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Later published as Evaluating the claims. In K.R. Murphy (Eds.) *A critique of emotional intelligence: What are the problems and how can they be fixed?* (pp. 198-210). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Chapter 14

Evaluating the Claims:

Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

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Manuscript prepared for inclusion in K.R. Murphy, (Ed.) *The EI bandwagon: The struggle between science and marketing for the soul of emotional intelligence*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

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Acknowledgements: This chapter was prepared while the first author was a visiting scholar at the University of Queensland, and was funded in part by a grant of the Australian Research Council.

We acknowledge with thanks the contributions and suggestions provided by Editor Kevin Murphy.

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Evaluating the Claims: Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

As the title of this book suggests, the construct of emotional intelligence has become fractured in the struggle between the scientists trying to develop a valid psychological construct on the one hand, and marketers attempting to develop a commercially viable psychological framework on the other. Given this fracturing, the importance of objective, critical evaluation of both the research and the practical application of emotional intelligence is paramount. Previous chapters have considered issues pertaining to the measurement of emotional intelligence (Conte, Chapter 7), its definition (Matthews, Zeidner and Roberts, Chapter 2), and validity (Daus, Salovey, Mayer, and Caruso, Chapter 6). In this chapter, we assess the utility of emotional intelligence measures and interventions in practice by evaluating those claims that underpin the commercial viability of this construct.

The range of claims regarding emotional intelligence is incredibly wide ranging. These include claims that emotional intelligence ...

- accounts for 80 percent of work performance and life success (Goleman, 1995);
- is directly linked to career progression (Goleman, 1998).
- results in individuals who are more altruistic (Cherniss & Adler, 2001).
- results in individuals who make better leaders (Goleman, 1998).
- contributes to better teamwork (Druskatt & Wolff, 2001).
- leads to better decisions (Jordan, Ashkanasy & Hartel, 2002).
- leads to people being self-starters and self-motivated (Goleman, 1998).

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- results in better coping with stress (Ashkanasy, Ashton-James, & Jordan, 2004).
- is a useful construct for addressing a broad array of behavioral problems (Gillis, 2004).
- results in individuals who have morally superior values (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997).

Clearly, it is beyond the scope of a single chapter to evaluate all of these claims. We have chosen three that we feel are significant, and have attracted a good deal of attention. These are that emotional intelligence contributes to: (1) workplace performance, (2) career success, and (3) leadership.

In preparing this chapter we were immediately stuck by two key aspects of the literature dealing with emotional intelligence. First was the number of differing definitions and models of emotional intelligence in existing research and the second was the paucity of independent research (i.e., research not conducted by test developers). We soon came to the conclusion we would not be able to assess claims about the relevance of emotional intelligence merely by reviewing the empirical data. Rather, we considered three key criteria in evaluating claims regarding emotional intelligence: (1) empirical support, (2) theoretical justification and (3) the availability of alternative research not specifically in the emotional intelligence field that might support or refute the proposed relationships. We also chose to limit our review of empirical support primarily to studies of emotional intelligence based on the Mayer and Salovey (1997) model of this construct. As has been noted in several other chapters in this volume, this model of emotional intelligence has been most clearly articulated and enjoys the strongest theoretical and empirical support among the competing definitions of emotional intelligence. Critics of emotional intelligence often argue, with some justification, that claims about the usefulness and

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relevance of this construct often stretch the definition or scope of emotional intelligence in ways that make it difficult to tell what constructs are actually being measured or what processes might be affecting outcome variables of interest (see Ashkanasy & Daus, in press; Daus & Ashkanasy, in press). In assessing claims about the effects of emotional intelligence, therefore, we have chosen to ignore research that does not adhere to the Mayer and Salovey (1997) definition of this construct.

The first criterion we used to assess the validity of claims regarding emotional intelligence is the extent to which empirical data exist to support these claims. We concede that many of the claims will not have been extensively tested by empirical data due to the infancy of emotional intelligence research (see Jordan, Ashkanasy, & Härtel, 2003). Furthermore, in many cases, the model of emotional intelligence used to collect empirical data is inconsistent with the construct of emotional intelligence described by Mayer and Salovey (1997) and/or incorporates personality variables that expand the definition of the construct (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000). Nevertheless, there are studies that provide relevant data, and assessments of the empirical support for major claims about the relevance and utility of emotional intelligence.

