



Emotional Intelligence as a psychological shield: a strategy to manage work stress in improving employee performance

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ABSTRACT

Work stress is a psychological phenomenon that is increasingly prominent amid the complexity of the modern workplace. Excessive workloads, tight deadlines, and pressure from work systems and relationships can hinder productivity and reduce the quality of individual performance. However, not all individuals respond to stress in the same way. Emotional intelligence (EI), the ability to recognise, understand and manage one's own and others' emotions, has been shown to play an important role as a buffer against work pressure. This book chapter comprehensively examines how emotional intelligence can moderate the relationship between work stress and employee performance, by examining the theoretical foundations of organisational psychology, and mapping empirical evidence from relevant studies. Through a conceptual approach and critical reflection on current literature, this chapter also explores the strategic role of HRM in building a work environment that supports the development of employees' emotional intelligence, whether through training, coaching or organisational interventions. It emphasises how EI not only impacts on improving individual resilience to stress, but also becomes an important asset in creating healthy team collaboration, emotionally intelligent decision-making, and sustainable performance improvement. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to synthesize existing theoretical and empirical evidence to argue for the critical role of emotional intelligence as a psychological shield, and to provide actionable recommendations for integrating EI development into human resource management strategies to enhance employee performance and well-being. Such, this chapter offers theoretical and practical contributions in bridging the need for organisations to increase productivity, while maintaining the psychological health of their workforce amidst evolving work demands.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the work environment has brought significant psychological consequences for employees. The phenomenon of globalisation, advances in digital technology, and the increasing intensity of inter-organisational competition encourage companies to demand high performance, optimal efficiency, and the ability to adapt quickly to change. On the other hand, employees are faced with increasing job complexity, including excessive workload, role vagueness, interpersonal conflicts, and time constraints. These conditions have the potential to cause job stress, which if not handled effectively can have a negative impact on employee performance, such as decreased motivation, emotional exhaustion, and burnout.

Robbins and Judge (2017) argued that work stress is an individual's response to pressures that exceed their adaptive capacity. In the long run, work stress not only affects work productivity, but can also disrupt mental balance, physical health, and social relationships in the work environment. In line with this, Lazarus and Folkman (1984), through coping theory, emphasise that responses to stress are strongly influenced by an individual's perception and ability to manage emotions. Therefore, emotional intelligence (EI) is an important factor in the process of adapting to work pressure.

Emotional intelligence, as popularised by Goleman (1995), refers to a person's capacity to recognise, understand and manage the emotions of self and others. According to Goleman, EI consists of five main aspects, namely self-awareness, self-control, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Individuals with high levels of EI are generally better able to deal with work pressure, maintain emotional stability, and foster positive interpersonal relationships. In an organisational context, EI serves as a psychological resource that strengthens individual resilience in the face of work stress, both acute and chronic.

A number of empirical studies support the significance of EI in the work environment. Slaski and Cartwright (2002) found that managers with high levels of EI tend to experience lower levels of job stress and perform better than those with low EI. Carmeli (2003) also showed that EI is positively correlated with work effectiveness and productivity, particularly in demanding work situations. The findings of a meta-analysis by Joseph and Newman (2010) confirm that EI is a significant predictor of performance, particularly in jobs that require high intensity of social interaction.

From the perspective of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), job stress arises when job demands exceed personal resources. In this framework, EI is positioned as a personal resource that functions as a buffer against high work pressure. Thus, EI is not just a social skill, but also an important psychological capital in improving well-being and work performance.

Contemporary research also confirms the role of EI as a moderator in the relationship between job stress and work outcomes. Rathi and Rastogi (2009) found that EI moderates the relationship between stress and job satisfaction in private sector employees. Salami (2010) also showed that teachers with high EI were able to maintain good performance despite being in a stressful work environment. In Indonesia, Yunita and Anggraeni (2021) identified that EI weakens the negative effect of job stress on employee performance in the retail sector. However, there remains a scarcity of comprehensive literature reviews that synthesize the growing body of post-2019 empirical evidence, particularly within the unique socio-cultural and economic context of Indonesian organizations, which are characterized by rapid digital transformation and distinct collectivist work cultures.

