

Exploring the Role of Leadership Emotional Intelligence in Enhancing Employee Performance: Evidence from Myanmar's Food and Beverage Sector

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ABSTRACT

In the dynamic and service-driven environment of Myanmar's food and beverage industry, the ability of leaders to manage emotional dynamics effectively is crucial for organizational performance. This study investigates the influence of leadership emotional intelligence (EI) on employee job performance, employing Daniel Goleman's five-component model of EI—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy (social awareness), and social skills (relationship management). A quantitative approach was adopted, surveying 300 managerial employees across 12 Yangon-based companies using a structured Likert-scale instrument. Employee job performance was assessed through dimensions such as work quality, job knowledge, efficiency, teamwork, and compliance. Statistical analysis, including descriptive, reliability, correlation, and regression tests using SPSS (Version 25), revealed that self-awareness and self-regulation are the most influential predictors of employee performance, while social awareness and relationship management showed moderate effects. The findings underscore the need for emotionally intelligent leadership in service-centric sectors and highlight strategic areas for training and leadership development. These insights contribute to both the academic literature and practical approaches for enhancing workforce outcomes in emerging economies.

Key Words: Emotional intelligence, Leadership, Employee Performance, Food and Beverage Industry, Myanmar.

Introduction

Dr. Daniel Goleman emphasizes the significance of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the capacity to recognize, understand, and regulate one's emotions while constructively responding to others' emotions. This essential skill enables individuals to navigate complex social interactions, build meaningful relationships, and contribute to both personal and organizational success (Mrisho & Mseti, 2024). In the corporate landscape, the success of organizations often hinges on the effectiveness of leadership. While ineffective leadership can stifle productivity and impede progress, leaders who inspire, motivate, and strategically guide their teams drive superior performance and achieve organizational goals. Freedman and Everett (2010) assert that emotional intelligence (EI) surpasses technical skills, knowledge, and experience as a reliable predictor of organizational success and similarly, Goleman (2021) emphasizes the critical role of EI in fostering leadership effectiveness and overall team performance. Likewise, Taplin (2023) highlights that leaders with high EI demonstrate resilience in adversity, make sound decisions, and foster collaboration, especially during crises. EI also profoundly impacts interpersonal relationships and decision-making, shaping performance across various domains (Antonopoulou, 2024). Despite its importance, EI remains underappreciated by many corporate executives, who often prioritize technical competencies over emotional and relational skills (Smith & Johnson, 2022). Leaders with strong EI not only address workplace challenges effectively (Taplin, 2023) but also master "soft selling" techniques, which are as critical as technical expertise (Stein & Book, 2000). While EI has acquired significant academic attention, organizations still struggle to leverage its potential as a competitive advantage. Organizational success depends on the performance of both leaders and employees. In Myanmar's food and beverage sector—a vital contributor to the national economy—leadership that cultivates high employee performance is essential. This study investigates the correlation between leaders' EI and employees' job performance in this sector, offering insights that advance academic understanding and inform practical leadership strategies.

2. Literature Review: Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Historical Foundations of Emotional Intelligence: The evolution of emotional intelligence (EI) has transformed it into a critical interdisciplinary construct, linking cognitive, emotional, and social competencies. The concept's roots lie in early 20th-century theories of intelligence. Thorndike (1920) introduced the concept of social intelligence, defining it as the ability to understand and manage interpersonal relationships effectively, thereby expanding the understanding of intelligence beyond cognitive abilities. Building on this foundation, Wechsler (1940) highlighted the significance of non-cognitive factors, including emotional regulation and self-awareness, in achieving personal and professional success. These foundational ideas paved the way for a more systematic exploration of emotional and social competencies in later psychological research.

