

Emotional Intelligent Organizations: Integrating Moods and Emotions into Organizational Development Strategies

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Abstract

In an era marked by rapid change and complex organizational demands, Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical determinant of organizational success. This paper explores the role of EI in fostering emotionally intelligent organizations by integrating moods and emotions into development strategies. Drawing on foundational theories by Mayer, Salovey, and Goleman, the study emphasizes the importance of EI components—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills—in shaping effective leadership, enhancing employee well-being, and driving organizational performance. Particularly in the hospitality industry, where human interaction is central, emotional responses significantly influence service quality and employee engagement. However, research has revealed conceptual ambiguities around emotions, emotional labor, and EI, highlighting the need for clearer integration into management practices. This review addresses these gaps by analyzing the interplay between emotions and workplace behaviors, and proposes EI as a strategic lever for organizational development. The paper also examines how emotionally intelligent leadership enhances adaptability, innovation, and crisis resilience, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders with high EI demonstrated the capacity to manage stress, foster psychological safety, and support team cohesion. Additionally, systems adaptability—when aligned with EI—further reinforces agility in navigating organizational change. Through practical applications of Goleman’s EI model, this paper outlines strategies for embedding emotional intelligence into leadership development, training programs, communication protocols, and human resource practices. The findings underscore the value of EI in cultivating inclusive, resilient, and high-performing organizational cultures. Ultimately, the integration of emotional intelligence into core strategies equips organizations with the tools to thrive in dynamic environments. By fostering emotionally intelligent systems, businesses not only improve employee outcomes but also gain a competitive edge through sustained innovation, engagement, and adaptability.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Development, Leadership Adaptability, Employee Well-Being

Introduction

Intelligence, as Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade (2008) suggest, is our unique ability to think and understand complex ideas. When we talk about emotional intelligence (EI), we're looking at how emotions influence our thinking, decisions, and interactions with others. Fischer et al. (1990) and Frijda (1993) describe emotions as natural responses to what happens around us, affecting us physically and mentally. Guzzo et al. (2021) take this further, explaining emotions as how we interpret our daily experiences, which is particularly important in the hospitality industry where interactions are key. In the hospitality industry, emotions play a vital role. The industry thrives on people and interactions, making emotions central to its operations (Woo and Chan, 2020; Bradley et al., 2010). Understanding the emotional responses of employees to their work, as Basch and Fisher (2000) point out, is crucial due to the unique nature of hospitality jobs (Yu et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020).

Research has shown that emotions significantly affect workplace behaviors, such as engagement and performance (Gobelna, 2019; Jung and Yoon, 2016; Lam and Chen, 2012; Cheung et al., 2019). However, there's a gap in clearly defining and distinguishing between emotions and related concepts like emotional labor and EI in the hospitality literature (Ashkanasy and Dorris, 2017; Chu et al., 2012; Briner and Kiefer, 2005), highlighting the need for better management of emotions to improve employee well-being and productivity (Basch and Fisher, 2000; Ekkekakis, 2012). Despite previous efforts to collate research on emotions in the workplace (Kong et al., 2018; Lee and Madera, 2019), a focused review on hospitality employees' emotions is lacking. This review aims to fill that gap by examining how emotions, affect, and moods are studied in hospitality, setting the stage for future research.

Building on the work of Daniel Goleman, a leading figure in EI research, we expand on the foundational EI model by Mayer et al. (2004). Goleman introduces additional dimensions to EI such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy (Resilient Educator, 2020), linking EI to leadership success, positive workplace climates, and productivity (Goleman, 1998). The aim is to highlight the importance of EI in organizations, especially in adapting to changes and integrating emotions into development strategies for better performance and innovation. We will review theoretical and practical aspects of EI and system adaptability, providing insights for leaders on enhancing organizational and employee well-being.

In times of crisis, such as the recent global pandemic, emotional intelligence in leadership has proven to be a cornerstone of organizational resilience. COVID-19 teach us that Leaders with high EI are adept at managing their own stress levels while simultaneously acknowledging and addressing the emotional needs of their teams. The unprecedented challenges brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic have starkly highlighted the necessity of high Emotional Intelligence (EI) in navigating through periods of intense stress and uncertainty. The core tenets of EI, which include interdependent competencies in self-awareness and responsiveness to others, have proven to be instrumental for individuals and organizations alike in mitigating the pandemic's psychological and operational impacts.

Emotional intelligence fosters an environment where creativity and innovation flourish. Teams led by emotionally intelligent leaders often feel more empowered to express novel ideas and take calculated risks, knowing they are supported. This culture of innovation is crucial for developing new products, services, and processes that keep organizations competitive in rapidly changing markets. Once a new idea is ready to be deployed, systems adaptability becomes crucial. Organizations that can quickly integrate innovative solutions into their existing operations can capitalize on market opportunities and respond to threats more effectively than their less agile counterparts.

