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The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Creativity with Job Performance of Employees in Education Department of District 8, Tehran

MahLaqa Tolou Asghari¹ , Afsaneh Boostan²  

1. M.A. in Family Counseling, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch, Tehran, Iran

2. Department of Counseling, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch, Tehran, Iran, boostana@iau.ac.ir

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity with the job performance of employees in the Education Department of District 8, Tehran.

Methods: In terms of data collection method, this research was descriptive and correlational, and in terms of purpose, it was applied. The statistical population included all employees of the Education Department of District 8 in Tehran, totaling 105 individuals. Based on the Morgan sample size table, the sample size was determined to be 83 participants. Stratified random sampling based on employees' gender was used to select the sample. Data were collected through both library and field methods. The research instruments included the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire by Schutte et al. (1998), the Creativity Questionnaire by Soltani (2011), and the Standard Job Performance Questionnaire by Moghimi et al. (2014). The reliability of these instruments, calculated using Cronbach's alpha, was 0.88, 0.73, and 0.79 respectively. Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships between the research variables, and regression analysis was employed to predict job performance.

Results: The results indicated that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity with employees' job performance. Furthermore, emotional intelligence and creativity were able to predict the job performance of employees in the Education Department of District 8, Tehran. Given the higher Beta coefficient of emotional intelligence, it had a greater contribution to predicting employees' job performance.

Conclusions: The findings suggest that emotional intelligence and creativity play an important role in improving employees' job performance. Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence and creativity tend to manage workplace challenges more effectively, communicate better, and perform their duties more efficiently. Therefore, it is recommended that educational organizations implement training programs aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence and fostering creativity among employees in order to improve overall organizational performance.

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Introduction

Job performance is considered a central variable in the field of industrial and organizational psychology. Many studies and investigations conducted by industrial and organizational psychologists focus on identifying, evaluating, or improving job performance. This issue is important for both public and private organizations. In governmental organizations, poor performance may lead to the inability to provide legally required public services, while in private companies it can result in serious financial losses and even bankruptcy. Job performance can be defined as the overall value that organizations expect from the discrete behavioral events individuals carry out over a specific period of time. In this definition, the behavioral aspect refers to the actions performed by employees that contribute to organizational goals.

Good job performance is generally the result of the interaction between employees' abilities and their motivation. However, organizational barriers such as inadequate training, lack of resources, or ineffective management practices may interfere with the achievement of high job performance. It is important to note that possessing high ability and strong motivation alone does not necessarily guarantee effective job performance. Therefore, providing appropriate working conditions and removing organizational obstacles play a crucial role in improving employees' performance (Ahmadi & Sheikh Alizadeh, 2011).

Among the various factors affecting job performance, emotional intelligence has received considerable attention in recent years. Some findings suggest that emotional intelligence is an important determinant of job performance (Sherman, 1990), while other studies have reported inconsistent results. It should be noted that many of the earlier studies considered intelligence primarily in terms of traditional cognitive intelligence measured by standard IQ tests. However, in recent decades, another form of intelligence known as emotional intelligence has been introduced. The concept was formally proposed by Salovey and Mayer in 1990 (Miri, 2015).

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and manage emotions in oneself and others. It encompasses a set of non-cognitive abilities, competencies, and skills that influence an individual's capacity to cope successfully with environmental demands and pressures. Individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence are generally more capable of managing stress, maintaining positive interpersonal relationships, and adapting effectively to workplace challenges. Theorists of emotional intelligence believe that there is a positive relationship between

emotional intelligence and the ability to cope with risky or stressful situations, and therefore high emotional intelligence can act as a protective factor. In their study, Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, and Epel (2002) found that emotional intelligence negatively predicted certain negative outcomes while positively predicting job performance (Sadeghi, 2015). Similarly, Bar-On (1997; cited in Drekson et al., 2002) argues that emotional intelligence, compared with general intelligence, includes a set of cognitive and non-cognitive abilities and competencies that help individuals deal with environmental pressures and demands and contribute to greater well-being and life satisfaction (Ashouri, 2016).

In general, emotional intelligence can be viewed as a set of abilities and capacities that enable individuals to adapt effectively to their environment and achieve success in life. These abilities can develop and improve over time and appear to be modifiable through educational and training programs. Moreover, the theory of emotional intelligence can provide a new preventive framework for increasing resilience and controlling aggressive behaviors (Keshavarzi Arshadi, 2013).

