



TECHNIUM
SOCIAL SCIENCES JOURNAL

www.techniumscience.com



Vol. 73/2025
A New Decade for Social Changes

PLUS
COMMUNICATION P



International
Communication & PR

The Relationship between Emotional intelligence, Personal effectiveness and Team spirit of Staff in Vietnamese Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract. This study aims to explore and analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence, teamwork spirit, and individual effectiveness of employees working in higher education institutions in Vietnam. Based on Bar-On's (2006) theoretical model of social and emotional intelligence and group dynamics theory, the study develops a structural equation model to examine the relationships between the variables. Data were collected from 625 employees working at public and private universities through a questionnaire with validated reliability and validity. The PLS-SEM analysis results indicate that emotional intelligence has a positive and significant impact on teamwork spirit and individual effectiveness. Furthermore, teamwork spirit also plays a mediating role in the relationship between emotional intelligence and individual effectiveness. These findings highlight the importance of developing emotional competencies and building a collaborative work environment to enhance work performance in the higher education sector in Vietnam. The study proposes managerial recommendations related to emotional skills training, strengthening teamwork culture, and strategies for improving human resource effectiveness in educational organizations.

Keywords. Emotional intelligence; teamwork spirit; individual effectiveness; higher education; Vietnam

1. Problem Statement

In the context of an increasingly complex and competitive work environment, Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is considered a key factor contributing to enhanced performance and organizational cohesion. Numerous studies have shown that beyond professional competence, the ability to recognize, regulate one's own emotions, and empathize with others plays a decisive role in managing stress, fostering cooperation, and maintaining work motivation (Goleman, 1995; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Cherniss, 2010). EQ is defined as the capacity to perceive, regulate, and utilize both personal and others' emotions effectively in social interactions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). Furthermore, in the growing trend of teamwork within modern organizations, team spirit—defined as the degree of collaboration, shared responsibility, and mutual support among members—has gained attention as a potential mediating or moderating factor in the relationship between psychological traits and work outcomes (Hoegl & Gemuenden, 2001; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

In particular, within the high-pressure environment of higher education institutions—where interpersonal relationships are critical—emotional intelligence becomes a foundational factor enabling staff to cope with challenges, manage conflicts, and sustain high levels of work performance (Goleman, 1995; Wong & Law, 2002; Nguyen et al., 2022). Recent studies have also indicated that EQ not only improves adaptability and intrinsic motivation but also enhances work performance through knowledge sharing, conflict reduction, and stronger group cohesion (Nguyen, 2023; Trinh et al., 2020). This underscores that, in higher education settings—where coordination among teaching, administrative, and research activities is crucial—team spirit acts as the glue that bonds individuals, facilitates the effective use of emotional intelligence, and boosts performance.

Therefore, modern organizations increasingly value EQ as a critical criterion in recruitment, training, and human resource development, aiming to build a workforce that is agile, adaptable to change, and capable of maintaining high performance in diverse and demanding environments (Cherniss, 2010; Bar-On, 2006; Carmeli, 2003). Investment in developing employees' emotional intelligence not only enhances individual effectiveness but also contributes to strengthening cohesion and overall organizational performance. This demonstrates that personal performance and team cohesion are two fundamental factors determining organizational success in today's competitive landscape.

However, many organizations are currently facing challenges in maintaining consistent work performance and enhancing member engagement. According to Saks (2006), a lack of engagement can lead to decreased motivation, low performance, and increased turnover. Additionally, personal factors such as burnout, lack of goal clarity, and insufficient internal support have also been identified as causes of declining work effectiveness (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Meanwhile, team cohesion not only improves task execution but also creates a positive work environment that fosters creativity and mutual support among members (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Costa, Passos & Bakker, 2014).

As a result, research and interventions aimed at improving personal effectiveness and fostering sustainable team spirit have become essential requirements for modern organizations. In Vietnam, amidst deepening international economic integration, enterprises are placing increasing emphasis on enhancing individual performance and team cohesion to maintain competitive advantage. However, studies on the interrelationships between the three factors—emotional intelligence, personal effectiveness, and team spirit—within higher education institutions remain limited. Moreover, many organizations continue to grapple with issues such as lack of employee initiative, limited teamwork skills, and low organizational commitment (Nguyen & Le, 2020). According to Pham et al. (2021), factors such as unmotivating work environments, ineffective recognition mechanisms, and generational differences in Vietnamese enterprises have heightened the barriers to optimizing work performance and developing team spirit. Additionally, pressures from traditional management culture and insufficient investment in soft skill development are also considered causes of weakened internal cohesion (Nguyen, 2019). Some international studies have proposed models in which team spirit may play a mediating role in the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance (Prati et al., 2003; Jordan & Troth, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2022). However, empirical evidence within the specific cultural, organizational, and personnel contexts of Vietnam remains scarce. This highlights the urgent need for empirical research to clarify these relationships and provide a scientific basis for educational managers in developing emotional competence and fostering a collaborative working culture within institutions.