Emergence and Development of Emotional Intelligence: The term "emotional intelligence" began to emerge in academic discussions during the 1960s, gaining significant attention with Wayne Payne's (1985) dissertation, which framed EI as a fundamental aspect of human functioning. Bar-On (1997) and Beasley contributed to the institutionalization of EI by introducing practical assessment tools like the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i®). Salovey and Mayer (1990) provided a theoretical foundation through their Four-Branch Model, which emphasized emotional perception, the use of emotions to facilitate thought, emotional understanding, and regulation. Daniel Goleman (1995) further popularized the concept, particularly in the context of leadership, by introducing a five-component framework that highlighted self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as key dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Contemporary Models and Applications

Contemporary research builds on these foundational theories, exploring EI's implications across organizational, educational, and healthcare settings:

- **Trait EI Model: Petrides and Furnham (2001)** emphasized personality-based aspects of EI, such as emotional resilience and adaptability, contrasting with ability-focused frameworks.
- **Meta-Emotional Intelligence (MEI):** Recent advancements integrate metacognitive processes, enhancing adaptability and emotional regulation (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023).
- **Emotional Granularity:** This emerging concept highlights the benefits of precise emotional labeling for effective emotional regulation (McCoy, 2023).

Emotional Intelligence in Professional Contexts

The influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) extends across various professional domains, with notable implications for leadership, organizational success, and job performance.

Leadership and Organizational Success: Extensive research underscores the significant role of emotional intelligence (EI) in driving organizational success. In healthcare, for example, EI has been associated with improved patient outcomes and enhanced employee satisfaction (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005). Similarly, in sales, individuals with higher EI demonstrate superior negotiation skills and stronger client relationships, contributing to greater success (Barchard, 2003). Meta-analyses, such as O'Boyle et al. (2011), consistently reveal a positive correlation between EI and job performance, particularly in roles demanding interpersonal proficiency or leadership capabilities. These findings highlight EI as a critical factor in fostering effective workplace dynamics and outcomes. High EI leaders are characterized by their ability to foster team cohesion, manage conflicts effectively, and demonstrate resilience, all of which contribute to the cultivation of positive workplace cultures (Taplin, 2023). Furthermore, emerging research highlights the role of EI in reducing workplace stress and enhancing employee engagement, suggesting that EI should be integrated into leadership development programs (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023). Leaders with high EI are also found to exhibit better adaptability, decision-making, and conflict resolution abilities, which directly influence organizational culture and improve employee performance (Antonopoulou, 2024).

Job Performance: The role of emotional intelligence (EI) in job performance is both broad and impactful. Employees with high EI tend to exhibit increased productivity, foster collaborative teamwork, and navigate workplace conflicts with greater ease. In roles requiring emotional labor, such as customer service and management, elevated EI is strongly linked to superior performance (Lopes et al., 2006). Beyond professional contexts, EI enhances academic achievement and mental well-being among students while strengthening educators' resilience and job satisfaction (Roberts et al., 2017). High-EI employees are better equipped to manage stress, contributing to improved mental health and higher performance levels (Taplin, 2023). Additionally, EI fosters emotional regulation and promotes social support within teams, creating a more resilient and effective workforce. This ability translates into increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall workplace well-being (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023). In summary, a growing body of evidence highlights EI as a cornerstone of leadership effectiveness, organizational success, and enhanced performance across diverse professional and academic environments.

Challenges and Future Directions: Despite the increasing recognition of Emotional Intelligence (EI), its study and application face several significant challenges,

particularly in the areas of measurement validity and cultural adaptability.

Measurement Validity: Current EI assessments often rely on self-report tools, which are lying to bias and limited in capturing the full scope of emotional competencies. Researchers advocate for integrating trait-based and ability-based dimensions into comprehensive assessment models to improve reliability and validity (Gillioz et al., 2023). This approach aims to address inconsistencies by combining subjective insights with objective evaluations.

