be given to the notional experience of the employees (Shaffer & Shaffër, 2005). Goleman (1995) articulates the above notion further, and states that:

“Much evidence testifies that people who are emotionally adept - who know and manage their own feelings well, and who read and deal effectively with other people's feelings - are at an advantage in any domain of life, whether romance and intimate relationships or picking up the unspoken rules

that govern success in organisational politics. People with well-developed emotional skills are also more likely to be content and effective in their lives, mastering the habits of mind that foster their own productivity; people who cannot marshal some control over their emotional life fight inner battles that sabotage their ability for focused work and clear thought” (Goleman, 1995).

Goleman (1995) outlined 25 competencies, that are rooted in the emotional elements of the brain, and which contribute to star performance. He categorised these competencies under five headings:

- Self-awareness
 - Emotional awareness: Recognising your own emotions and their effects.
 - Accurate self-assessment: Evaluating one's strengths and limits.
 - Self-confidence: Having a sense of self worth.
- Self-regulation
 - Self-control: Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check.
 - Trustworthiness: Honesty, integrity.
 - Conscientiousness: Taking responsibility for personal performance.
 - Adaptability: Being able to handle situations flexibly.
 - Innovation being comfortable with new ideas and information.
- Motivation
 - Achievement drive: Aiming high
 - Commitment: Aligning with the organisational goals
 - Initiative: Readiness to seize opportunities
 - Optimism: Undeterred by obstacles Motivation:
- Empathy
 - Understanding others: Sensing their feelings
 - Developing others: Sensing their needs and bolstering their abilities
 - Service orientation: Recognising customer needs
 - Leveraging diversity: Valuing the differences in groups
 - Political awareness: Reading organisational emotional and power currents
- Social Skills
 - Influence, with or without authority

- Communication: Listening and sending clear, messages.
- Conflict management: Resolving disagreements, negotiating.
- Leadership: Inspiring others.
- Change catalyst: Overcoming largely emotional resistance to change.
- Building bonds: Nurturing relationships.
- Collaboration and cooperation: Developing shared perspectives.
- Team development: Creating group synergy in pursuing goals.

He classifies the first two categories as personal competencies that spring from one's emotional make up, while the rest are classified as social competencies, which also exist in the realms of emotions and not in that of 'rational thought' or 'intellectual competence'. He noted that one does not need all of the 25 competences to excel in work, but should possess enough of them in order to reach the critical mass of success. In his opinion, where managers assume that intellectual reasoning is the key to successful strategy formulation and implementation, they are courting disaster. He concludes that emotionally intelligent people possess an inner strength in the area of self-awareness and self-regulation and that this helps them to determine whether what they are doing is worthwhile or not (Goleman, 1995). Similarly, Chapman (2009) opines that 'people with strong emotional quotient (EQ) have less emotional baggage, while those with low EQ have a tendency to have personal unresolved issues, which could act as triggers'. The author's premise of EQ is that being successful requires effective awareness, control and management of one's own emotions as well as the emotions of other people. A supervisor's insecurity could make him or her less tolerant of subordinates, in the bid to protect his or her vulnerabilities. Insecurity can result from low EQ. Higher a person's EQ, the less insecurity is likely to be present, and the more openness will be tolerated. Also, a person's preparedness to expose their feelings, vulnerabilities; thoughts, etc., is a feature of EQ.

In his leadership study, Goleman in (HBR, 2000) shows six leadership styles, each of which stems from the different facets of emotional intelligence (HBR, 2000). These leadership styles are:

1. Coercive leaders: Demand immediate compliance.
2. Authoritative leaders: Mobilise people towards a vision.
3. Affiliative leaders: Create emotional bonds, and harmony.
4. Democratic leaders: Build consensus through participation.

5. Pacesetter leaders: Expect excellence and self-direction.

6. Coaching leaders: Develop people for the future.

Nwachukwu (2006) agreeing with Goleman, posits that unlike the old leadership studies that tended not to use a quantitative approach to leadership and depended on inference, experience and instinct, the new leadership approaches are believed to spring from different components of emotional intelligence. According to him, these new approaches link the manager's ability to lead to the emotional competencies that the manager possesses.

