

## WORKING IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES: DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE MATTER FOR JOB EFFECTIVENESS?

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**Abstract:** *The recent trend has introduced the emotional quotient or intelligence (EQ) as the essential concepts to the psychology and management for academicians. EQ describes a person's ability to sense and respond appropriately to emotions. Thus, this paper seeks to examine the impact of EQ on private university lecturers' job effectiveness. A primary goal is to explore the EQ of the private universities' lecturers and examine how it predicts their job effectiveness beyond the ability. Quantitative analysis in the form of a survey was used in this study. A total of 20 private universities were listed and approached; however, only five universities agreed to participate. The cross-sectional data collection was done within a month, and the data obtained in the survey were analysed with the IBM-SPSS. The results showed that emotional intelligence has a significant impact on job effectiveness of the lecturers. However, only self-regulation and social skill are statistically significant, with self-regulation variable represents the strongest unique contribution to explain the job effectiveness. The findings of the study suggest that employees can apply their personal emotional experience into their work well. Also, it helps them to develop strong emotional bonding with those people associated with their work and leads to organizational performance. Hence, it is particularly imperative for a private university to use EQ to predict job effectiveness.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, Job Effectiveness, Private University, Malaysia*

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### Introduction

In the education industry, Emotional Quotient or Intelligence (EQ) plays an important role in helping the management of universities and lecturers to cope with challenging tasks required

in the educational environment. It is crucial for educators to work with balanced or stable emotions in order to meet the needs of today's challenges. The role of academicians today is not only to teach but also to conduct research, produce publications, provide consultation and perform administrative tasks. Ismail et al. (2013) found that there are significant and direct effects of conflict, work burden, and time pressure on job stress among lecturers which in turn influence their health and quality of life. According to Zuraida and Farahiyah (2015), university lecturers today are facing a high level of stress while doing their work.

At present, most of the lecturers in private and public universities are overwhelmed with multiple roles and tasks such as conducting research, attending seminars, presenting projects and being involved in students' and community service activities. With the heavy load of work responsibilities, subsequently, the lecturers tend to experience negative emotions such as tension, hostility, depression, anger, nervousness and frustration (Hassan, Jani, Som, Hamid, & Azizam, 2015).

Lecturers who are not emotionally intelligent cannot recognize emotion within themselves and are therefore unable to plan lives that fulfil them emotionally. This can influence all aspects of their lives, including their jobs and the organizations for which they work. In turn, such a lack of direction can result in problems such as higher turnover in organizations resulting from workers who lack direction, vision and leadership skills.

Furthermore, EQ is an important catalyst for leadership. It helps lecturers to articulate team goals and objectives, to instil enthusiasm in members, to empathize with other people, to establish cooperation, trust, and identity, and to encourage flexibility. Several empirical studies have been found to link the relationship between EQ with job effectiveness. However, there is still a lack of studies regarding which dimensions of EQ that highly affect the effectiveness of lecturers, especially in private institutions. Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

1. To assess the impact of EQ on the job effectiveness of private university lecturers.
2. To analyse which dimensions of EQ that impact the most on the lecturers' job effectiveness.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Job performance and job effectiveness***

Performance is an important criterion in determining the outcome and success in an organization. According to Spector (2009), performance is a combination of structures, according to which employees can identify a set of behaviours. Therefore, job performance is a multiple and extensive area in one's career in which all behaviours that are more narrowly determined is used to define performance (Gasykv, 2008). Informing people on how to perform with hints of defects and deficiencies in their work can improve their performance.

According to Tahir, Saba, and Rabia (2013), performance is defined as the ability of an individual to use knowledge efficiently and effectively. They further discussed that the teacher's performance is based on both aspects: the intellectual and physical factors. Additionally, Kalaiarasi, Amaravathi, and Soniya (2015) stated that job performance is an employee's achievement in his/her job. The performance relates to the efficiency and effectiveness of his/her job effectiveness. Furthermore, Baliessman and Pugh (1984), as cited

in Tahir, Saba, and Rabia (2013), state that the lecturer's performance is measured by the lecturer's activities regarding the writing on the board, spelling, and classroom management. Thus, job effectiveness has a bearing on how well the employee meets the requirements of a job.

