



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS: A THEORETICAL APPROACH

Jonida Leshaⁱ

University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi",
Shkodra, Albania

Abstract:

Emotional intelligence is one of the most powerful constructs that affect success at work, interpersonal relationships, etc. This article aims to analyze the theoretical models that relate to emotional intelligence and provide an overview of how processing emotional intelligence can us help achieve the desired success regardless of the IQ limits a person may have. This study concludes in giving some considerations for further scientific research in this field of study.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, success, theoretical models

1. Introduction

In recent years we can say that every psychologist has come across endless articles and books on a topic that has received a great deal of interest from researchers such as emotional intelligence. It is enough to Google the term emotional intelligence and we will see a large number of divulgative but also scientific articles that emphasize the importance of this psychological construct in human life, tests that measure this construct but also how we can improve such a construct to achieve success.

Over the past 30 years many scientific studies have focused on the field of emotions. Such studies have shed light on the emotional realm of the individual helping us to understand what role emotions play in an individual's behavior. Goleman (1995) was precisely one of the first researchers who broke the narrow view according to which IQ determines human destiny, giving special importance to another dimension of intelligence which is the emotional one. Goleman defined it as another dimension of intelligence which includes restraint, zeal, perseverance, and self-denial.

The same researcher Goleman (1995) states in his book "Emotional Intelligence" that we come to life with a genetic set in which is found even our IQ, a set which is totally inherited from thousands of combinations of our genes. The same author emphasizes that

ⁱ Correspondence: email jonidalesha@gmail.com

some individuals are born with high IQ, some medium and some low, despite this IQ does not mean that it will determine their fate, their behavior, as their fate is determined by their emotional intelligence which we can process to achieve success.

But how do we process emotional intelligence in order to be successful in our lives both in the educational, professional and interpersonal relationships?

The purpose of this article is to give a theoretical overview of how much it is possible to improve emotional intelligence to achieve success.

2. Literature review

Many researchers in recent years have focused their study on emotional intelligence as a new construct and where there is still much room for research.

A first definition of emotional intelligence was given by researchers Salovey and Mayer, 1990 in Brackett, Rivers & Salovey, 2011. They defined it as the ability to monitor and explore feelings and emotions, as well as an ability to use this information to guide us in our thinking but also in our actions.

Although the concept of emotional intelligence has been developed over the last hundred years, the systematic study of the field of Emotional Intelligence (IE) often dates back to the early 1990s, then when scientific articles suggested that there is a human mental ability, unknown but important, the ability to resonate over emotions, to use emotions to aid thinking, and to manage them in different contexts (Mayer, Salovey, 2004 in Macula, 2017).

Referring to the concept of EI and the first use of this term, the literature review reveals that the first use of the term Emotional Intelligence appeared in a Doctoral Dissertation by Payne (1986), on the topic: "Study on Emotions: Developing Emotional Intelligence, self-integration in relation to fear, pain and need. The researcher in question, advocated to adapt this term in educational systems, as well as to release emotional experiences through therapy. (Matthews, Roberts, 2002 in Macula, 2017).

Today there are three larger models, Mayer, Salovey and Caruzo, Bar-On (1988; 2000) and Goleman (1998; 2002), which present a set of emotional intelligence construct, where each of the authors has displayed the conception of this the construct and how this construct is related to our other abilities as well as how we can scientifically measure such a construct.

Goleman (1995) model describes emotional intelligence as a set of skills and competencies that contribute to human performance in all areas of life. These competencies are included in four key competencies: self-awareness, relationship management, self-management, and social awareness.

According to Goleman, these competencies form the basis of the 12 sub-levels of emotional intelligence that include emotional self-awareness, emotional self-control, adaptation, achievement orientation, positive outlook, influence, leadership and mentoring, empathy, conflict management, informed teamwork, and for the organization, and inspirational leadership (Goleman, 1995 in Faltas, 2017).

The second model is the Bar-On model, which introduces emotional intelligence as a skillfully interrelated emotional and social set of skills and behaviors that determine how well we understand and express ourselves, how well we understand and relate to others, and how we relate to them, we manage daily demands, challenges and pressures. The Bar-On EI model focuses on five EI scales: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management, and 15 sub-scales: self-esteem, self-actualization, emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, assertion, independence, interpersonal relationships, empathy, social responsibility, problem solving, reality testing, impulse control, flexibility, stress tolerance and optimism, direction of human behavior and relationships (Bar-On, in Faltas, 2017).

