

## The Software Component of the Mind Vis-à-vis Job Performance: Perspectives and Implications

Rommel Pilapil Sergio  
Canadian University of Dubai  
Sheikh Zyed Road, Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
E-mail: rommelsergio@yahoo.com

(Received: 19-04-2011 / Accepted: 30-04-2011)

### **Abstract**

This paper utilized primary and secondary data that threshed out the evolution of the software component of the mind as an impetus for job performance. Emotional Intelligence as the software component of the mind is elucidated as a perspective and as a working construct. Future implications to higher education classroom practice have also been raised.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, Job Performance, Emotional Intelligence-Based Theory of Performance, Emotional Intelligence and Higher Education

### **1. Introduction**

The modern science has tended to support and develop the idea that literally, there are two minds, one that thinks which we have known as the rational mind; and one that feels or the emotional mind. In the same vein, it can also be stated that rational mind stands as the hard area of intelligence; whereas, the emotional mind connotes the soft domain. This concept has continued as an important theme in the history of the relationship between reason and emotion.

Among the controversies in the psychological field, the most heated has been provoked by the idea that in each person there exists a general intelligence. In line with this, the new millennium dawns its radiance to further concretize its vow to unlock the depths of multiple intelligence, two of which are emotional intelligence and mental ability (Sergio, 2001).

Recently, it can be observed that industrial and organizational psychologists have begun to address what has historically been regarded as the "soft" side of individual differences, including moods, feelings, and emotions in relation to job performance – a way in which workers function in accordance with the anticipated tasks at hand.

The focus on individual's intelligent, working behavior, is, in many ways, a continuation of the interests investigated by the scientists of the past and the neophyte researchers of the new millennium. Mueller and Purcell, (1992) expressed:

"Two themes have dominated among personnel professionals in the last few years; what contribution can personnel make to productivity and performance, how can the change be managed effectively?"

In the corporate world where the author worked in the past decade, applicants were usually hired on the basis of their mental capacity and on some other cognitive-based qualifications like educational attainment, among others. In the process, as time goes by, competencies at work like organizational leadership manifest among employees who are candidates for supervisory position. Their job performance is considered an indicator or measure of their skills on-the-job.

Setting a debate on the extent of effectiveness of mental ability and emotional intelligence in the workplace does not carry a weight. Reality dictates that mental ability matters inasmuch as qualifications is concerned – may even be central in supervisory and managerial hiring or organizational realignment while emotional competencies are likewise important as part of leadership skills and self-understanding to propel the organization at a sustained growth and development (Sergio, 2001).

In this paper sets the importance of emotional intelligence in relation to job performance and its implications to higher education classroom practice. The theoretical bases, brief background, structure, and baseline researches on emotional intelligence are dissected.

For some, emotional intelligence is still a new concept despite having been introduced in the past six decades through differing perspectives. The clamor for more empirical evidences delves deeper into the data of consistencies about the variable being talked about.

## **2. Emotional Intelligence in Capsule**

The author of this paper is convinced that emotional intelligence is never a "neopsychobabble". History dictates that emotional intelligence has its roots in the concept of "social intelligence" first identified by Thorndike in 1920. This was followed by Wechsler's (1940) idea of non-intellective aspects of general intelligence. Whereas, Leeper (1948) proposed that emotional thoughts are part of and contribute to logical thought and intelligence in general. But these concepts were not given much emphasis as people in those times seek better explanations in empirical settings.

Later, the proposals just cited were succeeded nearly a half century by the ideas of Gardner who broadened the way people have traditionally considered cognitive intelligence since the early twentieth century. Gardner (1983) who propounded the Contemporary Theory of

Multiple Intelligences feels that intelligence is encompasses of multiple dimensions, combining a variety of cognitive aspects with elements of emotional intelligence (or personal intelligence as he calls it).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) concentrated efforts on the emotional aspect of intelligence as they expounded upon Gardner's approach. It is proposed that individuals differ in how they deal with their emotions, and those who effectively manage their emotions are said to be "emotionally intelligent". Goleman (1995) proposed five dimensions of the construct of emotional intelligence whereas Baron (1997) coined the term emotional quotient.

### **3. Emotional Intelligence-Based Theory of Performance: A Working Construct**

Goleman (2000) has set out a framework of emotional intelligence (EI) that reflects how an individual's potential for mastering the skills of Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management translates into on-the-job success. This model is based on EI competencies that have been identified in internal research at hundreds of corporations, educational institutions, and organizations as distinguishing outstanding performers.