Recent studies underscore the link between emotional intelligence, systems adaptability, and organizational success. For instance, research in the realm of talent management has shown that systems adaptability not only facilitates the strategic alignment of talent management practices with organizational goals but also enhances the efficacy of these practices through the mediation of emotional intelligence. This interplay between EI and systems adaptability significantly contributes to achieving superior organizational outcomes, such as increased employee satisfaction, retention, and performance. Global business leaders have highlighted adaptability and emotional intelligence among the top skills needed in the current and post-pandemic business environment. Leaders who exhibit high levels of EI are better equipped to lead their organizations through change, while adaptable systems ensure that these changes are implemented effectively and efficiently.

Salovey and Mayer Ei Model

One of the prominent theories underpinning Emotionally Intelligent Organizations is Daniel Goleman's model of Emotional Intelligence. Goleman identifies five components of EI: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These components form the foundation for understanding and developing emotional intelligence at both individual and organizational levels. Building on the foundational theory of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as proposed by Daniel Goleman, this section provides a deeper exploration into how each of the five components—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills—plays a pivotal role in fostering emotionally intelligent organizations. Goleman's model serves not only as a framework for individual development but also as a strategic tool for organizational growth and development.

Self-awareness represents the cornerstone of emotional intelligence. It involves an individual's ability to recognize and understand their own emotions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and drivers. In the context of organizations, fostering a culture of self-awareness encourages leaders and employees to engage in reflective practices, leading to better decision-making and increased accountability. Organizations that prioritize self-awareness benefit from leaders who are cognizant of their emotional triggers and are better positioned to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics, contributing to a more harmonious and productive workplace environment.

Self-regulation pertains to the ability to manage, control, or redirect disruptive emotions and impulses. It embodies the capacity for thoughtfulness, integrity, and comfort with ambiguity and change. In organizations, self-regulation is instrumental in maintaining a stable and resilient environment, especially in times of stress or crisis. Leaders who exhibit strong self-

regulation can model calm and composed behavior, setting a positive tone that permeates throughout the organization, thereby minimizing the spread of anxiety and negativity.

Intrinsic motivation, as opposed to being driven by external factors, is a key component of emotional intelligence. It encompasses a passion for work that goes beyond status or reward, characterized by an unyielding drive to achieve, optimism even in the face of failure, and an unwavering commitment to the organization's goals. Emotionally intelligent organizations harness this intrinsic motivation to cultivate a workforce that is engaged, dedicated, and persistently striving for excellence. Such organizations are adept at aligning individual aspirations with the organizational mission, thereby enhancing overall performance and job satisfaction.

Empathy, the ability to understand and share the feelings of another, is vital for effective leadership and organizational cohesion. It enables leaders to gauge the emotional makeup of their teams and to understand diverse perspectives, fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace culture. Organizations that prioritize empathy benefit from improved collaboration, heightened morale, and increased loyalty. Empathetic leaders are adept at managing cross-cultural sensitivities and nurturing relationships, both internally and externally, which is crucial in today's globalized business environment.

Social skills in Goleman's model refer to the skills needed to manage relationships and build networks effectively. This includes the ability to find common ground, build rapport, and cultivate a vast network of relationships characterized by mutual respect and cooperation. Organizations with a high degree of collective social skills enjoy enhanced communication, teamwork, and conflict management. This facilitates not only the smooth execution of projects but also the successful implementation of change initiatives.

Integrating Goleman's EI Model into Organizational Strategies

Integrating Goleman's Emotional Intelligence model into organizational development strategies involves creating systems and processes that support the cultivation and application of these EI components at all levels of the organization. This can be achieved through targeted training programs, mentoring and coaching initiatives, performance management systems that recognize and reward EI behaviors, and leadership models that embody and promote emotional intelligence principles.

Goleman highlights core behaviors central to Emotional intelligence as 5 important aspects which are recognizing and understanding personal emotions and their impact on others, managing and redirecting disruptive emotions and impulses thoughtfully, maintaining motivation beyond external rewards, pursuing goals with zeal, and understanding others' emotional states, treating people according to their emotional reactions and last one is building and maintaining relationships, establishing common ground, and fostering networks. His essential assertion that EI surpasses IQ as a determinant of workplace success has been extensively studied not only by Goleman and his associates but also by other scholars and practitioners (e.g., Bar-On & Parker, 2000).

Discussion

The integration of Emotional Intelligence (EI) into the fabric of organizational development strategies represents a pivotal evolution in the way businesses approach leadership, employee engagement, and adaptability in the face of rapid change. This discussion delves deeper into the multifaceted role of EI within Emotionally Intelligent Organizations, drawing from a wealth of research to underscore its critical influence on various organizational dimensions. Emotionally Intelligent Organizations recognize EI not just as a desirable attribute but as a strategic organizational pillar essential for navigating the complexities of modern work environments. The nuanced understanding of emotions, as highlighted by Barrett et al. (2004) and Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso (2008), provides a foundation for creating a workforce that is adept at managing personal and interpersonal emotional dynamics. This competency is increasingly recognized as crucial for fostering environments where creativity, problem-solving, and innovation can flourish.

