**The Evolution of Emotional Intelligence: History, Models, and Measures**

**ABSTRACT**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions in oneself and others. This study analyzes the historical development of EI, tracing its evolution and growing importance over time. It examines key theoretical models, including ability-based, trait-based, and mixed models, to provide a comprehensive understanding of emotional intelligence (EI). The study also evaluates various measurement tools used to assess EI, highlighting their significance in psychological research and practical applications. Furthermore, it examines the role of EI in various fields, including education, workplaces, healthcare, and mental health. The findings suggest that EI plays a crucial role in enhancing emotional well-being, improving social interactions, and supporting effective decision-making, making it an essential aspect of human development.

***Keywords:*** *Emotional Intelligence, History, Measures, Models, Emotional Well-Being.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Emotional Intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and manage emotions in ourselves and others to make effective decisions (Goleman, 2001; Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2007). Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial psychological construct that influences various aspects of human behavior, including personal relationships, workplace effectiveness, and academic performance (Wasswa, 2024; Solang & Nurjaningsih, 2024; Brackett et al., 2011). First introduced as a concept in the early 20th century, EI has gained significant attention over the past few decades, particularly with the contributions of psychologists such as Peter Salovey, John Mayer, and Daniel Goleman. In the early 20th century, Thorndike introduced the concept of social intelligence, describing it as the ability to interact effectively with others by understanding internal states, motives, and behaviors of both oneself and others (Thorndike, 1920). This idea closely aligns with the contemporary understanding of emotional intelligence. Soon after, Wechsler developed the notion of non-cognitive intelligence, emphasizing its importance for success in life. He argued that intelligence remains incomplete without acknowledging its non-cognitive aspects (Wechsler, 1958). Later in the century, Gardner introduced the theory of multiple intelligences in his book "Frames of Mind," proposing that emotional intelligence shares similarities with two of the seven intelligences he identified: interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence (Gardner, 1983; Webb, 2009). In 1990, psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer published a seminal article defining emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize, differentiate, and utilize emotional information to guide thoughts and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The concept gained widespread recognition following the publication of Daniel Goleman’s book "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ," which was inspired by the work of Salovey and Mayer. Goleman described emotional intelligence as encompassing self-control, enthusiasm, persistence, and the ability to self-motivate (Goleman, 1995; Feldman & Mulle, 2009; Joy, 2011). Another key figure in the field, Reuven Bar-On, introduced the term "emotional quotient" and defined emotional intelligence as the ability to understand oneself and others, build relationships, and effectively adapt to one’s surroundings to meet environmental challenges (Bar-On, 1988, 1997). Unlike traditional measures of intelligence (IQ), which focus primarily on cognitive abilities, EI encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions in oneself and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The significance of EI extends beyond psychology into various fields, including education, leadership, and mental health (Chen, 2024; Baranidharan & Dhakshayini, 2024). Researchers argue that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to exhibit better interpersonal skills, greater resilience, and more effective decision-making abilities (Baranidharan & Dhakshayini, 2024). As a result, EI is increasingly being integrated into educational curricula, workplace training programs, and leadership development initiatives. Given its growing importance, this study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of emotional intelligence by exploring its historical development, theoretical models, and measurement tools.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine the historical development of Emotional Intelligence (EI).
2. To analyze the key theoretical models of EI.
3. To evaluate the various measurement tools used to assess EI.

**I. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has evolved over time, drawing from various psychological, philosophical, and neuroscientific perspectives (Solang & Nurjaningsih, 2024). Although the formal term “Emotional Intelligence” was coined in the 1990s, its theoretical roots can be traced back to early discussions on the relationship between emotion and cognition. This section examines the historical evolution of EI, highlighting key milestones and contributions that have shaped its current understanding.

**1.1 Early Theories on Emotion and Intelligence**

The interplay between emotion and intelligence has been a subject of interest for centuries. Ancient philosophers, including Aristotle and Plato, explored the role of emotions in human reasoning and decision-making. Aristotle, in particular, emphasized the importance of managing emotions effectively to achieve personal and social harmony (Sanders & Johncock, 2016). The 20th century saw increasing interest in intelligence as a measurable construct. Traditional intelligence theories, such as those proposed by Alfred Binet (1905) and later expanded by Lewis Terman (1916) in the development of the IQ test, focused primarily on cognitive abilities (Euler et al., 2023). In 1920, Edward Thorndike introduced the concept of “social intelligence”, describing it as the ability to understand and manage people effectively. This idea laid the groundwork for later developments in emotional intelligence by emphasizing interpersonal skills as a form of intelligence.

