

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT**

MASTER THESIS



**THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE
ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE**

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**THESIS ADVISOR
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ISTANBUL, 2023

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**THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE
ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE**

by

NAAMAA MOHAMED ALI ISSA SALEH

**A project submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Economics**

**THESIS ADVISOR
PROF. MAHMUT ARSLAN**

ISTANBUL, 2023

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Management.

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Opinion

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This is to confirm that this thesis complies with all the standards set by the School of Graduate Studies of Ibn Haldun University.

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ÖZ

GİRİŞİMCİLİK PERFORMANSINDA DUYGUSAL ZEKANIN ROLÜ

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Duygusal zeka konsepti, son zamanlarda girişimcilik becerilerini geliştirmedeki ve girişimcilik performansını olumlu yönde etkilemedeki rolü nedeniyle iş araştırmacılarının dikkatini çekmiştir. Araştırmacılar, iş başarısı faktörlerini ve göstergelerini ve bazı ticari girişimlerin neden diğerlerinden daha başarılı olduğunu araştırıyor ve inceliyorlar.

Bu nedenle, bir girişimci girişimin işletilmesi ve yönetilmesi, yalnızca yeni iş girişimlerini başlatmak için teknik beceriler ve araçlar hakkında bilgi sahibi olmayı değil, aynı zamanda sunulan değeri sürdürmek ve geliştirmek ve ardından zorlu iş koşullarında başarıyı etkilemek için gereken yetkinlikler ve yetenekler hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmeyi gerektirir. İşletmeleri sürdürmek ve geliştirmek, girişimcilik performansını olumlu yönde etkileyen ve iş başarısına yol açan gelişmiş girişimcilik özellikleri ve becerileri gerektirir. Bunu yüzden, girişimcilik performansını iyileştirdiği ve başarılı girişimlere yol açtığı kanıtlanmış farklı beceri ve yeterlilikleri kucaklamak için duygusal zeka aranır.

Duygusal zeka girişimcilik faaliyetlerini geliştiren ve iş başarısını etkileyen iletişim ve iş ilişkileri, yenilikçilik, fırsatları keşfetme ve kullanma, risk tutumu, problem çözme ve karar verme becerileri açısından girişimci performansı etkilemeye çalışılmaktadır. Bu araştırma, derinlemesine görüşmelere dayalı bir veri toplama yöntemini benimseyen nitel bir fenomenolojik metodoloji izlemektedir. Nitel araştırma

yönteminin kullanılmasının nedeni, duygusal zeka ile girişimcilik performansı arasında pozitif bir ilişkinin varlığını ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmanın amacı, mühendislik endüstrisindeki 17 girişimci ve işletme sahibinin duygusal zekanın iş performansları üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin algı ve bakış açılarını gerçek yaşam deneyimlerine dayalı olarak tartışmaktır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, iş başarısına katkıda bulunan beceri ve yeterlilikleri artırarak girişimci performansı etkilemede duygusal zekanın rolünü incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygusal Zeka, Girişimcilik Başarısı, Girişimcilik Performansı ve İş Başarısı.



ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

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The emotional intelligence concept has recently acquired the attention of business researchers for its role in enhancing entrepreneurial skills and positively impacting entrepreneurial performance. Researchers have been investigating and studying the business success factors and indicators and why some business ventures are more successful than others.

Therefore, operating and managing an entrepreneurial venture requires not only knowledge of the technical skills and tools to launch new business ventures, but also learning more about the competencies and capabilities needed to sustain and enhance the value offered and subsequently influence success in challenging business conditions. Maintaining and developing businesses require advanced entrepreneurial characteristics and abilities that positively impact entrepreneurial performance and lead to business success. With that in mind, emotional intelligence is sought to embrace different skills and competencies proven to improve entrepreneurial performance and lead to successful ventures.

Emotional intelligence is sought to affect entrepreneurial performance in terms of communication and business relations, innovation, discovery and use of opportunities, risk attitude, problem-solving, and decision-making skills that improve entrepreneurial activities and affect business success.

This research follows a qualitative phenomenological methodology that adopts a data collection method based on in-depth interviews. The reason for using the qualitative research method is to reveal the existence of a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial performance. The aim of the study is to discuss the perceptions and perspectives of 17 entrepreneurs and business owners in the engineering industry, on the impact of emotional intelligence on their job performance based on real-life experiences. Thus, this study examines the role of emotional intelligence in influencing entrepreneurial performance by enhancing skills and competencies that contribute to business success.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, entrepreneurial performance, entrepreneurial success, and business success.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|--------------------------------|
| ECI | Emotional Competence Inventory |
| EI | Emotional Intelligence |
| EQ | Emotional Quotient |
| EQ-i | Emotional Quotient Inventory |



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

In today's entrepreneurship context, researchers are researching the factors influencing entrepreneurial performance and why some businesses and ventures are more successful. Former research sought hard to underlie the technical skills that enhance the performance of entrepreneurs, which is thought to lead to success. However, few other studies have stated that individuals can't be perceived as machines (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000). Additionally, these studies proved that it is highly inapplicable to put so much focus on the technical skills and abilities of individuals and not to pay attention to their feelings, behaviors, norms, and attitude at work, which represent who they are and is sought to directly influence their behavior and business performance (Goleman, Daniel, 1995).

Moreover, the mono-perspective of only focusing on technical skills and abilities has failed businesses to enhance their performance and, therefore, to grow solid ventures that adequately deal with uncertainties—that struggle to succeed (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011).

Modern businesses face high uncertainty and complexities; due to the need to apply innovative business models that can operate in challenging business environments. Nevertheless, working in a challenging business environment requires personal qualities and abilities to succeded and prosper (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Therefore, research indicated that attracting individuals with the technical skills and capabilities only can't ensure better ways of either dealing with complexities or providing solutions as well as effective management of uncertainty (Shane, S., 2003) (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

Therefore, this research is conducted to discuss the perspective and perception of entrepreneurs and the owners of small/medium business ventures on the importance of including emotional intelligence as a significant factor that influences the performance of entrepreneurs.

Moreover, this research is meant to discuss if entrepreneurs with high levels of emotional intelligence who are better at recognizing and regulating their feelings and the feelings of others (Goleman, Daniel, 1998) probably experience a high level of motivation and can act professionally in critical situations and take better decisions, while they effectively manage communications and business relations. Therefore, for business ventures to prosper and succeed, the best approach is for the entrepreneurial performance to combine both sides of the brain, the cognition and emotions, mind and feelings (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Accordingly, effective entrepreneurial performance is only possible by developing an emotional intelligence framework (Goleman, Daniel, 1998).

Additionally, as for the success of any business activity, Goleman presented supporting data at Harvard University, which summarizes that the rate of success of any business activity is determined by only 33% of technical skills, knowledge, and intellectual abilities (i.e., IQ), and 67 % – emotional competence (EQ) (Goleman, Daniel, 2002).

As for entrepreneurs and business owners, these figures vary even more: only 15% of success is determined by technical skills, knowledge, and intellectual abilities (i.e., IQ), and 85% by emotional competence (EQ) (Goleman, Daniel, 2002) (Goleman, Daniel, 1998).

Therefore, this research is aimed to study the role of emotional intelligence in influencing entrepreneurial performance. In addition, it targets answering what makes an entrepreneurial venture successful and more competitive than others.

To achieve the study's objectives, in-depth interviews have been conducted to discuss the influential role of the emotional intelligence construct on the entrepreneurial performance construct based on the real-life experiences of entrepreneurs and business

owners. Nevertheless, a case study is done based on the contribution of entrepreneurs and small/medium business owners. The case study explores the emotional intelligence level of entrepreneurs and venture owners operating in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It investigates how emotional intelligence influences entrepreneurial performance and promotes business success. The observations on the case study are meant to provide a perspective for entrepreneurship researchers, emotional intelligence practitioners, and researchers, as well as aspirational entrepreneurs, which could be examined later by other researchers.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurs start their new ventures with the hopes of achieving business success. However, statistics in the entrepreneurship field have stated that one-third of start-ups and new businesses announce closure within the first two years of operation, and almost half of these new ventures survive to make it to the fourth year of operation (Administration, 2008). Therefore, it is critical to research the factors contributing to and affecting the success or failure of new entrepreneurial ventures and the economy (Lussier, 2010). This research is meant to study and investigate the role of emotional intelligence in influencing the performance of entrepreneurs, which is the main contribution to the success or failure of businesses.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The study's primary purpose is to investigate and evaluate the vital role of emotional intelligence in influencing entrepreneurial performance, which determines business growth and leads to business success. Therefore, the research will study the relationship between the emotional intelligence dimensions and entrepreneurs' performance in the scope of entrepreneurial activities that lead to venture success. The emotional intelligence dimensions include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, and their relation to entrepreneurs' performance in terms of opportunity recognition, innovation, communications, business relation, problem-solving, and decision-making, which lead to success.

1.4. Research Main Question

Therefore, this research aims to study the role of emotional intelligence in influencing the performance of entrepreneurs. It seeks to answer the main research question about “what makes an entrepreneurial venture successful and more competitive than others.”



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is generally defined as a set of social skills or social abilities that emphasize recognizing and regulating emotions within oneself and others and using this emotional knowledge to best guide one's actions and decisions. Previous research suggested training to be used to employ the concept of emotional intelligence in one's life and to improve its impact in all life aspects.

Previous scholars have identified emotional intelligence as an inclusive type of intelligence that encompasses emotional, social, and practical intelligence, which allows individuals to reason with emotions and about emotions by combining the feeling with the thinking (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

The emotional intelligence concept is well-liked in many disciplines because of the belief that emotional intelligence is a better success predictor than cognitive intelligence (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Emotional intelligence is generally described as a set of emotional skills that individuals use to navigate the challenges of their everyday life (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011). Various research has been conducted to study emotional and cognitive intelligence and its implications on the performance of individuals. In comparing the two concepts, much research demonstrated the accuracy of emotional intelligence in predicting business success by impacting individual performance and behavior.

Additionally, the research argued that an individual's reasoning and intellectual abilities can be high yet might not lead to success. Nevertheless, how individuals communicate their ideas, participate in decision-making, and interact with their peers, are related qualities that impact performance, reflect the emotional intelligence level

of individuals, and can indicate business success (Furnham, A., & Petrides, K. V., 2003).

The emotional intelligence concept has been a popular topic that attracted the attention of the media and the public after the publication of Goleman's first and best-selling book, "Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ" (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Consequently, the book has extended to increase researchers' attention to research and discover emotional competencies and their relationship with performance and prosocial behavior. Therefore, this led to studying the importance of emotional intelligence in impacting individuals' performance and predicting business success (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011).

2.2. A Brief History of the Theory of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence was raised and gained the attention of researchers and scholars back in the 1920s as part of social intelligence (Thorndike, R. L., & Stein, S., 1937, p. 1937). No one is born intelligent. However, there are a set of abilities and skills that individuals must learn over time to act wisely in social groups. Thorndike first attempted to define social intelligence (Thorndike, R. L., & Stein, S., 1937). Therefore, the ability to understand and manage boys, girls, and men and women was the first attempt to measure social intelligence in human relations and social groups (Thorndike, R. L., & Stein, S., 1937).

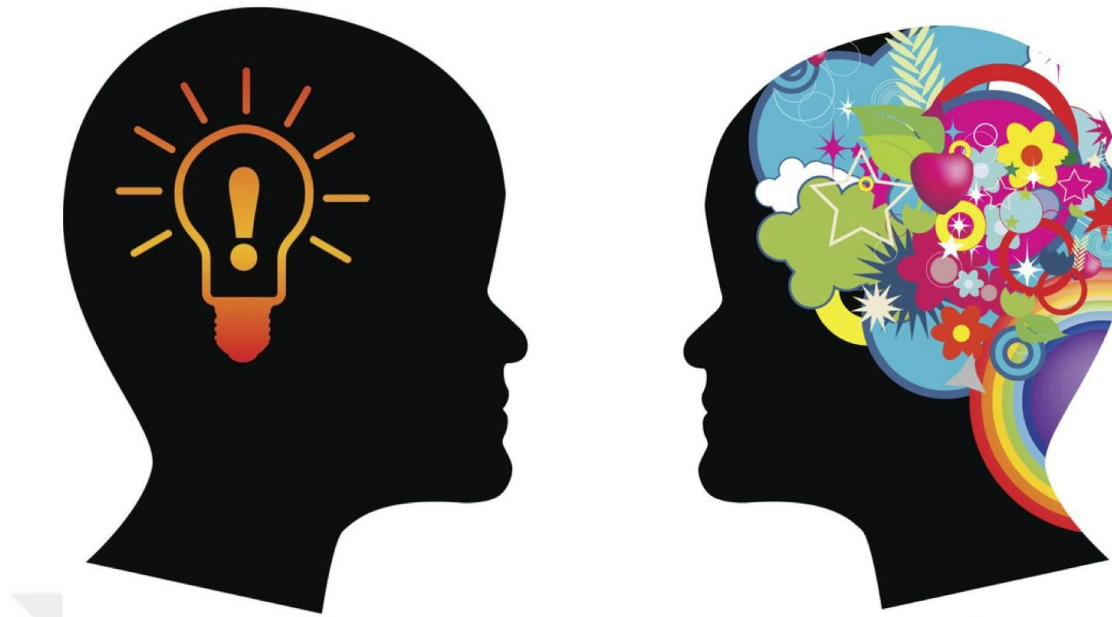


Figure 2.1. Emotional Intelligence and Intellectual Intelligence

Over the past years, scholars have been working hard to understand and explore the concept of intelligence. In the early twentieth century, it was believed that the concept of intelligence in a unidimensional term was best described as intellectual intelligence. The root of this theory was extracted from the functionality of the word itself, as it was believed that intelligence is a function of rational, systematic logic that represents higher levels of mental abilities such as abstract reasoning, problem-solving, and mental representation (Thorndike, E.L., 1920). In addition, the intelligence concept and the concept of emotions were sought as two separate constructs in the psychological domain. However, emotional intelligence- EI was first casually used in the literature in the late 1960s (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997). Afterward, during the early years of the 1970s, the research was concerned with the relationship between emotions and cognitive processes (Becker, G. S., 1964; Schumpeter, Joseph A., 1980). By the 1990s, emotional intelligence was identified as a formal scientific concept (Salovey, P. & Mayer, J. D., 1990). A few years later, emotional intelligence was developed and popularized as EI after the release of the best-selling book “Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ” (Goleman, Daniel, 1995).