Simamore (2006) looked at performance as the level of achievement on tasks performed that make up an employee's job. Meanwhile, Dessler (2006) defines employee performance as the actual achievements of employees compared with the expected accomplishments of employees. Expected work performance achievement standard is structured as a reference so that the employer can see the performance of employees by their position compared to the standard created.

In job performance, job effectiveness is crucial to achieve objectives that have been targeted. According to Drucker (2004), effectiveness is defined as doing the right things. Basow (2000) and Hativa (2000) as cited in Hwang (2006) described effectiveness in teaching as being caring, helpful and knowledgeable. Besides, Money (1992) stated that teachers' effectiveness included knowledge, effective communication, well-organized materials, and skills to motivate and inspire students, being friendly and good in classroom management.

Anderson (2004) summarized the attributes associated with effective lecturers such as certainty, dependability, responsibility, regard, expository reasoning, theoretical reasoning, and drive for development, data looking for, activity, adaptability, responsibility and enthusiasm for learning. Likewise, Chen, Sok and Sok (2007) expressed that a great instructor plays the role as a facilitator, assessor, member and motivator to encourage student interest and give update information.

According to Hwang (2006), student perceived great instructor qualities as organized, proficient, ready to convey, thought about the student, excited about the subject, testing and requesting, while least liked educator characters included uninteresting, ill-equipped, unclear, poor disposition and complicated. As per Delaney, Johnson, Jonson and Treslan (2010), the students need their instructor to converse with them definitively, their notes are efficient and the visuals are utilized for the explanation. Thus, the role of a good lecturer is important to ensure that students understand the subject matter clearly.

Nonetheless, the lecturers ought to be straightforward in the event that they do not know the substance obviously. The students are prepared to acknowledge lecturers who speak the truth about not knowing the response to a question yet will search out the appropriate response and bring it back to class. Effective lecturers are also able to expand instructional time, avoid insignificant materials and give exercises (Delaney et. al, 2010).

From the presented literature, the present study has conceptualised the lecturing effectiveness as having good academic and professional knowledge with a clear concept of the subject matter, thorough preparation of the lesson with clear objectives, organized and systematic presentation of the concepts with proper learning materials, ability to communicate one's knowledge to the students successfully, sound classroom management, positive attitude towards students and colleagues, feedback accountability and ability to understand and motivate students.

## *Emotional Quotient*

EQ has become a popular phrase and also an important component in attaining success in our lives. It appears to be an important set up of psychological abilities that relate to life; the measurement of which is necessary for help and guidance to the needed ones and for self-help. In past literature, two general models were proposed to explain the concept of EQ. One is skill-based model proposed by Mayer and Salovey (Mayer, 1997) while the other approach was proposed by Bar-on (1997). Mayer and Salovey (1993) defined EQ as the ability to monitor one's own feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this awareness of emotions to guide one's thinking and action.

According to Bar-On (2006), there are five areas of EQ, each consisting of a number of competencies, namely Intrapersonal (emotional self-awareness, self-regard, assertiveness, independence and self-actualization); Interpersonal (empathy, social responsibility and interpersonal relations); Adaptability (reality testing, flexibility and problem solving); Stress management (stress tolerance and impulse control); and General mood (happiness and optimism) (Bar-On, 2006). Furthermore, Goleman (1998) reformulated EQ on a theory of organizational and job effectiveness. All these models share a common core of basic concepts including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

Meanwhile, Salovey and Mayer (1993) categorized EQ into five aspects of dominance which are self-awareness, emotional management, self-motivation, empathy and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, Goleman (2000) had proposed the competency-based model of EQ consisting of four major clusters, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Therefore, EQ, in this study, is based on three models from Salovey and Mayer (1993), Bar-On (2006) and Goleman (2000). Based on the three models, this study selected five components: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness, and social skills.

