

Psychology of Emotion: Theory and Applications
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Module 12, Lecture 29: Emotional intelligence and workplace

I welcome, everyone, to the final module of this course, Module 12, where we'll delve into some applied aspects of emotional intelligence, specifically. Throughout this module, we'll have three lectures. Today, we'll focus on the application of emotional intelligence in the workplace context. Thus, we'll dive deeper into the applied aspect of emotional intelligence. Today's lecture marks the 29th overall and serves as the introductory session for Module 12. Let's begin with a brief recap of our last lecture, where we delved into the specific skill of emotional intelligence known as social skills and social intelligence. So, the last module focused on discussing very specific skills of emotional intelligence. In the last lecture, we specifically discussed social skills and explored how the concept of social intelligence is connected to these skills. We delved into Goldman's model of social intelligence, examining its different components such as social awareness and social facility, along with their respective subcomponents.

Additionally, we examined the impact of social intelligence and social support systems or relationships on various aspects of human health and well-being. Introducing the convoy model of social network analysis, we explored how we can analyse our network and support system using concentric circles, comprising inner, middle, and outer circles. Finally, we discussed strategies for building social skills, highlighting some important aspects towards the end of the lecture. Today, our focus shifts towards the workplace, particularly exploring how emotional intelligence as a construct is intertwined with the context of the workplace. We'll delve into the more applied aspects, specifically within the workplace setting.

So, let's explore the utility of emotional intelligence as a concept in the workplace context—how beneficial this concept is and how it can be applied. Specifically, we'll delve into the impact of emotional intelligence on various organizational and workplace variables, such as job performance, job satisfaction, organizational attitudes and behaviours, leadership, and organizational stress. We'll focus on the specific influence of emotional intelligence on all these workplace-related variables.

Now, let's begin today's lecture by addressing the relevance of emotional intelligence as a concept in the workplace context. Generally, extensive research and the applied aspects of emotional intelligence highlight its significance as one of the most crucial elements for improving productivity and other aspects within the workplace. It is often cited as a necessary component, even an essential one, for fostering productivity and fulfilment within organizations and among their members. Research consistently demonstrates the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace context, especially regarding productivity and overall employee behaviour. Employers increasingly seek individuals who exhibit compassion, dependability, productivity, and a commitment to both their colleagues and their work.

Remarkably, all these desirable traits in a workplace are inherently linked to the concept of emotional intelligence. In summary, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in shaping the characteristics and behaviours desired within the workplace, ultimately contributing to organizational success and employee satisfaction.

Emotional intelligence can impact organizational outputs and behaviour in various ways. It's evident that emotional intelligence has become an essential component in discussions about effective organizational practices, including recruitment, placement, functioning, leadership, and training. Nowadays, organizations across diverse sectors consider emotional intelligence when assessing employees, whether during recruitment, placement, functioning, leadership, or training phases. Emotional intelligence finds relevance across all aspects of organizational functioning. Now, let's consider the relevance of emotions in the workplace. Traditionally, the workplace was perceived as a domain dominated by logical thinking and cognitive intelligence, where emotions were deemed irrelevant. It was viewed as a highly logical, rational, and orderly environment, where cognitive intelligence was paramount for job performance. Emotions were often marginalized, considered inferior, and even incompatible with rationality. The prevailing notion was that emotional individuals lacked rationality, and thus emotions had little to no significance in the workplace. However, contemporary research in cognitive and emotional sciences suggests otherwise. Emotions not only complement reasoning but are also essential for accurate judgment and decision-making. As we explored in a previous module dedicated to cognition and emotions, emotions can positively influence various cognitive processes, including decision-making, judgment, creativity, and more.

Recent research challenges the notion that emotions are always opposed to rationality. Instead, emotions can enhance cognitive functioning and are integral to complex information processing. Emotions, therefore, hold a significant place even within the realm of cognition. We cannot completely disregard them. Emotions can profoundly influence decision-making, thought processes, creativity, and other cognitive functions, especially in situations requiring intricate information processing. Consequently, an increasing number of psychologists acknowledge the vital role emotions play in organizational life. If emotions impact cognition, judgment, decision-making, and creativity—fundamental aspects of organizational functioning—then they undeniably play a crucial role within organizations. Emotions cannot be entirely side-lined. They are intrinsic to organizational dynamics. That's the essence of it. Work and emotions are intricately intertwined, meaning they mutually influence each other. They are concepts that cannot be completely separated; they will always be interconnected. In one way, the workplace influences emotions by generating various emotional experiences. A person's profession is a key factor in their emotional life. Human life comprises personal and professional aspects, both of which enrich one's experiences.