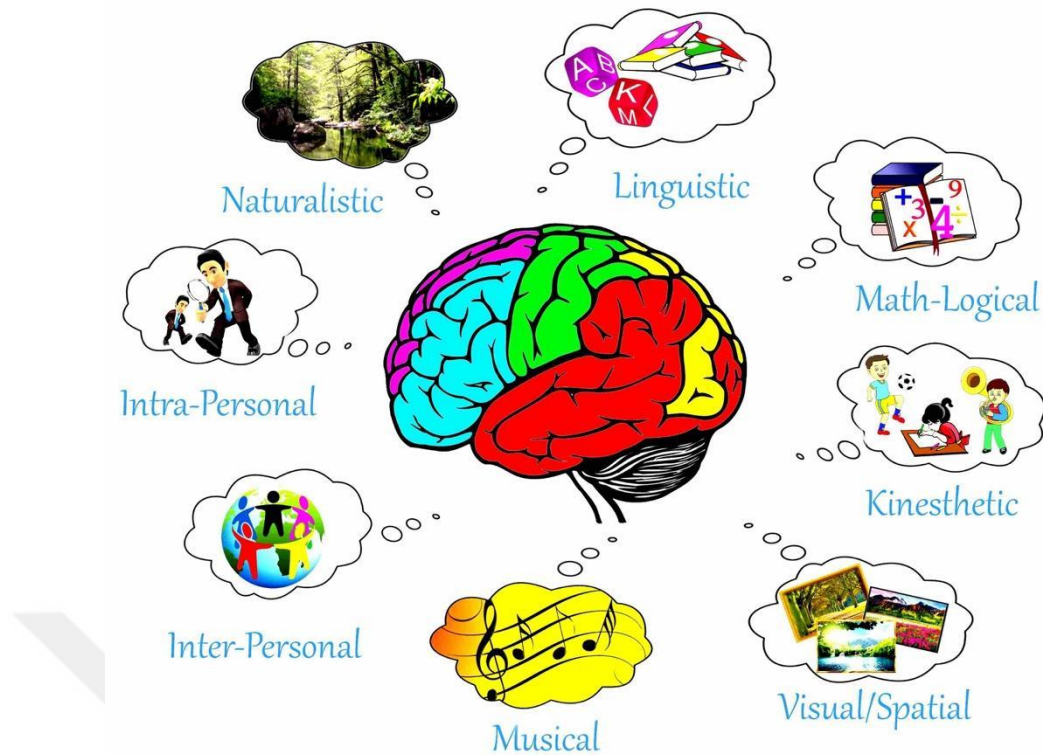


Figure 2.2. Theory of Multiple Intelligence by Gardner

Gardner created his theory of multiple intelligence to broaden this concept of intelligence, which states that the human brain consists of numerous intelligences, illustrated in *Figure 2.2*. The multiple intelligence theory introduces seven types of intelligence that challenge the traditional notion of intelligence, in which this conventional notion states that IQ is the only dominant type of intelligence (Gardner, H., 1983). Furthermore, the author refined the concept to consist of eight types of intelligence, to focus more on one main domain of intelligence that was introduced in theory, named emotional intelligence, and then to split it into two types of intelligence instead. The personal intelligence domain is divided into two main aspects: interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence (Gardner, H., 1999). The author clarified that interpersonal intelligence focuses on skills that deal with the ability of a person to interact and work with others, understand the behaviors and desires of others, and build effective relationships (Gardner, H., 1999; Gardner, H., 1983). While on the other hand, intrapersonal intelligence discusses a set of skills and abilities on how individuals understand their feelings and range of emotions, as well as be able to label and deal with one's behavioral attributes (Gardner, H., 1999).

Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence laid the foundation for affiliate research in emotional intelligence. Accordingly, the initiation of the term emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i) (Bar-On, R., 1997), which was re-developed after the Emotional Quotient (EQ) was coined by (Goleman, Daniel, 1995), was developed to measure the emotional intelligence level of individuals. Nonetheless, the emotional, social intelligence concept was defined as an array of emotional and social abilities that influence the individual's overall capacity to handle daily tasks and demands.

Emotional intelligence is a concept that has been discussed previously within the entrepreneurial field. The emotional intelligence concept has been believed to influence success in all life aspects for years. However, the idea of emotional intelligence was officially coined by Salovey and Mayer in the early 1990s as the ability of individuals to perceive, understand as well as manage and use their emotions, the emotions of those they deal with, to use them to enhance personal interactions and relationships (Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D., 1990). A few years later, Goleman has drawn on emotional and social intelligence to define work success.

Emotional intelligence aims to meet targets and business goals, balance working culture, and create healthier businesses (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Lastly, a mixed model of emotional intelligence was developed (Bar-On, R., 1997) that combines emotional and social competencies. The combined competencies are measured using the emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i) (Bar-On, R., 1997). The emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i) combines 133 short sentences, which uses a five-point Likert scale so that participants can choose how well these short sentences describe them.

Therefore, various theories discuss the concept of emotional intelligence and have developed models to discuss it. The approaches are very close in the definitions, yet there is a slight variance in how models are structured. The primary school of thought further argued that emotional intelligence is perceived as an ability or a trait. Therefore, the Encyclopedia of applied psychology suggested and approved two main models that discuss characteristics and skills of emotional intelligence - EI in a broader way, besides another mixed model.

– The three main models of Emotional Intelligence EI

- The ability model of Mayer & Salovey
- The model of Daniel Goleman
- The mixed models by Bar-On

2.3. Emotional Intelligence Schools of Thought and Models

The emotional intelligence concept combines the cognitive and non-cognitive competencies, skills, and abilities connected to the behavior and performance of all individuals in all fields. Management researchers have discussed the importance of emotional intelligence in business management. Emotional intelligence has attracted researchers' attention to study what constitutes the concept of emotional intelligence, as well as what emotional intelligence predicts. Thus, three primary schools of thought have resulted from years of research and analysis on the emotional intelligence concept: the ability model by (Mayer, J. D. & Salovey, P., 1997), the mixed/ performance model by (Goleman, Daniel 1995), and the competencies model by (Bar-On, R., 2000; Dulewicz, C., Young, M., & Dulewicz, V., 2005).

The ability model discusses the interaction between emotional and cognitive intelligence and is defined as the ability of individuals to identify and monitor the emotions in themselves and others, distinguish between them, and use this emotional information to guide their thoughts and actions (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997). This model of emotional intelligence focuses on four phases of human abilities: perceiving emotion, facilitating emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions that enhance building relationships.

The Bar-On model discusses the interconnected behaviors of individuals driven by a mixture of emotional and social competencies, which, if acquired by individuals, will influence their performance, and enhance life and business success (Bar-On, R., 1997). This model is focused on five major emotional intelligence scales ranging from self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management (Bar-On, R., 1997). These five significant scales produce fifteen subscales: empathy, social responsibility, problem-solving, reality testing, impulse control, self-regard,

self-actualization, emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, assertiveness, independence, interpersonal relationship, flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism, and driving human behavior (Bar-On, R., 1997).

While the mixed model is focused on a set of competencies and behaviors of individuals, which is believed to be trained and acquired, and contribute to the performance of managers and leaders, and represents how entrepreneurs adapt and perform in the work context (Goleman, Daniel, 1995; Goleman, Daniel, 1998). Based on Goleman's model, those emotional intelligence competencies focus on the entrepreneurs' performance and behavior, the cognitive and non-cognitive competencies, and progressive learning abilities and skills, *Figure 2.3*. (Goleman, Daniel, 1998; Goleman, Daniel, 2002).

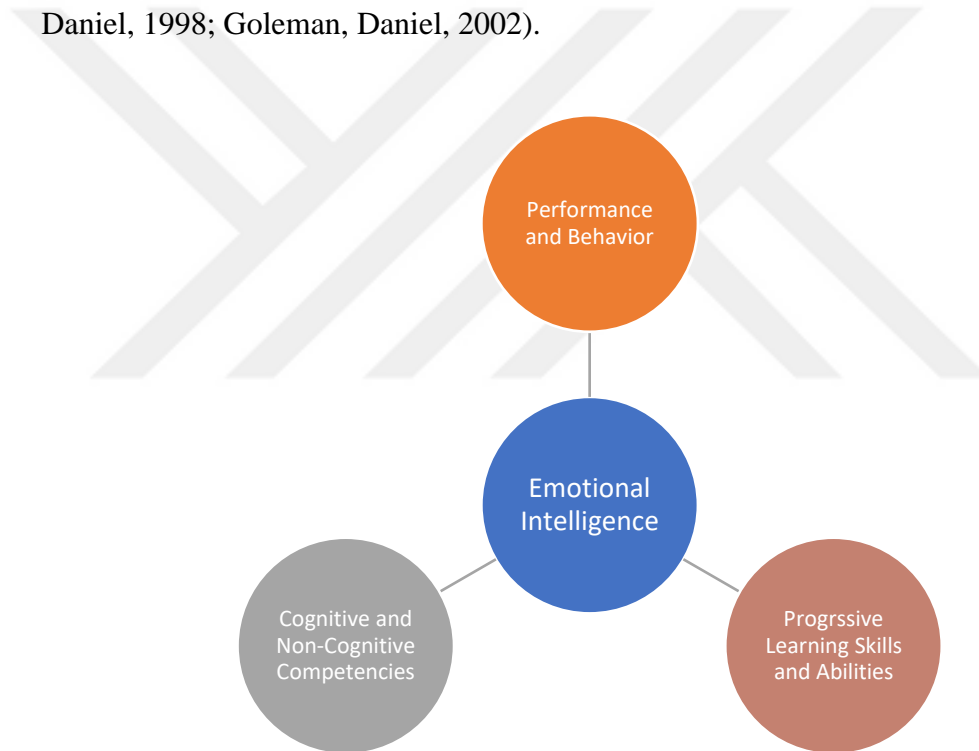


Figure 2.3. Three Main Domains of Emotional Competencies by Goleman

Emotional intelligence is essential in enhancing managers' performance and influencing entrepreneurial success. It has been proven to be a primary factor in identifying and evaluating business processes, techniques, management styles, attitudes, and interpersonal skills and behaviors (Shane, S., 2003).

Individuals in entrepreneurial occupations are facing business situations in which it is necessary to learn a set of skills and abilities of social interactions, such as leadership skills, communication skills, negotiation skills, resource management, opportunity exploitation, and trade-off skills, for prosperity and better control of their ventures (Goleman, Daniel, 2002). This brought up the importance of studying the emotional intelligence models to enhance the traits and abilities lacking to conduct a business and positively influence the performance of entrepreneurs and business owners.

2.3.1. The Ability Model of Mayer and Salovey

The term emotional intelligence was first introduced by (Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999) in the literature as the capacity to recognize the emotions in oneself and others once they occur and regulate them afterward. In addition, emotional intelligence describes the ability to discriminate between different feelings and label emotions once they happen while using this type of knowledge to guide the thoughts and behaviors in oneself (Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999). The emotional intelligence concept is discussed as the ability to use your emotions and the emotions of those you deal with to impact people's behavior and performance. Therefore, it is not a trait-based model but rather an ability-based model of the capability of an individual to use and facilitate those traits to manage the performance of oneself and others.

Salovey and Mayer, in the early 1990s, coined the concept of emotional intelligence to describe the emotional characteristics of individuals that were trusted to lead to success. These emotional aspects include empathy, adaptability, expression of feelings, problem-solving, independence, and decision-making (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997). This ability-based model of emotional intelligence by (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997) emphasizes that emotional intelligence should be perceived as a type of intelligence comparatively independent of the personality traits concept. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize the emotions of oneself and others, distinguish between feelings, and use this emotional knowledge to guide one's thinking and actions.

The emotional intelligence concept was revisited as it was admitted combining a set of abilities such as perceiving and expressing emotion, the ability to facilitate thoughts and generating feelings, the ability to understand emotional knowledge, as well as regulate and managing emotions that result in intellectual growth (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997; Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999). These emotional abilities are categorized into four domains model developed by (Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999; Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000):

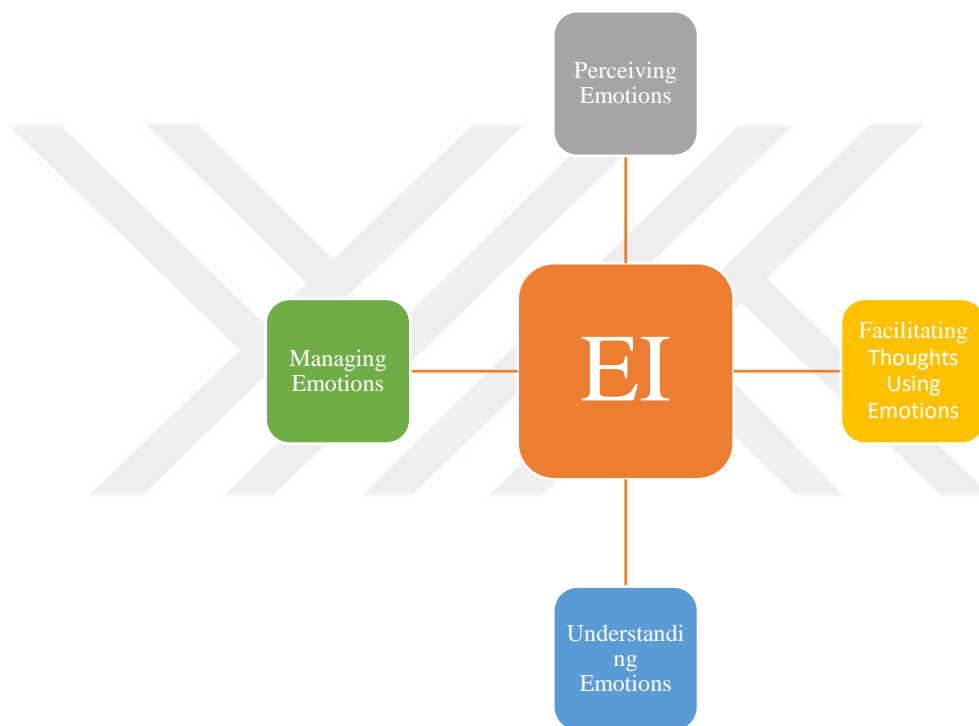


Figure 2.4. The Emotional Ability Model by Mayer

The ability-based model is the first model that focuses on the emotions of individuals and the processing of emotional information while performing a mental-based task (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997). The ability-based model defines emotional intelligence as abilities distinct from personality traits. The ability-based model focuses on individuals' mental skills and mental capacity to complete psychological tasks that meet specific standards, such as time constraints, and to be accurate (Mayer, J. D., Roberts, R. D., & Barsade, S. G., 2008). The ability-based model is defined as the ability of individuals to perceive and monitor the emotions in themselves and others, distinguish between them, and use this emotional information to guide their

thoughts and actions (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997). This ability-based model best measures maximal rather than typical performance (Petrides, K. V., & Furnham, A., 2000).

The ability-based model by (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997) is a process-based technique that highlights the following elements:

⇒ Emotional perception

Emotional perception reflects the ability to identify the emotions in oneself and others from the physical or psychological state of oneself and others—the ability to express those emotions clearly and accurately and label their associated needs.

⇒ Emotional facilitation of thought and the usage of emotional information in mental processes and thinking

The ability to use emotions to facilitate cognitive skills and direct the thoughts of problem-solving.

⇒ Emotional understanding and emotional reasoning processes

The ability to understand the cause of emotions and the true meanings associated with the emotions as well as understand complex feelings.

⇒ Emotional management and regulation

The ability to regulate and manage the stream of emotions experienced to generate intellectual growth and guide individuals' decisions.

2.3.2. The Mixed Models of Intelligence

The mixed-based model is composed of three main models that define emotional intelligence more broadly, in which this model combines emotion, personality traits, and competencies as well as motivational factors (Cote, S., Lopes, P. N., Salovey, P., & Miners, C. T. H., 2010). Assertiveness and the need to achieve and be successful are the main attributes of the mixed model (Bar-On, R., 2000; Goleman, Daniel, 2002). Authors of the diverse models defined emotional intelligence as an inclusive field with roots in the psychology and personality traits and competencies research fields, which

reflects on the personal characteristic of individuals (Goleman, Daniel, 1995; Bar-On, R., 2000). However, each of the authors of this model has his own descriptive set of attributes and components to describe emotional intelligence.

– *Goleman's Model*

The second model developed to define emotional intelligence after the ability-based model by (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997) was done by (Goleman, Daniel 1995), which consists of a set of competencies that describe the concept of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence certainly got the public and the media's attention after the best-selling book "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ" by (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Goleman defined a recent view of emotional intelligence to widen the concept, which includes twenty-five sub-competencies (Goleman, Daniel, 1995) that has a positive relationship with the personality of individuals. The power to recognize the feelings within oneself and others, then design a method to manage and use these feelings and emotions within oneself and others to create a healthier working culture, is defined as emotional intelligence (Goleman, Daniel, 1995).

