

## Emotional Intelligence and Automobile Sales Performance

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### KEYWORDS

*Emotional  
Intelligence, Sales,  
Performance,  
Automobiles.*

### ABSTRACT

The automobile sector all over the world is getting transformed by enhancing safety, in-vehicle experience and connected devices using Internet of Things (IoT). The driving experience by the customer is redefined by advanced technological features such as vehicle diagnostics and telematics. The passenger vehicle buying journey is reshaped by the advancement of digital sales channels and seamless data connectivity of 5G technology. The expectations of consumers who value convenience and transparency from India's online automotive market demands significantly the virtual showrooms, e-commerce options, and augmented reality tools. To attain the competitive advantage in the ever changing market and consumer expectations there is a greater requirement to cope with the change. Coping with the expectations of the consumers in who look for clear information from the sales executives in the showroom is a challenging consumer environment for these executives. Hence it is always a requirement for a sales person to be aware of himself in terms of knowledge to be given to the consumer and his emotions. Such executives would be able to regulate their emotions according to the situations can show empathy in understanding the feelings of fear, anxiety and irritation while talking or presenting to prospects and customers. Such qualities of sales executives contributes to their Emotional Intelligence (EI) which helps to project their professional expertise. For last two decades there are many researchers proved the importance of EI in the personal and professional growth. In this context this research was attempted to understand the EI level of sales executives and their sales performance working in various auto mobile showrooms located in Coimbatore. Questionnaires on EI and Job performance were used to collect the data and the results corroborates with other researches that sales performance depends on the EI too.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Emotions are understood as combinations of different feelings which contributes to the individual's ability to manage their behaviors in various situations. Daniel Goleman (1997) Father of Emotional Intelligence defined S EI as 'a potential for mastering the skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management'. EI helps to improve the capability of the individuals to manage with their own and other's emotions also. A study to determine the relation between customers oriented selling and the EI of the sales person by Rozell (2004) revealed that the sales executives' approach towards the customers related to his/her EI. Daniel Goleman (1995) asserted that excellence in customer service and interpersonal managing skills depends on understanding the emotions, knowledge about social awareness and social relationship. He also formulated EI as a theory of performance and said that employees' performance using EI has direct connectivity and use in the field of employment and in forecasting the excellence in jobs of any kind (Goleman 1998b) Dr.



C P Khokar, Tulika Kush (2009) said that EI is an important consideration for customer relationship management, customer service, interviewing and selection, performance measurement.

The technological advancements and various social media platforms are the added advantage for the customers to be well informed about their products to be purchased. Automobile industry sales is not exempted from this and it has to cater to the needs of the customers by providing more safety and efficient vehicles. The automobile industry in India has evolved to a greater sector of business over the past few decades and records are being made across all the sectors of this industry in sales. In order to seize these opportunities the players in the industry need to develop and acquire the resources and technologies to produce vehicles that fulfill the needs of future.

Personal and social competencies of individuals may be enhanced by managing own emotions. EI will lead to better performance, maintain a good relationship and to be a better social personality. It is required for the employees to understand and regulate their emotions so as to develop higher EI to excel in their performance.

The emotions are different for every individuals, they differ from each other in terms of their physical abilities and psychological abilities. Each individual is subjected to lot of variations in their emotions and there may be reasons to it. But it is utterly important to manage and control them at the same level to be efficient.

EI has the ability to promote emotional and intellectual growth by accessing, generating and assisting to understand the emotions. It is the ability of combining the concepts of emotions and intelligence, which are related to mental abilities of individuals. (Mayer and Salovey (1997).

To understand other's emotions, draw information out of these emotions requires social skills through which individuals can cope with the changing social demands among the consumers. This skill is considered to be an ability to flow with the other person's emotions and act according to the changing situations.

Since the job performance depends on behavior and productivity of the individuals, it is important that employees maintain a good behavior, attitude and interpersonal relationship to aim at higher performance. Job performance is the value of an individual's contribution to an organization by executing specific tasks over a period of time. (Motowidlo, 2003). The alignment of the employee's actions with the company's objectives will have greater impact in achieving the organizational goals. Job performance of the employees are also enhanced by ability to understand the emotions of others be it customers or colleagues in the workplace. Achieving the targets, employee turnover, customer satisfaction, regularity and supervisor's feedback are also used to measure the performance of employees.