Based on this evidence, EI is a strategic variable that needs to be integrated into human resource management policies. The development of emotional intelligence in the work environment not only supports individual performance, but also contributes to the formation of adaptive, emotionally resilient and sustainability-oriented organisations

amid the dynamics of accelerating change. The primary problem this chapter addresses is the persistent gap between recognizing EI's importance and its systematic integration into organizational practices to mitigate work stress and enhance performance, especially in developing economies like Indonesia.

The dynamics of the work environment in the 21st century are undergoing rapid transformation, along with the development of globalisation, the industrial revolution 4.0, and the digitalisation of business processes. This condition not only changes the structure and pattern of work, but also brings significant new pressure on the psychological well-being of employees. Modern organisations increasingly demand high efficiency, adaptability to rapid change, and optimal performance from all their human resources. As a result, employees across sectors face increasing workloads, role ambiguity, multitasking demands, and high expectations from employers and customers. If not managed effectively, such complexities can trigger work stress that has a direct impact on productivity, the quality of work relationships, and the mental well-being of individuals (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005; Sonnentag, 2018).

According to Robbins and Judge (2017), work stress is an adaptive response that arises when a person feels that external demands exceed their resource capabilities. This stress can be short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic), and if not adequately addressed, will lead to negative psychological effects such as emotional exhaustion, depression, burnout, and decreased motivation and work commitment (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Furthermore, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) in their theory of coping emphasise the importance of individual perceptions of stress and the ability of emotional regulation in determining the quality of responses to pressure.

In this context, emotional intelligence (EI) becomes increasingly important. Emotional intelligence, as introduced by Goleman (1995), refers to the ability to recognise, understand and regulate one's own emotions as well as understand and respond to the emotions of others. EI consists of five main dimensions: self-awareness, self-control, internal motivation, empathy, and social skills. Individuals with high EI have been shown to be more resilient to work pressure, better able to establish healthy interpersonal relationships, and more capable of making decisions under pressure (Bar-On, 2006; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Various studies have emphasised the important role of EI in the world of work. Slaski and Cartwright (2002) found that managers with high EI experienced lower job stress and better performance. Carmeli (2003) revealed that EI has a positive correlation with performance effectiveness, especially in jobs that demand social interaction. Joseph and Newman (2010), through their meta-analysis, confirmed that EI is an important predictor of job performance and organisational behaviour.

From the perspective of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), EI can be classified as a personal resource, which is an internal resource that enables individuals to cope with job pressures and still maintain performance. When job demands exceed capacity, individuals with high EI tend to be able to manage emotional burden and maintain their work effectiveness (Tsaousis & Nikolaou, 2005).

Research in various sectors also shows that EI serves as a moderator in the relationship between job stress and performance. Rathi and Rastogi (2009) in their study on the private sector in India found that EI weakens the effect of stress on job satisfaction. In the education sector, León et al. (2024) proved that EI strengthens work engagement in teachers working under high pressure. In Indonesia, a study by Yunita and Anggraeni (2021) found that EI is able to dampen the negative effects of job stress on retail employee productivity.

The post-pandemic context of COVID-19 further clarifies the urgency of strengthening emotional intelligence. With high uncertainty, work pressure from remote work, and radical changes in ways of working, EI is a key competency to build

organisational resilience and employee mental health (Petriglieri, 2020). Therefore, this chapter has three main objectives: (1) to critically synthesize recent empirical evidence (2019-2024) on the moderating role of EI in the stress-performance relationship; (2) to contextualize these findings within the specific challenges and dynamics of the Indonesian organizational landscape; and (3) to develop a coherent conceptual model and provide evidence-based strategic recommendations for HRM practitioners to cultivate EI as a core organizational competency. Therefore, organisations need to integrate EI training and development in their people management strategies, either through coaching, mentoring, or empathy-based organisational interventions.