Emotional intelligence was outlined as a set of learned competencies that influence the performance of individuals, which results in exceptional leadership and business success (Goleman, Daniel, 1998). The author developed his model based on presenting twenty-five competencies that are derived from the below five clusters as follows:

1. Emotional awareness cluster: Self-confidence and Accurate self-assessment.
2. Self-regulation cluster: Adaptability, Self-control, Innovation, Trustworthiness, and Conscientiousness.
3. Motivation cluster: Initiative, Commitment, Achievement drive, and Optimism.
4. Empathy cluster: Service orientation, understanding others, developing others, Leveraging diversity, and Political awareness.
5. Social skills cluster: Influence, Communication, Leadership, Team capabilities, change catalyst, Building bonds, Conflict Management, Collaboration, and Cooperation.

After that, the author published another book that refined the concept of emotional intelligence. The model stated only four main clusters to define the main competencies of emotional intelligence (Goleman, Daniel, 2002). The four presented clusters of the emotional intelligence concept are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

The concept has been extended to workplaces and used as a human and business relations reference. Goleman described that emotional intelligence triggers success in professional interactions and different life aspects and assures better communication and relationship with others, compared to the intelligence quotient-IQ (Goleman, Daniel, 1995; Goleman, Daniel, 2002). Based on this, the emotional quotient – EQ was created to act as a measure to assess the level of emotional intelligence of individuals to enhance their performance and lead to success (Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999; Goleman, Daniel, 1995).

Moreover, the corresponding measure - named emotional quotient EQ – was first introduced by (Goleman, Daniel, 1995) based on his research on the work done by (Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999; Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000). Therefore, a framework of emotional intelligence was designed of four main components in *Figure 2.5.*, which sum up the intrapersonal intelligence as well as interpersonal intelligence, which contribute to the behavioral attributes of human beings (Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999; Goleman, Daniel, 2002). These four components are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management

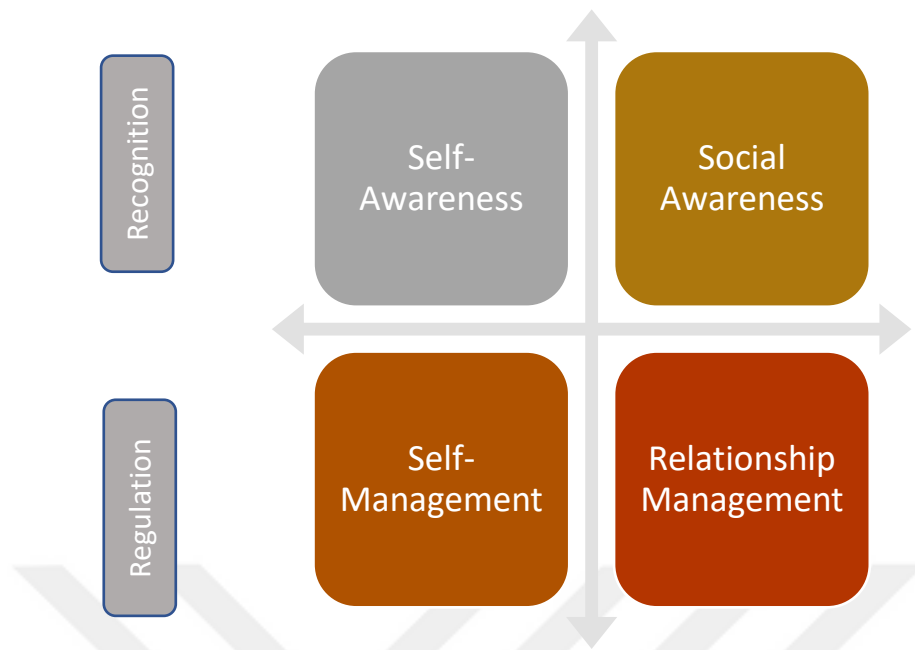


Figure 2.5. The Four Main Clusters of Emotional Intelligence by Goleman

The first two components of the emotional intelligence framework refer to intrapersonal intelligence, which deals with the self. While the last two components relate to interpersonal intelligence, which refers to the interactions with others (Gardner, H., 1999; Goleman, Daniel, 2002)

Goleman proposed a set of competencies within each emotional cluster to obtain self-rating and rating peers. Each collection includes a set of competencies that indicate the emotional intelligence capability of individuals (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). This competency model suggests that the emotional intelligence concept is not just perceived intuitive and innate competencies; instead, It is a series of learned capabilities that we must work to grasp and train to achieve outstanding performance (Goleman, Daniel, 1995; Goleman, Daniel, 2002).

Goleman’s model suggested that the first two components, self-awareness, and self-management, are about the intrapersonal scope of emotional intelligence and are meant to discuss recognizing, managing, and regulating the emotions oneself. However, the last two components, social awareness, and relationship management, are about the

interpersonal scope of emotional intelligence, which is about the capacity of individuals to manage and build relationships with others (Goleman, Daniel, 2002).

The validity of the application of this set of attributes predicts success at work and home (Goleman, Daniel, 1995), which proves to lead to less aggression, a high level of empathy, better communication, and cooperation, as well as genuine relationship (Goleman, Daniel, 2002).

– *The Bar-on model*

This third conceptual model is believed to be a theoretical model that defines emotional intelligence as a set of non-cognitive attributes that deals with the competencies and skills of individuals, which influence their success while coping with the demand and pressure of the working environment (Bar-On, R., 1997). As for the Bar-On model, emotional intelligence was defined as a combination of behavior triggered by a mixture of emotional and social competencies. Bar-On perceives the emotional intelligence concept as a model formed to use emotional and social skills and competencies to direct their influence on the individual's ability to train individuals to successfully deal with situational and environmental demands and pressures (Bar-On, R., 2000).

The emotional intelligence concept was defined as understanding yourself, understanding people around you, being able to relate to them accurately, and coping and adapting to circumstances to successfully deal with environmental demands (Bar-On, R., 1997). EI represents an array of emotional and social skills and competencies that influence the person's ability to cope and deal with life's pressure and demands. Therefore, emotional intelligence skills and competencies can be trained and coached to reach organizational goals (Bar-On, R., 2000).

This model argues that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better and more successful at responding to environmental demands. In addition, being unable to respond to ecological requests highlights a deficiency in emotional intelligence and can be a success barrier.

Generally, this model suggests that emotional intelligence is as important as cognitive and intellectual intelligence in contributing to the performance of individuals and in estimating work success (Bar-On, R., 2000). However, some research argued the validity of the self-report index created in this model, which led the model to replace it by focusing on the trait of emotional intelligence, illustrated below in *Table 1* (Bar-On, R., 2000).

Table 2.1. Bar-on Model of Emotional Intelligence

| Bar-On Model of Emotional Intelligence EQ-360(2003) | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Self and Other Reporting | |
| Components | Subcomponents |
| Intrapersonal | Self-regard |
| | Emotional self-awareness |
| | Assertiveness |
| | Independence |
| | Self-actualization |
| Interpersonal | Empathy |
| | Social Responsibility |
| | Interpersonal relationships |
| Adaptability | Flexibility |
| | Problem-solving |
| | Reality testing |
| Stress Management | Self-tolerance |
| | Impulse control |
| General Mood Components | Optimism |
| | Happiness |

- Intrapersonal skills: the ability to recognize and express the emotions and feelings of oneself.
- Interpersonal skills: the ability to understand the emotions and feelings of others and relate to them.

- Adaptation: the ability to adapt to change and manage the emotions of oneself.
- Stress management: the ability to solve and manage intrapersonal and interpersonal.
- General emotions: the ability to regulate positive emotions and to be self-motivated.

Nonetheless, the practical implications and the study layout of the ability-based model and the mixed models by (Bar-On, R., 1997) (Goleman, Daniel, 1995) overlap with some constructs and measures. Hence, they influence job performance and predict success (Ashkanasy, N. M., & Daus, C. S., 2005).

– *Dulewicz and Higgs' Model*

Consequently, the fourth theoretical model that is more comprehensive was developed by (Dulewicz, V. & Higgs, M., 1999) to define emotional intelligence. This model consists of seven main dimensions to explain the concept of emotional intelligence through a 360-degree questionnaire that aims to measure emotional intelligence directly through a self-completion method. The seven significant dimensions are as follows:

- Self-Awareness.
- Emotional Resilience.
- Motivation.
- Interpersonal Sensitivity.
- Influence
- Intuitiveness
- Conscientiousness

This model is believed to present a longitudinal study of the emotional intelligence literature through extensive research of personal competencies and personality traits and characteristics that affect job performance (Dulewicz, V., & Higgs, M., 1999; Dulewicz, C., Young, M., & Dulewicz, V., 2005).

2.3.3. Summary of Relevant Theories

Accordingly, the emotional intelligence construct is believed to be based on the two primary schools of thought and perspectives, which in turn consist of four significant models. as per below *Table 2*. The primary model is the ability-based research by (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997) describing the four elements of the cognitive ability model. Subsequently, the mixed model of emotional intelligence, which includes the four clusters model by (Goleman, Daniel, 1995), the five-dimension model by (Bar-On, R., 2000), and lastly the comprehensive model by (Dulewicz, C., Young, M., & Dulewicz, V., 2005) that emphasizes seven primary attributes of emotional intelligence theory.

Table 2.2. Summary of the Four Major Models of Emotional Intelligence

| Ability Model | Mixed Models | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Mayer and Salovey (1990, 1997) | Goleman (1995, 1998) | Bar-On (1997) | Dulewicz and Higgs (1999, 2000) |
| Identify Emotions | Self-Awareness | Intrapersonal Skills | Self-Awareness |
| Facilitate Emotions | Self-Management | Interpersonal Skills | Emotional Resilience |
| Understand Emotions | Social Awareness | Adaptation | Motivation |
| Manage Emotions | Relationship Management | Stress Management General Mood | Interpersonal Sensitivity Influence Intuitiveness Conscientiousness |

2.4. Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a field that is defined as the ability to extract new opportunities, create values, and launch new businesses (Baron, R., 2008). The ability of entrepreneurs to discover opportunities and to exploit new ideas that bring new goods and services to existence as well as create new services is described as

entrepreneurship (Volkman, C. k. Grünhagen, M & Tokarski, K. O., 2010; Shepherd, D. & Wiklund, J., 2005; Shane, S., 2003).

2.4.1. A Brief History of the Theory of Entrepreneurship

The term entrepreneurship dates to the 1850s in the 19th century, although Josef Schumpeter coined the term in the 1920s (Daneshmir, Hanna, 2017; Hagemann, Harald, 2015). Entrepreneurship is defined as creating new businesses and ventures, and those who execute and carry out the activities are identified as entrepreneurs (Schumpeter, Joseph A., 1980; T. Brown, P. Davidsson & J. Wiklund, 2001). Traditionally, economists have labeled the individuals who create new enterprises and ventures as entrepreneurs (Lowell, B. & Sharon, A., 2001).

The entrepreneurship field has been acknowledged to be a powerful engine that significantly stimulates countries' economic growth. It has been believed to influence the development of the economy of nations by acting as an essential source of job creation, production booster, and innovation stimulator (Birch, D., 1979; Baumol, W.J., 1993; Rhee, K.s. & White, R.J., 2007). Entrepreneurial activities that enhance knowledge, innovation, and the generation of job opportunities and encourage market competitiveness are indicators of economic growth and prosperity (Savrul, M., 2017). Therefore, wealth creation is said to be directly associated with entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial activities and processes (Schumpeter, Joseph A., 1980), specifically in the late twentieth century, as an attempt to understand and define entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship (Birch, D., 1979). Thus, entrepreneurship proves to benefit nations and societies on both scales, the economic scale as well as the social scale (Davidsson, P. & J. Wiklund, 2001; Savrul, M., 2017).

Many researchers have been working on studying and defining the term entrepreneurship. Generally, literature reviews on entrepreneurship have been published into two main categories: micro-entrepreneurship and macro-entrepreneurship (Schumpeter, Joseph A., 1980). The micro-entrepreneurship stream of research zoom-in to underline the characteristics and traits of entrepreneurs, which will be researched in this study. On the other hand, macro entrepreneurship articles

zoom out to consider the industrial and the economic themes (Thomas Grebel, Andreas Pyka & Horst Hanusch, 2003).

The success of an entrepreneurial venture depends on many factors related to the characteristics of entrepreneurs and the environment and the industry in which the venture operates (Simeh, K. N., 2011). Research shows that over 50% of new business ventures admit closure and terminate their firms within the first five years of operation (Aldrich, H. E., 1999). Therefore, exploring the factors that enhance the probability of business success is essential to start a business venture.

The growing research on performance in building and sustaining a business has highlighted the difference between entrepreneurs and managers (Littunen, Hannu., 2002). However, some characteristics that are sought to highlight the performance of entrepreneurs include opportunity-seeking attributes and persistence (Kecharananta, N., & Baker, H. G., 1999). Entrepreneurs are perceived to be opportunity seekers that are so-called opportunists (T. Brown, P. Davidsson & J. Wiklund, 2001), in addition to other studies that suggested that entrepreneurs do exploit opportunities and create them, not seek them (Baumol, W.J., 1993; Littunen, Hannu., 2002; T. Brown, P. Davidsson & J. Wiklund, 2001).

2.4.2. The General Theory of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a field that is defined as the ability of entrepreneurs to create and grow businesses that bring goods and services into existence that aim for success through the recognition and exploitation of opportunities (Shepherd, D. & Wiklund, J., 2005). A Successful entrepreneurial venture is a primary source of job creation that reflects on and nourishes the economy (Birch, D., 1979). Entrepreneurial success is directly influenced by the performance of entrepreneurs and how they think and make decisions. Thus, scholars have been researching the factors that affect the performance of entrepreneurs and influence entrepreneurial success.

The studies on entrepreneurial success focus mainly on two streams of research. The first stream of research on entrepreneurial success focuses on the characteristics of entrepreneurs, such as the entrepreneur's ability to recognize and exploit opportunities,

acquire, and manage resources, and their planning process (Shane, S., 2003). The second stream of research on entrepreneurial success studies the external environment, which includes the industrial and environmental elements in which the business operates (Shane, S., 2003). *Figure 2.6*. Below is the general theory of entrepreneurship framework, which was designed by (Shane, S., 2003; McLaughlin, E. B., 2012).

Studies that have been done on the industrial and environmental determinants (the second stream) proved to propose a partial explanation of entrepreneurship; instead, they need the human component to provide an adequate description of entrepreneurial success (Shane, S., 2003). The characteristics, abilities, and traits of the people (entrepreneurs) exploiting the opportunities and pursuing entrepreneurial activities are crucial to entrepreneurial success (Shane, S., 2003). Therefore, the performance of entrepreneurs must be researched to identify the factors that impact it.