EI helps in being less prone to engage in problematic situations and to unpleasant behaviors in the workplace. EI helps to learn individual and social skills which lead to execution of being aware of self, motivation, regulating self, empathy, and social relationships. People with considerable level of EI have proved better work performance and they are also considered as predictors of work performance. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) significantly argued that higher EI contributes to better reasoning, decision-making, and social functioning, positioning it as a critical factor in personal and professional success.

## OBJECTIVES

To understand the level of EI among the automobile sales executives.

To analyze the impact of dimensions of EI on job performance of sales executives.

## DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTS

This descriptive study is confined to the sales executives working in various car brand showrooms in Coimbatore. Among approximately around 600 sales executives who directly involved in end to end process of selling cars at various branded show rooms, data were collected from 82 sales executives which is considered as representative sample size. The data was collected by administering two sets of standard questionnaires by Daniel Goleman on EI and Job performance questionnaire by Donald Peterson. The questionnaires consisted of statements using a five point Likert scale with options Always (5), Usually(4), Sometimes(3), Occasionally(2) and Rarely(1). The data were collected on the dimensions of EI including self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social skills, and social awareness. In addition to this data on the dimensions of job performance reliability, persistence and rules is collected using a five point Likert scale.

**Table 1: Reliability statistics on EI and Job performance**

EI	
Value	N
0.827	25



Job performance	
Value	N
0.564	10

The Cronbach's alpha value 0.827 and 0.564, which is almost nearing to 0.6, on EI the job performance were considered as reliable.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

EI is the ability to grasp feelings and also to alter and control feelings. It can be one's own feelings or others. Daniel Goleman (1998b) stated that EI is mastering the skills of awareness and regulation. Zakkariya, K. A. (2008) mentioned that evolution of the concept EI extended the research opportunities in linking performance with personality. Such development helped the management to realize the requirement of EI skills among the employees to improve the performance which was a real concern. Enhancing the EI skills among the present era sales executives lead to higher notable performance

Bar-on (1997) views EI as non-cognitive skill which is a strong combination of social and emotional skills influence the ability of being flexible with pressure and demands in the environment. Anju Puri (2010) depicted from the research that executives with higher level of EI performed their job in a better way.

An analysis by Dogru (2022) examined the links between EI and various employee outcomes, including job performance indicate that EI is positively related to job performance while negatively related to job stress. Grobelny, J., Radke, P., & Paniotova-Maczka, D. (2021) proved that EI and Job performance resulted in significant positive correlation.

Nasir, S. Z., Bamber, D., & Mahmood, N. (2023) in their empirical research supported the argument that EI drives the job performance. Abebe, D. W., & Singh, D. P. (2023) proved in their research among the employees of public higher education Institutions that EI has positive correlation with job satisfaction and performance.

According to Ali and Bahram (2013) success in the education, business and interpersonal relationship depends on EI also. Positive and negative emotions can be effectively used by the employees to improve their performance. The employees who assess and manage their emotions have higher EI and have greater job satisfaction. These employees also used to handle the stressful situations effectively.

In his study, Brown (2014) investigated that EI influences the leadership style of and sales performance. Managing emotions during the interaction with customers is very important to sales people as their performance contributes more in revenue generation of the organization. Generating revenue in the organization is more in the hands of sales people

According to Stein (2009), EI is defined as the ability to stay in tune with the external world, recognize situations and to connect with others while keeping in account own life. Both the leader and sales person are working in a very complex and dynamic roles are subjected to encounter various emotions while they are interacting with the customers, suppliers and the managers. Emotions can be highly productive or destructive at times which depends on the individual's ability to drive them.

The study by Kamyabi and Nahid (2013) explores the role of self-regulation as a key dimension of EI in their study among teachers from Iran. Ability to manage emotions in teaching profession helps to improve the job performance. The study highlights the importance of ability to manage emotions is crucial for enhancing teachers' job performance and their interactions in the classroom.

Schunk (1996) explained self-regulation comprises three subcomponents namely observation, judgment, and reaction with respect to self. Observing self is an intentional focus on an individual to understand his/her behavior, Self-judgment refers to comparing the self to compare his current performance and goals that are to be achieved, and self-reaction is the evaluation of performance.

The concept of EI suggests that one must possess abilities such as being able to motivate, regulate emotions, to control impulses, to empathize others, and to be hopeful. Further people who are emotionally intelligent have two key factors which are; personal competence- ability to regulate oneself and social competence- ability to manage relationship. And hence EI is a combination of all these factors and can be improved by education (Goleman.D.1995).