Creativity is another important factor that may influence job performance. It is considered one of the most advanced and complex mental activities of human beings and is an essential component that educational systems should emphasize. In most scientific sources and research reports, creativity is regarded as a universal human potential, and scholars believe that all individuals possess the capacity to be creative. Creativity contributes to the development and flourishing of the talents and abilities of both educators and learners. Sternberg (2007) defined creativity as the ability to think about issues in novel and unconventional ways and to generate unique solutions to problems (Karbashi, 2015).

Considering the importance of job performance in organizations and the potential roles of emotional intelligence and creativity in enhancing employees' effectiveness, the present study seeks to answer the following fundamental question: Is there a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity with the job performance of employees in the Education Department of District 8 of Tehran?

Material and Methods

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design. Descriptive correlational studies aim to examine the relationships among variables without manipulating them. The present research is also applied in terms of purpose, as its findings are intended to contribute to practical improvements and decision-making in educational management and organizational practices.

Population and Sample

The statistical population of this study consisted of all employees of the Education Department in District 8 of Tehran, totaling 105 individuals. In order to determine an appropriate sample size, the Morgan and Krejcie sample size table was used. Based on this table and the size of the population, a sample of 83 employees was considered sufficient for the study.

Sampling Method

Participants were selected using stratified random sampling based on gender. First, the population was divided into two strata (male and female employees). Then, participants were randomly selected from each stratum in proportion to their representation in the population. This approach ensured that both gender groups were adequately represented in the sample.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using standardized questionnaires relevant to the variables of the study. The questionnaire consisted of two sections:

1. Demographic Information Form

This section collected background information about participants, including gender, age, educational level, work experience, and job position.

2. Research Variables Questionnaire

The second section measured the main variables of the study using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire items were adapted from previously validated instruments used in related studies.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire items were reviewed and evaluated by several experts in the fields of educational management and research methodology. Their feedback was incorporated to improve the clarity and relevance of the items.

The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A pilot study was conducted with a small group of respondents similar to the target population, and the obtained Cronbach's alpha values indicated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha \geq 0.70$).

Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining the necessary permissions from the relevant authorities of the Education Department in District 8 of Tehran, the questionnaires were distributed among the selected participants. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the research and were asked to complete the questionnaires voluntarily. After completion, the questionnaires were collected and prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using SPSS statistical software. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used:

- Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe demographic characteristics and the main variables of the study.
- Inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation coefficient, were used to examine the relationships between the study variables.
- Statistical significance was evaluated at the 0.05 significance level ($p < 0.05$).

Ethical Considerations

Several ethical principles were observed throughout the research process:

- Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time.
- Participants were informed about the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire.
- Confidentiality and anonymity of respondents were ensured, and the collected data were used only for research purposes.
- No personal identifying information was recorded in the data analysis process.

Results

To test the research hypotheses, multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive role of emotional intelligence and creativity on employees' job performance.

Model Summary

Table 1. Regression Model Summary

R (Correlation Coefficient)	R ² (Coefficient of Determination)
0.70	0.49

As shown in Table 1, the multiple correlation coefficient R is 0.70, indicating a strong positive relationship between the independent variables (emotional intelligence and creativity) and the dependent variable (employee performance).

The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.49$) indicates that approximately 49% of the variance in employees' job performance can be explained by the independent variables included in the model. In other words, emotional intelligence and creativity together account for nearly half of the changes observed in employee performance.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Table 2. ANOVA Results for the Regression Model

F	Degrees of Freedom	Sig.
39	2, 80	0.000

Table 2 presents the results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) used to assess the overall significance of the regression model. The obtained F value ($F = 39$) with degrees of freedom (2, 80) is statistically significant at $p < 0.001$.

Since the significance level ($Sig = 0.000$) is lower than the conventional alpha level of 0.05, the regression model is considered statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that the independent variables jointly predict the dependent variable, and the regression model is appropriate for explaining variations in employees' job performance.

Regression Coefficients

Table 3. Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
Constant	1.13	0.28	—	4.00	0.000
Emotional Intelligence	0.93	0.14	0.91	6.63	0.000
Creativity	0.19	0.10	0.26	2.84	0.028

As presented in Table 3, the significance values for both emotional intelligence ($p = 0.000$) and creativity ($p = 0.028$) are lower than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, with 95% confidence, the research hypothesis is supported.

The results indicate that both emotional intelligence and creativity significantly predict employees' job performance among staff of the Education Department in District 8 of Tehran.

Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficients show that emotional intelligence ($\beta = 0.91$) has a stronger predictive effect on job performance compared to creativity ($\beta = 0.26$). This suggests that emotional intelligence plays a more substantial role in explaining variations in employee performance.