Given the current transformation of higher education institutions in Vietnam—driven by the demands of educational reform, institutional autonomy, and international integration—enhancing the quality of human resources is not only a goal but also a prerequisite for sustainable development. Employees, including both faculty and administrative staff, play a central role in the implementation of teaching, research, and university governance activities. Their individual work performance depends not only on professional qualifications but is also profoundly influenced by psychological and social factors, specifically emotional intelligence and team spirit. Therefore, creating a flexible working environment that emphasizes mutual support and emotional skill development is becoming imperative to improve performance and promote team cohesion in Vietnamese organizations, particularly in the education sector.

2. Theoretical Basis and Literature Review

2.1. Issues of Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

2.1.1 Definition of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others in social relationships (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). According to Goleman (1995), EQ not only includes awareness of personal emotions but also relates to the ability to control emotions, motivate oneself, empathize with others, and maintain effective social relationships. Emotional intelligence has been shown to have a profound impact on many aspects of the work environment, from individual performance to organizational commitment (Cherniss, 2010). Studies also indicate that employees with high levels of EQ often have the ability to adapt well to pressure, resolve conflicts effectively, and build sustainable colleague relationships, thereby contributing positively to the success of the organization (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Therefore, the development of emotional intelligence is considered an important strategy in modern human resource management.

2.1.2 The components of EQ

EQ consists of five main components, each playing a crucial role in developing the ability to perceive and manage emotions in social environments. The first component is self-awareness, defined as the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions, and to recognize their influence on thoughts and behavior (Goleman, 1995). Second, self-management involves the ability to control and regulate one's emotions in stressful situations, thereby maintaining calmness and assertiveness (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Next is motivation, which Goleman (1995) describes as the ability to maintain enthusiasm and focus on long-term goals, even when faced with failures or obstacles. Social awareness is the fourth component, reflecting the ability to empathize and understand the emotions of others, thereby promoting cooperation and understanding in social relationships (Bar-On, 2006). Finally, relationship management is the ability to use communication and influencing skills to build, maintain, and improve personal and professional relationships (Goleman, 1998). These components interact with each other and form a powerful system that helps individuals respond effectively to emotions and achieve success in social and professional environments.

2.1.3 EQ Models

Emotional intelligence (EQ) models have continuously evolved and been updated to reflect advancements in research and practical application. One of the more recent models is the Petrides and Furnham (2001) model, known as the Trait Emotional Intelligence Model. This model focuses on individual emotional traits, arguing that EQ is not just the ability to recognize and regulate emotions but also a part of personality traits. According to Petrides and Furnham, EQ involves the ability to perceive and understand one's own emotions and those of others, and

to use emotions to resolve life situations (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) EQ model, also known as the Four-Branch Model of EQ, builds upon previous models and particularly emphasizes the ability to recognize emotions and use them to improve work performance and social relationships. This model includes four factors: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Recently, Mayer et al. (2008) added several factors to assess the maturity level of EQ through stages of personal and social development, making this model more flexible and applicable in research and practice (Mayer et al., 2004). In addition, the Wong and Law (2002) EQ model, known as the Emotional Intelligence in Leadership Model, has been widely used in leadership and management research. This model emphasizes the connection between EQ and leadership factors, arguing that effective leadership relies not only on professional skills but also on the ability to understand and manage personal and employee emotions (Wong & Law, 2002).

2.2. Issues related to individual work performance

2.2.1 Concept of individual work performance

Individual work performance is defined as the level of task completion and achievement of work goals by an individual in an organizational environment. According to Williams and Anderson (1991), individual job performance includes both behaviors directly related to the task and extra-role behaviors, such as maintaining a positive attitude and contributing to the overall success of the organization. Job performance is not only based on work results but also includes the ability to work in a team, problem-solving, and creativity at work (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). In the modern work environment, factors such as job satisfaction, ability to work under pressure, and communication skills also play an important role in improving individual performance (Judge & Bono, 2001). Research also shows that the development of emotional intelligence (EQ) can contribute to improving individual work performance by helping individuals manage emotions, communicate effectively, and cooperate better in the workplace (Goleman, 1995).

2.2.2 Constituent elements of performance

Work performance is the result of the interaction between many individual and organizational factors, and these factors can affect the ability to complete tasks and achieve work goals. According to Borman and Motowidlo (1997), work performance is composed of two main factors: task performance and contextual performance. Task performance is directly related to performing job tasks, achieving work goals, and meeting organizational work standards (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). Meanwhile, contextual performance refers to behaviors that are not recorded in the formal job description, but have an important impact on the organization, such as cooperative behavior, creativity, and a spirit of supporting colleagues. In addition to these two factors, some studies also suggest that factors such as motivation, self-awareness, communication skills, and problem-solving skills play an important role in promoting individual work performance (Judge & Bono, 2001). In particular, EQ has been shown to be a strong factor influencing work performance, as it helps individuals manage emotions effectively, resolve conflicts, and maintain positive relationships in the workplace (Goleman, 1995).