To be an expert in collaborating with others in a positive way and effective in utilizing the reaction centered regulation it requires a high level of EI (Goleman, 1995).

This comprehensive research by Story P A et al. (2011) examined EI as a significant predictor of job performance among various occupations. The study primarily focused to find out the role of EI in job performance and cognitive ability.



Paulo et al. (2006) found that performance appraisals, salary increments and holding superior ranks by employees highly reflected the contribution of EI. Be it improved communication skills or articulating ideas and thought process effectively required EI. It was also proved that the dimensions of EI have significant contribution in managing emotions and attaining higher level jobs in the workplace.

Jorfi, H. et.al (2010) in their study conducted among the employees of education administration of Iran mentioned that EI is important to an individual to succeed in the workplace. EI is not only applicable in the area of performance and managing relationships; it is used in selection of employees, development programs for individuals and teams. For an organization to be successful it should emphasize on the development of the employee's EI to work effectively.

Kumar, R. (2014) said that Salary, opportunity for growth, facilities, and benefits are some of the major factors that ensure that the employees are emotionally balanced and motivated to work. The study was conducted in Himachal Pradesh University, where there was continuous variations in the budget and many restrictions imposed which imposed negative feelings in the employees and fluctuates their emotional balance and the same had an effect on their performance. The EI on the basis of its dimensions self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management impacted the job performance.

Rahman, R. A. & Shamsuddin .N (2014) reported that employees working in call centers are exposed to customers of different nature and personality. It is expected that these employees maintain their composure and provide professional assistance to the customers. Failure to meet the expectation of regulating their emotions and to match with the emotions of customers will result reduced brand image. A strong positive correlation was found between high level of EI and job performance.

### 3. DATA ANALYSIS

Majority of the respondents are males (70%), there were 30% females. It shows that males hold the majority of sales jobs in automobile industry. 82% and 18% of them comprised the young age group 20-30 years and middle age respectively. Majority of the respondents (62.2%) of them are graduates, 24.4% of them have completed their Diploma in Automobile Engineering and there were 13.4% of the respondents with post graduate qualification.

H1: The opinion on dimensions of EI do not differ significantly among the Gender.

The mean values for female employees are higher than that of male employees for four dimensions except self –regulation and social skills. Both male and female employees score high mean value on self-awareness which are 4.14 and 4.2 respectively. The higher mean value on self –awareness for females imply their awareness about their emotions are more than male employees. The analysis of variance for this indicates the significant value for all dimensions of EI is less than 0.05. Hence it is inferred that, the opinions of male and female employees for the dimensions of EI differ, which means that male and female employees have different opinion on all the dimensions of EI in this research. (Annexure: Table 5).

H2: The opinion on dimensions of EI do not differ based on Age.

The respondents in the young age group indicated the higher mean values on self-awareness which implies that younger people are more aware of their emotions. Comparing with the other dimensions the mean value is higher side for both age groups on self-awareness. ANOVA indicates that the significant values for self-regulation and social awareness are less than (0.003 and 0.013 respectively) 0.05. Indicates except for self-regulation and social awareness the respondents have similar opinion for other dimensions of EI. (Annexure: Table 6)

H3: Respondents do not differ in their opinion on dimensions of Job performance based on gender.

The mean values indicate (Annexure Table 7) that opinion on dimensions of job performance differ among the male and females respondents. The mean value of reliability among males is highest numbering to 4.653, which suggesting that males are perceived to be more reliable in executing the job. Similarly the mean value for persistence (4.460) is highest among the male respondents which depicts that they tend to be more persistent in their jobs. On the other hand, the mean value for rules is highest among the females (4.450), suggesting female respondents are more obedient and adhere more strictly to company rules and regulations. ANOVA does not support this difference as the significant values are more than 0.05 for all the dimensions of job performance which indicates there is no significant difference in the job performance based on gender.

H4: Respondents do not differ significantly in job performance based on age.