**1.2 Emergence of Emotional Intelligence Concepts**

The 1940s and 1950s saw further exploration of emotional and social competencies. During the 1940s, psychologist David Wechsler argued that intelligence should include non-intellective factors, such as personality and emotional regulation. He noted that individuals with high intellectual intelligence (IQ) could still struggle in personal and professional settings due to a lack of emotional awareness and interpersonal skills (Wechsler, 1943). The rise of humanistic psychology in the mid-20th century further emphasized the role of emotions in personal development. Psychologists such as Abraham Maslow (1954) and Carl Rogers (1959) emphasized the importance of self-awareness, emotional expression, and empathy in achieving self-actualization (Guynn, 2021). These ideas contributed to the growing recognition of emotional competencies as essential aspects of intelligence. Howard Gardner (1983) introduced the theory of Multiple Intelligences, which expanded the traditional view of intelligence. He identified different types of intelligence, including interpersonal intelligence (the ability to understand others) and intrapersonal intelligence (self-awareness and self-regulation), both of which closely align with modern conceptions of EI. The 1980s marked a turning point in the study of emotional intelligence. Reuven Bar-On (1988) developed the concept of Emotional Quotient (EQ) as a measure of emotional and social competence. His work contributed to the development of EI assessment tools, which would later become widely used in psychological and organizational research.

**1.3 Formalization of Emotional Intelligence**

Peter Salovey and John Mayer first introduced the term "Emotional Intelligence" (EI) in 1990, defining it as the ability to monitor, differentiate, and utilize emotions to guide thought and behavior. Their model identified four key components: perceiving emotions (recognizing emotions in oneself and others), using emotions (applying emotions to enhance cognitive processes), understanding emotions (analyzing emotional cues and predicting changes), and managing emotions (regulating emotions for personal and social well-being) (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). This conceptualization laid the foundation for empirical research on EI and led to the development of performance-based assessment tools, such as the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) (Mayer et al. 2002).

**1.4 Popularization and Expansion of EI Research**

The concept of emotional intelligence gained mainstream attention when Daniel Goleman published his book "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ" (1995). Goleman expanded on Salovey and Mayer’s work, presenting EI as a key factor in personal and professional success. He introduced a Mixed Model of EI, incorporating self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as essential components. Goleman’s work led to the widespread adoption of EI in leadership training, workplace assessments, and educational programs (Goleman, 1995). During the early 2000s, researchers such as Petrides and Furnham (2001) introduced the Trait EI Model, which views EI as a personality trait rather than a cognitive ability. This model differs from Salovey and Mayer’s Ability Model and emphasizes individual differences in emotional perception and expression. In recent years, emotional intelligence has been widely studied across various fields, including education, healthcare, business, and psychology (Baranidharan & Dhakshayini, 2024; Solih et al., 2024).

**II. DEFINITIONS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been defined in various ways by different scholars over time. Salovey and Mayer (1990) first conceptualized EI as *"the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions."* Later, Mayer and Salovey (1993) refined this definition, describing EI as *"a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions."* Daniel Goleman (1995) expanded the concept, defining EI as *"the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions effectively in ourselves and others."* Reuven Bar-On (1997) introduced a broader perspective, stating that *"emotional intelligence is an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures."* Further refining the concept, Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2000) emphasized that *"emotional intelligence refers to an ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them."* Mayer and Caruso (2008) later described EI as *"the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought."* Petrides and Furnham (2001) contributed by defining *"trait emotional intelligence as a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies."* Howard Gardner (1983), in his theory of multiple intelligences, suggested that *"the personal intelligences entail the capacity to understand oneself, to have an effective working model of oneself—including one's own desires, fears, and capacities—and to use such information effectively in regulating one's own life."* Martinez (1997) highlighted the non-cognitive aspect, stating that *"emotional intelligence involves non-cognitive skills that influence one's ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures."* Finally, Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2004) described EI as *"the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions in the self and others."* These definitions collectively illustrate the evolving understanding of emotional intelligence, from an ability-based model to broader perspectives incorporating personality traits and workplace competencies.