The factors constituting performance in different professions can be very diverse, reflecting the specific nature of the work and the working environment. In the manufacturing industry, work performance is often measured by labor productivity, product quality, and the ability to optimize production processes. The factors constituting performance in this industry include professional skills, employee participation in process improvement, and teamwork

ability (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). In addition, work motivation and job satisfaction also have an important influence on performance in the manufacturing industry (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Specifically, in the education sector, the factors constituting performance are not only student learning outcomes but also include teaching quality, the ability to impart knowledge, and the participation of lecturers in research and academic activities (Tinto, 1993). In particular, the professional development of lecturers and the interaction between lecturers and students also contribute to improving overall performance in the educational environment. In Vietnam, these factors profoundly affect work efficiency. A study by Nguyen (2019) showed that in the working environment at manufacturing companies in Vietnam, work motivation and job satisfaction have a direct relationship with job performance, especially when positive working environment factors and career development opportunities are emphasized. Moreover, in educational institutions, improving factors related to teaching and research has helped improve learning outcomes and student satisfaction (Le & Hoang, 2020).

2.3. Teamwork and the role of Teamwork

2.3.1 Concept of cohesion and teamwork (Teamwork Quality – TWQ)

Cohesion and teamwork are important factors that contribute to work effectiveness in organizations. Employee cohesion within a group not only reflects the level of cooperation and interaction among members but also has a significant impact on the overall work performance of the organization (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). Studies have shown that when employees feel connected to their teams, they tend to contribute more, share information, and support each other to achieve common goals (Baker et al., 2006). Teamwork is understood as the ability of individuals in a group to work together effectively, with a clear common goal and agreement on how to perform tasks. Strong teamwork not only enhances relationships between individuals but also promotes creativity and more effective problem-solving (Edmondson, 1999). This is especially important in modern work environments, where complexity and rapid change require teams to be flexible and creative. Therefore, cohesion and teamwork also have a positive impact on job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates in organizations. According to a study by Cohen & Bailey (1997), highly cohesive groups often achieve superior performance due to cooperation, shared responsibility, and the ability to rely on each other in their work. On the other hand, groups lacking cohesion will have difficulty maintaining teamwork, which can lead to internal conflicts, reduced performance, and job dissatisfaction (Dyer, 1984).

In summary, cohesion and teamwork are indispensable factors in building and maintaining an effective work environment, helping organizations achieve long-term goals and sustainable development. **Đồng đội, điều này có thể dẫn đến mâu thuẫn nội bộ, hiệu suất giảm sút và sự không hài lòng trong công việc** (Dyer, 1984).

2.3.2 The Role of Team Spirit in Organizations

Team spirit plays a crucial role in building and sustaining organizational development, especially in the context of modern work environments where complex tasks require collaboration and coordination among group members. According to Katzenbach & Smith (1993), team spirit not only fosters cooperation among members but also contributes to the creation of a dynamic, creative, and problem-solving-oriented work environment. When team members are connected and demonstrate strong team spirit, they are more likely to share information, support one another, and achieve common goals (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). Edmondson's (1999) research also indicates that strong team spirit can enhance psychological safety within the group, allowing members to freely share ideas and provide constructive feedback without fear of criticism. This is a critical factor in promoting creativity and innovation, particularly in organizations that must quickly adapt to changes and confront new

challenges. Furthermore, Cohen & Bailey (1997) highlighted that team cohesion not only enables higher work performance but also improves job satisfaction and reduces turnover rates, as members feel recognized and supported in their daily work.

Team spirit also plays a vital role in shaping organizational culture. A group with a high level of team spirit not only achieves strong work performance but also fosters collaborative relationships and mutual trust, which serve as a solid foundation for the sustainable development of the organization (Schein, 2010). From a management perspective, promoting team spirit can enhance leadership effectiveness and improve strategic decision-making, as both leaders and employees contribute ideas and jointly determine the organization's direction. Therefore, team spirit is not only a key factor in improving work efficiency but also instrumental in creating a positive work environment where individuals can grow and dedicate themselves fully to the organization.

2.4. Overview of the Research

2.4.1 The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Job Performance

The study by Ho (2025) conducted a bibliometric and thematic analysis to identify current research trends and future directions regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence (EQ) and job performance. The findings indicate that this relationship has long been a central focus of research and continues to evolve, particularly in fields such as business and management, with a concentration of studies in developed countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. The thematic analysis identified five major research directions and confirmed a strong relationship between EQ and job performance. Especially in key sectors such as education, healthcare, information technology, banking, and hospitality, this topic has attracted significant scholarly attention and is expected to continue generating noteworthy research in the future.

2.4.2 The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Work Engagement

The study by Maguire et al. (2025) demonstrated that emotional intelligence (EQ) has a positive impact on work engagement among university students. Specifically, EQ was found to have a positive correlation with academic engagement ($r = 0.350$) and academic performance ($r = 0.407$), with academic engagement serving as a mediating factor in the relationship between EQ and academic performance. These findings suggest that enhancing EQ can improve work engagement, which in turn may lead to higher levels of job performance.