The model of Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2000) is the model known as the model of 4 branches of emotional intelligence or the model of skills. These four branches include perception, appraisal, and expression of emotions; emotional relief of thinking; understanding and analyzing emotions; establishing emotional knowledge as well as reflective regulation of emotions to promote emotional growth as well as intellectual growth. According to the authors in their scientific article "*in this model the branches are located from the most basic psychological processes to the highest ones, which are the most integrated psychological processes*". This model is known today as the model of emotional intelligence skills.

All three of these models, regardless of conception, are in line with the fact that emotional intelligence affects every aspect of our lives, from our behavior, decision-making, conflict resolution, how we feel about ourselves, how we communicate with others, how we manage stress, everyday to the way we perform in our work environment (Faltas, 2017).

3. Understanding emotional intelligence

Many of the above studies and models conclude that we can improve our emotional intelligence if we stop recognizing the information that our emotions convey to us in certain situations in our lives, if we manage to properly analyze and manage it effectively by given dimensions such as time, context etc.

The ability to integrate emotional information into cognitive activities is fundamental to effective lifelong functioning (Damasio, 1994 in Brackett, Rivers and Salovey, 2011), and even more so if we claim to succeed in what we do.

One possible scenario could be that you have an aesthetic center with a friend, with whom you did the business conception and the initial investment, but the business has been managed for only 2 years, and the friend does not make any contribution. You should choose to continue "working" with your business partner or break up the partnership and further your commitment to the business by increasing the investment as you will have the share of the profit you have given to your partner so far. Logically you can break the partnership and add benefits given the fact that your business partner has done nothing about this business. But you have a feeling you are doing wrong. The fact that you do not feel comfortable with such a feeling helps you to analyze both

situations. In the current business where you work with your partner you can feel exploited, while if you operate with the breakup of the partnership you can lose a friend like your business partner. This analysis, which clearly shows the causes and consequences, helps us to manage our feelings but also to make a decision, a decision which can lead us or not from the path of success. New business without partnership can scare us. Perhaps talking to a colleague with a long history in business management could help us to have emotional relief. Sharing this concern with your spouse or close family member can also help us to have emotional relief. For people with high emotional intelligence such a decision-making process happens directly by doing a cold logical analysis: I will break the partnership and I do not feel bad because the partner does not feel bad that he is exploiting me. While other people who do not have this skill needs to be further trained in skills such as problem solving skills.

4. Criticism of IE experiments and models

One of the biggest expectations of professionals regarding the emotional intelligence construct has to do with the part that it can be improved through well-organized training programs and help us consistently achieve success in various areas of our lives. The fact that emotional intelligence is already perceived as one of the skills that can be improved despite our IQ has led many researchers to build training programs to improve emotional intelligence in the school environment but also in the premises of various companies while also realizing studies with these quasi-experimental interventions.

Skills model-based studies show that knowledge about the emotional realm as well as skills involving emotional intelligence can not only be learned but also developed (Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, & Salovey, 2010).

There are few studies that show whether ability-based emotional intelligence can be improved (Caruso, 2004 in Chang 2008). Several skill-based model training programs have been developed to improve emotional intelligence in adults and children (Brackett, Alster, Wolfe, Katulak, & Fale, 2007; Wolfe, 2007 in Chang, 2008). These have data on improving emotional functioning but there is no data on the change in Caruso's emotional intelligence test scores (Chang, 2008). Also, programs based on the Goleman model, although they may have shown signs of improvement over interventions, need to be more sampled programs to support their findings (Chang, 2008)

If we want to refer to the main models mentioned above, not forgetting the new models regarding emotional intelligence we find a fundamental problem that is easily noticed which has to do with the fact of conceiving this construct which is not clear if emotional intelligence is based on traits or abilities.

If we refer to Goleman's model there have been many criticisms, where the main ones are related to the lack of empirical data from scientific studies (Locke, 2005, Eysenck, 2000 in Lobaskova, 2015). Other models have also received a lot of criticism. In providing different scales for this construct we have to consider two basic problems: where one relates to the basics of the model where the scale can measure skills or traits and secondly it has to do with the fact that training programs for improving emotional intelligence that

can be built or can target in one intervention all branches, subscales according to theories or different interventions should be made for each branch or subscales.