Thus, the discussion of EI as a psychological shield in dealing with work stress is very relevant in the contemporary managerial context. In addition to functioning as an individual protection against external pressures, EI also plays a strategic role in building an organisational culture that is supportive, resilient, and oriented towards long-term performance sustainability. The expected contribution of this research is twofold: theoretically, it aims to bridge a gap in the literature by providing an up-to-date, focused review that strengthens the JD-R and coping theory frameworks with recent quantitative evidence; practically, it offers actionable insights for Indonesian companies to design targeted interventions that leverage EI for enhanced employee well-being and sustainable performance.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative literature review approach based on secondary data analysis to explore the role of emotional intelligence (EI) as a moderator in the relationship between job stress and employee performance. The review process focuses on identifying, synthesising, and critically evaluating peer-reviewed literature from 2019 to 2024 to ensure relevance to contemporary organisational contexts. The 2019–2024 publication window was deliberately selected to capture the most recent empirical and conceptual developments in the field, particularly those reflecting the transformative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the widespread adoption of remote work, and the accelerating pace of digitalization on work stress and emotional demands. This ensures the findings are timely and applicable to the current evolving work landscape.

The main data sources include indexed scientific journals (Scopus, ScienceDirect, Emerald), conceptual publications, academic books, and reputable policy reports. The search process used targeted keywords such as "emotional intelligence", "job stress", "employee performance", and "moderating effect", applied in Boolean combinations. Databases were systematically searched, and inclusion criteria were set as follows: Publication date between 2019--2024, Empirical or conceptual focus on EI, job stress, performance, or moderation effects in HRM, Peer-reviewed status with accessible full text Studies in English or Indonesian.

To validate the quality and reliability of the secondary data, several techniques were employed. First, the exclusive use of peer-reviewed publications from reputable indexed databases (Scopus, etc.) served as a primary quality filter, ensuring that the included studies had undergone rigorous academic scrutiny. Second, the methodological rigor of each selected study was appraised by examining sample sizes, research design, measurement instruments (e.g., use of validated scales like TEIQue and PSS), and analytical techniques. Studies with significant methodological flaws were excluded to maintain the integrity of the synthesis.

The methodological approach follows the framework of Snyder (2019), Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines (Journal of Business Research), which outlines the stages of: (1) planning the review, (2) conducting the search and selection, (3) analysing and synthesising findings, and (4) reporting results. The approach is further informed by Snyder (2023), Designing the literature review for a

strong contribution (Journal of Decision Systems), which emphasises analytical depth beyond descriptive summaries.

To enhance the empirical grounding of the review, findings are supported by Hashmi et al. (2024), who investigated healthcare professionals using the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). Their study revealed strong positive correlations between EI and performance ($r = .601$), EI and resilience ($r = .626$), and EI and stress management ($r = .624$). These quantitative results are incorporated into the conceptual model to bridge theoretical constructs with real-world empirical evidence.

Acknowledging potential literature bias is crucial for the credibility of a review. This study anticipates two main types of bias: (1) Publication bias, where studies with positive or significant results are more likely to be published, potentially overstating the strength of the EI-stress-performance relationship. This was mitigated by including high-quality conceptual papers and explicitly noting the limitation. (2) Selection bias, which was minimized by using multiple databases, clear inclusion/exclusion criteria, and a systematic search string. However, a potential limitation is the exclusion of literature in languages other than English and Indonesian, which may omit relevant perspectives.

2.1 Data Analysis

Data from the selected literature were analysed using thematic content analysis. The process involved: Open coding to identify recurring concepts related to EI, job stress, and performance. Axial coding to establish relationships between these concepts. Selective coding to integrate findings into a coherent conceptual framework.