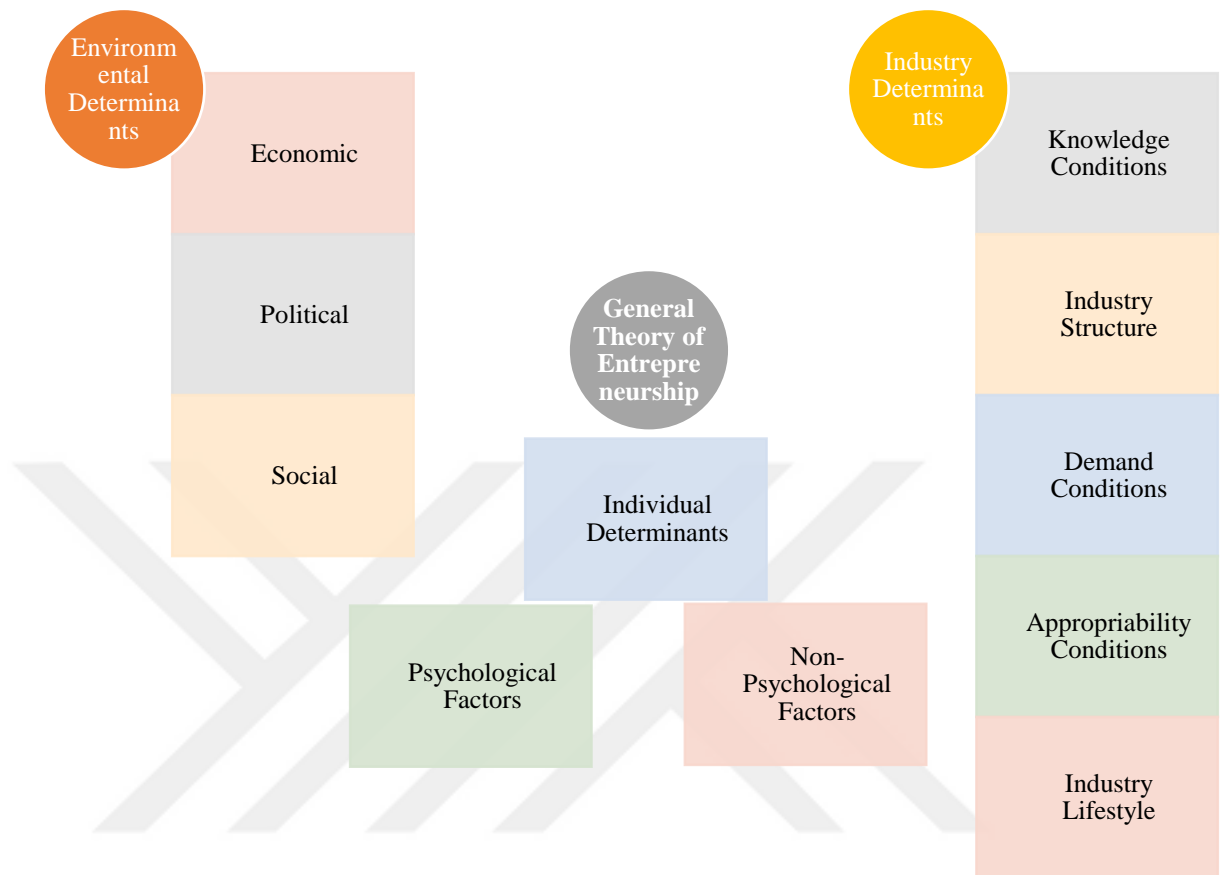


Figure 2.6. The General Theory of Entrepreneurship Framework

This study will focus on the first stream, which focuses on entrepreneurs' characteristics identified as individual determinants. The personal determinants discuss the psychological and non-psychological factors that affect the performance of entrepreneurs and could lead to entrepreneurial success.

○ Individual determinants

The entrepreneurial activities and processes are affected by individual and environmental determinants. The individual determinants are factors that are believed to influence the performance of entrepreneurs. Individuals sometimes engage in

entrepreneurial activities, expressing their problem-solving abilities, decision-making, creating social networks, sustaining social capital, and interacting in complex situations involving low emotions such as dissatisfaction and demotivation. The individual determinants seek to influence the ups and downs in entrepreneurs' behavior and performance, which can be trained for better results (Carroll, G., & Mosakowski, E., 570-589). The individual determinants of entrepreneurship are divided into two leading groups of factors (Shane, S. 2003), psychological and non-psychological.

– Non- psychological factors

Economists addressed non-psychological factors, which are physical/ tangible, to explain entrepreneurial performance. These non-psychological factors include physical capital, human resources (labor), and natural resources (Tomer, J.F., 2003). Some other factors indicated in this investigation by (Shane, S., 2003) include the level of education, age, career, social status, and opportunity cost to explain the non-psychological factors further. Below are the non-psychological factors that have been identified by (Shane, S., 2003):

- Age.
- Education is the level of education about the industry and the field of expertise.
- Career and experiences, which includes general business experience and experience with start-ups.
- Parental background
- Social position, which reflects social ties and social status.
- Opportunity costs refer to the possibility of sacrificing income.

The human capital theory used the non-psychological factors over the past thirty years to build models to indicate entrepreneurial success (Chandler, G. N., & Hanks, S. H., 1998; Davidsson, P., & Honig, B., 2003; Unger, J. M., Rauch, A., Frese, M., & Rosenbusch, N., 2009).

- Human capital theory

The human capital theory was defined as the knowledge and skills individuals acquire from attending training and schools and investing in other guiding experiences (Becker, G. S., 1964). Traditionally, human capital was said to be split into two main divisions: emotional and social (Gratton, L.,&Ghoshal, S., 2003). The emotional capital, which includes self-awareness, emotional intelligence, courage, ambition, and resilience, reflects the intellectual capital of individuals, while the social capital, such as relationships, reflects practical actions (Gratton, L.,&Ghoshal, S., 2003).

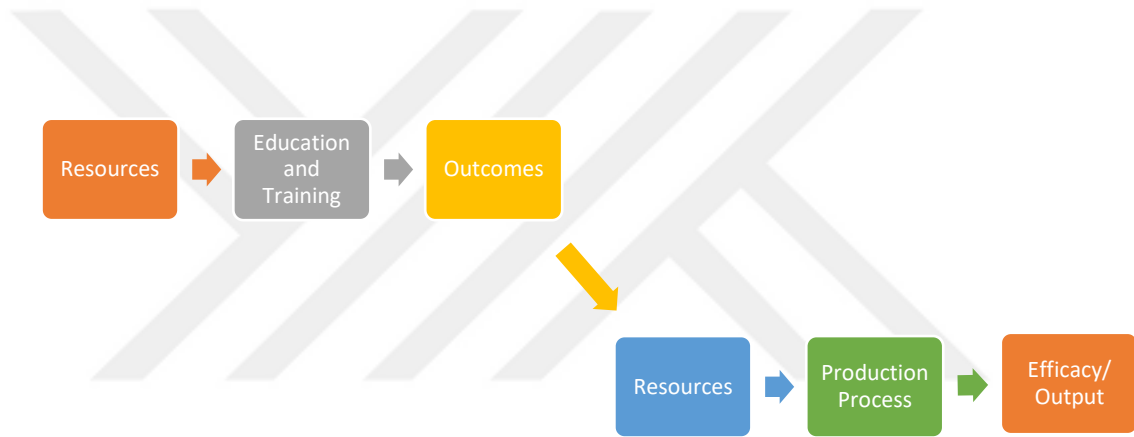


Figure 2.7. The Human Capital Theory

The human capital attributes such as education, skill, knowledge, and experience have been claimed to act as resources for entrepreneurial performance that enhance entrepreneurial success (Unger, J. M., Rauch, A., Frese, M., & Rosenbusch, N., 2009). The positive relationship between human capital and entrepreneurial success has been researched in the literature, proving, and indicating the increase in business owners' ability to succeed (Bosma, N., van Praag, M., Thurik, R., & de Wit, G., 2004). Furthermore, researchers indicated that the positive relationship between human capital and entrepreneurial success is due to the consistency in knowledge gain in a constantly changing work environment (Bosma, N., van Praag, M., Thurik, R., & de Wit, G., 2004). Moreover, human capital is claimed to enhance the ability of business owners and entrepreneurs to recognize and exploit business opportunities, which is a

primary task in the entrepreneurial context (Shane, S., 2003). In addition, other researchers explained the influencing role of parental background and prior knowledge on entrepreneurs' awareness and alertness, which allows entrepreneurs to see and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities that others may not recognize or see (Westhead, P., Ucbasaran, D., & Wright, M., 2005).

Another division of studies on the business catalysts on the positive relationship between human capital and entrepreneurial success suggested that human capital positively influences financial and physical capital (Brush, C.G., Greene, P.G., & Hart, M.M., 2001). Social capital represents a set of networks of relationships and sociability, which, combined with human capital, would provide opportunities and resources for entrepreneurs to build a productive capacity that leads to entrepreneurial success (Tomer, J.F., 2003). Therefore, researchers stated that thriving social capital and knowledge entrepreneurs could better interact in social groups (Baron, R., 2008). On the other hand, financial capital can positively be enhanced by human capital, as it could partially compensate for the lack of precise knowledge on capital gaining, which is a barrier for some entrepreneurs to afford to start a venture (Nahapiet, J., & Ghoshal, S., 1998).

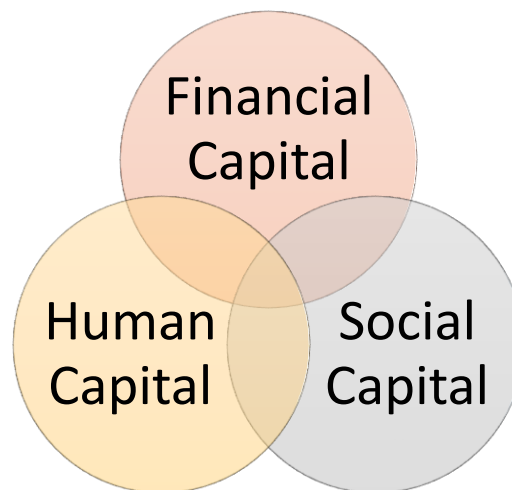


Figure 2.8. The Three Business Catalysts

Emotional capital, a division of human capital, has recently got the attention of researchers to study one of its aspects: the emotional intelligence attribute. It has been

believed that the dynamic intelligence attribute plays a significant psychological role in entrepreneurial success (Tomer, J.F., 2003). This will lead us to discuss the psychological part of the individual determinants of entrepreneurial success.

– Psychological factors

Research done on the psychology of entrepreneurs has discussed the relationship between entrepreneurs thinking manners and the entrepreneurial processes. Former researchers have underlined the effect of entrepreneurs' distinct ways of thinking on entrepreneurial strategies, such as the risk of operating a venture, recognizing and exploiting opportunities, decision-making, and problem-solving (Baron, R.A., & Ward, T.B., 2004). This relationship aims to highlight how entrepreneurs are different from other individuals with regards to the contents of their thought and the thought process they apply, which positively affect their performance in the entrepreneurial process and predict business success (Mitchell, R.K., Smith, B., Morse, E., Seawright, K.W., Prode, M. & McKenzie, B, 2002).

The elements of the thought processes sought, such as willingness, abilities, and arrangements, are proven to differentiate entrepreneurs from other business professionals (Baron, R.A., & Ward, T.B., 2004). The entrepreneurs' commitment to start and operate a new business venture reflects willingness in the thought process of entrepreneurs that encourages their persistence to succeed. In addition, the skills and knowledge of entrepreneurs reflect the ability level of their thought process that enhances their innovation and differentiates their business from others. Lastly, resource management and building relationships account for the arrangement component of the thought process done by the entrepreneurs, which are essential for the growth of any business venture (Baron, R.A., & Ward, T.B., 2004).

More researchers had further sought the thought process of entrepreneurs and stated that entrepreneurs seemed to possess a cognitive framework or a mental schema that helps them to recognize opportunities. This cognitive framework serves as entrepreneurial alertness to entrepreneurs that support their decision-making process regarding the entrepreneurial process (Baron, R.A., & Ward, T.B., 2004).

Furthermore, researchers approved that entrepreneurs' complex and adaptive framework help them think out of the box and be more creative (Gaglio, C. M., & Katz, J., 2001).

The cognitive framework is influenced by the emotions of entrepreneurs, in which authors stated that emotions affect the thought processes of entrepreneurs (George, J. M. & Forgas, J. P., 2001). Emotions are high-intensity feelings that interact with cognitive function and affect the performance of entrepreneurs, which influences the judgment, creativity level of entrepreneurs, and their inductive and deductive reasoning (George, J. M. & Forgas, J. P., 2001). Therefore, emotions are essential contributors to the psychological of entrepreneurs (George, J. M. & Forgas, J. P., 2001).

Emotional intelligence is a recent construct from the social intelligence theory (Thorndike, E.L., 1920). Thus, studying the evolution of the emotional intelligence theory will contribute to this conceptualization and the psychological state of entrepreneurs. The social intelligence theory was perceived as two main domains of intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and interpersonal intelligence (Thorndike, E.L., 1920). Years later, researchers followed up on the social intelligence theory and discussed advanced seven types of intelligence in developing the multiple intelligence theory (Gardner, H., 1983). As a result, the concept of emotional intelligence has gained the attention of management researchers in the field of organizational behavior to study the relationship between emotions and actions (Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A., 2009) and the applicability of the emotional intelligence to work-related matters such as intentions, performance, commitment, job satisfaction, and absenteeism (Rozell, E. J., Pettijohn, C. E., & Parker, R. S., 2002).

The psychological factors include three main clusters:

- Motivation includes aspects related to risk attitude, desire for independence.
- Core self-evaluation with qualities such as self-efficacy and locus of control.
- Cognition refers to the level of confidence and intuition.

2.4.3. Three Major Theories of Entrepreneurial Performance

Three major theories have contributed to the psychology-based research on entrepreneurial performance. The motive theory highlights the need for achievement as the primary motive entrepreneurs seek and has tried to speak about achievement as the main reason behind entrepreneurship (McCarthy, B., 2000). The theory discussed that the desire for personal achievement is the primary motivator encouraging entrepreneurs to succeed and go beyond the averages. However, the motive theory did not include other traits as necessary as the desire for accomplishments (Sagie, A. and Elizur, D., 1999). Therefore, the trait theory made its way to the literature to identify the essential traits experienced by entrepreneurs.

The trait theory, also named the personality theory, researches the human personality and suggests a specific stream of traits that are believed to be experienced by entrepreneurs. This theory promotes a stream of features, besides the need for achievements, that contributes to the performance of entrepreneurs. Such traits include consciousness, innovativeness, inventiveness, risk-taking, persistence and resilience, and adaptability (Kecharananta, N., & Baker, H. G., 1999; Littunen, Hannu., 2002; McCarthy, B., 2000; T. Brown, P. Davidsson & J. Wiklund, 2001). However, research proved that entrepreneurial personality differs from person to person, as not all entrepreneurs possess the same traits (T. Brown, P. Davidsson & J. Wiklund, 2001).

The cognitive theory sought to respond to the limitations and the gap in the trait theory. The cognitive theory was meant to explain and discuss entrepreneurial performance through cognition as a definitive process of thoughts (Christopher P. Neck, Heidi M. Neck, Charles C. Manz, Jeffrey Godwin, 1999). Self-efficacy perception and risk propensity approach are elements of the cognitive theory. The degree to which entrepreneurs are confident about their entrepreneurial skills and ability to run businesses indicates their self-efficacy level (Melissa S. Cardon, Joakim Wincent, Mateja Drnovsek, 2010). Entrepreneurs are most likely to display great self-ability to pursue their vision, which enhances their success and achieves results (Melissa S. Cardon, Joakim Wincent, Mateja Drnovsek, 2010). At the same time, the risk propensity approach highlights the high decision-making skills applied by entrepreneurs in change management and risk management, which as well is

determined by their confidence in taking risks and enhancing business success (Baumol, W.J., 1993; Littunen, Hannu., 2002; Knight, F., 1942; McCarthy, B., 2000).

The motive theory, the trait theory, and the cognitive theory have enriched the entrepreneurship literature review. However, they should have answered questions on the elements that contribute to the efficiency of entrepreneurial performance and lead to business success. Thus, this study is researching the factors that define the characteristics of effective entrepreneurial performance that lead to successful business management.