2.4.3 The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence (EQ), Work Engagement, and Job Performance

International studies have highlighted the close relationship between emotional intelligence (EQ), job performance, and organizational engagement. Goleman (1995) was among the pioneers in demonstrating that EQ—with components such as self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management—has a strong influence on work performance and teamwork capabilities. According to Goleman, individuals with high EQ tend to manage stress more effectively, maintain positive workplace relationships, and consequently achieve higher job performance. Research by Mayer et al. (2004) further clarified that emotional intelligence can predict employee performance, particularly in environments requiring high levels of interaction and collaboration, such as customer service and management roles. A study by Carmeli (2003) revealed that emotional intelligence not only affects individual job performance but also significantly impacts employee engagement. Specifically, employees with high EQ are more likely to build strong relationships with colleagues and supervisors, leading to higher levels of work engagement and job satisfaction. Similarly, Goleman et al. (2002)

affirmed that employee engagement is enhanced when individuals feel recognized and are capable of effectively managing negative emotions, thanks to the development of emotional intelligence.

Studies by Salovey & Mayer (1990) and Bar-On (1997) also concur that emotional intelligence (EQ) is a critical factor in improving job performance within organizations. Specifically, they found that employees who possess strong self-awareness and emotional self-regulation are more capable of maintaining consistent productivity under stressful conditions. In his later work, Bar-On (2006) emphasized that employees with high EQ tend to exhibit stronger engagement and commitment to their organizations, which ultimately enhances performance and reduces turnover rates. The relationship between EQ, job performance, and engagement has been examined across various industries, ranging from service sectors to manufacturing. Wong & Law (2002), in their study of EQ and job performance in Asian business environments, found that EQ significantly influences individual performance and team collaboration, particularly in high-stress workplaces requiring substantial social interaction.

More recently, Naqshbandi et al. (2023) applied the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model to investigate how hybrid work models affect job performance through the mediating role of work engagement. The results revealed that flexible work arrangements positively impact job performance, with work engagement serving as a key mediator in this relationship. Although this study did not directly address EQ, it suggests that factors such as job flexibility and engagement influence performance, and EQ may play a crucial role in enhancing these factors.

In summary, international research has consistently affirmed the vital role of emotional intelligence in enhancing job performance and fostering employee engagement within organizations. Employees with high levels of EQ not only tend to perform better but also contribute to building a more collaborative and engaged work environment.

2.5. Related Research Models

2.5.1. The Emotional Intelligence Model of Wong & Law (2002)

This model was developed based on the theoretical framework of Salovey and Mayer (1990), who defined emotional intelligence (EI) as "the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate one's own emotions and those of others in order to guide thinking and behavior effectively." Unlike earlier measurement scales that were often complex and difficult to apply in organizational settings, the model proposed by Wong and Law simplified and operationalized the structure of emotional intelligence into four distinct, independently measurable components, making it more accessible for empirical research. Specifically, the model consists of four core dimensions: (1) **Self-emotional appraisal** – the ability of an individual to understand and be aware of their own emotions; (2) **Others' emotional appraisal** – the capacity to perceive and interpret the emotions of others; (3) **Use of emotion** – the ability to harness positive emotions to enhance work motivation and performance; and (4) **Regulation of emotion** – the ability to effectively regulate and manage emotions in various situations (Wong & Law, 2002).

2.5.2 Spreitzer's Model of Personal Effectiveness

One of the foundational theoretical models for measuring personal effectiveness is the psychological empowerment model developed by Spreitzer (1995). This model builds upon the theoretical framework of Thomas and Velthouse (1990), which emphasizes that the perception of empowerment is a central factor driving intrinsic motivation and employee performance.

The structure of the model comprises four core dimensions that reflect an individual's subjective perception of their role and influence at work: (1) **Meaning** – the degree to which individuals perceive their work as aligned with their personal values, ideals, and standards; (2)

Competence – the individual’s belief in their capability to successfully perform work tasks; (3) **Self-determination** – the extent to which individuals feel autonomous in initiating and regulating their work behaviors; and (4) **Impact** – the perception of one’s influence over work outcomes and organizational goals (Spreitzer, 1995). These four dimensions form a comprehensive framework for assessing employees’ perceived effectiveness and self-worth in the workplace.

2.5.3 Hoegl & Gemuenden’s Team Spirit Model (2001)

The Teamwork Quality (TWQ) model is one of the most comprehensive and influential theoretical frameworks in this research field, proposed by Hoegl and Gemuenden (2001). According to the authors, team spirit is not only the presence of collaboration but also the quality of interaction among team members – which forms the foundation for team performance and innovation. Specifically, the team working quality model is composed of six key elements: (1) **Communication** – the extent to which information is exchanged fully, accurately, and in a timely manner between team members; (2) **Coordination** – the ability to effectively organize and align the actions of team members to achieve a common goal; (3) **Balance of Member Contributions** – the degree to which members contribute proportionally to their abilities and responsibilities; (4) **Mutual Support** – the willingness to help, share responsibilities, and encourage each other in the work process; (5) **Effort** – the extent to which members are committed and exert effort in the team’s work; and (6) **Cohesion** – the degree of bonding, trust, and consensus among team members (Hoegl & Gemuenden, 2001).

The TWQ model was established through empirical research conducted on several workgroups in technical and technological organizations and has since been widely tested in other fields such as healthcare, education, and public services. The research findings of Hoegl and Gemuenden indicate that the quality of team spirit not only directly affects team performance but also indirectly enhances satisfaction, personal motivation, and innovation within the organization. This model is particularly useful when applied to organizations such as universities, where collaboration between faculty, staff, and functional units is essential to achieving common educational and research goals.