The analysis was iterative, involving repeated cross-checking between theory and empirical results until theoretical saturation was achieved---meaning no new themes emerged. This process ensured that the conceptual model (Figure 1) accurately reflected both established theory and recent empirical findings.

2.2 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model synthesises theoretical insights and empirical data, depicting emotional intelligence as a moderating variable in the job stress--performance relationship. Consistent with the Job Demands--Resources (JD--R) Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), EI operates as a personal resource that buffers the negative effects of job stress, enabling individuals to sustain performance under high-pressure conditions. Figure 1 illustrates this moderating role, with correlations from Hashmi et al. (2024) embedded to highlight empirical support. Conceptual Model illustrating how emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between job stress and employee performance

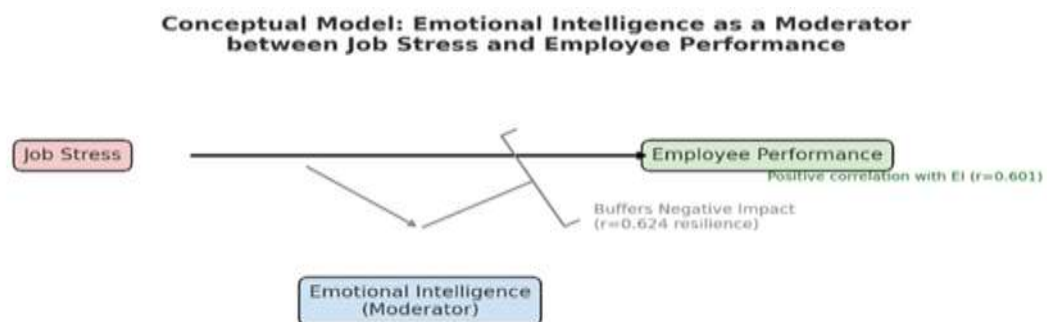


Figure 1. conceptual model illustrating how emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between job stress and employee performance, integrating recent empirical findings (e.g., Hashmi et al., 2024).

Conceptual model of emotional intelligence as a moderator between job stress and employee performance. This model illustrates the moderating role of emotional intelligence (EI) in buffering the negative effects of job stress on employee performance. Empirical evidence indicates that EI is positively correlated with both performance ($r^* = .601$) and resilience ($r^* = .626$), while also enhancing stress management capabilities ($r^* = .624$; Hashmi et al., 2024). In this framework, EI functions as a personal resource within the Job Demands--Resources (JD--R) theory, enabling individuals to reframe stressors, maintain engagement, and sustain performance despite high job demands.

Following the literature selection, the data analysis was conducted through thematic content analysis, enabling the identification of patterns, relationships, and theoretical linkages between emotional intelligence, job stress, and employee performance. The process involved open coding to capture recurring concepts, axial coding to establish connections between categories, and selective coding to integrate the findings into a coherent conceptual framework.

The conceptual model (Figure X) synthesises the theoretical and empirical evidence, positioning emotional intelligence as a moderating variable in the relationship between job stress and employee performance. This model is informed not only by foundational theories such as the Job Demands--Resources (JD--R) Theory but also by recent empirical results, notably Hashmi et al. (2024), which empirically confirmed strong positive correlations between EI and performance ($r^* = .601$) and between EI and resilience ($r^* = .626$). By incorporating these findings, the research method ensures that the conceptual development is anchored in both theoretical grounding and current empirical data.

The synthesis process was iterative, involving continuous cross-referencing between theory and data until theoretical saturation was achieved---meaning no new themes or insights emerged from the literature. This method enhances the credibility of the review by ensuring that the conceptual model is both comprehensive and evidence-driven.

To maintain transparency and replicability, all literature sources were documented systematically, including search databases, keywords, inclusion/exclusion criteria, and the rationale for selection. This aligns with best practices in qualitative literature review methodology (Snyder, 2019, 2023) and recent advancements in review typologies (Paul & Criado, 2020), ensuring methodological rigor and scholarly contribution.