**III. MAJOR MODELS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been conceptualized through various theoretical models that define its components, structure, and applications. These models attempt to explain how individuals recognize, manage, and utilize emotions to navigate social interactions and decision-making processes. The three major models of EI are: **(1) The Ability Model (Salovey & Mayer), (2) The Mixed Model (Goleman), and (3) The Trait Model (Petrides & Furnham)**

**3.1 The Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990)**

Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) introduced the Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence, defining EI as the capacity to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions in oneself and others. According to this model, EI is a form of intelligence similar to cognitive intelligence (IQ) and involves mental processes that contribute to emotional awareness and problem-solving.



**[Fig. 1:](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DeUTWeq_9OZ4&psig=AOvVaw2cgiOiCnWIl2wAApgr0wgf&ust=1743148472209000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBcQjhxqFwoTCJCk6vSZqowDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE" \t "_blank)** Salovey & Mayer's PUUM model

(Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/TheSalovey & Mayer's model-of-EI)

**Key Components of the Ability Model:**

Salovey and Mayer proposed a four-branch model that organizes EI into hierarchical skill sets:

1. **Perceiving Emotions** - The ability to recognize emotions in facial expressions, voice tones, and body language helps individuals understand their own emotions and those of others.
2. **Using Emotions** - The ability to harness emotions to facilitate cognitive tasks such as thinking and problem-solving.
3. **Understanding Emotions** - The ability to analyze emotions, interpret their meanings, and predict emotional outcomes.
4. **Managing Emotions** - The ability to regulate emotions effectively in oneself and others to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

The four branches operate in a hierarchical manner, with emotion perception serving as the foundational or lowest level, while emotional management represents the most advanced or highest level (Mayer et al. 2001). The Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence is supported by neuroscientific research and cognitive psychology, highlighting EI as a measurable cognitive skill (Killgore et al., 2013). One of its key strengths is the development of performance-based assessments, such as the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), which objectively evaluates EI abilities (Mayer et al., 2023; Brackett et al., 2011). However, critics argue that the model places excessive emphasis on emotional cognition, overlooking the behavioral and personality-related aspects of emotional intelligence (Kewalramani et al., 2015).

**3.2 The Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1995)**

Daniel Goleman (1995) expanded on Salovey and Mayer’s work by introducing the Mixed Model of EI, which integrates emotional skills with personality traits and competencies. Unlike the Ability Model, which views EI as a cognitive ability, Goleman’s model emphasizes emotional and social competencies that influence personal and professional success (Mrisho & Mseti, 2024).



**Fig. 2:** Goleman Mixed Model ofEmotional Intelligence

(Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-mixed-model-of-EI)

**Key Components of the Mixed Model:**

Goleman categorized EI into five dimensions:

1. **Self-awareness**- Recognizing one’s emotions and their impact on thoughts and behavior.
2. **Self-regulation**- Controlling emotional impulses, adapting to changing circumstances, and maintaining composure.
3. **Motivation**- Using emotions to pursue goals, maintain optimism, and exhibit perseverance.
4. **Empathy**- Understanding and considering others’ emotions and perspectives.
5. **Social Skills**- Managing relationships, communicating effectively, and resolving conflicts (Mrisho & Mseti, 2024).

Goleman’s Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence has gained significant recognition in leadership and organizational psychology, emphasizing the importance of EI in workplace performance, leadership effectiveness, and team collaboration (Trehan & Shrivastav, 2012; Shafik, 2024; Mrisho & Mseti, 2024). However, the model has been criticized for blending cognitive skills with personality traits, making it challenging to define EI as a distinct form of intelligence (Romanelli et al., 2006; Sfetcu, 2023). Additionally, concerns have been raised about the objectivity of self-report measures, such as the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI), as personal biases may influence their results (Byrne et al., 2007).

**3.3 The Trait Model of Emotional Intelligence (Petrides & Furnham, 2001)**

Konstantinos Petrides and Adrian Furnham (2001) proposed the Trait Model of EI, which differs from both the Ability and Mixed models by treating EI as a personality trait rather than a form of intelligence. According to this model, EI consists of behavioral dispositions and self-perceived emotional abilities that influence how individuals interact with their environment (Hansenne, 2012).