Cultural Adaptability: The universal applicability of EI frameworks has been questioned, as cultural norms significantly influence emotional expression and interpretation. Adapting EI models to reflect diverse cultural contexts is essential for ensuring their relevance and effectiveness across global settings. Scholars emphasize the importance of culturally nuanced approaches to enhance both theoretical and practical outcomes (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023; Gelfand et al., 2021). Future research must continue exploring technological innovations, such as AI-driven EI interventions, and refining cross-cultural applicability to maximize its impact on personal and societal development.

3. Research Objectives

This study aims to explore the influence of leaders' emotional intelligence (EI) on employees' job performance within the food and beverage sector in Yangon, Myanmar. While existing research highlights a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance across various industries, this study focuses on a sector-specific analysis in Myanmar, addressing a gap in the literature.

2.1 Specific Objectives

The research objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the impact of leaders' self-awareness on employees' job performance in Myanmar's food and beverage industry.
2. To determine how leaders' self-control influences employees' job performance in Myanmar's food and beverage industry.
3. To examine the effect of leaders' self-motivation on employees' job performance in Myanmar's food and beverage industry.
4. To assess how leaders' social awareness affects employees' job performance in Myanmar's food and beverage industry.
5. To explore the relationship between leaders' social management skills and employees' job performance in Myanmar's food and beverage sector.

3. Research Questions

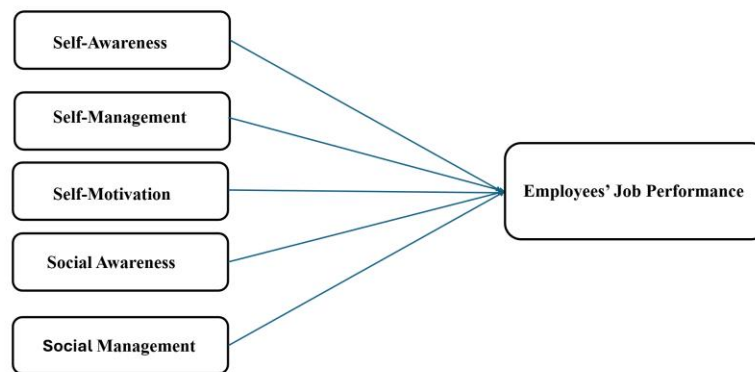
1. What is the relationship between leaders' self-awareness and employees' job performance in the food and beverage sector in Myanmar?
2. How does leaders' self-control relate to employees' job performance in the food and beverage sector in Myanmar?
3. What is the effect of leaders' self-motivation on employees' job performance in the food and beverage sector in Myanmar?
4. How does leaders' social-awareness influence employees' job performance in the food and beverage sector in Myanmar?
5. What is the relationship between leaders' social management skills and employees' job performance in the food and beverage sector in Myanmar?

4. Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework presents Emotional Intelligence (Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Self-Motivation, Social Awareness and Social Management) as the independent variables, and employee job performance as dependent variable. A diagrammatic illustration of the relationships is shown below.

Figure (1): Conceptual Framework

(Diagram illustrating the relationship between emotional intelligence variables and employee job performance.)



Source: Own compilation based on Goldman model of Emotional Intelligence.

Goleman's emotional intelligence model underpins the evaluation of leadership emotional intelligence, while Employees' Job Performance is assessed across multiple dimensions including work quality, job knowledge, efficiency, teamwork, and compliance.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Scope: This study focuses on the Yangon area to align with its objectives and ensure the findings are contextually relevant. The selection of this specific region allows for a more targeted analysis and enhances the applicability of the results to the local context.

3.1.2 Design: The study adopts a descriptive research design, employing quantitative methods to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and job performance. This approach provides a structured framework for examining correlations, offering a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between the two variables.

3.1.3 Tools: Data was collected using a standardized Likert-scale questionnaire, which was self-administered by participants. This instrument was designed to measure key dimensions of EI and job performance, ensuring consistency across responses and enabling a robust comparative analysis of the results.