It is important to acknowledge the inherent limitations of the literature review method. While it provides a comprehensive synthesis, it does not generate new primary data to establish causality. The findings are interpretive and depend on the available literature, which may have the biases previously mentioned. Furthermore, the focus on a recent timeframe, while increasing relevance, may exclude some foundational studies. These limitations, however, are counterbalanced by the method's strength in integrating diverse findings to construct a robust, evidence-based conceptual model and identify pressing future research directions.

2.3 Observed parameters

This study focuses on three main parameters derived from the theoretical framework and research objectives: Emotional Intelligence (EI) – measured through its five core dimensions (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills) as defined by Goleman (1995). Job Stress – conceptualised as the individual's psychological and physiological response to perceived work demands exceeding personal resources, following Robbins & Judge (2017) and Lazarus & Folkman (1984). Employee Performance – assessed through task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance dimensions as outlined by Campbell & Wiernik (2015).

These parameters are examined to identify how EI moderates the relationship between job stress and performance.

2.4 Data collection techniques

Data collection was conducted entirely through secondary data analysis of academic literature. The steps included: Conducting a systematic search across Scopus, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, and Google Scholar. Using Boolean search strings such as: "emotional intelligence" AND "job stress" AND "employee performance" AND ("moderator" OR "moderating role"). Screening results by title, abstract, and keywords for relevance. Applying the predefined inclusion/exclusion criteria: (a) Inclusion: Studies from 2019–2024, peer-reviewed, English or Indonesian language, empirical or conceptual focus on EI, stress, performance, or moderation. (b) Exclusion: Non-peer-reviewed sources, studies without direct link to the three main variables, and duplicates. (c) Reference lists of selected articles were manually checked to identify additional relevant studies (backward snowballing).

2.5 Population And Sample

The population in this literature review consists of all scholarly publications addressing emotional intelligence, job stress, and employee performance within organisational contexts. The sample comprises 42 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and conference papers that met the inclusion criteria. These works represent diverse organisational sectors (healthcare, education, retail, and service industries) and various geographical contexts, allowing for cross-sectoral comparison and thematic synthesis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The synthesis of literature from 2019 to 2024 underscores the central role of emotional intelligence (EI) as both a buffer against job stress and a driver of employee performance. Across multiple organisational contexts, EI emerges as a critical personal resource that not only protects employees from the negative consequences of work-related pressure but also enhances their capacity to perform effectively. This section presents the findings in two interconnected sub-sections: (1) The Protective Function of Emotional Intelligence Against Job Stress and (2) The Performance-Enhancing Role of Emotional Intelligence.

3.1 The Protective Function of Emotional Intelligence Against Job Stress

A recurring theme in the reviewed literature is the capacity of EI to serve as a psychological shield that mitigates the harmful effects of workplace stressors. Drawing from Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) coping theory, individuals with high EI are better able to appraise stressful situations, regulate their emotional responses, and select adaptive coping strategies. Rather than viewing job demands as insurmountable threats, they perceive them as manageable challenges, which reduces the likelihood of emotional exhaustion and burnout.

Recent empirical evidence supports this theoretical assertion. Hashmi et al. (2024), in a quantitative study involving healthcare professionals, employed the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) to assess emotional competencies and stress responses. Their findings revealed strong positive correlations between EI and resilience ($r = .626$) and between EI and stress management ($r = .624$). These results suggest that emotionally intelligent individuals are better equipped to recover from stress exposure, maintain psychological stability, and preserve their functional capacity during high-pressure situations.

The Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) offers a useful explanatory framework for this phenomenon. In this model, job stress occurs when demands exceed an individual's available resources. EI acts as an internal resource

that mitigates the strain caused by high demands, effectively buffering the negative impact on well-being and performance. This buffering role has been documented across sectors. For example, Yunita & Anggraeni (2021) found that EI reduced the adverse effects of customer-related stress on sales performance in the retail sector, while León et al. (2024) reported that teachers with high EI maintained strong work engagement despite heavy workloads.