Similar to personal life, professional life is a significant domain where individuals experience diverse emotions. Since people spend a substantial amount of time at work, it significantly impacts their experiences and emotions. Work influences various aspects of emotions due to its significance in a person's well-being, self-esteem, financial stability, and social status. Therefore, the workplace serves as a source of both positive and negative emotions, impacting emotional well-being and health. Successes, failures, and relationships with coworkers in the

workplace evoke diverse emotional responses. Emotions profoundly influence work as well. Emotions are among the key drivers of work behaviour, influencing individual productivity, well-being, and the social climate. Emotions can shape work-related cognitive and motivational processes, affecting task performance, social behaviour, and overall outcomes.

In the context of job characteristics, every job possesses distinct features that enhance the relevance of emotional intelligence. Certain job characteristics directly relate to emotional intelligence and can significantly influence job performance. For instance, many jobs involve handling emotionally intense situations and require emotional regulation to achieve organizational goals. Workplaces often necessitate managing emotionally charged situations, such as interacting with distressed patients and families in professions like medicine. Professionals in such fields must navigate complex emotions and engage in emotional labour to maintain professionalism and effectively manage their responsibilities. In these jobs, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in managing challenging emotions and performing tasks effectively.

Many job performances depend on the expression of positive emotions, such as in customer service, sales, recruitment, and marketing. Certain jobs, like those in customer service, sales, and marketing, require individuals to consistently display positive emotions to have a favourable impact on others. Despite facing negativity from customers or clients, employees in these roles must maintain a positive demeanour, necessitating constant regulation of emotions. Thus, effective management of emotions is crucial in these positions. Emotional intelligence can play a vital role, especially in jobs that involve advertising and creative problem-solving. In professions requiring creativity and emotional connection, emotions can significantly influence the development of novel and emotionally engaging advertisements. Emotional intelligence becomes instrumental in creating products and advertisements that resonate with consumers on an emotional level.

Another crucial aspect is the organization's ability to adapt to changes, with emotional intelligence aiding employees in managing the stress associated with shifts in business strategy and working practices. In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, where technological advancements and social changes are frequent, employees must cope with the challenges posed by constant changes. Emotional intelligence equips individuals with the skills to navigate through these changes and effectively handle emerging challenges within organizations. These important aspects of jobs and organizational settings highlight the significance of emotional intelligence. They underscore why emotional intelligence is essential in the workplace context, contributing to increased productivity, profitability, and overall enjoyment at work. The fascination with emotional intelligence in organizational contexts stems from the belief that it can enhance productivity, profitability, and workplace satisfaction. The integration of explicit cognitive knowledge and emotional intelligence enables individuals to consider aspects that pure logic may overlook, paving the way for successful outcomes.

Researchers have linked emotional intelligence to a wide range of organizational outcomes, seeking to understand its connection to various aspects of organizational performance. Emotional intelligence offers insights into decision-making processes and contributes to

organizational success by fostering a conducive work environment and facilitating effective problem-solving. Some of the organizational outcomes we will discuss today include job performance, job satisfaction, positive organizational attitudes and behaviour, leadership, and organizational stress. Let's examine each of these variables and their connection to emotional intelligence (EI). In terms of job performance, many theorists have made significant claims regarding the importance of emotional intelligence. For instance, statements like "In the corporate world, IQ gets you hired, but EQ gets you promoted" emphasize the role of emotional intelligence in career advancement. Research suggests that while general ability or cognitive ability predicts around 10 to 30 percent of variance in work performance, emotional intelligence may account for a significant portion of the remaining 70 to 90 percent. Interactions among numerous variables contribute to job performance, with emotional intelligence being a prime candidate among them.