According to Goleman (1998), self-awareness is viewed as having a clear perception of your personality, including strengths, weaknesses, thoughts, beliefs, motivation, and emotions. It is also a way to identify a person's emotions and how it could affect others. Other than that, self-regulation is the ability to monitor and control our behaviour, emotions, or thoughts, altering them in accordance with the demands of the situation (Education.com).

As for self-motivation, Goleman (1995) defined it as the ability to set goals and to remain focused and positive despite setbacks that may occur during setting goals. People with self-motivation can find a reason and strength to complete a task, even during challenging times, without giving up or needing others to encourage them.

Social awareness is important to let individuals be aware of the problems that different societies and communities face on a daily basis. Kalaiarasi, Amaravathi, and Soniya (2015) defined social awareness as having empathy, understanding and sensitivity to the feelings, thoughts and situations of others. Lastly, social skills refer to a person's talents in managing the relationship with others and building systems also called people skills (Schuetz, 2011). People who have worked on developing strong interpersonal skills are usually more successful in both their professional and personal lives.

## ***Empirical Studies on Emotional Intelligence and Job Effectiveness***

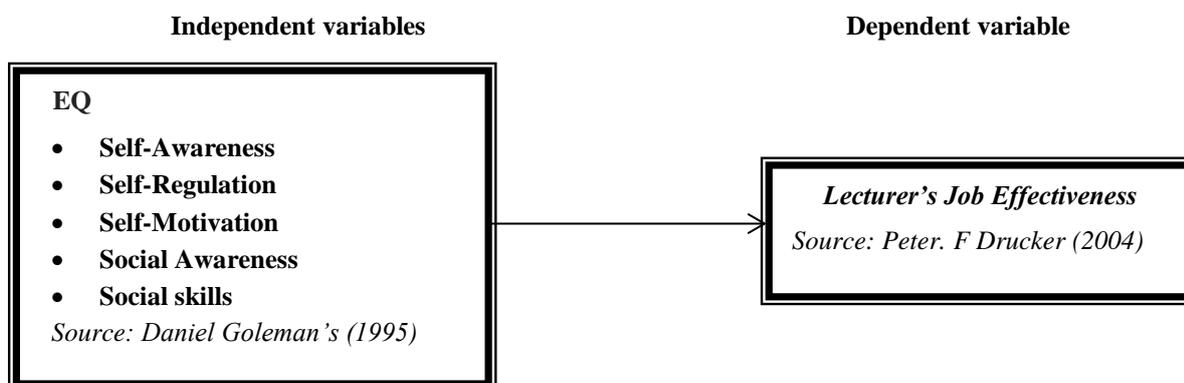
Many studies have been done to show the relationship between EQ and job effectiveness. In a study done by Ajeya Jha and Indoo Singh (2012) on EQ and job effectiveness, the EQ dimensions included self-awareness, empathy, integrity, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, self-development, values orientation, commitment and altruism. The study surveyed 250 respondents. *Teacher Effectiveness Scale* (TES) and *Teacher Rating Scale* (TRS) were used to measure teaching effectiveness. The finding showed that there is a positive correlation between EQ and teaching effectiveness.

Furthermore, Narehan, Syahrina, Rohana, Nur Zainie, and Nor Azmaniza (2015) studied EQ which consisted of interpersonal skills, personal leadership skills, self-management skills and intrapersonal skills. The measurement for teaching effectiveness was conducted using the Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE). The finding showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between overall EQ skills and overall teaching effectiveness. The 155 respondents were lecturers and the required information was gathered through the distribution of questionnaires. The results revealed that lecturers with high EQ tend to have higher self-confidence and were more committed towards their job.

Based on the study done by Akitayo and Babalola (2012), there was a significant relationship between EQ and workers' job performance, job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational commitment. Additionally, results from Elizabeth and Steven (2007) showed that team leaders' EQ was significantly related to the presence of emotionally competent group norms on the teams they led and that emotionally competent group norms are related to team performance.

In recent findings by Siti Asiah, Syahrina, Mary and Peter (2015), the scholars found that teaching effectiveness was significantly related with all five components of EQ at 0.1 levels. This study was conducted on 275 lecturers from both public and private universities using random sampling techniques. The results indicated that self-management has the strongest relationship while interpersonal has the weakest relationship with teaching effectiveness.