2.5.4 Theoretical Model of the Relationship between EQ – Teamwork – Personal Effectiveness (Prati et al., 2003; Jordan & Troth, 2011)

According to Prati et al. (2003), emotional intelligence positively influences team spirit, as individuals with high emotional competence often possess the ability to listen, empathize, regulate emotions, and maintain positive relationships within a group. These capabilities contribute to the development of a trustworthy, supportive, and cooperative working environment—core elements of effective teamwork. When team spirit is strengthened, members tend to share responsibilities, sustain their efforts, and coordinate more effectively, thereby improving individual performance as well as overall organizational effectiveness.

Building upon this perspective, Jordan and Troth (2011) proposed a model in which team spirit plays a mediating role in the relationship between emotional intelligence and individual job performance. They argued that while EQ may have a direct impact on performance, much of its effect is exerted indirectly through group dynamics. Specifically, emotional intelligence enhances the quality of group interactions, reduces conflict, and promotes collaboration, thereby improving task performance at the individual level.

In addition, several studies suggest that team spirit may also serve as a moderating factor, either strengthening or weakening the relationship between EQ and personal effectiveness depending on the quality of group interactions (Jordan & Troth, 2011). This theoretical model provides a critical foundation for better understanding the roles of emotional

competencies and group factors in promoting work effectiveness in modern organizations, particularly in interdisciplinary contexts such as universities.

Applying this model to research in Vietnamese higher education institutions not only clarifies the relationships among these three core variables but also offers practical intervention strategies to enhance work performance through emotional competency development and the cultivation of a positive team-oriented culture.

2.5.5 Research Model

Based on the theoretical foundations previously discussed (Wong & Law, 2002; Spreitzer, 1995; Hoegl & Gemuenden, 2001; Prati et al., 2003; Jordan & Troth, 2011), the authors propose the following research model:

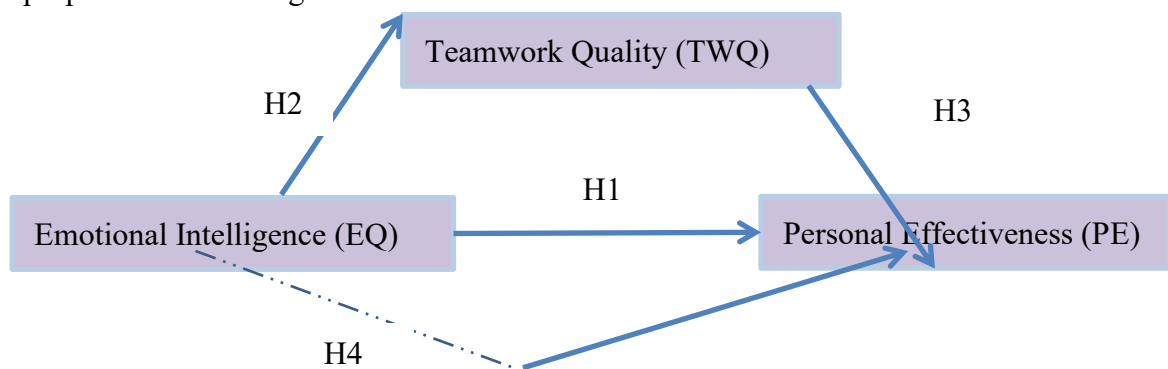


Figure 1. Research Model

(Source: Proposed by the authors)

Table 1. Research Hypotheses

No	Hypotheses	Relationship	Expected Sign
H1	Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has a positive impact on Personal Effectiveness (PE)	EQ → PE	Positive (+)
H2	Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has a positive impact on Teamwork Quality (TWQ).	EQ → TWQ	Positive (+)
H3	Teamwork Quality (TWQ) has a positive impact on Personal Effectiveness (PE).	TWQ → PE	Positive (+)
H4	Teamwork Quality (TWQ) mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Personal Effectiveness (PE).	EQ → TWQ → PE (Mediated pathway)	Positive (+)

(Source: Proposed by the authors)

The study by Law et al. (2004) revealed that emotional intelligence (EQ) has a positive impact on job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Similarly, research by Côté and Miners (2006) affirmed that EQ serves as a compensatory mechanism for limitations in cognitive ability when predicting job performance. This finding is particularly relevant in the context of higher education, where the nature of work requires flexibility in adaptation and the capacity to resolve conflicts with subtlety and tact. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the personal effectiveness of employees in higher education institutions.

According to Prati et al. (2003), emotional intelligence enhances trust, commitment, and collaborative spirit within teams. Jordan and Troth (2004) also emphasized that individuals with high EQ tend to adapt more easily and collaborate more effectively with others, thanks to their ability to regulate emotions and create a harmonious work environment. Based on these theoretical and empirical foundations, the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the teamwork quality of employees in higher education institutions.