**Key Components of the Trait Model:**

The Trait Model is based on personality psychology and includes multiple self-perceived emotional competencies grouped into four broad factors:

1. **Well-Being** - Encompasses optimism, self-esteem, and emotional self-confidence.
2. **Self-Control** - Includes emotional regulation, stress management, and impulsivity control.
3. **Emotionality** - Covers emotional perception (awareness of one’s emotions), empathy, relationships and emotional expression.
4. **Sociability** - This relates to social skills, assertiveness, and the ability to manage emotions in interpersonal interactions.



**Fig. 3.** The trait model of EI.

(Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-trait-model-of-EI)

The Trait Model of Emotional Intelligence recognizes the role of personality in emotional functioning and is commonly assessed through self-report questionnaires, such as the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) (Petrides et al., 2006). However, critics argue that this model lacks a strong theoretical foundation in cognitive intelligence and that self-reported EI scores may be subject to personal biases, affecting their reliability and objectivity (Petrides, 2010; Sharma & Pandey, 2024).

**3.4 table 1-Comparative Analysis of EI Models**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Aspect** | **Ability Model (Salovey & Mayer)** | **Mixed Model (Goleman)** | **Trait Model (Petrides & Furnham)** |
| **Nature of EI** | Cognitive ability-based | Combination of cognitive and personality traits | Personality-based |
| **Key Components** | Perception, understanding, use, and management of emotions | Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skills | Well-Being, Self-Control, Emotionality, and Sociability |
| **Measurement** | Performance-based (MSCEIT) | Self-report (ECI, ESCI) | Self-report (TEIQue) |
| **Applications** | Psychological research, cognitive science | Leadership, workplace performance | Personality and individual differences |
| **Criticism** | Narrow focus on cognition, lacks personality elements | Mixes intelligence with traits, lacks clear boundaries | Lacks empirical support as an intelligence |

The three major models of Emotional Intelligence - The Ability Model, the Mixed Model, and the Trait Model offer distinct perspectives on how emotions influence human behavior. While the Ability Model treats EI as a cognitive skill, the Mixed Model integrates competencies that enhance social and professional success. The Trait Model, in contrast, views emotional intelligence (EI) as a personality characteristic that influences individual differences in emotional behavior.

**IV. MEASUREMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Accurately measuring Emotional Intelligence (EI) is crucial for understanding its role in personal and professional development. Various models of EI have led to different assessment methods, broadly classified into three categories: **(1) Performance-Based Measures (2) Self-Report Measures (3) Observer-Rated Measures.**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) can be assessed using three primary measurement approaches. Performance-based measures evaluate EI as a cognitive ability, assessing how individuals perceive, understand, and manage emotions through objective tasks rather than self-perceptions. Self-report measures are the most widely used tools, relying on individuals' subjective evaluations of their own emotional abilities and behaviors, assuming they can accurately assess their competencies. Observer-rated measures involve evaluations from peers, supervisors, or trained professionals, providing an external perspective on an individual's EI, making them particularly useful in workplace and leadership contexts.

Table 2- Different assessment methods and their descriptions

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Categories** | **Tool Name** | **Author(s)** | **Number of Items** | **Description** |
| **Performance-Based (Ability) EI Tools** | **Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)** | John Mayer, Peter Salovey & David Caruso (2002) | 141 items | Assesses four branches of EI: perceiving, facilitating, understanding, and managing emotions through emotion-related tasks. |
| **Situational Test of Emotional Understanding (STEU)** | MacCann & Roberts (2008) | 42 items | Measures understanding of emotions in various social contexts through situational scenarios. |
| **Situational Test of Emotion Management (STEM)** | MacCann & Roberts (2008) | 44 items | Evaluates a person’s ability to manage emotions effectively in workplace scenarios. |
| **Geneva Emotional Competence Test (GECo)** | Schlegel & Mortillaro (2019) | 110 items | Assesses emotion recognition, understanding, regulation, and expression through performance-based tasks. |
| **Self-Report EI Tools** | **Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i 2.0)** | Reuven Bar-On (1997, revised 2011) | 133 items | Measures five EI domains: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management. |
| **Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue)** | Konstantinos Petrides & Adrian Furnham (2001) | 153 items (full form) | Measures EI as a personality trait across four factors: well-being, self-control, emotionality, and sociability. |
| **Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) OR Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT)** | Schutte et al. (1998) | 33 items | Measures general EI based on Salovey and Mayer’s model using self-report responses. |
| **Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)** | Wong & Law (2002) | 16 items | Measures EI across four dimensions: self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, regulation of emotion, and use of emotion. |
| **The Profile of Emotional Competence (PEC)** | Mikolajczak et al. (2014) | 50 items | Assesses intrapersonal and interpersonal EI skills. |
| **The Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale (REIS)** | Pekaar et al. (2018) | 28 items | Measures self-focused and other-focused EI skills in workplace settings. |
| **Observer/Multisource EI Tools** | **Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI)** | Daniel Goleman & Richard Boyatzis (1999) | 110 items | Uses a 360-degree feedback system to assess EI competencies. |
| **Workplace Emotional Intelligence Profile (WEIP)** | Jordan et al. (2002) | 30 items | Measures emotional awareness and management in workplace settings using self and observer ratings. |
| **Emotional Intelligence Appraisal (EIA)** | Travis Bradberry & Jean Greaves (2009) | 28 items | Based on Goleman’s four EI domains, used in workplace and leadership settings, includes self and peer ratings. |