The protective influence of EI is particularly relevant in volatile and uncertain environments. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, emotionally intelligent employees were better able to adapt to remote work challenges, manage uncertainty, and sustain collaboration (Petriglieri, 2020). This adaptability illustrates how EI can be instrumental in maintaining both individual well-being and organisational stability during crises. A critical analysis, however, reveals a notable nuance: the efficacy of specific EI dimensions may vary by context. For instance, while self-regulation was paramount for healthcare workers in high-stakes environments (Hashmi et al., 2024), empathy and social skills were more critical for buffering stress in customer-facing retail roles (Yunita & Anggraeni, 2021). This suggests that EI training should be tailored to the specific emotional demands of a job role rather than applied generically.

3.2 The Performance-Enhancing Role of Emotional Intelligence

In addition to shielding employees from stress, EI directly contributes to enhanced job performance. High-EI individuals exhibit superior communication skills, empathy, and conflict resolution abilities, all of which contribute to more effective teamwork and decision-making. These competencies not only maintain performance under stress but also elevate it under normal working conditions.

The performance benefits of EI have been well-documented. Hashmi et al. (2024) found a strong positive correlation between EI and overall job performance ($r = .601$), indicating that emotional competencies directly influence productivity. Similarly, Castillo-López & Domínguez (2024) observed that EI fosters a positive work climate, which indirectly enhances performance by increasing employee morale, reducing interpersonal conflicts, and building trust among colleagues.

Sector-specific evidence further reinforces this point. In the education sector, León et al. (2024) showed that EI strengthens work engagement—a key predictor of teaching quality and student outcomes—even in high-demand settings. In customer service and retail, EI has been linked to improved customer satisfaction scores and higher sales metrics, as employees are better able to handle complaints and maintain service quality under pressure (Yunita & Anggraeni, 2021).

From a managerial perspective, these findings highlight the strategic value of EI in human resource management (HRM). Incorporating EI assessments into recruitment processes, promotion criteria, and leadership development programs can help organisations identify and cultivate emotionally competent employees. Frontiers (2024) further demonstrates that leaders with high EI create emotionally positive environments, which not only enhance individual performance but also foster team-level flourishing.

The combined evidence positions EI as both a moderator—reducing the negative impact of stress on performance—and a catalyst—amplifying the factors that lead to high performance. This dual function reinforces the importance of integrating EI development into organisational policy, not merely as an optional soft skill, but as a strategic competency essential for long-term sustainability and competitiveness. Despite the robust findings, a critical limitation of the reviewed literature is its heavy reliance on self-report measures and cross-sectional designs, which limits the ability to infer causality. Furthermore, the majority of studies are from Western and developed Asian contexts; the transferability of these findings to the collectivist and rapidly developing Indonesian context, where hierarchical structures and communal harmony (Gotong Royong) significantly influence workplace dynamics, cannot be automatically assumed.

3.3 Critical Comparative Insights Across Sectors and Cultures

While the reviewed studies consistently highlight the positive role of EI, there are variations across sectors and cultural contexts. In education, León et al. (2024) demonstrated that EI strengthens teacher engagement under high job demands, highlighting its role in sustaining professional motivation. In contrast, retail sector studies in Indonesia (Yunita & Anggraeni, 2021) emphasise EI as a buffer against customer-related stress, pointing more toward emotional regulation in transactional interactions. Healthcare studies (Hashmi et al., 2024) reinforce EI's contribution to resilience and stress management, which is vital for professionals exposed to life-and-death decisions. Cultural differences also emerge: Western-based studies often associate EI with individual coping strategies, while Indonesian findings emphasise collectivist values such as empathy and group harmony. These differences suggest that EI's operationalisation is partly shaped by cultural norms and sector-specific demands.