Combining Spreitzer’s (1995) model with numerous studies, it has been demonstrated that a positive team working environment contributes to enhanced intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and reduced conflict and stress—all of which directly impact individual performance (Marks et al., 2001; Mathieu et al., 2008). This is particularly true in the context of higher education, where employees face pressures from teaching, research, and community service. In such settings, support and effective collaboration from colleagues become valuable resources enabling staff to achieve higher personal effectiveness. Based on these theoretical and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Teamwork quality has a positive effect on the personal effectiveness of employees in higher education institutions.

Research by Prati et al. (2003) and Jordan & Troth (2011) has provided empirical evidence for this relationship, showing that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to foster positive group environments, thereby enhancing engagement, satisfaction, and individual performance. This is especially relevant in higher education institutions, where the work is highly interactive and requires close coordination across departments, disciplines, and functional roles. Based on this theoretical and practical foundation, the following mediating hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Teamwork quality mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and the personal effectiveness of employees in higher education institutions.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research method to test the proposed theoretical model concerning the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EQ), Teamwork Quality (TWQ), and Personal Effectiveness (PE) among employees in higher education institutions in Vietnam. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire survey using a 5-point Likert scale for all observed variables. The measurement scales were adapted from validated instruments in prior studies, including Wong & Law (2002) for emotional intelligence, Hoegl & Gemuenden (2001) for teamwork quality, and Spreitzer (1995) for personal effectiveness.

Table 1. Variable Description and Measurement Scales

Variable	Code	Source	Scale Description
Emotional Intelligence	EQ	Wong & Law (2002) – WLEIS	- EQ1: I can recognize my emotions when I am experiencing them. - EQ2: I understand others' emotions when talking to them. - EQ3: I can control negative emotions. - EQ4: I use positive emotions to work effectively.
Teamwork Quality	TWQ	Hoegl & Gemuenden (2001)	- TWQ1: Team members communicate clearly and openly.

Personal Effectiveness	PE	Spreitzer (1995)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TWQ2: We coordinate smoothly in our tasks. - TWQ3: Members support each other when needed. - TWQ4: Everyone contributes actively to the overall result. - PE1: I feel capable of performing my job well. - PE2: I have control over what happens in my work. - PE3: The work I do is meaningful. - PE4: I influence decisions within my unit.
Gender, Age, Seniority, Position, etc.	Control Variables	Research Design	Demographic information used for descriptive statistics or auxiliary testing.

(Source: Developed by the authors)

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 . Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

After the survey and data processing stages, the study collected **n = 625** valid responses. The demographic characteristics of the survey sample are presented as follows:

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Categories	n	%
Gender	Male	248	39.7%
	Female	377	60.3%
Age	Under 30 years old	132	21.1%
	From 30 to under 40	274	43.8%
	From 40 to under 50	153	24.5%
	50 years old and above	66	10.6%
Years of Service	Under 30 years old	105	16.8%
	From 30 to under 40	211	33.8%
	From 40 to under 50	218	34.9%
Job Position	50 years old and above	91	14.6%
	Lecturer	448	71.7%
	Administrative Staff	139	22.2%

Source: Survey Analysis Results

The descriptive statistics reveal that females comprise the majority of the sample (60.3%), reflecting the typical gender composition in higher education institutions. The most common age group is from 30 to under 40 years old (43.8%), which corresponds to the core workforce in today's academic environment. In terms of years of service, most respondents have between 5 and under 20 years of experience (68.7%). A majority of participants are lecturers (71.7%), which aligns with the study's focus on the university teaching environment.

4.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Construct	Number of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Min	Max
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	16	3.87	0.54	2.44	4.93
Teamwork Quality (TWQ)	18	3.78	0.57	2.11	4.94
Personal Effectiveness (PE)	12	3.92	0.52	2.58	5.00

Source: Authors' data processing using SPSS 27.0

According to Hair et al. (2019), the results presented in Table 3 indicate that the mean values of the research constructs range from 3.78 to 3.92, reflecting a relatively high level of agreement among respondents on a 5-point Likert scale. The standard deviations are low (less than 0.6), indicating a relatively homogeneous dataset.

Table 4. Reliability Test of Measurement Scales

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Level of Acceptance
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	16	0.925	Excellent
Teamwork Quality (TWQ)	18	0.934	Excellent
Personal Effectiveness (PE)	12	0.912	Excellent

Source: Authors' data processing using SPSS 20.0

The results from Table 4 indicate that all measurement scales achieve Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.9, demonstrating very high reliability of the indicators. This confirms the suitability of the scales for further analysis (EFA and SEM). According to the KMO and Bartlett's Test, with **KMO = 0.933**, which is considered excellent (Kaiser suggests > 0.9 as optimal), and **Bartlett's Test significance = 0.000**, the conditions for factor analysis are satisfied. The extracted factors are presented as follows:

Table 5. Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Construct	Number of Items	Eigenvalue	Percentage of Variance Explained (%)	Factor Loadings
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	16	>1.0	~64%	0.612 – 0.853
Teamwork Quality (TWQ)	18	>1.0	~68%	0.603 – 0.878
Personal Effectiveness (PE)	12	>1.0	~66%	0.621 – 0.849

Source: Authors' data processing using SPSS 27.0

The results from Table 5 show that the EFA confirms all measurement scales possess a clear factor structure consistent with the original theoretical framework. No items were excluded due to low factor loadings.