The absence of empirical data to support a claim does not prevent that claim from being valid, however. Our second criterion, therefore, is the existence of a *prima facie* theoretical argument that links the claim to the emotional intelligence construct. Once again, we draw on Mayer and Salovey's (1997) theoretical model of emotional intelligence as a framework for conceptualizing emotional intelligence as a construct that is distinguishable from existing individual difference variables (Jordan, et al., 2003). Using this framework, we ask whether

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sound inferences from the Mayer and Salovey (1997) model might provide support for specific claims.

Third, we evaluate each claim in light of other related research that might support or refute the claim. We justify this on the basis that studies that do not examine emotional intelligence directly might nevertheless provide relevant data about the claims and enable us to draw conclusions as to the likelihood that the claim is valid or not. For example, we draw on the extensive research on career success to determine if there are factors, other than emotional intelligence, that might contribute to career success. In sum, the validity of each claim is evaluated according to whether or not it can be logically deduced from data, theory, and relevant research findings.

The aim of this chapter is not to devalue emotional intelligence research, nor to denigrate the use of emotional intelligence assessment tools in organizational settings. To the contrary, by providing an uncompromising, objective, and criterion-driven evaluation of these claims, we hope to bring attention to the essence of emotional intelligence, highlighting that which is valid and represents a unique contribution to our understanding of individual differences in human functioning in the workplace. To this end, we first lay out the theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence as it has been conceptualized by Mayer and Salovey (1997). This model provides a framework to evaluate claims regarding the predictive utility of emotional intelligence. Following this, we address each of the three claims identified above and evaluate whether they meet each of the criteria described above. In conclusion, we discuss those claims

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that are sustainable and evaluate the utility of emotional intelligence as a construct that can be applied in workplace settings.

A Model of Emotional Intelligence

As discussed in the Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts chapter of this book (Chapter 2), the various definitions and models of emotional intelligence diverge on several factors. Indeed, some of the claims of the superior ability of individuals with high emotional intelligence are premised on expansive and fuzzy definitions of the emotional intelligence construct. For example, Goleman (1995) defines emotional intelligence in terms of a broad set of social and emotional competencies and at one stage even uses the term “character” interchangeably with emotional intelligence. The problem with this definition and other similar broad definitions of emotional intelligence is that they describe an ‘ideal’ set of personality characteristics, rather than unique construct linking emotions and cognition. Although poor construct definition is grist for the mill for academics analyzing this construct (e.g., see Landy, in press; Locke, in press), in the popular literature this expansive definition of the construct contributes to the allure of emotional intelligence potential and therefore, makes the claims more attractive. In this respect, the “bandwagon” moves forward as society in general, and managers in particular look for the ‘magic bullet’ or a panacea for the problems faced in organizations and in life.

The model developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) defines emotional intelligence as a set of abilities that are separate and distinct from personality. This model does not, however, suggest the existence of a completely new or previously undiscovered set of abilities. Rather,

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this model recognizes the relatedness of several aspects of emotion processing that together contribute to social psychological functioning. The four related emotion processing abilities are a) emotion perception, b) emotion facilitation, c) emotion understanding, and d) emotion management.

In the following, we discuss each of the four components of Mayer and Salovey's (1997) model of emotional intelligence, highlighting research validating the existence of each of these processes, and the way that individual differences in the functioning of the emotion processing mechanisms contribute to individual differences in social and workplace behavior.

Emotion perception

Mayer and Salovey (1997) describe this component of emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive one's own and others' emotions. This is not a newly discovered ability. For example, a person's ability to perceive his or her own and others' emotions extends back to research into Chimeric faces (i.e., facial images in which the left and right half of a face are different; Indersmitten, & Gur, 2003) and Ekman's research into nonverbal (facial) expression and communication of emotion (e.g., Ekman & Friesen, 1984). Also, we note that extreme examples from abnormal psychology such as alexithymia (i.e., a condition in which individuals are unable to describe emotions in words) and autism demonstrate that there are indeed individual differences in ability to perceive and to display emotion. This highlights the point that individual differences in emotion perception are not just a product of socialization or a developed skill. Instead, they represent a set of abilities or capacities that are restricted by individual differences in the structure and function of neurobiological mechanisms (Ashkanasy, 2003).