Shaffer and Shaffer (2005) related EI to personality and workplace performance. According to them, a core theme in EI research is that emotions serve important functions in human behaviour, for instance, preparing for action, aiding cognition, and communications. They posit that since the management of social behaviour involves the management of emotions, EI has the potential to be a strong predictor of performance. The authors developed and tested a model of the direct and indirect effects of the Big Five personality traits and EI abilities on multiple forms of performance - task performance and contextual performance. In their model, the Big Five personality factors are extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability, conscientiousness, and intellectance (openness to experience). Task performance refers to the behaviour that links directly with completion of a job, while contextual performance comprises interpersonal behaviours or actions that benefit the organisation. In relation to EI, Shaffer and Shaffer (2005) hypothesized that EI is a positive predictor of task performance and contextual performance and that EI will strengthen (weaken) the positive (negative) relationships between the big five personality traits and (a) task performance and (b) contextual performance. The authors carried out their research using two online instruments (an abilities test for assessing EI and a self-report survey for assessing all other variables) at different time periods and their sample were managerial-level employees, who were post-graduate students at three Hong Kong universities.

The test is composed of 141 items, which are designed to measure the specific skills associated with each of the four branches of the Mayer and Salovey (1997) EI model: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. They used gender, age and ethnicity as control variables (Mayer *et al.*, in Shaffer & Shaffer 2005). Results of their findings however did not support all of the above hypotheses. Contrary to the authors' expectations, branch one (perceiving emotions) was a significant negative predictor of contextual performance. Thus, they concurred that hypothesis was not supported. According to the hypothesis, EI would moderate the relationship between personality and performance. Significant moderating effects were found for both forms

of performance. Agreeableness was involved in significant interactions with EI for task and contextual performance. As predicted, EI enhanced the effects of agreeableness on task and contextual performance. Again, based on their findings, the researchers agreed that the second hypothesis (i) was only partially supported. The finding of the authors regarding the second part of the hypothesis, (i) that EI is not a positive predictor of contextual performance, seems to negate the positions of major authors (like Mayer, Salovey, Goleman, and Bar-On) of the EI construct. In their conceptualisations of EI, each of these major authors included the element of contextual performance in their models, in the sense that the operational definition of ‘contextual performance’ stated above, relates to managing emotions, social awareness and relationship management, interpersonal EQ (Bar-On *et al.*, 2003). This latter opinion is also supported by the eight competencies under the ‘social skills’ as outlined by Goleman’s 25 emotional competencies.

Morrison (2007) examined the role of EI and emotion in relation to five core social work tasks namely engagement of users, assessment and observation, decision making, collaboration and co-operation, and dealing with stress.

He argued that social work should identify its claims to professional competence, one of which is the ability to use relationships to address user’s needs. He posits that this competence requires the capacity to effectively handle one’s own and other’s emotions. In his paper, Morrison (2007) drew attention to a multidisciplinary framework of competence that is targeted at people working with children and young people. He noted that this framework stresses the intra and interpersonal skills required of social work practitioners, including listening and building capacity; understanding the effects of non-verbal communications, and self-awareness about how working with children may affect one emotionally and how to seek help. These intra and interpersonal skills mentioned above are consistent with the domains/ components of EI covered in the various models and studies of EI already discussed. Further, it is observed that the basic EI paradigm that captures all the main EI studies comprise four domains: two intrapersonal domains covering self-awareness and self-management and two interpersonal domains covering awareness of others, empathy and relationship skills (Morrison, 2007). These four domains are similar to Goleman’s (1995) four dimensions. They are represented diagrammatically in Fig. 1.