4.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Table 6. Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Observed Value	Acceptable Threshold
Chi-square/df	2.347	< 3.0
GFI (Goodness of Fit)	0.918	> 0.90
CFI (Comparative Fit)	0.962	> 0.90
TLI (Tucker Lewis Index)	0.955	> 0.90
RMSEA	0.046	< 0.08

Source: Authors' data processing using SPSS 27.0

According to the results in Table 6, the measurement model demonstrates a very good fit with the empirical data. All model fit indices meet or exceed the recommended thresholds, indicating that the measurement structure is consistent with the observed data.

Table 7. Composite Reliability (CR) and Convergent Validity

Construct	CR (Composite Reliability)	AVE (Average Variance Extracted)
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	0.927	0.623
Teamwork Quality (TWQ)	0.938	0.659
Personal Effectiveness (PE)	0.911	0.601

Source: Authors' data processing using SPSS 27.0

Based on the results presented in Table 7, all constructs have **Composite Reliability (CR) greater than 0.7** and **Average Variance Extracted (AVE) greater than 0.5**, indicating good composite reliability and satisfactory convergent validity.

4.5. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Table 8. Model Fit Indices of the SEM

Fit Index	Observed Value	Acceptable Threshold
Chi-square/df	2.512	< 3.0
GFI	0.910	> 0.90
CFI	0.954	> 0.90
TLI	0.946	> 0.90
RMSEA	0.049	< 0.08

Source: Authors' data processing using SPSS 27.0

Based on the results in Table 8, the structural model demonstrates a good level of fit, allowing for the continuation of hypothesis testing.

Table 9. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standardized Coefficient (β)	p-value	Conclusion
H1	EQ \rightarrow TWQ	0.631	< 0.001	Supported
H2	EQ \rightarrow PE	0.386	< 0.001	Supported
H3	TWQ \rightarrow PE	0.428	< 0.001	Supported
H4	EQ \rightarrow TWQ \rightarrow PE (indirect relationship))	0.270	< 0.001	Supported

Source: Authors' data processing using SPSS 27.0

The results in Table 9 indicate that all four proposed hypotheses are supported with high statistical confidence ($p < 0.001$). Notably, **teamwork quality** plays a **mediating role** in the relationship between emotional intelligence (EQ) and personal effectiveness (PE).

4.6. Discussion of Research Findings

4.6.1 Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this study confirm all four proposed hypotheses, thereby affirming the positive and statistically significant relationships among **emotional intelligence (EQ)**, **teamwork quality (TWQ)**, and **personal effectiveness (PE)** of employees in Vietnamese higher education institutions. These findings not only reinforce prior theoretical foundations but also extend their applicability to the specific context of education in a developing country.

First, the results of the hypothesis testing for **H1** indicate that **emotional intelligence (EQ)** has a significantly positive effect on **teamwork quality** ($\beta = 0.631, p < 0.001$), aligning with the theoretical models of Prati et al. (2003) and Jordan & Troth (2011), which emphasize that the ability to recognize, regulate, and manage emotions enables individuals to build trust, empathy, and more effective communication within teams. The study by Jordan et al. (2002) also found that teams composed of members with high EQ tend to coordinate more effectively and experience fewer conflicts.

Second, the direct relationship between **EQ** and **personal effectiveness (H2)** is confirmed ($\beta = 0.386, p < 0.001$), which is consistent with the model proposed by Spreitzer (1995), where internal competence and self-awareness are regarded as key drivers of work motivation and task performance. According to Law et al. (2004), EQ functions as a foundational factor that helps individuals maintain a positive psychological state and cope effectively with work-related stress, thereby enhancing productivity and job satisfaction.

Third, the relationship between **teamwork quality** and **personal effectiveness (H3)** was also confirmed ($\beta = 0.428, p < 0.001$), which is fully consistent with the theoretical framework of Hoegl & Gemuenden (2001). Teamwork quality is considered a central factor in group effectiveness, fostering a supportive, cooperative, and cohesive work environment that enhances the performance of individual members. In addition, studies in the field of education (e.g., Chen et al., 2014) have also shown that collaboration among faculty members contributes to improved academic outcomes and innovation in teaching practices.

Finally, **Hypothesis H4** confirmed the **mediating role** of teamwork quality in the relationship between **emotional intelligence** and **personal effectiveness**. This finding supports the view of Prati et al. (2003), who argued that emotional intelligence not only has a direct influence on job performance but also exerts **indirect effects** through social mechanisms such as team collaboration, organizational cohesion, and trust. This is a notable contribution of the study, as it clarifies the **mechanism through which EQ influences performance** via a highly organizational mediator like teamwork quality (TWQ).

Thus, this study has established a solid theoretical and empirical foundation for the proposed model linking **emotional intelligence, teamwork quality, and personal effectiveness** in the context of higher education. The findings not only reinforce previous theoretical frameworks but also make a novel contribution by empirically validating the **important mediating role** of teamwork quality—an element that should be strategically invested in and developed as part of human resource management in Vietnamese universities.