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Emotion facilitation

Emotional facilitation refers to an individual's ability to use emotions to prioritize thinking by focusing on important information to explain experienced feelings. This factor also includes the ability to adopt multiple perspectives to assess a problem, including pessimistic and optimistic perspectives (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) and the ability to determine emotion that is conducive to completing tasks (e.g., being enthusiastic during a brainstorming session).

Examining research that mirrors the concept of emotional facilitation, we see there has been substantial research into the emotional aspects of motivation (Hamilton, Bower, & Frijda, 1988), commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990), and emotional contagion (Barsade, 2002). On the other hand, research into emotional labor (Hochschild, 1979) acknowledges that emotional facilitation has consequences in the workplace such as producing emotional and cognitive dissonance that might lead to increased stress (Morris & Feldman, 1996).

Emotion understanding

Emotional knowledge is the third component of emotional intelligence, and refers to an individual's ability to understand emotional cycles and complex emotions such as simultaneous feelings of frustration and anger. This factor also refers to an ability to recognize the likely transitions between emotions, for example, moving from feelings of betrayal to feelings of anger and grief (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). In fact, this is not a new idea at all; understanding emotional progressions and cycles has been a central concept in Cognitive Behavior Therapy (McMullin, & Giles, 1981) and psychological counseling (Bordin, 1968) for decades.

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Emotion management

Finally, emotional regulation revolves around the management of emotions. That is, an individual's ability to connect or disconnect from an emotion depending on its usefulness in any given situation (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Again this is an area of significant research interest particularly in relation to stress and coping (see Ashkanasy, et al., 2004).

This brief outline of links between existing areas of research and emotional intelligence demonstrates that each of Mayer and Salovey's (1997) branches has a foundation in broadly accepted research. In this respect, we note that Mayer and Salovey have not introduced this concept 'out of the blue'. Instead, their model is built on a foundation of decades of research on intelligence and emotional functioning.

Following this introduction to the Mayer and Salovey (1997) four-branch model of emotional intelligence, we now move on to examine the three key claims that we identified earlier.

Evaluating the Claims

Claim 1: Workplace Performance

"IQ contributes about 20 percent to the factors that determine life success, which leaves 80 percent to other forces" (Goleman, 1995, p.34)

Goleman goes on to suggest that the "other forces" he refers to constitute "EQ". Indeed, this is one of the pervasive and often quoted claims regarding emotional intelligence. This statement was first made by Goleman (1995) and, while subsequently shying away from this

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overstatement of the emotional intelligence contribution to performance in later books, Goleman (1998) still claimed that emotional intelligence was “twice as important as IQ” in producing outstanding performance.

The way that Goleman seems to have arrived at this claim is instructive. In the first, instance, he expended his definition of emotional intelligence to make it essentially all-encompassing; in other words, it become, by definition the “other forces” in the quotation above. Indeed, he does this specifically, when he refers to emotional intelligence as another way of describing character. A second tactic adopted by Goleman (1995, 1998) and others is to examine successful people and their behavior and then to make *post hoc* attributions to emotional intelligence of whatever their successful behaviors are. Cooper and Sawaf (1997) used this approach when they profiled the lives of successful business people. As one reads their book however, it becomes apparent that Cooper and Sawaf never actually measured these individuals’ emotional intelligence or any other individual difference variable.

Empirical evidence

Turning now to examination of the empirical studies that consider the relationship between performance and emotional intelligence, we find that there are two branches of research that apply: (1) studies of emotional intelligence and individual workplace performance, and (2) studies of emotional intelligence and teamwork or group performance.

At the individual level, early research on emotional intelligence and its relationships with performance focused on achievement in scholastic examinations (Pons, 1997; Schutte et al., 1998); these authors suggested that emotional intelligence could contribute to exam performance.