2.5. Entrepreneurship and Emotional Intelligence

Research has been discussing the influence of the intellectual abilities of entrepreneurs on operational processes and business success. Researchers identified entrepreneurs' cognitive and intellectual capabilities that they sought to impact their performance. However, statistics showed that these mental abilities don't guarantee business success. Entrepreneurs are disturbed by their unprocessed emotions and feelings, which substantially influence their performance and prevent business success (Goleman, Daniel, 1998).

The concept of intelligence has been widely researched and explored as a critical contributor to the performance of individuals in a business context. Former research has discussed explicitly and implicitly the influence of cognitive and intellectual intelligence constructs on managerial job performance (Moran, 1999). However, few studies have predicted the effect of emotional intelligence on work success through impacting entrepreneurial performance. Therefore, this research section is considering analyzing the discussion of the seventeen entrepreneurs on how they believe the construct of emotional intelligence had influenced their performance and relates to previous studies within the exact scope of interests.

The emotional intelligence concept has had an uncommon association and impact on managerial practices and entrepreneurial performance (Ashkanasy, 2002). According to this, businesses have been discussing the evident effect of emotional intelligence on the performance of entrepreneurs, managers, and employees, which is more profound

than cognitive intelligence, as they described. Emotional intelligence represents a set of abilities of individuals to perceive emotions in themselves as well as in others, to understand emotional knowledge, to use the emotional knowledge to facilitate performance and to regulate and manage the emotional knowledge in oneself and others (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997). Accordingly, some entrepreneurs perform effectively and better than others because they have high emotional intelligence. Consequently, some businesses are now more concerned about incorporating emotional intelligence training and programs into their employee development programs rather than focusing on just the determined cognitive abilities such as verbal, quantitative, and IQ abilities.

Empirical findings state that how entrepreneurs label, recognize and manage their emotions, as well as how they interact in social groups, are vital to entrepreneurial success (Baron, R., 2008). Few previous researchers have shown some efforts in studying the models and theories in developing the emotional intelligence concept about its application to individuals' performance at the workplace. Significant theoretical models in this regard include the theory of bounded emotionality (Jayasinghe Dennis Thomas, 2008) and the outline of a multi-level of emotions at work (Ashkanasy, 2002).

The entrepreneurship field classically followed the interpretations of (Schumpeter, Joseph A., 1980), which focuses on the economic rationality in entrepreneurial behavior and performance. Consequently, the theory of bounded emotionality contributes to the discussion in entrepreneurship research, which supports the need for an alternative, more social approach that attempts to explain the relationship between the social structure and individual entrepreneurial performance (Jayasinghe Dennis Thomas, 2008). Emotional Intelligence improves the social effectiveness level of individuals, which is considered an essential element of entrepreneurship success. The higher the emotional intelligence, the better the social network, leading to better business relations (Jayasinghe Dennis Thomas, 2008).

Therefore, studying the two sides of the human brain, the intellectual and the emotional side, has positively impacted the performance of individuals in a business context. Therefore, this study aimed to participate in researching the influence of emotional

intelligence factors on entrepreneurial performance. Moreover, the importance of the emotional intelligence concept has been realized in assessing and evaluating the intrapersonal and interpersonal skills of individuals in the business context. The emotional quotient – EQ, which measures emotional intelligence – EI, has been sought to assess and impact the performance of individuals and influence personal and professional success (Mayer, J. D., Roberts, R. D., & Barsade, S. G., 2008).

Scholars recently discussed the psychological roots of entrepreneurship research, in which they are researching the factors that influence as well as enhance entrepreneurial performance and affect business and venture success, which will benefit the social and the economic spheres (Jerome A Katz, A. J., Robert, B. & Michael, F.). Researchers in the field of entrepreneurship argued that there is no concrete recipe for success. However, it is a combination of entrepreneurial traits, abilities, and characteristics that affect the performance of entrepreneurs and contribute to the success of businesses while operating in a challenging work environment (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000). The mental abilities of entrepreneurs identify the path of the operational procedures; however, the way is affected by the emotional state of entrepreneurs and business owners (Goleman, Daniel, 2002).

Entrepreneurs evaluate themselves in terms of business success. Nevertheless, entrepreneurial activities are affected by the mixture of traits and abilities of entrepreneurs. In other words, the psychological state of an entrepreneur is as essential as the knowledge and the skills needed to start a business venture. The psychological condition of an entrepreneur directly affects the level of communication, motivation, innovation, risk attitude, and decision-making style of entrepreneurs while managing and running a venture in a challenging environment (Mayer, J., Caruso, D., & Salovey, D., 1999).

Contemporary studies have discussed the effects of emerging psychological aspects on entrepreneurship. The psychological theories of entrepreneurship discuss specifically the role of emotional factors that drive the success of an entrepreneurial business venture (Jerome A Katz, A. J., Robert, B. & Michael, F.). Also, it has been demonstrated that positive emotions influence the ability of entrepreneurs to discover and recognize business opportunities and be creative, as well as encourage them to

convert past learning experiences into positive solutions for the future (Baron, R., 2008).

Moreover, an observed phenomenon suggests that entrepreneurs with a strong passion for their business ideas of operating the venture have better chances of success than those who don't display such positive emotional aspects (Baron, R., 2008). However, due to the challenges of the modern business environment, operating a business means non-stop interactions with clients, employees, and teammates, which require entrepreneurs to learn about managing and regulating the emotions of others as much as they do within themselves (Baron, R., 2008).

New research in the business psychology field indicates that the success of a business venture depends highly on the performance and ability of entrepreneurs to handle the human side of the business proficiently (Barber, A. E., Wesson, M. J., Roberson, Q. M. & Taylor, M. S, 1999). In other words, speaking about the human side of the business, which refers to the ability of entrepreneurs to efficiently recognize, handle and manage the emotions of themselves as well as of those who represent and work for their business and the emotions of partners and clients imply and influence business success. (Barber, A. E., Wesson, M. J., Roberson, Q. M. & Taylor, M. S, 1999). Successful entrepreneurial ventures demand high mental abilities of entrepreneurs to manage the logical processes, as well as high emotional skills to handle and build business relations, for ventures to survive and succeeded.

Scientifically, the human brain is perceived as having two sides/parts: the cognitive and emotional aspects. So, the first part is processing emotions and feelings – which represents the emotional part, and the other part is responsible for the mental reasoning and logic of the human brain – which means the cognitive function (Boren, A., 2010). Hence, the research found that the gap between the two parts is not that distinct, while the two brain parts meet at a point where the intersection represents emotional intelligence (Cohen, J. D., 2005).

Emotional intelligence is the science resulting from integrating the brain's logical processes and emotional functions. Consequently, integration is about individuals' efficient use of emotional information while performing cognitive tasks (Cohen, J. D.,

2005). This integration is relevant to the entrepreneurship field. It impacts the entrepreneurs' performance, in which entrepreneurs with high emotional intelligence levels know to convert a negative emotion into a positive emotion and a positive thought while performing cognitive tasks. This led to a higher ability of entrepreneurs to regulate their emotions, focus, and motivate themselves to see beyond the current situation. Therefore, high emotional intelligence entrepreneurs can regulate their emotions to solve problems while obtaining a positive attitude.

The connection between emotions and innovation has been sought to lead to business success. This is to say that individuals experiencing positive emotions tend to be more innovative than those experiencing negative emotions or even neutral effects (Estrada, C. A., Isen, A. M., & Young, M. J., 1997). Therefore, the connection between emotions and innovation leads to entrepreneurial success, as innovation and creativity are highly influenced by emotions, and innovation and creativity represent a main pillar in the success of the entrepreneurial process, which is said to lead to venture success (Boren, A., 2010). Innovation is a quality that is enhanced by having a high level of self-awareness, self-management as well as relationship management, which determines high levels of emotional intelligence which influence the performance of entrepreneurs and allows individuals to design and apply creative business techniques (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011).

Additionally, Entrepreneurs with high emotional intelligence can smartly assess risky situations and make the right decision. As entrepreneurs are subjected to make decisions rapidly and consistently while operating their ventures, their choices are influenced by the positive emotions that can make them confident about their decision (Cohen, J. D., 2005)—these positive emotions and triggered by practicing self-regulation. When entrepreneurs are good at converting emotions into positive emotions, they evaluate risky possibilities more powerfully, which helps them make the right decisions (Boren, A., 2010; Cohen, J. D., 2005).

The success of new ventures depends highly on entrepreneurial performance and especially on managing the human side of the business efficiently. In addition, the studies accepted the importance of the emotional side of the human brain in influencing performance as much as the cognitive and mental side does. Thus, this

research will show the various aspects in which emotional intelligence plays a role in influencing the performance of entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial activities and processes which lead to entrepreneurial business success.

2.5.1. Theoretical Framework

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that influence entrepreneurial performance and lead to business success from an emotional intelligence perspective. In other words, this study is researching the significant role that emotional intelligence plays in the entrepreneurial performance context. Therefore, the methodology applied to attain the purpose of this research is introduced in the next chapter.

This study is meant to answer why some entrepreneurial business ventures are more successful than others. Therefore, to answer this core question and reach the primary goal of the research, a study methodology is developed and presented below in *Figure 2.9*. based on previous research work and empirical studies done by authors in the business field and the psychology field. The proposed model shows a workflow that starts with the entrepreneur as the dependent variable and zooms into emotional intelligence as an independent variable to discuss the relationship between the two variables and deduce perspectives based on the below-structured research scheme in *Figure 2.9*.

The methodological approach begins with a macro view discussing the emotional intelligence independent variable in the outer layer and zooms into a micro view on the entrepreneur as a dependent variable to end up with a designed hypothesis while using the literature review to research perspectives using the presented model in *Figure 2.9*.

Researchers believe that training and programs provided by organizations have improved the emotional intelligence level of the human resource (Beaujean, 2006). Therefore, the findings of this research are expected to provide perspectives. Real-life experiences and suggest more ideas for entrepreneurs as well as individuals with

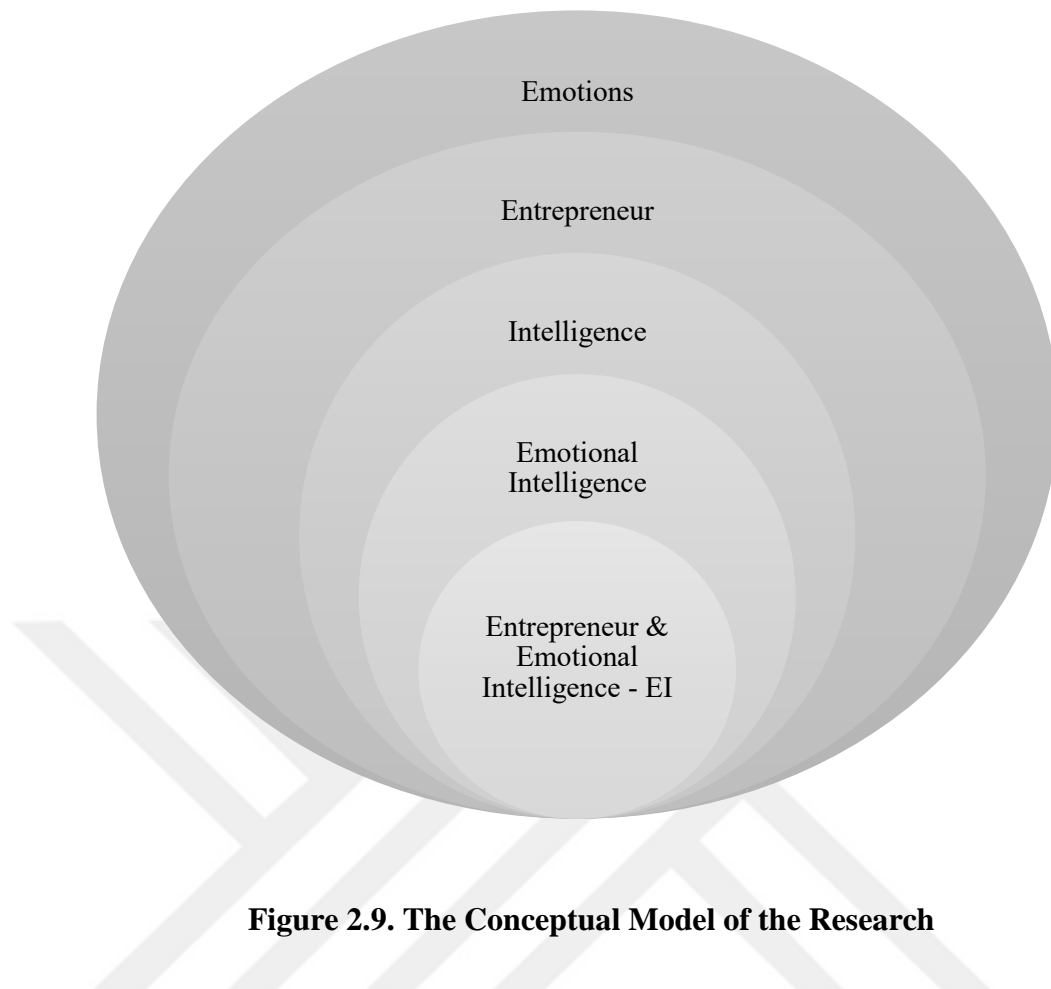


Figure 2.9. The Conceptual Model of the Research

entrepreneurial aspirations. In addition, the research findings have the potential to provide insights and information for business owners to use in designing organizational training and learning programs that aim to enhance the emotional intelligence level of teams as well as influence business success. The model presented in *Figure 2.9.* aims to deduce perspectives, which will later be discussed throughout the qualitative research method.

– Entrepreneur

Traditional research in entrepreneurship is confined to a set of mental abilities that seek to influence the performance of entrepreneurs and result in business success. However, contemporary studies suggest that more than cognitive abilities are needed for entrepreneurs to operate a business successfully. Therefore, recent studies on micro-entrepreneurship claimed that the traditional view of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial activities lacks essential factors, allowing entrepreneurs to start the venture and persist while executing the entrepreneurial activities in a challenging

environment (Lowell, B. & Sharon, A., 2001). The personal characteristics and traits of entrepreneurs as well as the characteristics of the entrepreneurial process, are essential factors to be considered. Such factors related to entrepreneurs, later named psychological attributes, qualify a person to discover and exploit opportunities and be an entrepreneur (Begley, 1987). The ability to find and use opportunities is related to entrepreneurs' psychological attributes, including the need for achievement, internal locus of control, and attitude toward risk (Shane, S., 2003).

A person capable of recognizing business opportunities to use them to execute activities to create a venture or revive an existing business is sought to be an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship is a person's ability to see, perceive, and exploit business opportunities to create a new venture or revive an existing business (Shane, S., 2003). It is about creating new ventures that bring goods & services into existence by entrepreneurs (Shane, S., 2003) (Volkman, C. K. Grünhagen, M & Tokarski, K. O., 2010). On the other hand, other authors argued from a macro perspective that entrepreneurship is a process of activities and tasks in an organizational context that end up creating a firm that influences the economy (Moran, 1999) (Rhee, K.s. & White, R.J., 2007) (Davidsson, P. & J. Wiklund, 2001). Thus, combining micro and macro perspectives shapes a successful business venture. The characteristics of entrepreneurs are as important as the characteristics of business processes and business operations of ventures (Davidsson, P. & J. Wiklund, 2001).

(Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011) It is argued that entrepreneurship is not only about launching more ventures but rather a set of activities that leads to success, as shown in *Figure 2.10*. Opportunity recognition, opportunity acquisition, innovation, and value creation are a set of entrepreneurial abilities and characteristics that create a set of business activities that lead to entrepreneurial success.