3.1.4 Theoretical Support: The methodology is grounded in established research frameworks, particularly those outlined by Gay and Airasian (2003) and Borg (2003). These frameworks provide a reliable and valid foundation for the study, ensuring methodological rigor and the credibility of the findings.

3.2 Population and Sampling

3.2.1 Definition: The target population of the study consists of employees from 12 companies based in Yangon, in accordance with the established definitions of population as outlined by Sekaran (2003) and Fox and Bayat (2007).

3.2.2 Sampling Method: A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure that all management levels within the selected companies were adequately represented, thus providing a balanced and comprehensive sample.

3.2.3 Sample Size: The sample included 300 respondents, which exceeds the minimum reliability threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2010) and Roscoe (1975), thereby ensuring sufficient statistical power for the analysis.

3.2.4 Data Sources: Primary data were collected through the distribution of surveys, while secondary data were sourced from company records and government reports, providing a more comprehensive analysis of the research topic.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

3.3.1 Methods: Structured questionnaires were distributed through the Human Resources (HR) departments of the selected companies and via Google Forms to facilitate broader reach and response.

3.3.2 Timeline: Data collection took place over two months, from August to September 2024. The response rate was 81%, yielding 243 usable responses.

3.3.3 Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire comprised 25 concise and focused questions designed to be manageable for participants while gathering essential data on emotional intelligence and job performance.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

3.4.1 Principles: The study adhered to principles of privacy, confidentiality, and informed consent. Ethical standards were maintained throughout to protect participant rights.

3.4.2 Transparency: Participants were fully briefed on the objectives, expected outcomes, potential impacts of the study, and funding sources, ensuring transparency throughout the research process.

3.4.3 Confidentiality: Participant anonymity was safeguarded, and data integrity was ensured through robust measures to protect sensitive information.

3.5 Limitations

3.5.1 Scope: The study is limited to the food and beverage industry in Yangon, with a specific focus on the impact of emotional intelligence on employee performance within this sector.

3.5.2 Focus: The analysis primarily emphasizes five key components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and social management, which are central to understanding EI's effect on job performance.

3.6 Data Analysis

Approach: The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 25, which included the following steps:

Preliminary Tests: Initial analyses were conducted to assess demographics, normality, and reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha used to evaluate internal consistency. Descriptive Statistics: These were used to identify general trends within the data, providing an overview of the sample characteristics.

Correlation Analysis: To examine the relationships between the components of emotional intelligence and job performance, Pearson's correlation analysis was employed, allowing for the identification of significant associations.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of Demographic Variables

Table 1 shows the **demographic characteristics** of the respondents.

No.	Variable	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	128	53%
		Female	115	47%
		Total	243	100%
2	Age	under 30 years old	115	47%
		31 to 40 years old	73	30%
		41 to 50 years old	44	18%
		above 50 years old	11	5%
		Total	243	100%
3	Job Title	Supervisor/ Executive	110	45%
		Assistant Manager	70	29%
		Manager	36	16%
		General Manager	19	8%
		Director / CEO Level	5	2%
		Total	243	100%
4	Education level	Undergraduate	51	21%
		Graduate	115	48%
		Post Graduate Diploma	61	25%
		Master's degree	16	6%
		Ph.D.	0	0
		Total	243	100%

Table 1. Frequency distribution of demographic variables in the sample population

The demographic characteristics of the sample population provide important context for interpreting the results. The key findings from the descriptive analysis of demographic variables are summarized below:

1. Gender: The sample consists of 53% male and 47% female respondents, offering a relatively balanced gender representation (Table 1).
2. Age: Most respondents (47%) are under 30 years old, with the remaining population distributed across older age groups (30% aged 31–40, 18% aged 41–50, and 5% above 50 years old). This indicates that the sample is predominantly young, which may influence their emotional intelligence and job performance levels.
3. Job Title: Most participants are in supervisory or executive roles (45%), followed by assistant managers (29%), managers (16%), general managers (8%), and those in director or CEO positions (2%). This suggests a diverse range of roles within the organization.
4. Education Level: A significant portion of the sample holds a graduate degree (48%), followed by those with post-graduate diplomas (25%) and undergraduates (21%). Only a small proportion have completed a master's degree (6%), with no participants holding a Ph.D.
5. Marital Status: Marital status information was not provided explicitly in the original table but may influence employees' job performance and emotional intelligence, depending on factors like work-life balance and stress management. These demographic insights help contextualize the findings, showing a relatively young and well-educated sample, which may have a higher level of emotional intelligence and job performance.

4.2 Reliability Analysis Using Cronbach's Alpha

Table 2. Reliability scores of variables

The internal consistency of the EI components was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. All variables exceeded the threshold of 0.70, indicating acceptable reliability:

Variables	Numbers of items	Cronbach's alpha
Self-Awareness	4	0.741
Self-Management	5	0.718
Self-Motivation	5	0.711
Social Awareness	4	0.821
Social Management	6	0.731

The reliability results confirm that the constructs measured are consistent and suitable for further analysis.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Employee Performance and Emotional Intelligence

Descriptive statistics of employee performance and EI components are summarized below:

- Employee Performance: The mean score of 3.89 indicates above-average job performance across respondents.
- Self-Awareness: With the highest mean value (4.1), self-awareness emerges as a prominent strength among employees, suggesting a strong ability to understand and manage personal emotions.
- Social Awareness: The lowest mean score (3.12) points to a potential gap in employees' ability to perceive and interpret the emotions of others.
- Self-Motivation: A relatively high standard deviation (0.9824) for self-motivation highlights variability, suggesting diverse levels of intrinsic motivation across employees.

These findings reveal key strengths in self-awareness and opportunities for improvement in social awareness and self-motivation, aligning with potential workplace training needs.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Table 3. The correlation amongst independent variables and dependent variable

Variable	N	JP	SA	SM	SMT	SOA	SOM
Job Performance (JP)	243	1					
Self-Awareness (SA)	243	.697**	1				
Self-Management (SM)	243	.519**	.505**	1			
Self-Motivation (SMT)	243	.424**	.527**	.349**	1		
Social Awareness (SOA)	243	.306**	.427**	.323**	.346**	1	
Social Management (SOM)	243	.357**	.492**	.429**	.572**	.452**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation analysis reveals significant positive relationships between EI components and job performance:

1. Self-awareness: A very strong correlation ($r=0.697, p<0.01r = 0.697, p < 0.01r=0.697, p<0.01$) indicates that employees with higher self-awareness are more effective in their roles.
2. Self-management: This component also demonstrates a strong positive correlation ($r=0.519, p<0.01r = 0.519, p < 0.01r=0.519, p<0.01$), reflecting the importance of emotional regulation for job performance.
3. Self-motivation: A moderate correlation ($r=0.424, p<0.01r = 0.424, p < 0.01r=0.424, p<0.01$) suggests that intrinsic motivation positively influences performance, though to a lesser degree than self-awareness and self-management.
4. Social Awareness and Social Management: These components show moderate positive correlations ($r=0.306, p<0.01r = 0.306, p < 0.01r=0.306, p<0.01$ and $r=0.357, p<0.01r = 0.357, p < 0.01r=0.357, p<0.01$, respectively), indicating that while these factors contribute to performance, their influence is less pronounced.

4.5 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis aims to determine how well the various EI components predict job performance and the strength of these relationships. Self-awareness and self-management emerge as the strongest predictors, highlighting their critical role in driving employee effectiveness. Other components, such as self-motivation and social management, show moderate predictive power, while social awareness has the least influence.