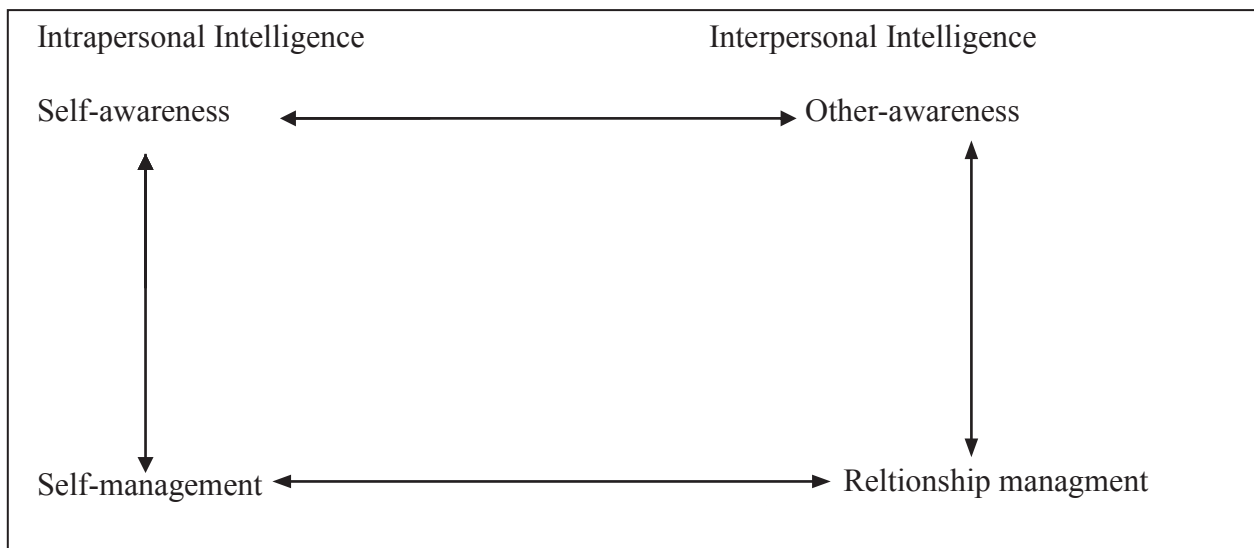


Fig. 1: The Emotional Intelligence Paradigm

Source: The Emotional Intelligence, Emotion and Social Work: Context, Characteristics, Complications and Contribution (Morrison, 2007:251).

He explained through the arrows that the four domains interrelate. Specifically, ‘self-awareness and empathy for others’ are the ‘basis for managing self and relationships’. The relevance of Morrison’s work in relating the concept of EI and emotions to social work, could best be comprehended in the statement that the capacity to be in touch with the client’s feelings is related to the worker’s ability to acknowledge his/her own. Before a worker can understand the power of emotion in the life of the client, he or she will necessarily need to discover its importance in his or her own experience

(Shulman in Morrison, 2007). This statement agrees with the saying that one cannot give what one does not have.

In their own research, Bar-On *et al.* (2003) explored the neurological substrate of emotional and social intelligence. The primary purpose of their research was to provide empirical evidence in support of their hypothesis that emotional and social intelligence is different from cognitive intelligence, since these two major components of general intelligence are supported by separate neural substrates and

this was supported by their findings. The work of the authors therefore, contributes to existing literature which validates EI as a separate type of intelligence, different from IQ.

In a similar, yet slightly different analysis, Montemayor and Spee (2004) studied the dimensions of EI construct using manager and self-ratings. The focus of their research was to provide validity support for the EI construct. The authors noted that the definitions of EI given by main authors like Goleman (1998) and Salovey and Mayer (2004), share a two-fold distinction in foci-one's versus other's emotions and a two-fold distinction in-intelligent operations - awareness versus management of emotions. Based on this, they hypothesized that EI is comprised of four dimensions namely:

1. Emotional Self-awareness: Ability to recognise one's own emotions;
2. Emotional Other-awareness: Ability to recognise other's emotions;
3. Emotional Self-management: Ability to control one's emotions; and
4. Emotional Other-management: Ability to control other's emotions.

However, the results obtained from their analysis support only three dimensions namely general emotional awareness, emotional self-management, and emotional other-management. In the discussion of their findings, Montemayor and Spee (2004) explained that general emotional awareness relates to the signal function, which emotions play and represents the monitoring mechanism in EI's architecture and the two other dimensions - emotional self-management and emotional other-management - relate to the trigger function which emotions play and represent the response mechanisms in EI's architecture.

Rahim *et al.* (2006) have built on and redefined Goleman (1998) EI competencies categorised under the five headings as reviewed above. Their descriptions of the dimensions are (i) self-awareness - ability to be aware of one's emotions, moods, and impulses and why they are being experienced, as well as their effect on others; (ii) self-regulation - ability to keep one's emotions and impulses in check, and to be calm in volatile circumstances and maintain composure despite one's emotions; (iii) Motivation - ability to remain focused on goals irrespective of setbacks and operate from the hope of success rather than fear of failure, as well as delay gratification; (iv) Empathy - ability to understand nonverbal feelings, and messages and provide emotional support, as well as understand the link between people's emotions and their behaviours; and (v) Social skills - ability to deal with problems without demeaning others working with one and not allow other's negative feelings to inhibit collaboration; to handle conflict with tact and diplomacy.