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This research has, however, been refuted by O'Connor and Little (2003), who showed that emotional intelligence was not a strong predictor of academic achievement, even when using several different methods of measuring emotional intelligence. In research specifically looking at cognitive-related workplace performance, Day and Carroll (2004) found that an individual's ability to perceive emotions (the first component of emotional intelligence) predicted performance on a cognitive decision making task (deciding the order in which employees should be laid off in a fictitious company). Day and Carroll concluded, however, that none of the other components of emotional intelligence were related to task performance.

Research at the team level of analysis, however, have been more encouraging. In two recent studies comparing individual and team performance on a cognitive task, Jordan and Troth (2004) and Offermann and her associates (2004) found that emotional intelligence was a predictor of team performance in a decision-based task, but was not a predictor of individual performance on the same task. Jordan and Troth (2004), in particular, found links between emotional management skills (the fourth component of emotional intelligence) and team performance. That is, teams with members who were able to regulate their experience and expression of emotions achieved a higher performance than those teams where members were not able to control their emotions. Examining the low performing teams, Jordan and Troth (2004) noted that a lack of emotional control resulted in higher levels of conflict and therefore reduced the performance of team members who focused on their conflict, rather than arriving at a decision.

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Jordan, Ashkanasy, Hartel, and Hooper (2002) also identified emotional intelligence as a predictor of performance in workgroups. In a longitudinal study involving team performance, they found a significant difference between the *initial* performance of teams with high average emotional intelligence and those with low average emotional intelligence, in terms of goal achievement and the effectiveness of the processes they used to achieve those goals. Over the nine week duration of the study, however, the differences between the performance of these two groups diminished to a point where, at the end of the study, the low emotional intelligence teams improved their performance to the extent that they became indistinguishable from the high emotional intelligence teams. It is not clear from this study whether this change in the performance of low average emotional intelligence teams was due to the training or general group development over time. Based on the measures used in this study, however, it was concluded that teams with high emotional intelligence were more adaptive to group processes than teams with low emotional intelligence; emotionally intelligent teams were able to come together and share strengths and compensate for weaknesses in the team more quickly to produce higher performance.

The picture that emerges from the foregoing is that the claim that emotional intelligence is a predictor of *individual* performance does not seem to hold up, although there is accumulating evidence that emotional intelligence can play a significant role in promoting *team* performance. In the next section, we examine whether higher individual and team performance is a logical consequence of emotional intelligence as theorized by Mayer and Salovey (1997).

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Theoretical considerations

With regards to individual task performance, Mayer and his colleagues (2000) argue specifically that emotional intelligence is distinct from and unrelated to academic or cognitive intelligence. Hence, being emotionally intelligent does not necessarily correlate with individual cognitive performance at work. In theory, however, emotional intelligence should enhance an individual's ability to cope with time pressures, performance anxiety, and other distracters that can limit task performance (Ashkanasy et al., 2004). If emotionally intelligent individuals are better equipped to handle factors that often interfere with successful task performance, emotional intelligence will make an indirect contribution to performance and effectiveness at work.

The arguments presented above suggest that emotional intelligence may be linked to an ability to perform consistently under stressful or emotional workplace conditions. For example, Schutte, Schuettpelez, and Malouff (2000) found, controlling for baseline performance on a moderately difficult cognitive task, that individuals with high emotional intelligence were able to solve more problems after encountering a very difficult or frustrating set of problems than people with low emotional intelligence, who were less likely to persist. Thus, consistent with Mayer and Salovey's (1997) model of emotional intelligence, people with the ability to understand and to manage their emotional reactions during the performance of cognitive tasks may be more productive at work than those who allow their emotions to interfere with task performance. Emotional intelligence alone does not predict task performance, however; it is merely a moderator of task performance under certain workplace conditions (see also Ashkanasy et al., 2004; Jordan, et al., 2002).

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In contrast to individual performance, Mayer and Salovey's (1997) model of emotional intelligence postulates a direct impact on team performance. First, teams of individuals who, collectively, have a high emotional intelligence, are thought to be better able to adapt to and to utilize diversity in group-member skills and work styles than groups of individuals with low collective emotional intelligence (Jordan & Troth, 2004, Offermann et al., 2004). Second, emotional intelligence might also influence group members' ability to deal with each others' emotions. Barsade (2002), Kelly and Barsade (2001), and George (1995) have demonstrated that individual group members' affective states have a powerful influence on other members' affective states, consequently affecting group performance. In accordance with Mayer and Salovey's (1997) conceptual model, it follows that a group of individuals with high emotional intelligence may be better able to regulate group affect by first of all, regulating the experience and expression of their own emotions, and hence not influencing others' moods, and secondly, by regulating their affective response to the emotional expressions of other group members.