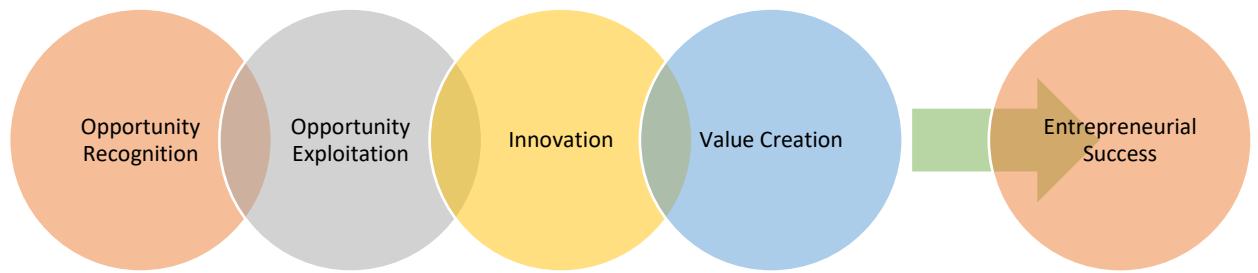


Figure 2.10. A Set of Activities That Leads to Success

Research indicates that opportunity recognition and exploitation are critical characteristics and factors that differentiate entrepreneurs from managers (Cote, S., Lopes, P. N., Salovey, P., & Miners, C. T. H., 2010). Entrepreneurs are determined to find and sometimes create business opportunities (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003). Therefore, the process of entrepreneurial success starts with opportunity recognition, and then the process is followed by innovation and business value creation (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003).

Innovation is considered a significant aspect of the success of the entrepreneurial process (Nghah, R & Salleh, Z., 2015). Thus, an innovative entrepreneur is a certain anticipator who accelerates the economic development of nations (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011). Schumpeter viewed successful entrepreneurship as the ability of an entrepreneur to convert an idea or a thought into a successful innovation (Schumpeter, Joseph A., 1980) (Volkman, C. k. Grünhagen, M & Tokarski, K. O., 2010).

Accelerating economic growth and creating value is directly related to the risk approach of entrepreneurs, besides innovation. Individuals who recognize business opportunities and find joy in creating value through taking risks and giving up their secure workplace and paid job to carry out a viable business idea are identified as successful entrepreneurs (Volkman, C. k. Grünhagen, M & Tokarski, K. O., 2010). Knight, who constructed the entrepreneurship theory, believes that being a risk taker indicates a successful entrepreneur process (Volkman, C. K. Grünhagen, M & Tokarski, K. O., 2010; Knight, F., 1942).

Therefore, innovation, attitude towards risks, and competitive & independent human nature are essential psychological attributes seeking to accelerate venture success in a challenging business environment (Stefanovic, I., Prokic, S. & Rankovic, L., 2010; Knight, F., 1942).

– Emotions

The nature of emotions is that they are high-intensity feelings that an individual can experience, which are triggered by internal or external motives and causes. Emotions naturally can influence the mental state of individuals cognitively as well as behaviorally. In other words, emotions can influence entrepreneurs' thoughts and behaviors (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003). Research indicates that emotional states directly affect individuals' thoughts, influencing human behavior and performance (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003).

The entrepreneurship literature has been dominated by discussing trait, cognitive, and management theories. At the same time, the research needs to include the emotional role in influencing entrepreneurial performance and anticipating entrepreneurial success (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003). Emotions have been argued to influence inductive as well as deductive reasoning. For instance, Positive emotions which influence the mood of individuals have shown an increase in the inductive reasoning of individuals through self-esteem, motivation, flexibility, eagerness, and passion. On the other hand, negative emotions affect the mood of individuals, which has proved to increase the deductive reasoning of individuals through critical thinking, problem-solving, evaluations, and analysis (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000) (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003).

An emotionally intelligent person can identify and recognize the emotions and feelings influencing their behaviors. This process of emotional recognition is addressed as emotion labeling (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Emotion labeling is the ability of a person to name each emotion that they feel, as well as be able to identify the implication of their behavior. In addition, emotionally Intelligent individuals are those who practice emotional restraint to serve their growth through building inductive reasoning, which helps their personal and professional success (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D.

R., 2000) (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003). The ability of a person to control their intensive emotions is sought to serve their growth and result in success (Furnham, A., & Petrides, K. V., 2003)

– Intelligence

Research conducted regarding intelligence is sought to reflect the high level of human mental and cognitive abilities that qualify a person to comprehend abstract thoughts and ideas, adapt to diverse conditions, learn from experiences, and use knowledge to deal with daily circumstances. There are several arrays of standards and criteria that intelligence must meet to be considered legitimate. Therefore, emotional intelligence - EI should meet specific criteria and standards to be measured and assessed and consequently regarded as fair intelligence. These criteria and standards are classified and divided into three main groups below in *Figure 2.11*. conceptual, correlational, and developmental (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

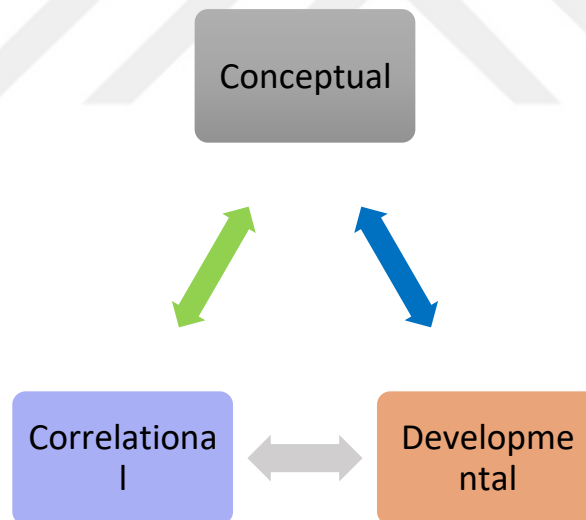


Figure 2.11. Three Main Intelligence Criteria

The conceptual criteria assess intelligence through the mental processes' implications on individuals' performance while measuring human abilities (Caruso, D. R., Mayer, J. D. & Salovey, P., 2000). So, how an idea converts to a concept is sought to influence the human thought and cognitive process, resulting in a conceptual type of intelligence.

On the other hand, the correlation criteria measure intelligence through a set of interrelated abilities driven by the conceptual state.

However, the developmental criteria describe the pre-existing intelligence and measure how intelligence develops and grows through experience and age (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

– Emotional Intelligence - EI

Emotional intelligence is a significant psychological construct that emerged in the 1990s. The EI concept is described as a set of abilities relatively equivalent to general intelligence. Early influential studies have been done on emotional intelligence that defined EI as "the abilities to monitor one's feelings and emotions as well as those of the other and be able to explain them, manage and use them to serve their personal and professional growth" (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000). In other words, they argued that individuals with high emotional intelligence - EI have better abilities and skills in managing and regulating their temper and emotions and those of their peers and teams and use this emotional information to guide their actions and decisions in life and at workplaces (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

Emotion intelligence - EI is divided into three main models, the trait EI model, the ability EI model, and the mixed model *Figure 2.12.*, which was refined to represent two main models, the ability-based model and the hybrid models. Each model has measures and assessment criteria to distinguish between them and define them (Petrides K. V., Furnham A., 2000). General methods that define the trait EI is through a self-report measure, in which it measures the typical behavior in relevance to the emotions of individuals in specific situations. At the same time, the maximal performance method measures the ability EI, which tests the constructs related to the understanding of emotions and emotional functions by individuals (Petrides K. V., Furnham A., 2000; Pérez J. C., Petrides K. V., Furnham A., 2005).

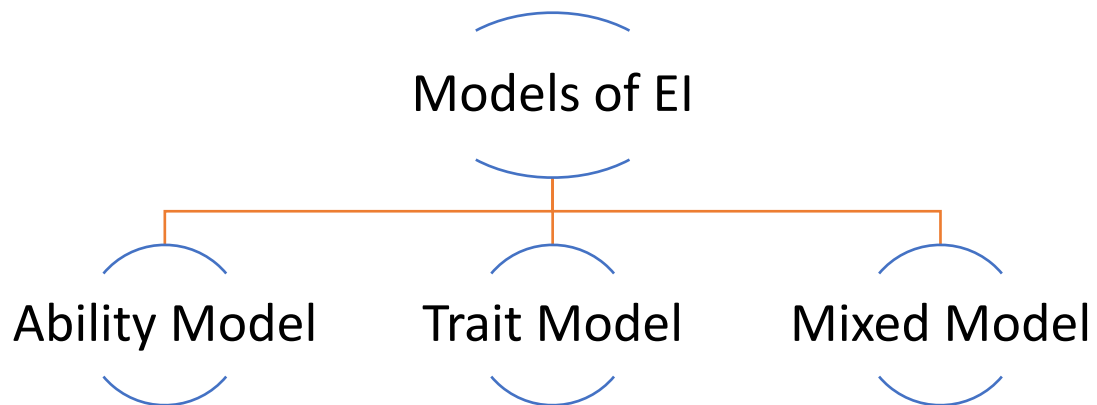


Figure 2.12. Three Primary EI Models

Emotional intelligence - EI is about learning to recognize and label each emotion, including the positive and negative ones. Hence, labeling the positive feelings will assist individuals in focusing on generating an array of positive emotions that enhance entrepreneurial performance. Likewise, labeling negative feelings will alert individuals to control their emotions in challenging situations (Furnham, A., & Petrides, K. V., 2003). In addition, being emotionally intelligent will help entrepreneurs learn how to deal with negative emotions in a positive way that will also feed into the creation of instructive entrepreneurial activities or at least not hinder any performance of business ideas or trends (Shane, S., 2003). Emotional awareness and management indicate the ability of individuals to generate an array of activities that result in personal and professional success (Shane, S., 2003).

– Entrepreneur and Emotional Intelligence - EI

Entrepreneurship is directly influenced by the cognitive activities as well as the emotional activities experienced by entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial performance is sought to be impacted by the mental state and emotional state of entrepreneurs (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997; Shane, S., 2003). Psychological attributes and emotions are attached to each phase of the entrepreneurial process. In other words, entrepreneurs

experience various emotions in each stage of the entrepreneurial process. These emotions influence success; only if an entrepreneur knows how to recognize, regulate, and adjust them (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011) (Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997).

Entrepreneurs with psychological attributes, such as competitive nature, innovation orientation, and attitude toward risks, experience dense emotion in each phase while executing entrepreneurial activities in a challenging business environment (Stefanovic, I., Prokic, S. & Rankovic, L., 2010). Entrepreneurs could feel emotions while recognizing and exploiting opportunities: passion, eagerness, fear, tension, motivation, and anger (Nghah, R & Salleh, Z., 2015). Thus, entrepreneurs who can regulate and manage this array of emotions while operating a business venture can improve their performance to predict business success (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011).

Entrepreneurs experience positive and negative emotions while executing business activities in a challenging business environment (Stefanovic, I., Prokic, S. & Rankovic, L., 2010). The range of emotions that an entrepreneur experience in the entrepreneurial process can directly affect their performance and behaviors while executing their business activities. This says a relationship exists between entrepreneurs' level of emotional intelligence and their performance and behaviors. Nevertheless, the positive array of emotions enhances entrepreneurs' performance and leads to success. However, negative feelings can negatively affect the performance of entrepreneurs, which might hinder business success (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011; Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

The positive range of emotions can help entrepreneurs experience high self-confidence and assurance, be more determined, flexible, and creative, generate more ideas, and improve their communication skills. Positive emotions are believed to be a motivational tool in boosting entrepreneurial performance, resulting in business success (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011). The positive array of emotions helps entrepreneurs practice higher creativity and innovation and recognize more opportunities (Baron, R., 2008). While on the other hand, negative emotions can negatively affect the entrepreneurial process and delay or hinder business success.

However, entrepreneurs with high emotional intelligence have the skill to manage the negative array of emotions positively, which positively impacts their performance (Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011).

Entrepreneurs with high emotional intelligence are believed to be skilled in dealing with negative emotions. They can recognize and label their negative emotions, as well as know how to navigate the negative emotions and employ them to improve their performance and influence the business success (Nghah, R & Salleh, Z., 2015; Ahmetoglu, Leutner & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011; Baron, R., 2008). Therefore, emotional intelligence – EI is believed to be a significant factor that positively influences the performance of entrepreneurs and contributes to entrepreneurial success (Baron, R., 2008).

Therefore, emotions directly affect the performance of entrepreneurs, enhancing their business abilities and influencing the success of ventures and businesses (Goldenberg, 2006). Furthermore, it is sought that emotions influence behaviors and performance as well as the processes, which make it relevant to study the psychological basis of emotional intelligence to be able to find out the relationship between the emotional intelligence level of entrepreneurs and business success (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003) (Goldenberg, 2006). The affective sphere, which performs emotional functions, can influence the two other spheres, the cognitive and the conation spheres (Cross, B. & Travaglione, A., 2003). Therefore, studying emotions is significant, as it is a factor that influences the intellectual process of individuals as well as identifies the trends of individuals through influencing motivational behavior (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

– The psychological basis of Emotional Intelligence

Psychologists have divided mental functions into three primary levels that describe how the human brain works. The three primary levels in which the mind functions are interconnected in a way that ultimately shapes the human personality (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000). The three main divisions of the human brain are the cognitive sphere, the affective sphere, and the conation sphere *Figure 2.13*.

Cognition Sphere -
Measures
Intelligence

Affective
Sphere -
Measures

Conation
(Motivation) -
Measures
behavior

Figure 2.13. Three Main Spheres of the Human Brain

The cognitive sphere is the division that describes the abilities and capabilities of the human brain, in which the brain performs all the intellectual and mental processes and performs functions such as memory, reasoning, as well as abstract concepts and thoughts (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

On the other hand, the affective sphere is the part in which the brain does functions such as evaluations and managing the temper and the feeling processes. In addition, emotional intelligence - EI is stated to be the result of the interconnection of the cognition sphere and the affective sphere and is a fusion of emotions and cognition (Goleman, Daniel, 1998) (Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R., 2000).

The third sphere of the brain function is the conation sphere, which describes the role of the human brain's motivational aspect and identifies goal-seeking behaviors and social behaviors in individual performance (Goleman, Daniel, 1998) (Goldenberg, 2006).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The research design in this study follows the qualitative research method, which is based on the interpretive philosophy, in which the researchers work as a subjective analyst to understand a phenomenon in the social world. This paradigm focuses on analyzing a phenomenon from an interpretive perspective and how people experience the social phenomenon.

The interpretive paradigm is a qualitative phenomenological research methodology that follows a data collection manner that depends on in-depth interviews, observations, document study, and image data analysis. The qualitative design method aims to answer the main research question of why some business ventures are more successful than others. Qualitative research was first applied to the psychological field when examining human behavior in numbers was hard. This research design is expected to discuss the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial performance and to research to what extent the research participants experienced the influence of emotional intelligence on their performance.

Qualitative phenomenological research methodology requires and entails a remarkable amount of data gathering and categorizing of data, as the researcher is working on documenting the human experience (Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B., 1994). The qualitative researcher seeks to apply methods that depend on content analysis, grounded theory, and sometimes intuition, and insight, given the remarkable amount of data collected during phenomenological qualitative research (Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B., 1994).

The study approach applied in this qualitative research methodology is a case study approach. Qualitative research generally represents an inquiry technique that allows the researcher to explore a phenomenon in which data is limited but available (Yin., Robert K., 2014). Data is collected from participants through in-depth interviews using open-ended questions; then, data can be analyzed and interpreted to establish findings and conclusions. The qualitative research methodology is also sought to find out how people think, perceive, and feel about a subject, in which the behavior is assessed through insights and impressions to establish findings and conclusions.