4.6 Reliability of Variables

The reliability of the emotional intelligence components was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (Table 2). The results show that all variables have Cronbach's Alpha values above the threshold of 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency for each construct. Specifically:

- Self-awareness: 0.741
- Self-management: 0.718
- Self-motivation: 0.711
- Social awareness: 0.821
- Social management: 0.731

These values indicate that the emotional intelligence variables measured in this study are reliable and the responses are consistent across participants.

4.7 Descriptive Statistics of Employee Performance and Emotional Intelligence Variables

Table 3 provides an overview of the mean values and standard deviations of the emotional intelligence components and job performance. The key findings are as follows:

- **Employee Performance:** The average score of 3.89 suggests that employees generally perform at a level above the median, indicating that overall job performance is good.
- **Self-awareness:** With a mean of 4.1, self-awareness is the highest EI component, reflecting that employees generally have a strong understanding of their emotions, which may positively influence their work.
- **Social Awareness:** The lowest mean value of 3.12 for social awareness suggests that this may be an area for improvement, as employees may have a weaker understanding of the emotions of others compared to their self-awareness.
- **Self-motivation:** With a relatively high standard deviation of 0.9824, self-motivation shows a wide variation in responses, indicating that employees have differing levels of intrinsic drive and determination.
- **Other Emotional Intelligence Components:** The standard deviations for self-management, social awareness, and social management are moderate, suggesting more consensus on employees' capabilities in these areas.

These descriptive statistics highlight the variability in emotional intelligence across employees and offer insight into areas that may require intervention to improve performance, particularly social awareness.

4.8 Correlation Analysis of Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

The correlation analysis (Table 3) reveals important relationships between emotional intelligence components and job performance:

1. **Self-awareness and Job Performance:** A very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.697$) indicates that employees with higher self-awareness tend to perform better. This finding aligns with the theory that individuals who understand their emotions are better at managing their tasks and interacting with others effectively in the workplace.
2. **Self-management and Job Performance:** The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.519$) between self-management and job performance further reinforces the idea that employees who can regulate their emotions effectively are more likely to perform well in their roles.
3. **Self-motivation and Job Performance:** The moderate correlation ($r = 0.424$) between self-motivation and job performance suggests that while self-motivation plays a role in performance, it is less influential than self-awareness and self-management.
4. **Social Awareness and Job Performance:** The moderate correlation ($r = 0.306$) between social awareness and job performance indicates that understanding the emotions of others can have a positive impact on job performance, but it is a weaker predictor compared to self-awareness and self-management.
5. **Social (Relationship) Management and Job Performance:** The moderate correlation ($r = 0.357$) between social management and job performance suggests that employees who effectively manage relationships with others contribute positively to job performance, but again, its effect is less pronounced than self-awareness and self-management.

4.9 Regression Analysis: Predicting Job Performance

Based on the correlations and descriptive statistics, a regression analysis can help quantify the strength of the relationships between emotional intelligence components and job performance. Given the strong correlations of self-awareness and self-management with job performance, we can hypothesize that these two variables will have the most significant predictive power in a regression model.

- Self-awareness and self-management are likely to emerge as the strongest predictors of job performance, followed by self-motivation and social management.
- Social awareness may not emerge as a significant predictor of job performance, given its lower correlation with the dependent variable.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that emotional intelligence (EI), particularly self-awareness and self-management, plays a significant role in enhancing job performance. Employees who exhibit higher levels of self-awareness and emotional regulation tend to perform better in their roles, underscoring the importance of these self-related EI components. Although social awareness and relationship management also contribute to performance, their moderate correlations suggest that interpersonal EI competencies are secondary in this context, potentially reflecting the specific nature of the roles studied or cultural factors that influence emotional expression and perception.

The regression and correlation analyses further reinforce the critical role of self-awareness and self-management as key predictors of job performance. While other EI dimensions, such as self-motivation and social management, also contribute, their impact is less pronounced compared to the self-related components of EI. These results highlight the need for organizations to prioritize the development of self-awareness and self-management skills among employees to enhance overall

performance. Additionally, training programs focused on improving social awareness and relationship management could further support employees in achieving higher levels of job performance.