Focusing on EI as a theory of performance, it looks at the physiological evidence underlying EI theory, and it reviews a number of studies of the drivers of workplace performance and the factors that distinguish the best individuals from the average ones.

As defined, an emotional competence is "a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work" (Goleman, 1998b). To be adept at an emotional competence like Customer Service or Conflict Management requires an underlying ability in EI fundamentals, specifically, Social Awareness and Relationship Management. However, emotional competencies are learned abilities: having Social Awareness or skill at managing relationship does not guarantee one has mastered the additional learning required to handle a customer adeptly or to resolve a conflict-just that one has the potential to become skilled at these competencies.

Emotional competencies are job skills that can, and indeed must be learned. An underlying EI ability is necessary, though not sufficient, to manifest competence in any one of the four EI domains, or clusters. A person may be highly empathic yet poor at handling customers if he or she has not learned competence in customer service. Although one's emotional intelligence determines potential for learning the practical skills that underlie the four EI clusters, one's emotional competence shows how much of that potential he/she has realized by learning and mastering skills and translating intelligence into on-the-job capabilities.

Twenty competencies nest in four clusters of general EI abilities. The framework illustrates, for example, that one cannot demonstrate the competencies of trustworthiness and

conscientiousness without mastery of the fundamental ability of Self-Management or the Competencies of Influence, Communication, Conflict Management, and so on without a grasp on Managing Relationships (Goleman, 2000).

This model is a refinement of the model Goleman used in 1998 that earlier framework identified five domains, or dimensions, of emotional intelligence that comprised twenty-five competencies. The current version of the EI framework by Goleman and Boyatzis (2000) is shown below:

	<b>Self (Personal Competence)</b>	<b>Other (Social Competence)</b>
	<b>Self-Awareness</b>	<b>Social Awareness</b>
<b>Recognition</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional self-awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate self-assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Self-confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Empathy <input type="checkbox"/> Service orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational awareness
	<b>Self-Management</b>	<b>Relationship Management</b>
<b>Regulation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-control <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthiness <input type="checkbox"/> Conscientiousness <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement drive <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/> Developing others <input type="checkbox"/> Influence <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict management <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Change catalyst <input type="checkbox"/> Building bonds <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork and Collaboration

Three dimensions-Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, and Motivation described personal competencies, that is, knowing and managing emotions in oneself. Two dimensions-Empathy and Social Skills-described social competencies, that is, knowing and managing emotions in others. The current model reflects recent statistical analyses by Goleman’s colleague Richard Boyatzis that supported collapsing the twenty-five competencies into twenty, and the five domains into the four seen here: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000).

Boyatzis, Goleman, and Rhee administered the Emotional Competence Inventory, a questionnaire designed to assess the twenty EI competencies just described, to nearly six hundred corporate managers and professionals and engineering, management, and social work graduate students. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which statements about EI-related behaviors, for instance, the ability to remain calm under pressure, were characteristic of themselves. Their ratings of themselves were then compared to ratings of them made by those who worked with them. Three key clusters into which the twenty EI competencies were grouped emerged: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, and Social Awareness (which subsumes Empathy), along with Relationship Management, which, in the statistical analysis, subsumed the Social Awareness cluster. While the analysis verifies that

the competencies nest within each EI domain, it also suggests that the distinction between the Social Awareness cluster and the Relationship Management cluster may be more theoretical than empirical.

#### **4. Emotional Intelligence on Job Performance: Groundbreaking Explorations**

Various studies and literature point out the role of emotional intelligence on job performance both in the Philippines and abroad.

"Traditionally, it has been believed that the cognitively smartest (highest IQ) make the best technical performers," says Dr. Steven Stein (1997), psychologist and President of MHS. The initial research showed that the high EQ IT professionals might be the real stars. They used their interpersonal skills to get more information, to get help solving problems, and were generally better liked by others. IT professionals scored highest in Problem Solving and Impulse control. Interpersonal Relations was found to be the area most in need of improvement".

These results confirm that many people would expect for IT professionals. The strengths are in areas that are most obviously required to do their jobs. But their weaknesses are in the areas that could really help them excel and rise to the top (Stein, 1998).