Singh (2010) in his study of developing human capital by linking EI with personal competencies noted that growing and prosperous organisations need good employees with competencies that include people success, task success, system success, and self-success. According to him, self-success is an indicator of self-awareness, which helps individuals to comprehend their emotions and recognise the impact of those emotions on their decisions. People success entails understanding behaviour in interpersonal context and requires empathy, service and organisational awareness which are core in social connectivity. The author therefore, hypothesized and confirmed that self-success and people success strongly relate to EI. It can be seen that these competencies of self-success and people success relate to intrapersonal EQ and interpersonal IQ of Bar-On's ESI model. This Bar-On's (1997) model of emotional-social intelligence posits that emotional intelligence will increase individuals' competencies and this may help them to decrease external demands and pressures (Ismail, Suh-suh, Ajis, Noor Faizzah Dollah, 2009). Similarly, self-success and people success also relate to self-awareness and social awareness of Goleman's (2003) emotional intelligence constructs, which stresses that the level of emotional intelligence increases individuals' competencies and this may help them to decrease environmental strains. Furthermore, they equally relate to understanding emotions and managing emotions in Salovey and Mayer's (1997) ability-based model of emotional intelligence, which explains that the level of emotional intelligence increases individuals' competencies and that this can increase their ability to decrease stress situations and behaviours.

Ismail *et al.* (2009) in a study to ascertain the relationship between occupational stress, EI and job performance, hypothesized and confirmed that there is a relationship between occupational stress and job performance and that EI mediates the effect of occupational stress on job performance. Hosseinian, Seyedeh-Monavar, Zahraie, and Faith-Ashtiani (2008) agree to this and note that employees with higher EI can effectively recognise frustration and stress-related emotions and thereby control them in order to reduce stress. Such employees are able to control their emotions and relate better with people. In their study of emotional intelligence and its relationship with leadership practices, Anand and UdayaSuriyan (2010) affirm that stress management significantly and positively relates with modeling the way and enabling others to act; flexibility and empathy relates significantly and positively with enabling others to act; and overall, emotional intelligence has a positive relationship with modeling the way and enabling others to act. Another related study that examined the role of empathy in developing the EI of leaders, Badea and Pana (2010) maintain that leaders with high level of empathy create stronger interpersonal relationships. Related literature shows that interpersonal relationship refers to empathy which is a

factor for performance (Goleman, 1998) and one measure of the manager's performance is the ability to develop work teams that are committed to the organisation. This is in line with the position of Flores and Toyar (2008) who examined the emotional intelligence model for directors of research centres and found that awareness of one's emotions is correlated with self-management of emotions, precisely, self-evaluation; empathy is correlated with management of other 'people's emotion; development of skills in personnel, readiness to 'serve and management of conflict. Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, and Boyle (2006) towed this line in their study of the relationship between leadership EI and leadership effectiveness of supervisors in a manufacturing organisation.

They note that leadership is an emotional process in which leaders recognise emotional states of the subordinates, induce emotions in them and attempt to manage the emotions of these subordinates. They used the Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) to measure the EI of supervisors in the four branches of the model, namely identifying emotions, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. They used subordinates' ratings to measure the leadership effectiveness of the supervisors. Results of their investigation show that leadership EI is a key determinant of effective leadership and that the subordinates' perceptions of the supervisor effectiveness related strongly with the supervisor's EI. Interestingly though, relationship between subordinates' rating of supervisor effectiveness and the two branches of MSCEIT - understanding emotions and managing emotions were not supported. The authors' interpretation of this is that it is an indication that the ability of supervisors to understand and manage their emotions is not a key determinant of how subordinates view and rate them. Thus, Matthews, Zeidner and Roberts in Kerr *et al.* (2006) posit that the relationship between the ability to understand emotions and the ability to use such understanding to act effectively may just be marginal. Rozell and Scroggins (2010) confirm this latter finding in their study of the effect of EI on the satisfaction of self-managed work team of undergraduate business students, also using the MSCEIT measure of EI.