Alternative predictors of workplace performance

Several decades of research have demonstrated that both personality traits and intelligence are reliable predictors of performance and behavior at work. Schmidt and Hunter (1998) reviewed 85 years of research showing that measures of cognitive ability are among the most valid predictors of job performance. Intelligence is probably a better predictor of individual performance than team performance, because the competencies required to achieve team performance are not reflected in intelligence measures (Druskat & Keyes, 1999). Nevertheless, while there is a substantial body of evidence showing that intelligence is related to performance

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in a wide range of jobs; there is no comparable body of evidence showing that emotional intelligence is a valid predictor of individual performance.

In the last 15-20 years, a steady stream of research has also shown that personality inventories have potential as predictors of job performance and effectiveness. For instance, researchers have documented a consistent link between conscientiousness and performance (Barrick, Mount & Judge, 2001); self-efficacy and work-related performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998); and self-monitoring and workplace performance (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 2001). In other research, Furnham, Jackson, and Miller (1999) found that extraversion and neuroticism predicted performance, but point out that these only accounted for a small amount of variance in performance. Finally, in a meta analysis of the relationship between personality and performance of work requiring interpersonal skills, Mount, Barrick, and Stewart (1998) found that conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability were positively related to work performance.

Claim 1 conclusions

Based on these three sets of evidence, it is clear that emotional intelligence does not account for 80% of personal performance – or anything like this. While there are links that have been established between work performance and emotional intelligence, these links have been demonstrated almost exclusively in areas where strong interpersonal and communication skills have been required or where emotions were a moderator of work performance (eg highly stressful jobs). The evidence supports the idea that emotional intelligence can predict

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performance, but only in limited circumstances, and not with the level of precision or accuracy suggested by some emotional intelligence proponents.

Claim 2: Career Success

“... a strong IQ score will often get you in the door ...but those who are successful tend to have high emotional intelligence”. Brown (2001, p.25)

Another marketing claim regarding emotional intelligence is that it is a predictor of career success (Thorlakson, 2002; Goleman, 1998). The general form of this argument is that cognitive intelligence improves people’s chances of getting hired, but emotional intelligence is required to get promoted. For example, Thorlakson (2002) uses a case study of Harry the “intelligent failure” to demonstrate the importance of emotional intelligence (and in particular, emotional intelligence training) in the workplace over and above cognitive intelligence.

Empirical evidence

While there are no empirical data that directly tests the relationship between emotional intelligence and career success, research by Fox and Spector (2000) provides indirect support for the claim that emotional intelligence may be important in recruitment and selection processes. Fox and Spector note that the employment interview is a complex interaction between employer and employee in which emotional management, a component of emotional intelligence, plays a central role. While they acknowledge that the employment decision to hire is strongly affected by intelligence, their data also reveal that the positive affectivity of the interviewee also plays a major role in influencing this decision. Fox and Spector argue that emotional management skills

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associated with emotional intelligence contribute to interviewees' ability to regulate their affective state during interviews, and to display positive affect. As such, Fox and Spector conclude that emotionally intelligent individuals, who are able to regulate their affective state during the interview process, are more successful in securing a job than other less emotionally intelligent individuals. These findings mirror the work of Isen and Baron (1991), who found that employees who were able to regulate mood in an organization were at a significant advantage in job interviews and in getting promotions.

There has also been research demonstrating that individuals with high emotional intelligence have better social skills leading to better quality social interactions. Lopes, Brackett, Nelzlek, Schutz, Selin, and Salovey (2004) found that this was so in general social interactions, while Sue-Chan and Latham (in press) reported that emotional intelligence fully mediated the relationship between situational interview scores and subsequent teamplaying behavior. Further, in view of findings by Forret and Dougherty (2004) that networking ability is a predictor of career advancement, it seems reasonable to conclude that the quality of social interactions with co-workers and superiors, which serves to enhance networking potential, may therefore lead to career advancement. Plainly, however, more direct testing of this hypothesis will be required before this relationship can be confirmed.