The author also adheres to Robbin's (2010) insights that "leaders need basic intelligence and job relevant knowledge. But IQ and technical skills are so-called threshold capabilities. They are necessary but not sufficient requirements for leadership." He also stressed that emotional intelligence capabilities surface as the reason for his or her effectiveness. Specifically, when star performers were compared with average ones in senior management positions, nearly 90 percent of the difference in their effectiveness was attributable to emotional intelligence factors than basic intelligence.

The emotional, however, is a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work. The emotional competence shows how much of that potential have translated into on-the-job capabilities. Likewise, trustworthiness is a competence based on self-regulation, or handling impulses and emotions well. Emotional competencies cluster into groups, each based on a common underlying emotional intelligence capacity. The underlying emotional intelligence capacities are vital if people are to successfully learn the competencies necessary to succeed in the workplace. If they are deficient in social skills, for instance, they will be inept at persuading or inspiring others, at leading teams or catalyzing change (Gardner, 1997).

In a study by the Center for Creative Leadership of top American and European executives whose careers derailed, the inability to build and lead a team was one of the most common reasons for failure (Leslie & Van Velsor, 1996). Team skills, which had been of little

consequence in a similar study in the early 1980s, had emerged as a key mark of leadership ten years later. By the 1990s, teamwork became the most frequently valued managerial competence in studies of organizations around the world (Spencer Jr. & Spencer, 1993).

In the Philippines, the author himself (2001) anchored his study between emotional intelligence and mental ability as determinants of job performance among plant supervisors in selected manufacturing firms. The study showed that there is a significant relationship that exists with mental ability and emotional intelligence when correlated with job performance. On the other hand, it was affirmed that mental ability and emotional intelligence registered a very low and negligible correlation.

Before this study, Santos (2000) divulged that there are significant effects of emotional intelligence and morale on the job performance of 101 nurses in selected hospitals in Makati while there is no significant relationship between the nurse's profile variables such as emotional intelligence, mental ability, and job performance.

The study by Jae (1998, as cited by MHS) at Ateneo de Manila evaluated 100 university-educated, front-line Filipino bank employees (56% female and 44% male). They were administered BarOn EQ-i along with a widely used IQ test. Each employee also underwent an independent performance review with his or her supervisor. The study found that EQ scores were far more related to actual on-the-job performance than IQ. Indeed, IQ scores were virtually unrelated (correlation of .07) as they accounted for less than 1% of job work evaluation scores. Previous estimates have placed IQ as accounting for up to 20% of job success, although most research findings are closer to 6%. The EQ-i scores, however, accounted for an impressive 27% (correlation of .52) of job performance.

In a thesis submitted to the University of the Philippines, Salazar (1998) validated the existence of the concept of emotional intelligence and its applicability to the Filipino workplace. The respondents were 30 middle managers from three hotels in Metro Manila. The result of the in-depth interview shows that majority of the managers are not so knowledgeable about the emotional intelligence concept. After the orientation on the concept, the managers were able to perceive several behaviors that can be related to emotional intelligence. The study found out that training and experiences are important factors that can contribute to the development and improvement of emotional intelligence behavior among employees.

## **5. Emotional Intelligence and Higher Education: Future Implications**

With the foregoing studies and present trend, the author envisions that given the value of EI-based capabilities, there is a dire need to integrate them into the educational institutions' functions. Teaching institutions need to hire faculty for emotional intelligence together with the technical expertise.

Indeed, researchers investigated dimensions of emotional intelligence by measuring related concepts, such as social skills, interpersonal competence, psychological maturity, and emotional awareness even before the term "emotional intelligence" came into use. Teaching of classes such as "social and emotional learning", "social development", and "personal intelligence", all aimed at "raising the level of social and emotional competence" (Goleman, 1995). Social scientists are just beginning to uncover the relationship of emotional intelligence to other phenomena like leadership (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995), group performance (Williams and Sternberg, 1998), individual performance, interpersonal, social exchange, managing change, and conducting performance evaluations. Emotional intelligence, the skills that help people harmonize, should become increasingly valued as a workplace asset in the years to come (Goleman, 1995).

As Goleman (2000) has emphasized, when it comes to promotions and succession planning, EI should be a major criterion, particularly to the extent that a position requires leadership. When those with high potential are being selected and groomed, EI should be central. And in training and development, EI should again be a major focus.