This research follows a qualitative research methodology, a descriptive design involving a qualitative data collection method. To collect data accurately from the 17 entrepreneurs, a set of coded open-ended questions have been prepared for them to be discussed and shared during in-depth interviews, as well as to share their perspectives and perceptions on how they think emotional intelligence impacted their performance, which in turn influence business activities and processes, that results in business growth and success.

3.2. Research Question

Researchers are embracing the concept of emotional intelligence after considering evidence from previous studies that document the influence of emotional intelligence on leadership, job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior and management. Nevertheless, more research needs to be done to study the impact of emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial performance and what factors enhance entrepreneurial success.

Therefore, this study is developed to examine the framework of the concept of emotional intelligence and to discuss the perception of 17 real-life business owners and entrepreneurs from the Arab Association for Engineers in Turkey on the relationship between the two constructs, emotional intelligence, and entrepreneurial performance.

To research the relationship between the two constructs, emotional intelligence, and entrepreneurial performance, a qualitative study will be conducted in this research to

observe the perception of entrepreneurs and business owners on the influence of emotional intelligence on their professional business performance. The interviews lasted 45-70 minutes for each of the 17 entrepreneurs and business owners, in which a set of open-ended coded questions were discussed and shared.

3.3. Data Collection

i. Methodological Review

This chapter describes the qualitative research methodology, which intends to explore a phenomenon where a gap exists, and data is generally limited. Studies designed to determine how people feel about and perceive specific subjects or sensations are categorized as qualitative and measured through insights and impressions (Kothari, C.R., 2004).

Therefore, this study is guided by entrepreneurial observations in seeking their professional perspectives from an expert point of view. This is done through a case study approach, part of a qualitative study (Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E., 2014). The sections within this chapter discuss; (a) Research method; (b) Participants/ Sample; (c) Study approach; (d) Procedures; (e) ethical considerations, and (f) Discussion.

ii. Research Method

The research follows a qualitative phenomenological research methodology that adopts a data collection method that depends on in-depth interviews, image data analysis, document study, and observations. The data is collected through open-ended interviews with 17 entrepreneurs. The qualitative research method indicates a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial performance. In addition, this study aims to discuss 17 research participants' perceptions of the influence of emotional intelligence on their business performance based on their real-life experience.

iii. Participants - Sample

In terms of sample size, the researcher has conducted one-on-one interviews with 17 high-profile entrepreneurs and business owners who are members at the Arab Association of Engineers in Turkey who have been running their businesses for five years and more. The research participants were invited to express their perceptions and perspectives on emotional intelligence - EI and discuss EI's influence on their professional performance based on their experiences.

iv. Study Approach

The study approach applied in this research is a case study approach that adopts in-depth interviews with 17 participants as the primary data collection method. The qualitative data explored from the in-depth interviews with the entrepreneurs in this study underlies a sample that explains the structured real-life experience of entrepreneurs with the concept of emotional intelligence and its influence on business performance. The open-ended questions were recorded, and content analysis was conducted on the participants' discourse.

v. Construct Variables

- Independent variable: Emotional Intelligence
- Dependent variable: Entrepreneurial performance.

vi. Procedures

In-depth interviews are the primary data collection method to search the topic and establish findings. Therefore, data is gathered through adopted open-ended coded questions discussed through in-depth interviews with 17 high-profile entrepreneurs and business owners at the Arab Association of Engineers in Turkey.

A set of coded questions on emotional intelligence and its influence on entrepreneurial behavior and performance have been prepared to personally ask our interviewees

during our discussion about their perceptions and perspectives on the relationship between the two constructs, Emotional intelligence - EI and entrepreneurial performance. So, the in-depth interviews aim to guide the interviewees to express and communicate their experiences about the influence of emotional intelligence on their professional performance and how it leads to business success. The set of coded questions was derived from the literature review in this research with a focus on the four branches of the Goleman model of emotional intelligence (Goleman, Daniel, 2002), alongside using and assessing the essential skills of entrepreneurs for successfully managing a business venture proposed by (Galloway, L., Anderson, M., Brown, W., 2005; OCDE, OECD, 2014). They classified innovation, negotiation, communications skills, team working skills, leadership skills, decision-making skills, and problem-solving skills as the essential skills that must be possessed by entrepreneurs to succeed while managing a business (Galloway, L., Anderson, M., Brown, W., 2005; OCDE, OECD, 2014).

Therefore, the coded questions aim to enclose the conversation with the interviewees within the dimensions mentioned above of the model and identified skills, explore the researcher's goals, and facilitate the process of analysis and measurements of the outcome. The open-ended questions are done in four primary levels, each highlighting questions that follow a sequence.

The levels were adopted based on the influence of emotional intelligence on performance:

- The general characteristics level of entrepreneurial performance.
- The general introduction level of practical, emotional intelligence on performance.
- The personal experience level of emotional intelligence.
- The challenging status of the actual application of the EI concept.

The open-ended questions were recorded, and content analysis was conducted on the participants' discourse. The age range of the participants is 36 and 48 years; all are Arabs running and managing businesses in Turkey for more than five years in the Engineering sector.

The set of coded questions applied in the research, which is shared with the entrepreneurs, discusses the following:

1. What are the characteristics of the entrepreneurial performance?
2. Do you think the aspects of the behavior/ performance change over time?
3. What affects the performance of entrepreneurs?
4. How do you think emotional intelligence helped you discover business opportunities?
5. How do you think emotional intelligence - EI triggers innovation?
6. How does emotional intelligence influence your problem-solving skills?
7. Does emotional intelligence leverage better negotiations?
8. How are decisions influenced by the emotional intelligence - EI level of entrepreneurs?
9. How does emotional intelligence - EI effects business networks and impact the relationship level of entrepreneurs with other partners/suppliers, etc.?
10. How can emotional intelligence - EI be achieved, and what are the most effective strategies to improve emotional intelligence - EI?

3.4. Ethical Considerations

The researcher is aware of all the ethical protocols in this preliminary study and believes that the consent of the research participants is essential to publish the study. The ethical approach develops responsibility for the researcher throughout the research plan and during interaction with the research participants, which initiates mutual respect that aims to acquire the consent of the research participants and make the participants pleased (Miller, 2003).

Therefore, the ethical significance considered throughout this study includes (Miller 2003): giving a detailed explanation to the research participants about the study's objectives and asking for their consent to proceed with the interviews. In addition, the researcher was keen to keep the participants' identities confidential and assure them that the data collected would be kept confidential and could be excluded if the participants wished so. Ultimately, this ethical consideration aims to ensure that no harm will be done to the participants due to their contribution to the study.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the data analysis of the data collected from the in-depth interviews and discussions on the findings and answers. The data analysis part includes the coding of data. It converts qualitative data into quantitative data and shows the frequencies and the relationship between data and how the answers relate to each other and make evidence. The results and findings have been done manually without using any software, as all the questions were coded already and intended to extract specific answers and perceptions of the interviewees that shape a pattern and support the researcher's goal.

4.2. Data Coding

Regarding the coding of data, the audio version of the interviews has been converted to a Word version, so it would be easy for the researchers to alter the qualitative data extracted from the interviews into quantitative data to get some insights and analyze the frequencies. The codes were picked up according to the relativity of the study.

To investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and the performance of entrepreneurs, the Emotional competence inventory (ECI) has been used as a primary measure of the level of emotional intelligence experienced by entrepreneurs to relate and assess their competencies and skills based on the competence guide developed by Goleman. The below table 4.1. shows the branches of emotional intelligence based on the mixed model developed by Goleman and what competencies are included and shared in each component.

Table 4.1. Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI)

| EI- Variables | Description | Competences |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Self-awareness | The ability to perceive and understand the mood swings, emotions, and the drives of oneself as well as how it affects others through relationships. | Accurate self-assessment |
| | | Self-confidence |
| | | Negotiation |
| | | Innovation |
| | | Emotional self-awareness |
| | | Assertiveness and focus |
| Self-regulation | The ability to manage and control mood swings and impulsive emotions. The ability to think before acting. | Decision-making |
| | | Problem solving |
| | | Adaptability and flexibility |
| | | Trustworthiness |
| Motivation | Eagerness and passion towards work and success and the persistence to achieve goals. | Achievements |
| | | Commitment |
| | | Influence and Team management |
| | | Change management |
| Empathy | The ability to sync and understand the emotional state of others. | Communications |
| | | Leadership |
| | | People management |
| Social Skills | The ability to build networks and manage relations. | Persuasiveness |
| | | Networking |
| | | Communications |
| | | Cooperation |
| | | Business relations |

4.3. Results of Coding

The coded questions helped the researcher focus on identifying specific competencies and skills based on the emotional competence inventory (ECI) from the conversation with the interviewees within the dimensions mentioned above of the emotional intelligence model to follow the researcher's goals, to facilitate the measurements of the outcome.

As a result, the analysis of answers to the open-ended questions is divided into four primary levels; each level gives an insight into their perception of emotional intelligence and how it influences their performance by developing specific competencies.

The levels were adopted based on the influence of emotional intelligence on performance:

- The general characteristics level of entrepreneurial performance.
- The impact of emotional intelligence on performance.
- The personal experience level of emotional intelligence.
- The challenging status of the actual application of the EI concept.

The researchers started the stream of interviews by asking the participant if emotional intelligence is the main reason for business longitudes and success and influencing performance. Table 4.2. presents the answers of the 17 participants.

Table 4.2. Emotional Intelligence Essential for Success

| | YES | NO |
|--|-----|----|
| Emotional intelligence leads to success through directly influences the entrepreneurial performance. | 10 | 7 |

Most participants believe that emotional intelligence plays an essential role in boosting the performance of entrepreneurs, which then leads to business success. They reported that emotional intelligence is the missing factor in the success formula. Emotional intelligence is a set of essential competencies needed for positively impacting performance. However, other participants reported that emotional intelligence is as important as intellectual intelligence, and entrepreneurs need both to operate a successful business venture.

Additionally, the below *Table 4.3.* presents a more extensive and general detailed view of our resulting analysis from the interviews based on the various codes recorded from the participant's responses and the frequencies of each code.

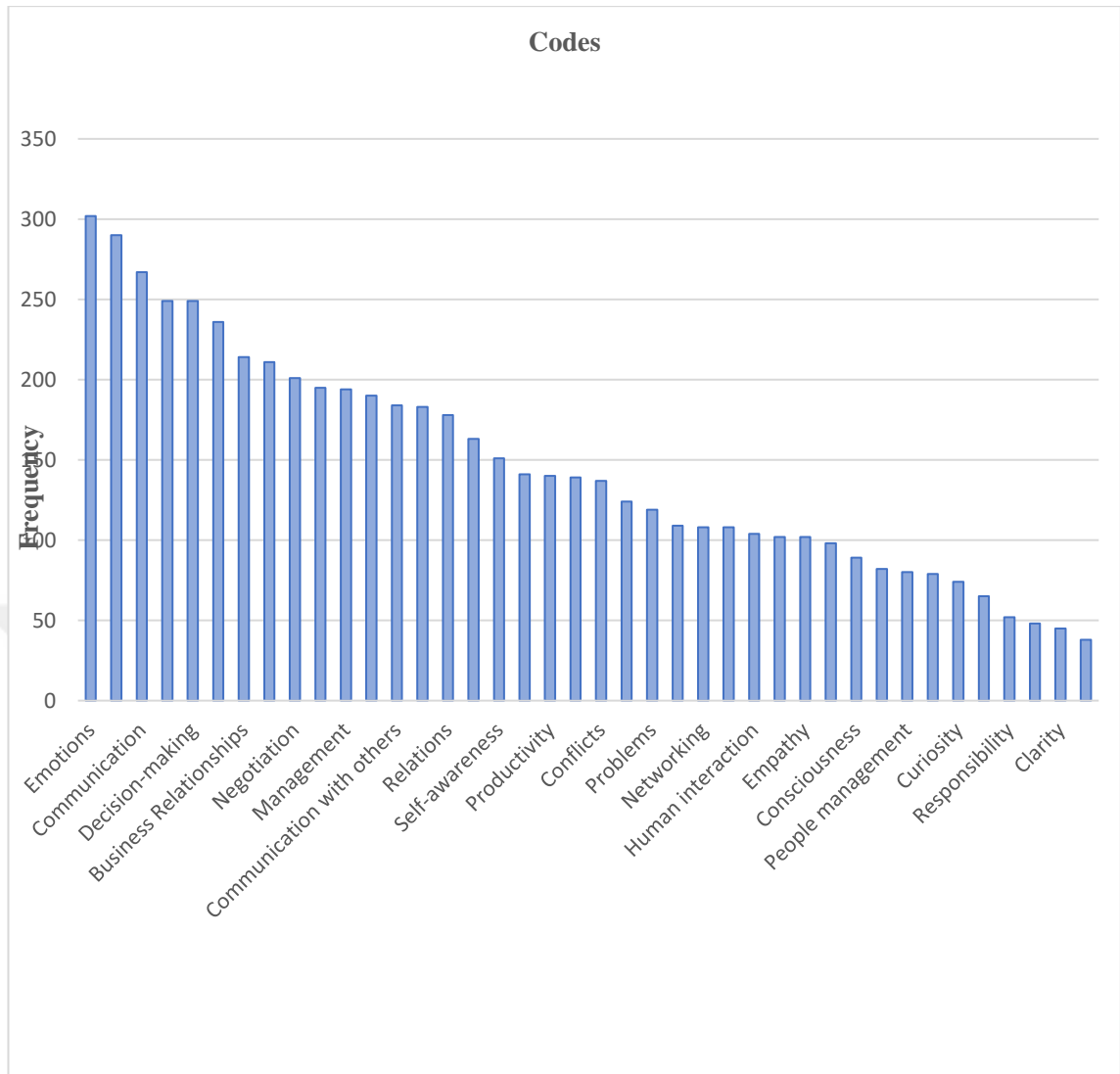
Following the *Table 4.3.*, according to the analysis, we present a histogram of the recorded findings of the codes and their frequency to give a general view of how many times each code has been recorded across the whole stream of interviews.

Table 4.3. General Codes and Frequencies Recorded

| Code | Recorded Frequency |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Emotions | 302 |
| Expressions | 290 |
| Feelings | 183 |
| Clarity | 45 |
| Human interaction | 104 |
| Commitments | 82 |
| Appreciation | 79 |
| Trust | 65 |
| Problems | 119 |
| Curiosity | 74 |
| Opportunities | 102 |
| Networking | 108 |
| People management | 80 |
| Observation | 48 |
| Communication | 267 |
| Self-regulation | 109 |

Table 4.3. (cont.)

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Cooperation | 190 |
| Innovation | 249 |
| Self-awareness | 151 |
| Connecting with the self | 98 |
| Communication with others | 184 |
| Entrepreneurial Performance | 236 |
| Company Performance | 195 |
| Empathy | 102 |
| Relations | 178 |
| Consciousness | 89 |
| Leadership | 163 |
| Management | 194 |
| Teamwork | 139 |
| Social management | 108 |
| Relationships | 141 |
| Business Relationships | 214 |
| Productivity | 140 |
| Conflicts | 137 |
| Negotiation | 201 |
| Problem-solving | 211 |
| Strategies | 124 |
| Service | 38 |
| Responsibility | 52 |
| Decision-making | 249 |



Graph 4.1. General Recorded Frequencies

The total number of codes is 40, representing the influential competencies and components recorded, expressed, and shared by the participants during the interviews. As per the presentation in the chart, the most influential competencies recorded with the highest frequencies are Emotions, Expression, Communication, Innovation, and Decision-making. These elements recorded frequencies: 302, 290, 267, 249 & 249. Subsequently, Entrepreneurial performance, Business relations, Problem-solving, and Negotiation recorded the second set of elements and competencies expressed by the participants during the interviews. This second set of features recorded frequencies: 236, 214, 211 & 201. This records the highest nine components expressed by the participants during the interviews, which is believed to highlight the essential

competencies and features of how emotional intelligence influences entrepreneurial performance, positively impacting business success.

