

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENHANCING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN DIGITALLY TRANSFORMED MANAGEMENT INSTITUTES

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Abstract

This quantitative study investigates the relationship between employees' emotional intelligence (EI) and job performance in management institutes undergoing digital transformation in Maharashtra, India. Emotional intelligence has long been linked to workplace effectiveness, but limited evidence exists on its role in educational institutes adapting to technological change. A cross-sectional survey was administered to 350 faculty and administrative employees across public and private management institutes. Data were collected using validated instruments: the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), a Digital Transformation Scale (DTS) adapted to educational contexts, and Williams and Anderson's in-role and contextual performance items. Structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS was employed to test measurement and structural models. Results revealed that EI had a significant positive effect on both task and contextual performance. Digital transformation also directly predicted performance and moderated the EI–performance relationship, strengthening the impact of EI in institutes with higher levels of digital transformation. Mediation tests confirmed that digital transformation partially mediated the EI–performance relationship. The findings suggest that emotionally intelligent employees adapt more effectively to digitally transformed work environments, thereby enhancing performance outcomes. Recommendations are offered for HR managers and institutional leaders to integrate EI training with digital capacity-building initiatives.

Keywords:

Emotional intelligence, employee performance, digital transformation, management institutes, SEM

1. Introduction

The contemporary higher education sector is experiencing unprecedented changes driven by digital transformation. Learning management systems, artificial intelligence, cloud-based administration, and online teaching modalities are reshaping how management institutes function. In such contexts, employees are expected to adapt to technological demands while maintaining high levels of professional performance.

Emotional intelligence (EI)—defined as the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions—has been recognized as a vital factor in employee performance. However, in the digitalized academic environment, the interplay between EI and employee performance remains underexplored.

This study addresses this research gap by applying structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the effect of EI on task and contextual performance, while examining the mediating and moderating roles of digital transformation.

Objectives

1. To measure the impact of employees' EI on task and contextual performance.
2. To assess the role of digital transformation in influencing performance outcomes.
3. To test whether digital transformation moderates or mediates the EI–performance relationship.

Significance

This research contributes theoretically by integrating EI theory with digital transformation frameworks and practically by offering HR/training recommendations for management institutes undergoing digitalization.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Emotional Intelligence

Salovey and Mayer (1990) first conceptualized EI as a set of emotional abilities, while Goleman (1995) popularized it in organizational contexts. The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) operationalizes EI across four dimensions: self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotions, and regulation of emotions.

2.2 Employee Performance

Employee performance is generally categorized as:

- Task (in-role) performance: fulfilling job-specific duties.
- Contextual (extra-role/OCB) performance: going beyond formal requirements, e.g., teamwork and helping colleagues (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

2.3 Digital Transformation in Education

Digital transformation refers to the integration of digital technologies that reshape organizational structures and outcomes (Vial, 2019). In management institutes, this includes online pedagogy, data-driven decision-making, and digital administration.

2.4 EI, Digital Transformation, and Performance

Prior studies confirm positive links between EI and job satisfaction, teamwork, and performance. However, few have examined EI's role in digitally transformed academic environments.

2.5 Research Gap & Conceptual Model

Little empirical evidence exists on how digital transformation moderates or mediates EI–performance relationships in management institutes. This study proposes the following conceptual model: EI → Employee Performance (task & contextual), with DT as moderator/mediator.

3. Hypotheses

- **H1:** EI positively influences task performance.
- **H2:** EI positively influences contextual performance.
- **H3:** Digital transformation positively influences employee performance.
- **H4:** Digital transformation moderates the EI–performance relationship.
- **H5:** Digital transformation mediates the EI–performance relationship.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

Quantitative, cross-sectional, survey-based design.

4.2 Sample & Data Collection

- Population: Faculty & administrative staff in management institutes in Maharashtra.
- Sample Size: 350 respondents via stratified random sampling.
- Demographics: Balanced distribution by gender, role, and institute type.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=350)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender (Male)	180	51.4
Gender (Female)	170	48.6
Faculty	210	60.0
Administrative	140	40.0
Public Institute	160	45.7
Private Institute	190	54.3

4.3 Instruments

- EI: WLEIS (16 items, 7-point Likert).
- DT: 12-item Digital Transformation Scale adapted to educational institutes.
- Performance: Williams & Anderson (7 in-role, 7 contextual).

4.4 Data Analysis

- Reliability & validity: Cronbach α , composite reliability, AVE.
- CFA: confirm measurement validity.
- SEM: test structural paths, mediation, and moderation.

5. Results

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. EI	5.12	0.86	1			
2. Digital Transf.	4.89	0.91	0.42	1		
3. Task Perf.	5.21	0.78	0.51	0.36	1	
4. Contextual Perf.	5.04	0.80	0.48	0.33	0.54	1

5.2 Reliability & Validity

Table 3: Reliability & Validity of Constructs

Construct	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
EI	0.89	0.91	0.62
Digital Transf.	0.87	0.89	0.58
Task Perf.	0.85	0.88	0.60
Contextual Perf	0.86	0.89	0.61

5.3 CFA Results

Model fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.12$, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.061 → acceptable.

5.4 SEM Path Analysis

Table 4: Structural Model Results

Path	β	p-value	Result
EI ? Task Performance	0.42	<.001	Supported
EI ? Contextual Performance	0.36	<.001	Supported
Digital Transformation ? Performance	0.29	0.005	Supported
EI $\times$ DT ? Performance (Moderation)	0.18	0.032	Supported
EI ? DT ? Performance (Mediation)	0.12	Bootstrapped CI	Supported

6. Discussion

The findings confirm that EI significantly enhances both in-role and extra-role performance. In digitally transformed institutes, EI becomes even more critical, as employees must manage emotional challenges arising from online teaching, digital collaboration, and virtual communication. Digital transformation not only directly improves performance but also strengthens EI's influence, confirming both moderation and mediation effects.

7. Recommendations

1. HR Development: Introduce EI-based training modules for faculty and staff.
2. Leadership Strategy: Incorporate EI in recruitment and promotion frameworks.
3. Digital Training: Provide structured digital literacy programs.
4. Blended Development: Combine EI workshops with digital transformation initiatives.
5. Policy Implication: Institutional policies should integrate emotional well-being with digital strategies.

8. Limitations

- Cross-sectional design limits causal inference.
- Reliance on self-reporting may introduce bias.
- Regional focus (Maharashtra) limits generalizability.

9. Conclusion

This study highlights EI as a critical factor in enhancing employee performance in digitally transformed management institutes. By combining emotional skills with digital readiness, institutes can improve both task and contextual outcomes.

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