Theoretical considerations

While there are no other empirical studies that examine the link between emotional intelligence and careers explicitly, Emmerling and Cherniss (2003) have developed the theoretical case for a link between these two variables. They argue that the rational decision-

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making models that have been applied to career decision-making are deficient. Emmerling and Cherniss point to the research on the role of emotional expression in job interviews, but take the argument a step further by noting that people with high emotional intelligence would have a better access to emotional memories that would facilitate the integration of the overt and suppressed emotional information that informs their career decisions. In essence, these authors argue that current methods of career counseling such as self-assessment measures and tests will be more useful to individuals with high emotional intelligence as they have the ability to access the information that counts. This argument is, however, predicated on the untested assumption that enhanced access to and use of emotional information would help people make better career decisions. Clearly, research to test this assumption should be a priority.

Alternative predictors of career success

There are several predictors of career success, including interpersonal support networks (Simonton, 1992), person-organization fit (Bretz & Judge, 1994), sponsorship (Judge, Kammeyer-Mueller & Bretz, 2004), mentoring efficacy (Gibson, 2004), willingness to relocate (Eddleston, Baldrige, & Veiga, 2004), job satisfaction (Markiewicz, Devine & Kausilas, 2000) and self-efficacy (Creed, Patton & Bartrum, 2004). The most well-demonstrated and reliable predictor of career success (both in terms of level of promotion and salary) is education (Cox & Harquail, 1991; Judge, Cable, Boudreau & Bretz, 1995; Melamed, 1996). Judge et al. (1995) and Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher (1991) indicate that the returns from educational attainment in terms of compensation level are significant. Education is also expected to underlie one's self-efficacy and beliefs about one's marketability (Wayne, Liden, Kraimer & Graf, 1999).

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Claim 2 conclusions

In summary, while Fox and Spector (2000) demonstrated a link between emotional intelligence and interview success, there is no evidence to support the broader claim that emotional intelligence can help individuals to achieve promotion once they ‘get a foot in the door.’ Theoretically, there is no reason why emotional intelligence should be an important determinant of success in careers that are not people-oriented. Hence, it is not clear how emotional intelligence would help someone in such a career to achieve promotion over and above their task performance. Of course, if one’s workplace performance is contingent solely or largely upon social skills, it may be that emotion perception and emotion management (two components of emotional intelligence) can contribute to higher levels of performance, and thus to career success. From the evidence presented in this section, however, it is clear that, that in such jobs, emotional intelligence would only be one of many predictors of career success. Given the proven track record of these alternate predictors, it is unlikely that emotional intelligence will play the sort of preeminent role in career success predicted by Goleman (1998), Brown (2001) and others.

Claim 3: Leadership

“Outstanding leaders’ emotional competencies make up to 85% to 100% of the competencies crucial for success.” (Goleman, 1998, p. 187)

Again this is an important marketing claim. Those aspiring to leadership positions look for the ‘magic bullet’ which will allow them to lead effectively and those who are in leadership roles look for ways of improving their performance. Clearly there is a link between an

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individual's ability to manage and to generate emotions and leadership (Bass, 2002). Indeed, Avolio and Bass (1988) discuss the importance of individualized consideration as an aspect of transformational leadership and identify charisma as an aspect of leadership. Both individualized consideration and charisma have obvious links to emotions and emotional management.

Within some of the emotional intelligence literature, however, emotional intelligence has been described as a major determinant of effective leadership. For instance, Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2001) claim that leaders who lack emotional intelligence must rely on luck to maintain the appearance of effective leadership.

Empirical evidence

While there are a number of research studies that seek to link emotional intelligence to leadership and in particular transformational leadership, many of these studies confound the model of emotional intelligence by adding factors to the model of emotional intelligence that include personality traits that are only weakly related to emotional intelligence (e.g., Dulewicz & Higgs, 2003; Goleman et al., 2001). For example, Kobe, Reiter-Palmon, and Rickers (2001) were able to demonstrate that emotional intelligence was correlated with self-reported leadership experiences, although they noted in their discussion that emotional intelligence did not provide unique variance over a measure of social intelligence employed in their study.