5. Conclusion

Various studies and research suggest that an individual's Emotional Intelligence coefficient can be as great a predictor of success as the IQ scale, despite the claim that individuals with a higher IQ level achieve more in life. (Goleman, 1995 in Macula, 2017). These studies show that there is practical and psychological value to understanding emotions, personal and others, managing them effectively and using them to aid thinking and judgment. Studies show that identifying and managing emotions helps in the process of cognition, performance, and social relationships (interaction). Then, these skills and benefits from studies in this field, can be used in other contexts, such as family, work, developmental, social, educational context, etc. (Macula, 2017).

Numerous suggestions and recommendations have been raised in relation to the field of EI and there are well-known and general assertions that suggest that tests for EI are important predictors of educational and professional criteria, in addition to what general intellectual ability predicts. From this general perspective, the field of study has important implications for the social and educational environment, especially as a driver to improve emotional functioning in daily life as well as to promote positive aspects of behavior (Macula, 2017).

Today we are in a situation where the EI model has a promising future. Quasi-experimental studies are needed to be conducted in this regard in order to construct effective interventions that model EI and where post-test findings are relevant compared to pretested ones. It is equally important to thoroughly study the potential positive and negative impact of training programs focusing on emotional intelligence (Salovey & Grewal, 2005). The development of emotional intelligence skills may not be fruitful if we also do not implement interventions that address the contextual and motivational factors that influence our ability (Salovey & Grewal, 2005).

References

- Bar-On, R. (2000). Emotional and social intelligence. Insights from the emotional quotient inventory. *Educational psychologist*.
- Brackett, M. A., Alster, B., Wolfe, C. J., Katulak, N. A., & Fale, E. (2007). Creating an emotionally healthy school district: A skills-based approach. In R. Bar-On J. G. Maree & M. J. Elias (Eds.), *Educating people to be emotionally intelligent*, (pp. 123–138). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Brackett, M., Rivers, S., & Salovey, P. (2011). *Emotional Intelligence: Implications for Personal, Social, Academic, and Workplace Success*. *Social and Personality Psychology*.

- Caruso, D. R. (2004). Critical issues regarding teaching and training emotional intelligence.
- Chang, K., (2008). Can we improve emotional intelligence? Addressing the positive psychology goal of enhancing strengths. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1044&context=psyc_fac
- Damasio A. R. (1994). *Descartes error: emotion, reason and the human brain*. Putnam Publishing, 1994.
- Eysenck, H. J. (2000). *Intelligence: A new look*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Lobaskova, Aleksandra (2015). The Issue of Multiple Theories of Emotional Intelligence: Criticisms and Measurement Limitations. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309293190_The_Issue_of_Multiple_Theories_of_Emotional_Intelligence_Criticisms_and_Measurement_Limitations
- Locke, E. A. (2005). Why emotional intelligence is an invalid concept. *Journal of organizational behavior*, 26(4):425 – 431.
- Matthews, G., Zeidner, M., Roberts, R. (2004). Seven Myths about Emotional Intelligence. *Laërence Eribaun Associate*. Vol. 15, No. 3, 179 – 196).
- Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R. (2004). Emotional intelligence: Theory, findings, and implications. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(3), 197–215. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327965pli1503_02.
- Mayer, J. D., Caruso, D. R. & Salovey, P. (2000). Selecting a measure of emotional intelligence: the case for ability scales.
- Metaj Macula, A. (2017) *Inteligjenca emocionale dhe ndërlidhja e saj me interaksionin social*, Doctoral thesis.
- Pablo Fernández-Berrocal and Natalio Extremera, (2006). Emotional intelligence: A theoretical and empirical review of its first 15 years of history. *Psicothema* 2006. Vol. 18, suppl., pp. 7-12
- Salovey, P. & Grewal, D. (2005). The science of emotional intelligence. *Current directions in psychological science*. Vol.14, No.6 (Dec., 2005).
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional Intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9(3), 185–211. <https://doi.org/10.2190/DUGG-P24E-52WK-6CDG>
- Wolfe, C. J. (2007). *The practice of emotional intelligence coaching in organizations: A hands-on guide to successful outcomes*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers.

Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Social Sciences Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).