Various aspects and components of emotional intelligence have been purported to contribute to workplace performance and productivity. EI affects one's ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures, enabling individuals with high EI to perform better. Workers with high EI are also adept at incorporating feelings and aesthetics into products, particularly in job contexts requiring creativity and initiative. Additionally, emotionally intelligent individuals excel in communication, assertiveness, and teamwork, fostering better workplace relationships and group dynamics. However, empirical findings on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance are inconclusive. While some studies have reported positive associations, others have found no significant link. Even when a correlation is observed, its magnitude is typically small, suggesting that the impact of emotional intelligence on performance may be limited.

In summary, emotional intelligence is considered crucial for various aspects of job performance and organizational outcomes. While theoretical claims highlight its importance, empirical evidence regarding its influence on performance remains mixed, with further research needed to elucidate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance conclusively. Many research studies have failed to account for various other factors that could influence performance alongside emotional intelligence (EI), such as personality traits and general intelligence. Therefore, it's challenging to isolate the impact of EI alone. While the importance of EI for work performance has been emphasized, some claims regarding its significance may have been overstated. However, EI could indeed be crucial for certain specific jobs, where its importance is evident. For instance, in roles requiring emotional labour, where individuals must actively manage their emotional expressions to support work goals, such as in customer care, the impact of emotional intelligence on productivity and performance is pronounced.

Salespersons, for example, must maintain enthusiasm despite their feelings or the behaviour of others, necessitating emotional regulation. Research summarized in 2006 indicated that emotional intelligence may contribute to more effective emotional labour in service-based occupations, where its relevance is particularly high. Now, let's consider the aspect of job satisfaction and its connection to emotional intelligence. Some theories and empirical research suggest that individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to experience greater job satisfaction. For instance, a study by Baron in 1997, which included salespeople, teachers,

college students, and nurses, found a significant positive association between EI scores and job satisfaction scores. Similarly, other studies have found correlations between managerial EI and employee satisfaction. For example, data from approximately 187 food service personnel across nine different restaurant chain sites revealed a relationship between employee EI and job satisfaction and performance.

While these findings suggest a connection between EI and job satisfaction, more studies are needed to validate them and establish causal relationships. Some researchers have proposed potential reasons for this association, suggesting that individuals with higher EI may be more likely to experience or report greater job satisfaction. Some of the reasons could be that high EI individuals are said to use their capacity to assess and control emotions in others, allowing them to promote relationships that increase their own and the group's morale. Emotional intelligence is strongly connected to the aspect of controlling emotions in oneself and others, fostering more harmonious relationships. This can lead to greater satisfaction and happiness in the work context, contributing to overall well-being and satisfaction. High EI individuals may also be better at controlling their emotions and reducing job stress. For individuals low in EI, job stress could contribute to negativity and lack of satisfaction. However, if you are able to control and manage it, obviously your lack of satisfaction and negativity will be lessened, which can protect you from these negative effects of high EI. Emotional intelligence managers are also better at assisting employees in managing their emotions and buffering them from negative events.

Especially for people in leadership positions like managers or leaders, if they are high in emotional intelligence, they also take care of their employees and try to ensure, to the best of their ability, to assist employees in managing their emotions and emotional experiences in the job context to make it better as much as possible. This can also enhance satisfaction. Emotionally intelligent managers are more likely to create a favourable work environment, which increases job satisfaction. If people are emotionally intelligent in a particular work context, there will be a more harmonious and favourable work atmosphere, which can also increase job satisfaction. Now let's consider another variable: positive organizational attitude and behaviour and how EI can play a role here.

Many papers have linked EI to positive organizational citizenship behaviour. When we talk about organizational citizenship behaviour, we are referring to employees voluntarily doing certain work beyond their job roles, which can positively impact the organization. These actions, which promote relationships and a positive work climate, are not required as per specific job profiles, but are done voluntarily with the intention to benefit the organization. Such behaviours are called organizational citizenship behaviour, and many studies have linked EI with higher or positive organizational citizenship behaviour. According to Abraham, EI would both strengthen organizational citizenship behaviour and increase organizational commitment. Similarly, Jordan and Coolix also contend that EI moderates organizational commitment, with high EI individuals being more likely to generate strong emotional commitment even during times of stress and instability. More commitment and organizational citizenship behaviours are likely connected with high emotional intelligence.