The mean values suggest a clear differences in job performance across two age groups, (Annexure: Table 8). The dimensions of reliability shows the highest mean scores for both age groups (4.547 and 4.489) and among these respondents 20–30 years demonstrates the highest mean value for reliability indicating that younger respondents are perceived as more reliable in executing their job responsibilities. Also this age group, reports a higher mean value for persistence (4.437), reflecting greater perseverance in task performance. A similar trend is observed in adherence to company rules and regulations, with younger respondents showing slightly higher compliance. Despite these observed differences in mean scores, the results of the ANOVA analysis reveal that the p-values for all dimensions of job performance exceed the 0.05 significance level. Thus, it



is concluded that there is no statistically significant difference in job performance between respondents of different age groups.

H5: There is no significant difference in the EI among the respondents based education.

The mean values for self-awareness is highest among all the dimensions for all three groups of education. (Annexure: Table 9) The significant value for self-regulation and social awareness is less than 0.05 which shows that education has an effect on self-awareness and social-awareness. It is obvious that education helps employees to enhance their EI. The significance values of self-awareness, self-motivation, and social skills which are more than 0.05 indicates that these dimensions EI are not affected by the educational qualification of the respondents.

H6: Dimensions EI and job performance do not relate significantly.

The Pearson correlation values for each of the dimensions of EI on job performance indicates (Annexure Table 10) the social skills (0.387) and job performance are related which depicts that there is a high significant effect of social skills on job performance. Similarly the correlation values self-awareness, (0.306) self-regulation (0.262), self-motivation (0.195), Social awareness (0.259) of EI also has a significant positive relationship on job performance.

H7: EI and dimensions of job performance do not relate significantly.

The correlation test performed for the above hypothesis indicates all the dimensions of job performance are significantly impacted by the EI (Annexure Table 11). The correlation value of persistence with EI is highest and is 0.533. It means that emotionally intelligent people can perform persistently at work. The other two dimensions also have been influenced by EI with the correlation of 0.331 and 0.102 respectively for reliability and rules.

H7: EI and overall job performance do not relate significantly

This hypothesis is rejected as the correlation value of 0.382 between the two variables (Annexure Table 12) implies that there is a positive relationship between EI and job performance of employees. Based on the results of the correlation it can be inferred that employees with higher EI are better job performers and the improvements in the dimensions of EI can assist employees to enhance their performance.

H7: Self-motivation and rules followed in the company are not related.

Correlation analysis of self-motivation, a dimension of EI and rules, a dimension of job performance resulted at negative value of 0.035. (Annexure Table 13). This leads to an understanding that the rules and regulations by the company may have a negative impact on the employee's emotions. When employees are not enthusiastic and motivated, their performance deteriorates. Hence it is important for the organizations to form the norms and rules such that they bring in desired discipline among employees and also motivate them to perform better. In this case the hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 2: Age of the respondents**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid 20-30	67	81.7	81.7	81.7
30-40	15	18.3	18.3	100.0

**Table 4: Gender of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Female	25	30.5	30.5	30.5
Male	57	69.5	69.5	100
Total	82	100	100	

**Table 3: Education Demographics of the respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	PUC	20	24.4	24.4	24.4
	UG	51	62.2	62.2	86.6
	PG	11	13.4	13.4	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

**Table 5: ANOVA on Emotional Intelligence among the Gender**

Dimensions	N	Mean		F	Sig.
		Male	Female		
Self-awareness	82	4.14	4.2	0.153	0.696
Self-Regulation	82	3.642	3.472	0.837	0.363
Self-motivation	82	3.983	4.080	0.490	0.486
Social awareness	82	3.905	4.032	0.577	0.450
Social skills	82	4.098	4.056	0.063	0.802

**Table 6: ANOVA on Emotional Intelligence and Age**

Dimensions	N	Mean		F	Sig.
		20-30	30-40		
Self-awareness	82	4.191	4.013	0.970	0.328
Self-Regulation	82	3.707	3.067	9.251	0.003
Self-motivation	82	4.054	3.828	1.906	0.171
Social Awareness	82	4.033	3.547	6.433	0.013
Social Skills	82	4.137	3.853	2.061	0.155

**Table 7: ANOVA on Job Performance and Gender**

Dimensions	N	Mean		F	Sig
		Male	Female		
Reliability	82	4.653	4.485	1.428	0.236
Persistence	82	4.460	4.416	0.080	0.778
Rules	82	4.160	4.450	0.780	0.380



**Table8: ANOVA on Job performance and Age**

Dimensions	N	Mean		F	Sig
		20-30	30-40		
Reliability	82	4.547	4.489	0.120	0.730
Persistence	82	4.437	4.400	0.040	0.842
Rules	82	4.413	4.133	0.509	0.478