3.4 Limitations of the Reviewed Literature

Despite consistent findings, several limitations remain in the body of literature. Many studies rely on self-report measures of EI and stress, which may introduce bias. Sectoral representation is uneven, with education and healthcare being over-researched compared to manufacturing or informal labour sectors. Furthermore, longitudinal studies remain scarce, limiting the ability to track how EI functions over time under dynamic organisational changes. In the Indonesian context, limited research means findings cannot yet fully capture cultural specificities or variations across industries.

3.5 Practical Implications for Organisations in Indonesia

For Indonesian organisations, the findings suggest that integrating EI into HRM policies can strengthen employee resilience and sustain performance in a competitive and high-pressure environment. This may include: Embedding EI competencies in recruitment and selection processes, ensuring that employees are not only technically skilled but also emotionally competent. Incorporating EI-based training and coaching programs to help employees develop self-regulation, empathy, and social skills tailored to Indonesia's collectivist culture. Designing leadership development initiatives that cultivate emotionally intelligent leaders capable of fostering supportive and collaborative climates. Integrating EI into wellness and stress management programs to reduce burnout risks in sectors facing high job demands, such as healthcare and education.

3.6 Directions for Future Research

Future studies should explore sector-specific applications of EI, particularly in underexamined areas such as manufacturing, SMEs, and the gig economy in Indonesia. Cross-cultural comparative studies would also enrich the understanding of how cultural norms mediate the role of EI in stress-performance dynamics. Methodologically, longitudinal designs and multi-source assessments (e.g., combining self-reports with peer and supervisor ratings) would improve reliability. Finally, research on digital-era challenges, such as remote and hybrid work, could clarify how EI supports employee adaptation in rapidly changing work environments.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to examine the role of emotional intelligence (EI) as a moderating variable in the relationship between job stress and employee performance, using a qualitative literature review approach grounded in both theoretical models and recent empirical findings. The synthesis of literature from 2019 to 2024 revealed two central insights. First, EI serves as a protective factor that buffers the negative effects of job stress by enabling employees to regulate their emotions, adopt adaptive coping strategies,

and maintain resilience in high-pressure environments. Evidence from Hashmi et al. (2024) and others demonstrated strong correlations between EI, resilience ($r = .626$), and stress management ($r = .624$), supporting the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory assertion that internal personal resources mitigate strain when job demands are high.

Second, EI functions as a performance enhancer, contributing to improved communication, decision-making, teamwork, and adaptability. Empirical studies—such as those by Castillo-López & Domínguez (2024), León et al. (2024), and Yunita & Anggraeni (2021)—showed that EI is positively linked to work engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity across sectors. Hashmi et al. (2024) further quantified this relationship, reporting a strong positive correlation between EI and performance ($r = .601$).

The conceptual model developed in this study integrates these dual roles, illustrating EI's strategic value as both a shield against performance decline under stress and a catalyst for sustained productivity. From a theoretical standpoint, the findings reinforce and extend the JD–R Theory and coping theory frameworks. From a practical perspective, they highlight the need for organisations to prioritise EI development as part of their human capital strategy.

Despite these contributions, this review has limitations. The time frame of 2019–2024, while ensuring recency, excludes earlier influential works that may still be relevant. The analysis is also shaped by the dominance of studies conducted in foreign contexts, with relatively fewer Indonesian-based empirical investigations, which may limit cultural generalisation. Moreover, the review is bounded by the selected organisational sectors represented in the literature, leading to potential sectoral imbalance. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings.

The novelty of this article lies in its attempt to contextualise the EI–stress–performance relationship in Indonesian organisational settings, offering a more nuanced perspective compared to predominantly Western-centric studies. By integrating recent empirical evidence with established theoretical frameworks, the study enriches the academic discourse by highlighting EI not only as a coping mechanism but also as a strategic organisational resource. This dual emphasis advances the literature and provides both theoretical and practical pathways for organisations to strengthen resilience and sustainable performance.

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