4.6.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications

4.6.2.1 Theoretical implications:

This study confirms the role of **emotional intelligence (EQ)** in enhancing **teamwork quality** and **personal effectiveness**, thereby extending the applicability of the emotional intelligence model proposed by Wong & Law (2002) to the context of higher education. The findings also reinforce the assumptions of Prati et al. (2003) and Jordan & Troth (2011), which suggest that EQ not only has a direct impact on job performance but also exerts influence through social mechanisms such as team coordination and a positive working environment. Moreover, the study contributes to the development of **mediation models in organizational behavior research**. Specifically, it clarifies the **mediating role of teamwork quality** (Hoegl & Gemuenden, 2001) in the relationship between EQ and personal effectiveness, highlighting that **indirect effects through social dynamics** represent a critical structure in organizational

processes. This is a meaningful theoretical contribution, enriching the body of **SEM-based organizational psychology models** in the Vietnamese academic context.

4.6.2.2

Practical

implications:

The findings suggest that **developing emotional intelligence among faculty and staff** can serve as a strategic lever to enhance both **individual performance** and **team collaboration**. Therefore, universities should implement internal training programs focused on EQ-related skills such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy—shifting beyond purely technical competencies toward more holistic **social-emotional development**. In parallel, **strengthening teamwork quality** is essential to improving job performance. The mediating role of teamwork further implies that a **supportive, democratic, and cohesive work environment** is key to unlocking individual potential. Educational administrators are encouraged to invest in **team development strategies**, cultivate a **collaborative organizational culture**, and create **transparent communication platforms** to foster stronger internal connection and knowledge sharing.

5. Conclusion and Managerial Implications

5.1. Conclusion

Based on survey data from 625 valid responses, this study conducted a series of analyses, including **scale reliability testing**, **exploratory factor analysis (EFA)**, **confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)**, and **structural equation modeling (SEM)** to examine the relationships among **emotional intelligence (EQ)**, **teamwork quality (TWQ)**, and **personal effectiveness (PE)** of employees in Vietnamese higher education institutions. The results indicate that all measurement scales demonstrated high reliability (**Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7**; **AVE > 0.5**; **CR > 0.7**) and strong model fit (**CFI > 0.9**; **RMSEA < 0.08**). The SEM analysis confirmed all four proposed hypotheses, revealing that EQ exerts both **direct and indirect effects** (through TWQ) on personal effectiveness. Notably, **teamwork quality plays a critical mediating role** in the relationship between EQ and PE. Through quantitative analysis, this study contributes to strengthening the theoretical foundation of **organizational behavior** in the educational context and offers **valuable practical insights** for human resource management in the era of modern higher education.

(a) 5.2. Managerial and Human Resource Policy Implications in Higher Education

Based on the research findings, several managerial implications are proposed to enhance individual effectiveness and organizational quality in universities:

First, integrate emotional intelligence into human resource development strategies. Universities should design and implement training programs to develop emotional intelligence among faculty and staff, including self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These capabilities help improve adaptability, communication, and conflict resolution—key factors for enhancing both individual performance and team effectiveness (Goleman, 1995; Wong & Law, 2002).

Second, strengthen teamwork quality as an organizational lever. Teamwork not only enhances group performance but also acts as a bridge between emotional competence and personal effectiveness. Therefore, administrators should establish effective team management policies: encouraging open communication, clarifying roles, and fostering mutual trust and support within the workplace. Team-building activities and cross-departmental or inter-faculty projects can further reinforce organizational cohesion (Hoegl & Gemuenden, 2001).

Third, adopt a human resource management orientation based on soft values and holistic development. In the context of university autonomy and digital transformation,

administrators need to shift toward a “people-centered” approach that values both technical competencies and emotional-social skills. Recruitment, evaluation, and reward policies should include criteria related to collaboration, communication, and teamwork—rather than focusing solely on individual achievements.

The Ministry of Education and Training may consider developing competency frameworks that incorporate soft skills and emotional intelligence into the performance evaluation systems for academic and administrative staff. Furthermore, universities should be encouraged to invest in building a **positive organizational culture** and a **supportive, flexible working environment**—which are essential conditions for fostering teamwork and long-term personal effectiveness.

5.3. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Although the study has achieved results aligned with its research objectives, several limitations should be acknowledged:

First, the study was conducted at a limited number of higher education institutions in Vietnam, primarily focusing on public universities. As such, the findings may not fully capture the broader landscape of the higher education system, particularly in relation to private or international universities. This limits the generalizability of the research model across the entire sector.

Second, the study mainly employed a quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships among variables. However, it did not incorporate qualitative methods that could have explored the underlying mechanisms or contextual nuances in greater depth. This may have constrained the interpretive richness of the findings, especially regarding behavioral and organizational dynamics.

In light of these limitations, future research could expand the scope of investigation to include **private universities, international institutions, or vocational education centers**, thereby improving the representativeness and allowing for comparative analysis across different regions, organizational models, and cultural contexts. Additionally, future studies could consider incorporating **other mediating or moderating variables** such as **organizational culture, leadership styles, job satisfaction, or occupational stress** to further elucidate the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence impacts both **individual and collective outcomes**.

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