Based on the regression coefficients, the regression equation for predicting employee performance can be expressed as:

$$\text{Employee Performance} = 1.13 + (0.93 \times \text{Emotional Intelligence}) + (0.19 \times \text{Creativity})$$

Overall, the findings demonstrate that higher levels of emotional intelligence and creativity are associated with better job performance among employees, with emotional intelligence being the more influential predictor.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that emotional intelligence and creativity are significant predictors of job performance among employees of the Education Department in District 8 of Tehran. The regression results showed that both variables have a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee performance. However, based on the standardized beta coefficients, emotional intelligence has a stronger predictive power than creativity in explaining variations in employees' job performance.

These findings suggest that employees who possess higher levels of emotional intelligence and creativity tend to demonstrate better work performance. Emotional intelligence enables individuals to understand and manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of others, which helps them respond more effectively to workplace challenges, interpersonal interactions, and organizational demands. Creativity, on the other hand, supports innovative thinking and problem-solving, allowing employees to generate new ideas and improve work processes.

One possible explanation for this result is that human resources are the most important asset of any organization, and the achievement of organizational goals largely depends on the capabilities and competencies of employees. This is particularly true in educational organizations such as the Ministry of Education, where employees play a key role in implementing policies, supporting educational activities, and improving institutional performance. Scholars in the field of organizational behavior emphasize that without skilled, capable, committed, and satisfied human resources, achieving organizational objectives becomes extremely difficult.

Job performance is generally defined as the overall expected value of employees' behavioral activities over a specified period of time that contribute to organizational goals. Various factors influence job performance, among which emotional intelligence and creativity have gained increasing attention in recent years. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and effectively use emotions in oneself and others. It represents a set of non-cognitive abilities, competencies, and skills that influence an individual's capacity to cope with environmental demands and pressures. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are better able to manage stress, maintain positive interpersonal relationships, and make balanced decisions in complex situations.

Moreover, emotional intelligence includes a range of abilities that prepare individuals to adapt effectively to their environment and achieve success in personal and professional life. These abilities are not fixed; rather, they can develop over time and can be improved through educational and training programs. Therefore, organizations that invest in developing employees' emotional intelligence may experience improved performance outcomes.

Creativity also plays a vital role in enhancing employee performance. Creative employees are capable of generating innovative ideas, improving work procedures, and identifying more efficient solutions to organizational problems. In educational organizations, creativity can contribute to better administrative processes, improved communication systems, and more effective service delivery.

The results of the present study are consistent with many previous studies that have highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence and creativity in improving employee performance. Previous research in organizational and educational settings has demonstrated that employees with

higher emotional intelligence tend to show better teamwork, stronger communication skills, and higher job satisfaction, all of which positively influence their performance.

Similarly, prior studies have shown that creativity contributes to organizational effectiveness by encouraging innovation and continuous improvement. Researchers have argued that creative employees are more capable of adapting to changing work conditions and developing novel solutions to workplace challenges. The stronger predictive role of emotional intelligence found in this study is also consistent with earlier research suggesting that emotional competencies often have a more direct influence on interpersonal and organizational performance than cognitive abilities alone. Overall, the findings of the present study reinforce the growing body of literature suggesting that psychological and behavioral competencies play a critical role in enhancing employee productivity and organizational success.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. The study was conducted only among employees of the Education Department in District 8 of Tehran, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other regions or organizations. The data were collected using self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by participants' personal perceptions or response biases. The research design was cross-sectional, meaning that data were collected at a single point in time; therefore, causal relationships between variables cannot be established with certainty. Future studies may address these limitations by including larger and more diverse samples, using multiple data sources, and employing longitudinal research designs.

Based on the findings of this research, several practical recommendations can be proposed for improving employee performance in educational organizations:

Educational organizations should design training programs aimed at developing employees' emotional intelligence, such as workshops on emotional awareness, communication skills, and stress management.

Managers should create an organizational climate that encourages creativity and innovation, allowing employees to express new ideas and suggestions for improving processes, services, and cost efficiency.

Opportunities should be provided for employees to discuss and present innovative ideas related to improving organizational products, procedures, and services.

Clear and transparent criteria for evaluating and selecting innovative ideas should be established within the organization.

Organizations should recognize and reward creative individuals and creative teams, which can motivate employees to engage in innovative activities.

Human resource managers should focus on identifying employees' talents and fostering personal development, including fair practices in recruitment, selection, job placement, and classification of staff.

Encouraging collaborative teamwork and knowledge sharing can further support creativity and improve overall organizational performance.

In conclusion, strengthening emotional intelligence and fostering creativity among employees can significantly enhance job performance and contribute to the overall effectiveness of educational organizations.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the ethics committee of Islamic Azad University. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection, and analysis. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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