**Table 9: ANOVA on Emotional Intelligence and Education**

Dimensions	N	Mean			F	Sig
		PUC	UG	PG		
Self-awareness	82	4.400	4.098	4.000	2.098	0.128
Self-Regulation	82	3.910	3.616	2.891	7.168	0.001
Self-Motivation	82	3.950	4.055	3.927	0.367	0.694
Social Awareness	82	3.910	4.063	3.455	3.747	0.028
Social Skills	82	4.140	4.082	4.000	0.141	0.868

**Table 10: Correlation between dimensions Emotional Intelligence and Job performance**

Pearson Correlation		Job performance Average
Job Performance		1
Sig(2 tailed)		
N		82
Self-awareness		.306**
Sig.(2 tailed)		.005
N		82
Self -regulation		.262*
Sig.(2 tailed)		.017
N		82
Self-motivation		.195
Sig. (2 tailed)		.079
N		82
Social awareness		.259*
Sig.(2 tailed)		0.019
N		82
Social skills		.387**
Sig.(2 tailed)		.000
N		82
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)		
Correlation is significant at 05level (2 tailed)		

**Table11: Correlation between dimensions of Job performance and Emotional Intelligence**

Pearson Correlation	Emotional Intelligence Average
Emotional Intelligence Sig.(2tailed) N	1 82
Reliability Sig.( 2tailed) N	.331** .002 82
Persistence Sig. (2 tailed) N	.533** .000 82
Rules Sig. (2 tailed) N	.102 .364 82
**Correlation is significant at .01 level (2 tailed)	

**Table 12: Correlation Analysis on Emotional Intelligence and Job performance**

	Emotional Intelligence Average	Job performance average
Emotional Intelligence Pearson Correlation Sig.(2 tailed) N	1 82	.382** .000 82
Job performance Average Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	.382** .000 82	1 82

**Table 13: Correlation between Rules and Self-motivation**

	Self - motivation average	Rules average
Self- motivation average Pearson Correlation Sig(2 tailed) N	1 82	-.035** .757 82
Rules Average Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.0355** .757 82	1 82

## FINDINGS

Majority of the respondents are males which shows that males hold the majority of sales jobs in automobile industry. Majorly young graduates are selected for automobile sales job which could be their interest in automobiles and their approach to customers will be pleasant. Diploma in automobile engineering are also considered for sales jobs considering their expertise in technical aspects which helps the customers to improve their technical information about their vehicles. Both male and female sales executives taken for the study have same level of self-awareness, self-motivation, self-regulation, social skills and social awareness. The level of EI is same among the employees from different age groups also except of self-regulation and social awareness. Young sales executives in automobile sales have more self-regulation and social awareness



Similarly there is no difference in job performance among male and female respondents Also there is no difference among the employees about job performance dimensions such as reliability, persistence, rules among employees of different age groups.

Education qualification of the sales executives differentiate them in their EI which means that the level of education impacts the level of EI.

Correlation between EI and job performance infers that job performance will increase positively when the all the dimensions of EI increases. The overall EI also increases the individual dimensions of job performance. Hence it is concluded that there is a strong influence of EI on job performance as indicated by researchers in the previous years. The correlation between self-motivation and rules was found to be negative, which shows that lesser the flexible working environment for employees, lesser will be their motivation levels.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The present day sales jobs require high degree of communication, empathy, assessing the needs and persuading others. The skills required to achieve these are intellectual in nature and also an emotional ability. Employees who can manage and balance both the intellectual and emotional skills can be highly productive. Knowledge and skills may help a person to succeed, but currently the understanding of oneself and other's emotions will help triumph. EI helps in handling irrational fears, stressful situations. EI is the measure of the degree to which one uses his/her reasoning in the process of emotional response which could be different depending on the situation.

EI helps people to perform better by aiding in development of good relationships at work, team works. The success of an employee working is directly related to his EI and might be particularly essential to perform the responsibilities of sales executives. Passionate work might be distressing for a few employees, particularly those who lack autonomy, and the capacity to direct one's feelings might offer workers some assistance with coping with this anxiety. This research indicated a positive relation between the EI and job performance. It is recommended to provide a flexible work environment that allows employees the freedom to work efficiently and productively so as to improve the job performance. Many organizations supports the opinion of EI impacting the job performance, provide various training programs to their employees on EI and personality development programs

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