However, because EI competencies entail emotional capacities in addition to purely cognitive abilities, modes of learning that work well for academic subjects or technical skills are not necessarily well suited for helping people improve an emotional competence (Goleman, 1998b).

The researcher supports the idea of Claxton (1999) that using emotional intelligence is a prerequisite for developing a good relationship with a group of learners can be the basis for producing learners who have:

- More engagement,
- Greater motivation,
- A greater readiness to take risks in their learning,
- A more positive approach,
- A readiness to collaborate,
- More creativity and more tenacity.

The implication for education is indeed clear. The challenge of teaching emotional competencies lies in the hands of the educators. It is seen that EI will be integrated in the curriculum and various training institutions will give accreditation before any EI training be conducted.

At the top of all these, the author has seen the beneficial effects on the use of emotional intelligence. In the coming years, tapping emotional leadership among teachers in the classroom will become a major impetus of positive learning environment so that teachers will remain salient feature of the educational setting while students develop personal and social skills.

## References

- [1] A. Lees and D. Barnard, *Highly effective headteachers: An analysis of a sample of diagnostic data from the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers*, (1999), Report prepared for Hay/McBer.
- [2] E.A.L. Salazar, *Emotional Intelligence and its Applicability to the Workplace: A Perception Study of Filipino Managers in the Hotel Industry*, (1998, March), Unpublished master's thesis, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines.
- [3] C. Cherniss and M. Adler, *Promoting Emotional Intelligence in Organizations*, (2000), Alexandria, Virginia: AST.
- [4] D. Goleman, *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books. Hay/McBer, (2000), Research into teacher effectiveness: A model of teacher effectiveness report by Hay McBer to the Department for Education and Employment. Report prepared by Hay/McBer for the government of the United Kingdom, available on the web at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/teachingreforms/mcber/>.
- [5] G. Claxton, *Wise up: the challenge of lifelong learning*, (1999), London: Bloomsbury.
- [6] H.P. Santos, *Emotional Intelligence and Morale as Determinants of Job Performance among Nurses in Selected Public Hospitals*, (2000, March), Unpublished master's thesis, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Intramuros, Manila, Philippines.
- [7] J.H. Jae, *Emotional Intelligence and Cognitive Ability as Predictors of Job Performance among Bank Employees*. Unpublished master's thesis, (1998, March), Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines.
- [8] K. Dabrowski and M.M. Piechowski, Theory of levels of emotional development. *Journal of Psychology*, 89(12) (1998), 350-354.
- [9] L.A.B. Castillo, et al. *A Correlational Study on the Relationship of Intelligence Quotient and Emotional Quotient on the Gifted Middle Adolescent Students of Parañaque High School*, (2000), Unpublished undergraduate thesis, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Cavite City, Philippines.
- [10] N. Gibbs, The emotional quotient factor. *Time*, 146(15) (1995), 24-31.
- [11] P. Sweeney, Teaching new hires to feel at home. (1999, February 14), *New York Times*.
- [12] R. Bar-On, Presentation at Linkage Emotional Intelligence Conference, (2000), London: May 18.
- [13] R. Boyatzis, *The financial impact of competencies in leadership and management of consulting firms*. Department of Organizational Behavior Working Paper, (1999), Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland.
- [14] R. Boyatzis, D. Goleman, and K. Rhee, *Clustering competence in emotional intelligence: Insights from the emotional competence inventory (ECI)*. In R. Bar-On and J.D.A. Parker (Eds.), *Handbook of emotional intelligence*, (2000), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



[15] R.P. Sergio, *Emotional Intelligence and Mental Ability as Determinants of Job Performance among Plant Supervisors in Selected Manufacturing Firms*. Published master's thesis, (2001, December), Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Intramuros, Manila, Philippines.

[16] S. P. Robbins and T.A. Judge, *Essentials of Organizational Behavior*, (2010), New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

*About the Author:* Dr. Rommel Sergio has been a Human Resource practitioner and an Organizational Development Consultant before teaching in the universities in Asia and in the Gulf Region. He is a graduate of Post-Doctoral Bridge to Business Program at Tulane University, Louisiana, USA and has earned his Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling Psychology (Summa Cum Laude) at De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Philippines. He is an Assistant Professor at the School of Business Administration at the Canadian University of Dubai, United Arab Emirates.