Therefore, based on these findings, the current study has developed a research framework (see Figure 1) which proposed a significant relationship between EQ and job effectiveness.



**Figure 1: Theoretical framework**

## Research Methodology

The target population for this study is the lecturers who are working in private higher education institutions. Twenty private universities were carefully selected in Selangor. For this purpose, a stratified random sampling procedure was used for selecting the respondents.

In order to satisfy the objectives of this research, a quantitative research was decided for the data collection. A questionnaire survey was designed because it is best served to answer the questions and the purposes of the study. The question-items asked the respondents on demographic characteristics; EQ that consists of self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness, and social skills; and the job effectiveness. Using the 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 as “strongly disagree” to 6 as “strongly agree,” this study measured the study variables by adopt-and-adapting an instrument developed by Rensis Likert (1932).

In examining the hypothesis postulated for this study; the impact of EQ on the job effectiveness, the collected data was computed into the IBM-SPSS version 23 for Windows. Subsequently, the data was cleaned and used for further analyses such as the descriptive statistics, item-total correlation analysis, and multiple regressions.

## Data Analysis

Of a total of 20 private universities that were approached; only five universities agreed to participate in the study; which 27 lecturers completed the questionnaire survey. The results show that the female respondents dominated the survey by 70% and most of them are aged between 26 and 35 years old (53%). In term of academic qualifications, the respondents earned the master degree as the highest qualification (75%). About 66% of the respondents are holding a lecturer position, and they have been working between two to five years in the academic field.

### *The Impact of EQ on Job Effectiveness*

Prior to the assessment of the EQ’s impact on job effectiveness, this study at first tested the validity and reliability of the measurement and ensured that the values of Cronbach’s Alpha are above .7, meeting the suggested cut-off point. All dimensions of EQ and job effectiveness achieved high reliability, that ranged between .7 and .8. Each Cronbach Alpha, mean scores, standard deviations, and total items are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Cronbach Alpha and Descriptive Statistics**

	Cronbach Alpha	Mean	Std. Deviation	No. of Items
Self-awareness	.858	4.9417	.60112	5
Self-regulation	.797	4.7528	.59971	5
Social Awareness	.694	4.8839	.54808	4
Self-motivation	.824	4.8839	.60733	4
Social Skills	.734	4.3740	.55226	4
Effectiveness	.843	4.7992	.65846	4

This study also checked the correlation results for all variables as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Pearson Correlations**

	effectiveness	Self-Awareness	Self-Regulation	Social Awareness	Self-Motivation	Social Skill
Effectiveness	-					
Self-Awareness	.538***	-				
Self-Regulation	.626***	.617***	-			
Social Awareness	.574***	.612***	.589***	-		
Self-Motivation	.597***	.700***	.610***	.709***	-	
Social Skill	.506***	.230**	.370***	.421***	.431***	-

Accordingly, to test the hypothesis, the multiple regression analysis was performed. This study predicted that EQ influences job effectiveness. The output of regression in Table 4 revealed that 53.4% variance in job effectiveness is explained by the EQ ( $R^2 = .534$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .515$ ). The model is significant ( $F=27.767$ ;  $p=.000$ ); indicating the positive relationship between EQ and job effectiveness (Table 5). Therefore, the hypothesis is supported.

In the studies of Iskandar et al., (2009) and Narehan et al., (2015) the links between EQ and job effectiveness showed that employees with higher levels of EQ demonstrated at a higher level of job effectiveness. This study found a similar pattern among lecturers indicating that those with high job effectiveness take the initiative whenever they can and make sure that their work is done to the highest standards.