Some of the more recent work, however, appears to meet, at least in part, the standards we set in the introduction to this chapter. Sosik and Megerian (1999), for example, focused on self-awareness as an indicator of transformational leadership perceptions of followers (see also

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Megerian & Sosik, 1996). While this study did not use a measure of emotional intelligence *per se*, and relied on proxy measures of emotional awareness and emotional management, Sosik and Megerian were able to show that self-other agreement was a predictor of leader behavior and leader performance. Rubin, Munz, and Bommer (in press), in a field study involving 145 managers, found that emotion recognition ability and positive affect predicted transformational leadership ability. In another field study, Lopes, Salovey, Côté, and Beers, M. (in press) found that emotional intelligence was a predictor of both peer and supervisor estimates of leadership potential, even after controlling for personality and demographic influences. These results are encouraging, although more research into the specific role played by emotional intelligence factors as leadership determinants is clearly warranted.

In this respect, it is instructive that the study by Jordan et al. (2002) also demonstrated a link between self-monitoring and emotional intelligence. Specifically, Jordan and his colleagues identified a link between acquisitive self-monitoring (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984) or the propensity of individuals in social interactions to get ahead and lead the interaction and emotional intelligence. While this is not leadership *per se*, it does point to a propensity for individuals with high emotional intelligence to control social interactions. By examining the theoretical links between leadership and emotional intelligence a way forward obtaining further empirical evidence may be established.

Finally, and consistent with the concept of self-monitoring, Newcombe and Ashkanasy (2003) demonstrated that follower's impressions of the leader in a performance feedback situation were determined by the leader's display of positive affect, and also the leader's ability

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to display positive or negative affect consistent with the (positive or negative) feedback being expressed. This result can be interpreted in terms of the fourth branch of the Mayer and Salovey (1997) model of emotional intelligence – management of emotion – and suggests that an important skill of leader impression management is emotional intelligence

Theoretical considerations

Ashkanasy and Tse (2000) and George (2000) have linked the abilities referred to as emotional intelligence to a model of transformational leadership. These authors note that emotional awareness and emotional management skills play a major role in the development of relationships with followers. Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, and Buckley (2003) have taken this idea a step further, suggesting that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in linking leadership to team outcomes. Indeed, considering the aspects of transformational leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1988), a leader's ability to provide inspired charisma/idealized influence and inspirational motivation, while at the same time articulating a vision of the future that can be shared can be aligned to the emotional intelligence ability of emotional facilitation. Moreover, individualized consideration, a transformational leadership characteristic that involves the leader paying attention to individual needs, is likely to be enhanced by the leaders' ability to be aware of and manage others emotions.

Ashkanasy and Tse (2000) also note that this ability could lead to emotional manipulation. Connelly, Gaddis, and Helton-Fauth (2002) propose similarly that transformational leaders who display the appropriate positive and negative emotions influence followers and generating follower commitment to the leader's vision. Dasborough and

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Ashkanasy (2002) take this a step further, and posit that an emotionally intelligent leader is able to manipulate follower's emotions for evil and/or self-serving ends, although they characterize this as "pseudo-transformational leadership" (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996).

The argument for a link between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership has been contested by Antonakis (2003), however, who cautions against the use of broad definitions of emotional intelligence and calls for assessment of the broad spectrum of research into leadership and its correlates before determining the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership.

Alternative predictors of leadership ability

Leadership has been an area in which a substantial amount of theoretical and empirical work carried out. For instance Neubert and Taggar (2004) found that informal leadership emergence was predicted by a combination of conscientiousness, emotional stability, and centrality to the group. Using meta-analytic techniques Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Werner, (2002) found that leadership is positively linked to extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, and negatively linked to neuroticism.

While the evidence for a link between cognitive intelligence and leadership has been shown to be relatively weak (Judge, Colbert, & Ilies, 2004) cognitive abilities are still correlated with objective measures of leadership and followers perceptions of leaders.