This study also establishes a significant and positive relationship between leaders' emotional intelligence and employee job performance within Myanmar's food and beverage sector. Key findings include:

1. **Self-Awareness:** Leaders' awareness of their emotions and their impact on others strongly correlates with improved employee performance.
2. **Self-Management:** The ability of leaders to regulate their emotions is similarly linked to higher employee performance, emphasizing the importance of this skill in leadership.
3. **Self-Motivation:** Although self-motivation has a moderate influence, its positive effect is important for sustaining employee engagement and productivity.
4. **Social Awareness:** Leaders' attentiveness to others' emotions enhances team performance by improving understanding and support within teams.
5. **Social (Relationship) Management:** Effective interpersonal relationship management, while moderately influential, plays a key role in fostering workplace harmony and collaboration.

These findings confirm that leaders with high EI, especially in the areas of self-awareness and self-management, have the greatest impact on employee performance. This study underscores the importance of emotional intelligence in driving employee job performance, particularly within Myanmar's food and beverage sector. Future research should explore these relationships in different industries and cultural contexts and incorporate longitudinal studies to examine how EI develops and influences outcomes over time. By integrating emotional intelligence into organizational strategies, companies can enhance employee performance, improve job satisfaction, and ensure sustainable success.

5.1 Practical Implications

Organizations can apply these findings in several practical ways to optimize employee performance and foster a supportive work environment:

1. **Training and Development:** Focus on developing programs that enhance self-awareness and self-management skills, which are critical for improving employee performance.
2. **Targeted Interventions:** Implement team-building exercises and empathy training to address gaps in social awareness and improve interpersonal relationships.
3. **Recruitment Strategies:** Incorporate EI assessments into the hiring process, particularly for leadership roles or positions that involve direct interaction with clients, to identify candidates with high emotional competencies.
4. **Recognition and Rewards:** Design structured recognition programs that reward EI-driven behaviors, such as effective emotional regulation and strong interpersonal skills, to encourage these traits in the workplace.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this study offers valuable insights, several limitations suggest areas for future research:

1. **Geographic and Industry Scope:** The findings should be tested across different industries and regions to assess their generalizability and explore potential cultural and sectoral variations in the relationship between EI and job performance.
2. **Multi-Source Data:** Incorporating multiple sources of data, such as supervisor and peer evaluations, in addition to self-reported measures, could enhance the reliability and validity of job performance assessments.
3. **Qualitative Insights:** Future research could use in-depth interviews or case studies to provide richer insights into the nuanced application of EI in real-world workplace dynamics.
4. **Exploration of Mediators:** Investigating additional factors—such as organizational support, cultural norms, or personality traits—could offer a more comprehensive understanding of how EI influences job performance.
5. **Cross-Industry and Longitudinal Studies:** Longitudinal and cross-industry studies are necessary to assess the long-term effects of emotional intelligence on both employee and organizational outcomes, providing deeper insights into its dynamic role over time.

By addressing these limitations, future research can contribute further to understanding the complex relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance, offering practical guidance for organizations seeking to leverage EI for sustained success.

5.3 Broader Implications

The findings highlight the pivotal role of emotional intelligence (EI) in contemporary workplaces. As recognized by the World Economic Forum, EI is increasingly regarded as one of the top competencies essential for future success. This underscores the need for organizations to prioritize the integration of EI into leadership development programs and broader organizational strategies. While it is important to exercise caution against excessive emotional involvement—often referred to as the "curse of emotions"—a balanced and thoughtful application of EI can significantly enhance leadership effectiveness. By fostering emotional intelligence at all levels of an organization, companies may be able to enhance employee performance, boost job satisfaction, and cultivate a positive organizational culture. This, in turn, contributes to long-term success, ensuring that the workforce remains engaged, motivated, and aligned with the organization's goals.

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