**Table 4: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.731 <sup>a</sup>	.534	.515	.45853

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Skill, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Social Awareness, Self-Motivation

b. Dependent Variable: Job effectiveness

**Table 5: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.190	5	5.838	27.767	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	25.440	121	.210		
	Total	54.630	126			

a. Dependent Variable: Job effectiveness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Skill, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Social Awareness, Self-Motivation

Table 6 presents the coefficient results. However, the coefficients at 95% confidence interval witnessed that the EQ from the subset of self-regulation, and social skills were the only variables that uniquely and statistically contributed to impact on the lecturers' job effectiveness. Specifically, the unique contribution from the self-regulation was 33.3% ( $p=.001$ ), whereby the social skills was 31.1% ( $p=.000$ ).

The coefficients' results were consistent with the previous study done by Money (1992) as cited in Hwang (2006), where teachers' effectiveness included knowledge, effective communication, well-organized materials, skills to motivate and inspire students, being friendly, and sound classroom management.

**Table 6: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t Sig.
1 (Constant)	-.202	.441		-.458 .648
Self-Awareness	.145	.104	.132	1.387 .168
Self-Regulation	.333	.095	.303	3.512 .001
Social Awareness	.139	.113	.116	1.231 .221
Self-Motivation	.136	.113	.125	1.199 .233
Social Skill	.311	.086	.261	3.637 .000

a. Dependent Variable: Job effectiveness

Based on above table, the results supported the main objective of this study, which was to analyse which dimensions of EQ gave the highest impact towards lecturers' job effectiveness. Self-regulation was found out as the strongest contributor, followed by social skills among the EQ sub-dimensions.

## Discussion

This study found a positive correlation between EQ and job effectiveness among lecturers in private Higher Education Institutions. It shows that EQ predicts lecturers' ability to regulate themselves, manage other people, and achieve success. Furthermore, this research also showed a link between EQ and career success whereby the lecturers with higher EQ demonstrated an excellent knowledge of the subject area. In previous literature, EQ was related with job effectiveness, and this study confirmed that EQ predicts job effectiveness among private university lecturers. In other words, when lecturers have a higher EQ level, their outputs tend to achieve work target and also satisfy the students' needs.

Demographic factors also played an essential role in achieving the objectives. Based on the results, it showed that a majority of the respondents were aged between the range of 26 to 35 years old which is considered young and a majority of them have between 2 to 5 years working experience in the academic field. It shows that young people are more energetic and ambitious. They are enthusiastic about their first job, with an intense eagerness to learn and develop their career path.

Furthermore, the empirical data showed that self-regulation and social skills have a strong relationship with job effectiveness. Therefore, it can be said that lecturers can manage their emotions well and stay focused even under pressure. Staying composed, focused, and productive under pressure is all about an individual's mentality. Lecturers that can handle any arising issues successfully are able to channel their emotions well resulting in proper behavior. They are caring and considerate, and even if they do not find a solution to the problem, they usually leave feeling more hopeful and optimistic.

Also, lecturers with higher EQ can also maintain personal relationships with work associates and can lead by example. A good lecturer can positively influence the people around them by building trust. Trust is vital in gaining respect and building a positive relationship. It can be said that lecturers with high EQ have strong relationships, and they manage difficult situations calmly and effectively. They can manage disputes, are excellent communicators, and are masters at building and maintaining relationships. Hence, it is particularly imperative for a private university to use EQ to predict job effectiveness.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, this paper emphasized the importance of EQ that covered five main areas: self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, self-motivation, and social skills. It is, of course, important to have good communication with others and is, therefore, a gateway to better learning, friendships, career success and employment.

The Pearson correlations results showed that two dimensions of EQ: self-regulation and social skills were significantly related to job effectiveness. According to Slaski and Cartwright (2003), EQ can be taught and learnt. Therefore, it is recommended that organizations place emphasis on the training and development programs of their employees on the EQ aspect to let them learn how to manage their own emotions when dealing with other people while performing their jobs.

The focus population in this study was the private university lecturers. However, lack of cooperation from several selected private universities due to the confidential information had limited this study. Thus, further studies could introduce the impact of the EQ on other factors like service quality, efficiency or job performance. Furthermore, other researchers can also focus on the other intelligence such as spiritual intelligence to know more in depth about people's spiritual level and how it can affect their job effectiveness or job performance.

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