The discussion around emotional labor and leadership, inspired by the findings of Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt (2009), brings to light the nuanced challenges leaders face in balancing emotional authenticity with organizational expectations. In Emotionally Intelligent Organizations, leaders are seen as the conduits through which the emotional climate of the organization is moderated. Their ability to manage their own emotions and those of their team members with authenticity and empathy directly impacts the organization's culture, employee motivation, and the overall psychological safety within the workplace. Studies by Ariawan (2023) and Gardenswartz, Cherbosque, & Rowe (2008) illustrate how an emotionally intelligent organizational culture—characterized by diversity, inclusivity, and psychological safety—serves as a catalyst for sustained performance, innovation, and resilience. Such a culture not only supports the well-being of employees but also enhances their ability to collaborate effectively, navigate stress, and adapt to change. The richness of emotional diversity within organizations is thus leveraged as a strategic asset, enhancing engagement and driving organizational success.

The critical role of EI in enhancing communication and employee well-being within organizations cannot be overstated. Effective communication practices, underscored by EI, facilitate a deeper understanding and expression of emotions, as noted by researchers like Gouasmia (2022) and Deepa Mishra (2022). This fosters an environment where employees feel valued and understood, contributing to higher levels of job satisfaction, team cohesion, and organizational commitment. Moreover, emotionally intelligent organizations are better equipped to address and mitigate the impacts of workplace stress, conflict, and burnout, prioritizing the emotional well-being of their workforce. The continued exploration of EI's integration into organizational practices is essential for future development strategies. This involves not only expanding EI training and development programs but also examining the broader implications of emotionally intelligent leadership and organizational culture on performance outcomes. Future research should aim to uncover the mechanisms through which EI can be embedded more deeply within organizational structures and processes, ensuring that its benefits are fully realized across all levels of the organization.

Elsewhere in literature demonstrates that emotional intelligence is a fundamental component of modern organizational development strategies. Emotionally intelligent organizations, by embedding EI into their core operations, leadership models, and cultural

practices, are poised to navigate the challenges of an increasingly complex business environment. They achieve this by cultivating a workforce that is resilient, adaptable, and deeply engaged, underpinned by a culture of empathy, understanding, and emotional agility. The path forward for organizations lies in harnessing the transformative power of emotional intelligence to create workplaces that are not only productive but also nurturing, inclusive, and innovative.

Conclusion

The exploration of emotionally intelligent organizations and the strategic integration of moods and emotions into organizational development strategies underscore a critical pathway for enhancing resilience, innovation, and competitiveness in the modern business landscape. This examination has illuminated the multifaceted nature of emotional intelligence (EI), revealing how leadership styles, training and development programs, effective communication practices, and HR policies collectively contribute to the cultivation of an emotionally intelligent workforce. Leadership that inspires, motivates, and shows genuine concern for employees' development plays a foundational role in fostering an environment where emotional intelligence thrives. Coupled with targeted EI training and development initiatives, organizations can significantly elevate their capacity for emotional awareness, regulation, empathy, and social skills. Moreover, the establishment of open, empathetic communication channels and the prioritization of EI in HR practices further embed emotional intelligence within the organizational culture, attracting and retaining talent that excels in these competencies.

The impact of emotional intelligence on organizational outcomes is profound. High levels of EI among employees and leaders are associated with better stress management, enhanced job satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, teamwork, and overall organizational performance. These benefits are particularly poignant in navigating the complexities and challenges of the current global business environment, including the unprecedented disruptions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Emotional Intelligence and systems adaptability are not merely advantageous but essential for organizations aiming to navigate the present and future challenges of the business environment. By embracing EI and fostering systems adaptability, organizations can create a dynamic, responsive, and innovative workforce capable of meeting the demands of an ever-changing world.

As organizations look towards the future, it is clear that Emotionally Intelligent Organizations that effectively integrate moods and emotions into their developmental strategies stand at the forefront of achieving sustainable success. This paper not only contributes to the body of knowledge on organizational behavior, development, and management but also offers practical insights and recommendations for organizational leaders to harness the power of emotional intelligence and systems adaptability. In doing so, organizations can ensure they remain resilient, innovative, and competitive, ready to seize the opportunities of tomorrow. This study enriches Emotional Intelligence (EI) theory by linking Goleman's model with systems adaptability, addressing gaps between emotions, emotional labour, and EI in organizational literature. Contextually, it demonstrates how EI-driven leadership and adaptable systems enhance resilience, innovation, and engagement, offering practical strategies for building emotionally intelligent, competitive organizations in dynamic and crisis-prone environments.

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