However, not much empirical data is available to validate many of these claims. Some studies have looked at the link of EI with variables indirectly linked to organizational citizenship behaviour, such as helping behaviour. For example, some studies show that EI is related to altruistic behaviour, career commitment, and effective commitment to the organization. These are all indirectly connected to organizational citizenship behaviour. Some studies show that EI is positively linked to all these things. People are more likely to be willing to help other employees or coworkers beyond their job profiles, especially if they are high in emotional intelligence. They are also more likely to be committed. Interpersonal sensitivity and prosocial tendencies are positively connected to EI altruism and compliance, meaning they are more likely to do things they are supposed to do. Compliance aspect is also more pronounced. These are some of the indirect pieces of evidence that show EI is likely to facilitate organizational citizenship behaviour.

Some of the other findings indicate satisfaction with group members, communication within the group, and other factors are positively linked. Job dedication, customer orientation, and so on could all be directly or indirectly connected to organizational citizenship behaviour. Now, let's explore another variable: leadership. How is EI connected to leadership? In fact, much of the research has focused on the leadership aspect because EI can play a very significant role in leadership. Leaders need to connect with people, motivate them, influence them, and guide them toward goals. Emotion plays the most important role in this context. A good leader can touch the emotions of their followers. Emotional intelligence can thus play a significant role in leadership.

Leadership involves the mobilization of resources to achieve organizational goals. The ability to mobilize resources effectively is a hallmark of good leadership. This may involve choosing organizational objectives, planning organizational activities, motivating others, maintaining cooperative interpersonal relationships, fostering teamwork, and enlisting support from people outside the group or organization to promote organizational goals. All these activities are connected to leadership. Leadership is generally considered an emotional activity. Emotions cannot be separated from the leader; they are crucial from both the leader's and followers' perspectives. A leader needs to have an emotional connection; otherwise, leadership will not be effective. Goldman claimed in his book, titled "Primary Leadership," that the primary component of leadership is emotion.

Emotion is at the core of leadership. Great leaders move us emotionally, ignite our emotions, and inspire the best in us. These qualities of a leader are all emotional in nature. Thus, the main goal of a leader is to instill positive feelings in their followers. A successful leader is one who can create or instill positive emotions in their followers through their actions. It has been stated that emotional competencies might be relevant at every level of the process linking to effective leadership. There is no doubt about it; emotion cannot be separated from the context of leadership. A meta-analysis study found that the association between intelligence and leadership is much weaker than previously thought, with the corrected correlation coefficient being only 8 percent. This study implies that IQ accounts for a very small percentage, around 8 percent, of the variability in leadership effectiveness. The remaining variability is explained in part by social, emotional, and motivational factors. Thus, leadership success largely depends

on many other factors, including emotional intelligence, motivational factors, social factors, and so on.

In the empirical literature, EI has been mostly connected to a particular type of leadership called transformational leadership style. This leadership style has four basic components. The first is intellectual stimulation, where leaders not only challenge the status quo but also encourage followers to be creative. They inspire followers to try new things and take advantage of fresh learning chances. The second important characteristic is individualized consideration, where leaders support individual followers and maintain open lines of communication to recognize each follower's distinctive contribution. The third characteristic is inspirational motivation, where leaders have a clear vision and convey it to the followers, inspiring them. The last one is idealized influence, where transformational leaders act as a model and keep themselves as a model for others to follow. Emotional intelligence has been linked to this kind of leadership, particularly transformational leadership. Transformational leadership has been found to have various positive results, enhancing employee satisfaction, increasing trust in leadership, employees' effective commitment, and business unit performance.

Berlin et al. in 2000 proposed that EI is directly connected to transformational leadership because the components of this leadership style are directly connected to emotional intelligence aspects. For example, leaders who can manage their own emotions, display self-control, and delay gratification can serve as role models for their followers and build trust and respect for the leader. This idealized influence of transformational leadership is directly related to emotional intelligence. Similarly, leaders high in EI would be ideally placed to realize the extent to which followers' expectations could be raised, which is a kind of inspirational motivation. This aspect also about understands the followers, connecting with them, understanding their expectations, and showing empathy. So this is also an important aspect of emotional intelligence. Thirdly, a major component of individualized consideration is the ability to understand followers' needs, show empathy, and manage relationships. So individualized consideration is also directly connected to emotional intelligence because it's only possible when a person can understand each follower's needs, their perspective, and has empathy to understand their viewpoint.