The authors found that understanding and managing emotions components of MSCEIT were significantly negatively correlated with some aspects of group member satisfaction, and explained that highly emotionally intelligent individuals, higher levels of managing emotions and understanding emotions will likely decrease some aspects of group member satisfaction. The authors therefore posit that highly emotionally intelligent group member is extremely sensitive to group member conflict. This high level of awareness and understanding can lead to situation where the group member who is highly emotionally intelligent experiences lower group outcome satisfaction.

Polychroniou (2009) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership of supervisors and its impact on team effectiveness in Greek organisations. In particular, the author used employees' perceptions to measure their supervisor's social skills, motivation and empathy components of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, to overcome the limitations of self-report measures, noting that if supervisors have to self-assess their EI competencies, some may give inaccurate information. He contended that unsuccessful supervisors overestimate their skills in comparison to successful ones (Kruger & Dunning in Polychroniou, 2009), while managers who under-estimate their managerial skills are likely to be more effective than those who over-estimate them (Van, Taylor & Lesiie in Polychroniou, 2009). His findings include supervisors lead effectively by utilising interpersonal competence of social skills; empathy helps supervisors to understand the feelings of subordinates, take interest in them and provide the emotional support that enables them work towards goal attainment; empathy also enhances the transformational leadership of supervisors less than social skills. This was attributed to the culture of individualism and subordinates' perception of the degree of power distance in the organisation; and that, motivation better predicts supervisor's transformational leadership than empathy.

The above findings agrees with the findings of Koman and Wolff (2008) who carried out a similar study and examined the effect that leadership EI competencies and emotional intelligence team have on the team performance. Their results confirm that the leader's EI influences the EI competencies of the team and team performance through the development of emotionally competent group norms. Brown, Bryant, and Reilly (2006) also examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership and their influence on organisational outcomes among manufacturing workers, engineers and professional staff in a manufacturing setting in the USA, using the Bar-On (1996) EQI measure. Contrary to findings of other studies which used the same measure of EI (Barling, Slater, & Kelloway; Sivanathan & Fekken; Mandell & Pherwani in Brown *et al.*, 2006), the authors maintain that the study does not support the relationship between EI as measured by EQI and transformational leadership; and between EI and desirable organisational outcomes. They explained that this non-correlation may be due to the setting in which data was collected — manufacturing setting, as opposed to the settings in which data for the other studies were collected—pulp and paper organisation (Barling, Slater and Kelloway in Brown *et al.*, 2006); university residence hall setting (Sivanathan & Fekken in Brown *et al.*, 2006); and human resource representatives of volunteering organisations (Mandell & Pherwani in Brown *et al.*, 2006). They argue that the extent of interactions in these organisations are more

affectively based than what obtains in a manufacturing plant, which to a large extent, is performance-based.

The authors also noted that the large sample size would have also contributed to the non-correlation between the variables, by providing large psychological and cultural diversity, as their respondents included hourly workers, professional managers, industrial and product development engineers, computer scientists, marketing and customer service personnel. This may imply that heterogeneous samples may produce variations in results of a study. In line with studies which account for cultural diversity, Tang, Yin, and Nelson (2010) carried out a cross-cultural study and investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership practices of academic leaders in Taiwan and the USA. The authors found that for Taiwanese participants, their overall EI has significant positive relationship with the five areas of transformational leadership, including challenging the process. Inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, and modeling the way, while for the US participants, their overall EI had a significant positive relationship with only three of the transformational leadership practices, and did not support challenging the process and inspiring a shared vision dimensions.

In another interesting study, Stein *et al.* (2009) examined the EI scores of leaders, in particular, top executives, in comparison with that of the general population, and also investigated their relationship with organisational outcomes, including net profit, growth management, and employee management and retention. Their study employed the EQ-i scale and the results showed that the top executives scored significantly higher than the general population in eight intra-personal, general mood, adaptability, self-regard, self-actualisation, assertiveness, dependence, and problem solving of the 15 EQ-i subscales. Also, as they found in agreement with their hypothesis that higher score EI was positively related to the degree to which the challenge for managing growth, managing others, training and retraining employees were perceived to be easier.