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Claim 3 conclusions

Examining the relevant research on leadership, one thing becomes clear. There exist a vast array of different models of effective leadership, including Avolio and Bass's (1988) conceptualization of transformational and transactional leaders to models of charismatic leadership (House, 1977; Conger, & Kanungo, 1998), situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969), contingent leadership (e.g., Fiedler, 1967), and the path-goal theory of leadership (House, 1971). Each of these different models of leadership present a different perspective of leadership, making it exceedingly difficult to assert, as Goleman et al. (2001) do, that emotional intelligence will inevitably be an essential ingredient of effective leadership.

On the other hand, the extant research demonstrates that there is an emotional element to leadership (Humphrey, 2002). Indeed, Ashkanasy and Tse (2000) may be right that emotional intelligence moderates a specific type of leadership such as transformational leadership, and recent research (e.g., Lopes et al., in press) appears to back this up. This argument however still needs to be developed more thoroughly as a theoretical model and then tested to establish the veracity of the claim.

Discussion and Conclusions

Although there have been substantial claims made about the importance of the emotional intelligence construct, it is clear from this review that these can only be sustained to a very limited extent. Nonetheless, it is also clear from our review that emotional intelligence does provide additional explanatory power in industrial and organizational psychology research. To

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advance our knowledge of this construct and its correlates, however, well crafted research needs to be conducted to confirm first the theoretical basis for these assertions. Moreover, it is important that empirical evidence using measures based on the Mayer and Salovey (1997) model of emotional intelligence must be collected. Unless researchers stick to an established model of emotional intelligence that has some level of scientific credibility, at least in the short-to-medium future, it is going to be difficult to establish a *prima facie* case for the role emotional intelligence plays in predicting workplace performance outcomes.

Extravagant claims have been made in the popular press about the importance and relevance of emotional intelligence (e.g., Goleman, 1995, 1998). These claims have received considerable attention in organizations, in part because emotional intelligence appears to provide a fresh approach for solving long-standing problems such as how to find and develop the best employees. The most sweeping claims about emotional intelligence have little empirical or theoretical support and are often based on fuzzy, all-encompassing definitions of emotional intelligence. We would argue that these claims have done considerable harm to the field, because they lead many people to regard emotional intelligence as a fad and a confidence game. The evidence reviewed here supports the notion that emotional intelligence, as defined by the Mayer and Salovey (1997) model, can be an important construct. Unfortunately, the inflated claims made in some quarters have made the whole field of emotional intelligence suspect in the eyes of many. Mud that is thrown at commercial promoters of emotional intelligence is likely also to splatter the legitimate scientists working in this field. A critical, evidence-based

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examination of these claims can help us sort the useful and valid work in the area of emotional intelligence from the unfounded marketing hype.

Future directions for research

The implications of our discussion in this chapter are fairly clear. In terms of research there is a paucity of studies that have examined the emotional intelligence construct in work settings that has been based on the recognized definition of emotional intelligence. In particular, by introducing elements of personality into definitions of emotional intelligence, writers such as Goleman have confounded our understanding of the area. While the use of broad models and measures of emotional intelligence increases the likelihood that the construct will predict human behavior, it does not contribute the incremental validity that researchers of emotional intelligence seek. The way forward is to use models of emotional intelligence that are less contaminated by personality constructs, such as the Mayer and Salovey's (1997) model.

Practical implications

It is in the area of management practice that the advocates of emotional intelligence have had their greatest effects, with Goleman's (1995) book topping the *New York Times* Best Seller list for weeks on end, and even getting a cover story in *Time Magazine* (Gibbs, 1995). It is here that the 'bandwagon' has been rolling. Our review suggests that management practitioners need to take care that they do not overemphasize the predictive value of emotional intelligence in workplace settings. The evidence for the dramatic claims of advocates in the areas that we have canvassed – performance, career advancement, and leadership – simply does not hold up. While

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there is emerging evidence that emotional intelligence has some beneficial effects, the broad and sensational claims of the commercial advocates of the construct need to be set aside by thoughtful managers. This is not to say, however, that research in emotional intelligence should not continue. Indeed, future research may well lead to useful advances in our knowledge of emotional intelligence and its effects. At the same time, we note that it is essential that claims in future be carefully assessed, firstly to ascertain the level of theoretical and empirical support for the claims, and secondly to discount alternative explanations for the effects claimed.

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