So that is also directly connected to emotional intelligence. By definition, transformational leadership and its components are actually part of emotional intelligence. So they're very strongly connected to each other. Several pieces of research have also shown empirical support for this concept of EI and transformational leadership. Some of the findings are here. For example, Bass found empirical evidence that showed that social and emotional intelligence outperformed cognitive intelligence as a predictor of transformational leadership. Emotional intelligence was directly the most significant predictor of transformational leadership. Research also found a link between several aspects of EI and leadership. The data, however, are not totally consistent, with some research revealing different findings, but most of the research actually showed a positive relationship. So when all the available data are evaluated, the evidence generally appears to support the concept that EI is associated with several indexes of the transformational leadership style. But some aspects could still not be clear, but this is an empirically established fact. The last one is organizational stress, how EI is connected to that.

In fact, stress management and everything are directly included in the definition of EI itself. So a number of occupational psychologists have conceptualized stress in the organizational context as the interaction between persons and the environment based on the transactional model of stress. Job stress occurs when demands and opportunities are thought to threaten a person's attention or coping abilities. We experience stress only when the demands and challenges that we face are perceived as threatening or exceed our ability to handle them. The moment we perceive something that we will not be able to handle whatever demand is coming, and then the resultant outcome is stress.

So emotional intelligence proponents have suggested that obviously, better knowledge and regulation of one's emotions can drastically improve personal coping abilities. Emotional intelligence is directly connected to the regulation of emotions, which is connected to coping. So people who are high in EI are also more likely to cope better in stressful situations, which can lead to many adaptive outcomes. EI generally should be systematically linked to individual differences in coping and should confirm more or less effective results in the individual. In general, EI researchers believe that how people identify, understand, control, and heal emotions influences coping behaviour and resultant adaptive outcomes. EI is directly connected to better coping abilities. Better coping abilities mean you are able to handle stress in much better ways. So in the organizational context also, one will be able to better manage and deal with the challenges and stressful circumstances in the job context also. Mostly, people who are highly emotional are more likely to use problem-focused coping, which is a very effective strategy for solving problems rather than ruminating over what to do. If there is a problem that needs to be addressed, the person will have to directly confront the problem and seek social support and so on.

All these positive coping strategies are connected to social-emotional intelligence. So they can use all these adaptive coping strategies and, as a result, are more likely to effectively deal with or cope with stresses. Some researchers found a relationship between stress indicators and EI scales when looking at many additional factors. EI has been linked to the assessment of interpersonal facilitation and stress tolerance. EI has been linked to higher stress tolerance. Other studies discovered that EI was connected to lower levels of burnout as well as higher levels of work engagement. So why, what are the possible mechanisms that EI is linked to better coping and low occupational stress? Two possible mechanisms could be proposed. One is handling organizational change. People with higher emotional intelligence are able to handle the changes in rapidly changing organizations, whatever is there, especially in the present scenario, and managing emotional levels, which we discussed, the ability to control the expression of emotions for bringing about organizational goals. For example, salespersons, among others, have to be positively expressing emotions all the time, even though the situation may be very negative.

EI facilitates those, and as a result, they are able to manage occupational stress more. Most studies basically supporting this model include EI predicting more positive attitudes towards organizational change. Trait EI was also connected to lower job stress and so on. Empirical research is also in line with this model. Some research also found that EI is a predictor of emotional labour, meaning they are able to better manage in terms of the expression of

emotions required to reach a goal and so on. There is also evidence of a correlation between trait EI and stress symptoms, which were partially but not entirely mediated by emotional labour and so on. The idea is empirical studies also support these two mechanisms. These are some of the findings that show that EI could be very significant and relevant in the work context. Although some of the claims are kind of overstated, empirical research shows the various aspects of emotional intelligence can play a significant role in diverse variables related to the workplace and job context and can have many positive impacts on the behaviour of the people working in job situations. With this, I stop here. Thank you.