**V. APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays a crucial role in various domains of human interaction, influencing personal well-being, workplace performance, education, and leadership (Shafik, 2024; Azad & Kumar, 2023; Jihan et al., 2024). The ability to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions is essential for fostering positive relationships, making informed decisions, and effectively managing stress (Shah & Sah, 2024; Yunus & Chaudhary, 2023). EI has broad applications across multiple sectors, including education, business, healthcare, and mental health, with far-reaching implications for both individual and societal outcomes (Baranidharan & Dhakshayini, 2024). In education, EI enhances students' emotional resilience, academic performance, and social interactions (Chen, 2024; Sele & Mukundi, 2023). Teachers with high EI create positive learning environments and support students' development of essential life skills through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs (Qazi et al., 2024). In professional settings, EI is crucial for leadership, teamwork, and decision-making. Emotionally intelligent leaders inspire and motivate employees, fostering a collaborative and productive work culture. Meanwhile, employees with strong emotional intelligence contribute to conflict resolution, stress management, and effective communication, ultimately driving organizational success (Panait, 2017; Blendea et al., 2024). In healthcare, EI plays a crucial role in fostering strong doctor-patient relationships, mitigating burnout among healthcare professionals, and enhancing patient care outcomes. Medical practitioners with high emotional intelligence (EI) demonstrate empathy, active listening, and emotional regulation, leading to improved healthcare experiences and enhanced professional well-being (Silva, 2024; Cascio et al., 2017). Additionally, EI is closely linked to mental health, as it helps individuals regulate emotions, cope with stress, and build resilience against anxiety and depression. Emotionally intelligent individuals tend to have healthier relationships, greater self-awareness, and more effective coping strategies, thereby enhancing their overall psychological well-being (Zhylin et al., 2024; Rao et al., 2024). Beyond personal and professional applications, EI has broader societal implications, fostering social harmony, cultural adaptability, and ethical decision-making. It promotes prosocial behavior, strengthens communities, and supports ethical leadership, ultimately contributing to a more cohesive and empathetic society (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2008; Culham & Bai, 2011).

**CONCLUSION**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial construct in understanding human emotions, social interactions, and decision-making processes. Its historical development has seen the evolution of multiple theoretical models, including the ability-based, trait-based, and mixed models, each contributing unique perspectives to the field. Over time, various standardized tools have been developed to assess emotional intelligence (EI), enabling researchers and practitioners to measure emotional competencies in diverse settings. The applications of EI extend across multiple domains, including education, workplace dynamics, healthcare, and mental health etc. In education, EI fosters emotional resilience, enhances teacher effectiveness, and improves student outcomes. In professional settings, it contributes to leadership development, teamwork, and effective decision-making. Healthcare professionals with high EI demonstrate better patient care, stress management, and job satisfaction. Additionally, EI plays a crucial role in mental health by enabling individuals to regulate their emotions, cope with stress, and develop emotional resilience. Emotional Intelligence plays a crucial role in various aspects of life. Addressing its challenges will make it more effective and useful. Refining its theories, improving measurement methods, and considering cultural and ethical factors will enable EI to continue supporting well-being, professional growth, and social harmony.

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