As expected, EI was significantly related to the challenges which are centred on interpersonal activities, contrary to those which are task-oriented like raising capital and coping with technological changes. Thus, the authors posit that since relationship between the emotional and social perceptions of business challenges come from social interactions, it naturally follows that the strongest and most significant relationships occur between EI and social challenges.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY OF THE PAPER

This paper does not involve an empirical evaluation on workplace emotion intelligence. Thus, it does not involve data

collection of any kind, rather it is a theoretical exposition on the dynamics of the emotional interplay amongst workplace actors, with respect of their emotional intelligence. The paper adopted and relied on logically analytical and interpretative explanations on the implications deduced from conceptual, theoretical and empirical review of the extant literature on the subject matter. This approach was deemed necessary to produce a much needed reconciliation of the postulations on the growing intellectual field of emotional intelligence, where parsimonious research is indeed gainful. This paper therefore, does not produce any findings grounded in research data rather conclusion for appropriate research paradigm on emotional intelligence was drawn from the perceived implications grounded in the extant literature.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The emotional state of man is a dominant characteristic of his everyday life, yet its fluid and abstract nature tends to present it as a trivial phenomenon. Unfortunate, even humans who are victims of emotion related problems both in their individual and social existence are unmindful of the true circumstance they are. This appears to be because emotional fits are very often associated with weakness or immaturity of the person involved.

However, considering deductions from the extant literature reviewed, it is gainful to have a robust view of the emotional phenomenon of man at the workplace, through a logical and philosophical research paradigm for its inquiry. Our view is that emotional intelligence dwells both in the psychological and social domain of human co-existence and as such requires a comprehensive research paradigm for its investigation. The research issues we sought to consider are: unit of analysis, nature of research data, data collection techniques, methodology, types of triangulation and measurement of variable.

The consideration on the unit of analysis on emotional intelligence based research seeks relevance in the individual, as a unit of analysis. This is deemed appropriate because emotion is an individual feature, and emotional intelligence is an individual capability. Thus, studies involving emotional intelligence will only seek to explain, describe or discover the individual in his world of emotions. On variable type, since the criterion value of organisational outcome are specific to direct objective expectations, emotional intelligence is usually a predictor variable. Most of the times, researchers are concerned with how emotional intelligence predicts business objective outcomes or expected behaviour. This is not a fixed position, but direct business expectations put emotional intelligence as an independent, predictor variable on direct objective determinants like loyalty, commitment, and performance, which are criterion variables in organisational studies.

The nature of data required tends to be life occurring data or opinion of respondents. The life occurring data are useful as they are collected from real life performance study subjects. These may be words, facial expressions, moods and other observable reactions of the study subjects. Data collected from the opinion of a respondent may be about himself or about other persons involved in the study.

The primary nature of emotional intelligence data requires such techniques as observations, interviews, and questionnaires. The questionnaire becomes only useful where the questions are carefully coded and scaled to transform opinion to numerical values. This later process produces quantitative data.

Thus, considering the nature of emotion as a human attribute that is better perceived through participant observation, than being told, the collection and analysis of life occurring data on the emotional intelligence competence of the actor's real life will be indeed more gainful, than solely relying on the calibrated research instrument. For instance, there cannot be any more accurate and appropriate measure of love, hatred, happiness, self-control, than to be close to personally to the actor manifesting these fits, to produce life data. However, the life experiential approach can be complimented with clinical testing models to have robust revelations.

From a philosophical viewpoint, on the foundation of knowledge in the social sciences, emotional intelligence appears to be largely rooted in subjectivism, where the ontological consideration is idealism; the epistemological preference is anti-positivism; the human nature view is determinism. These favour ideographic methodology, where the research data are qualitative. For the purpose of procuring advantages of both the objectivists and subjectivists philosophical strands, triangulation is necessary. We thus propose data, setting, theory, and methodological paradigm triangulations to ensure a robust inquiry into the universe of emotional intelligence in the workplace, which will involve both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis.

From the foregoing, the paper contends that the study of emotional intelligence acquires a comprehensive research approach to produce a robust understanding of the complex mental processes that manifest in individual emotional outcomes, that further affects social interactions. The paper further suggests a theory on emotional capital, for it to receive sufficient practical and scholarly attention for real gains. This is proposed because it is an essential resource for organisational productivity, particularly in service oriented organisations.

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