Table 4.4. The Highest Recorded Frequencies

| Code | Recorded Frequency |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Emotions | 302 |
| Expressions | 290 |
| Communication | 267 |
| Innovation | 249 |
| Decision-making | 249 |
| Entrepreneurial Performance | 236 |
| Business Relationships | 214 |
| Problem-solving | 211 |
| Negotiation | 201 |



Graph 4.2. The Highest Recorded Frequencies 1

The rest of the components recorded relatively lower rates of frequencies, which is believed not directly to affect the influence of emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial performance. Therefore, the next section will discuss the main competencies that positively enhance the relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial performance.

- Code quotes and meaning

The code quotes and meaning represent how codes were quoted from the participants' answers recorded during the interviews and reinterpreted to give definitions to these quotes. The following *Table 4.5.* provides an idea of how the codes affect the influence of emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial performance.

Table 4.5. Quotes for Codes and Meaning

| Code | Quotes | Meaning |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Use of emotions | <p><i>Emotions are so powerful. If you want to be successful, you need to learn how to manage your emotions. (M.A)</i></p> <p><i>Entrepreneurs do depend on the positive emotions to motivate them and to discover opportunity. (G.M)</i></p> <p><i>Positive emotions inspire people to be committed and persistent. (A.E)</i></p> | Emotions is main subject of the research and relates to all other components. The interviews were meant to discover how emotions can influence performance. Emotional intelligence refers to the positive and regulated emotions that is meant to positively influence the performance to maximize the productivity and success. |
| Expression of emotions | <p><i>Emotional expression allows for better clear communication and team managements. (T.A)</i></p> <p><i>Emotional expression happens with people are self-aware with results in good negotiation skills. (R.E)</i></p> | For this code as it is believed that emotional expression is a main element in the emotional intelligence branches. It affects the performance level of the whole team when done in the right way. Teams whole express emotions can work in harmony with less |

Table 4.5. (cont.)

| | | |
|---------------|--|---|
| | <p><i>Expressing emotions help us to get to understand each other, which it is essential for harmony so for the organization to grow. (G.M)</i></p> | <p>conflicts, which leads to higher productivity. Emotional expression represents essential leadership skill that is experience in people management.</p> <p>Also emotional expression aligns with problem-solving skills, in which it identifies the problem and develops list of alternative solutions to those problems.</p> |
| Communication | <p><i>Communication impact relationships in business settings. (M.A)</i></p> <p><i>Communication encourages collaborations and business cooperation. (A.M)</i></p> <p><i>Managing client relationships requires high level of social understanding and awareness, that is found in emotionally intelligent entrepreneurs. (B.M)</i></p> <p><i>A person with high communication skills can practice empathy and sympathy with others and teams. (M.E)</i></p> | <p>Communication is a core emotional intelligence competence that is essential for conveying the thoughts and feelings from one person to another. Communication is an important interpersonal skill that helps entrepreneurs build business relations, negotiate business offers, and lead their teams.</p> |
| Innovation | <p><i>Innovation is producing new ideas that help in solving existing problems. (W.I)</i></p> <p><i>Innovation is the ability to see opportunities. (S.T)</i></p> <p><i>Innovative entrepreneurs have the ability to self-motivate themselves. (N.E)</i></p> | <p>Innovation is the ability to exploit opportunities and create value out of them. Innovation is a interpersonal competence that is experienced by entrepreneurs who have self-awareness and are able to guide their emotions to achieve high goals. <i>Innovation incorporates a process of idea</i></p> |

Table 4.5. (cont.)

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| | <p><i>Individuals with high level of self-awareness and self-regulation have the ability to experience high level of innovation and idea creation. (A.S)</i></p> | <p><i>generation that cannot be applied by average people. An innovative person is a person who can reach goals by applying different advanced methods.</i></p> |
| Decision-making | <p><i>Professional entrepreneurs understand the influence that emotions can have on decision-making. (S.T)</i></p> <p><i>The use of regulated emotions can lead to making better decisions. (M.R)</i></p> <p><i>Communications, negotiation, ideation and collecting information enhance better decisions. (M.S)</i></p> <p><i>Dealing with risks in a flexible way while gathering more information enhance better decisions. (S.T)</i></p> | <p>A decision maker is a person who is aware of the difference between the intellectual and emotional impacts on the information and data gathering process that shape their decisions. Individuals with high level of self-awareness and self-control have better chances of taking the right decisions. Emotional intelligent entrepreneurs are those who can identify and differentiate between the positive and negative stream of emotions, are good decision-makers.</p> |
| Entrepreneurial Performance | <p><i>Positive emotions motivate entrepreneurs and enhance performance. (N.E)</i></p> <p><i>Effective entrepreneurial performance is about digging for opportunities that enhance the possibility of business success. (B.M)</i></p> <p><i>Positive emotions improve the probability of entrepreneurial opportunity recognition which leads to distinguished performance. (I.A)</i></p> | <p>Entrepreneurs with high levels of self-awareness and self-regulation have the abilities differentiate between positive and negative emotions. They can focus on the positive emotions to influence their motivation and boost their performance.</p> |
| Business Relationships | <p><i>Social intelligence is an essential tool for creating business relationship. (S.A)</i></p> <p><i>The ability to build networks and manage relations. (A.M)</i></p> | <p>Business relations and communications depend on self-regulation and self-control. The aspects self-regulation and impulse control involve regulating personal emotions, managing personal goals, developing strategies to achieve</p> |

Table 4.5. (cont.)

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| <p>Problem-solving</p> | <p><i>The ability to handle team conflicts through practicing empathy. (W.I)</i></p> <p><i>The ability to generate maps of ideas and solutions. (A.I)</i></p> <p><i>Positive attitude while managing conflicts. (T.A)</i></p> | <p>Entrepreneurs who are good at empathizing and sympathizing with others have better chances at solving problems. They have the abilities to step back to observe and understand the whole conflict and problem then collect information to solve it. Also, they can generate alternative solutions while using their positive emotions.</p> |
| <p>Negotiation</p> | <p><i>A negotiator is a person who can read the verbal and non-verbal expressions of others. (A.S)</i></p> <p><i>Negotiation is a set of persuasive skills are triggered by high level of communication. (M.R)</i></p> <p><i>Negotiation requires high level of assertiveness and self-awareness. (T.A)</i></p> | <p>Negotiators with high emotional intelligence and self-regulation are able to use emotional management tactics to observe the emotional reactions of others, to reach their own goals.</p> <p>Negotiators are smart and diplomatic who practice emotional regulation to always listen are persuade the other party to reach a win-win situation.</p> |

- Codes and relationships

The code relationship presents a map showing how the codes with high frequencies relate to each other at least five times, as recorded from the interviews. This indicates that regulations are positively associated with each other and are directly related to entrepreneurial performance; in other words, they influence entrepreneurial performance.

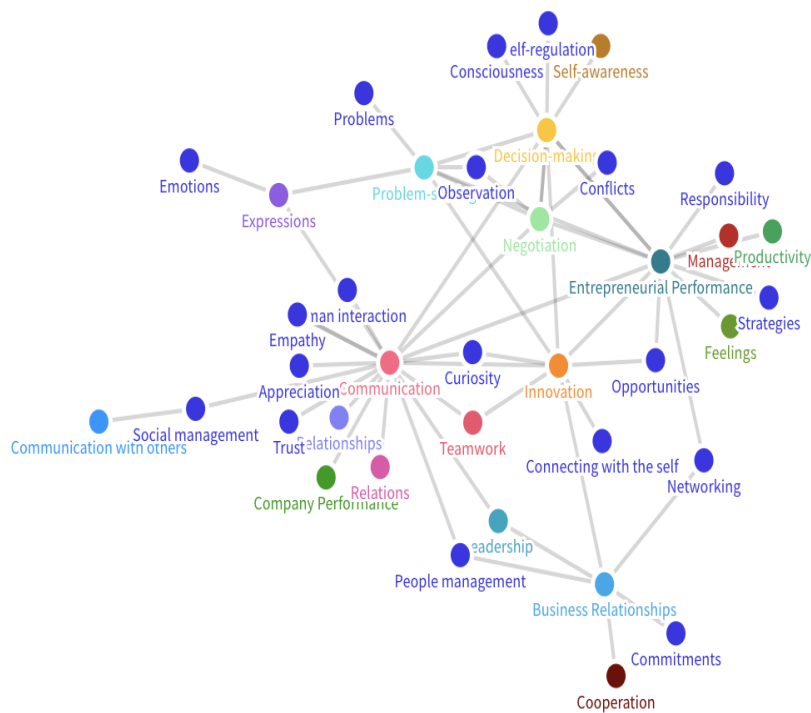
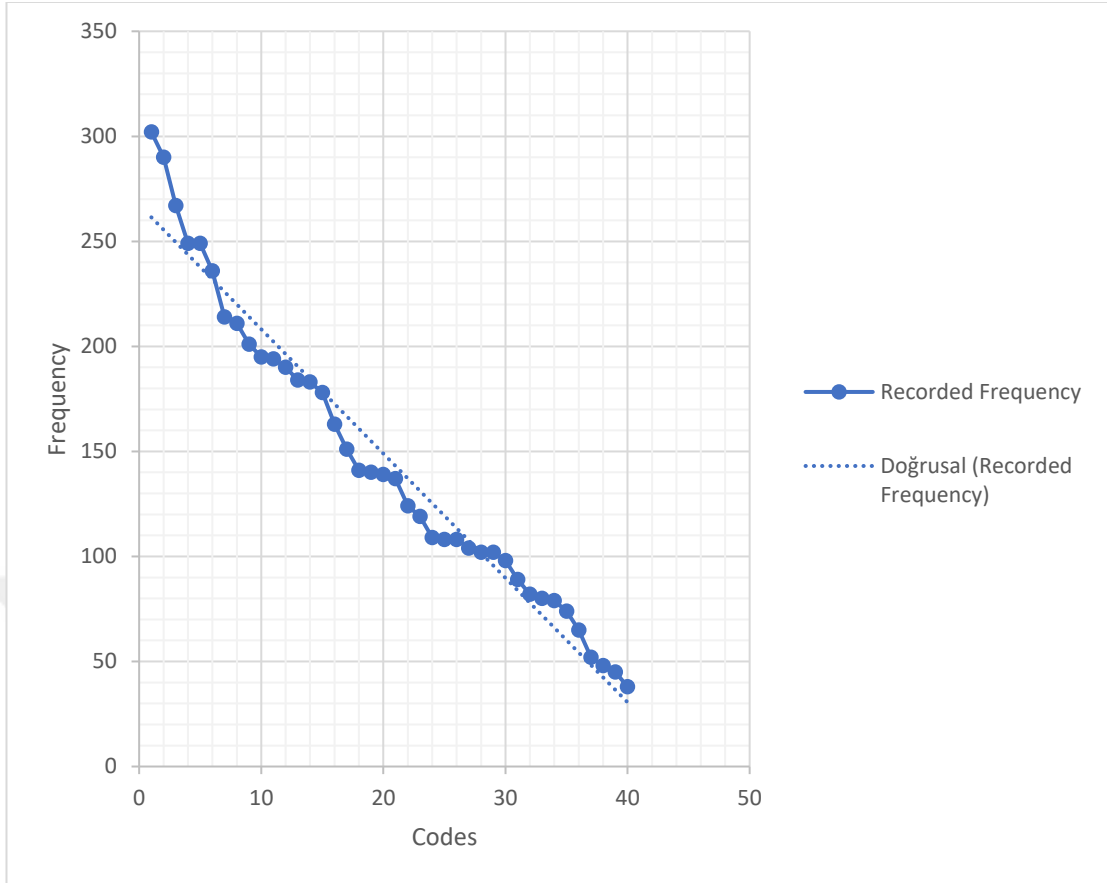


Figure 4.1. Coding Map

The code map presented above shows that all our codes relate to different frequencies, the more branched, the higher relation between the related regulations. Communication and entrepreneurial performance are the most branched and visual components associated with each other, with a strong connection to other parts. Then comes innovation, negotiation, decision-making, and problem-solving, which relate to each other and other less frequented components. The other features are just the lowest associated with each other, with less than five frequencies.

- Code grouping

The chart below shows a linear frequency recorded from the participant's responses. The left side of the linear line shows a group of frequencies that highlight the highest frequencies of codes recorded above 200 times. This group of high frequencies presents the competencies and elements that recorded the most elevated scores influencing entrepreneurial performance.



Graph 4.3. Code Grouping

Concerning the in-depth interviews conducted with the seventeen entrepreneurs and business owners, their responses were generally relatable concerning the above chart, in which the highest frequencies recorded for codes of the performance elements are for communication, innovation, negotiation, problem-solving, and decision-making. The responses recorded for each of the seventeen code/ performance competency participants are presented in the *Table 4.6.* below.

Table 4.6. Frequencies of Codes in Questions

| Interviewees | Performance Aspects | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Participants/ Entrepreneurs | Communication | Innovation | Decision- making | Problem- solving | Negotiation |
| 1 | 13 | 23 | 15 | 14 | 13 |
| 2 | 18 | 8 | 19 | 10 | 11 |
| 3 | 20 | 13 | 15 | 13 | 15 |
| 4 | 14 | 21 | 12 | 15 | 11 |
| 5 | 11 | 17 | 10 | 13 | 13 |
| 6 | 9 | 15 | 11 | 17 | 9 |
| 7 | 9 | 9 | 17 | 16 | 15 |
| 8 | 21 | 9 | 20 | 11 | 13 |
| 9 | 19 | 10 | 19 | 15 | 11 |
| 10 | 17 | 12 | 15 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 9 | 19 | 12 | 12 |
| 12 | 23 | 17 | 9 | 11 | 10 |
| 13 | 8 | 13 | 10 | 8 | 10 |
| 14 | 11 | 20 | 17 | 13 | 11 |
| 15 | 22 | 19 | 15 | 10 | 13 |
| 16 | 12 | 15 | 12 | 13 | 10 |
| 17 | 28 | 19 | 14 | 11 | 14 |
| Total | 267 | 249 | 249 | 211 | 201 |

The responses of the interviewed entrepreneurs and business owners are grouped into five main streams, that is, based on their primary business activities. The first group of responses indicates that emotional intelligence – EI positively and strongly influences communication-based on high levels of self-awareness and social skills. The second group of reactions suggests that emotional intelligence – EI positively and strongly influences a high level of innovation based on a high level of self-awareness and social awareness. The third group of responses indicates that emotional intelligence – EI positively and strongly influences decision-making skills based on self-awareness and self-regulation. The fourth group of responses suggests that emotional intelligence – EI positively and strongly influences a high level of problem-

solving skills based on self-awareness and social skills. Lastly, the fifth group of responses indicates that emotional intelligence – EI positively and strongly influences a high level of negotiation skills based on self-awareness and social skills.

The stream of in-depth interviews has been conducted with high-profile entrepreneurs and business owners' members at the Arab Association of Engineers in Turkey to discuss their views and perception of how emotional intelligence (EI) influenced their business performance and how they integrated the elements of EI in their actual business experience while running their businesses and during the daily operations. The seventeen entrepreneurs divided their responses into points while responding to the coded questions and discussing their experience with the emotional intelligence concept. However, they all agree that emotional intelligence is tied to cognitive and rational thinking competencies. In addition, the interviewed entrepreneurs believe that emotional intelligence is positively related to organizing the mental activities that lead to practical actions on both the intrapersonal and interpersonal scales. The stream of coded questions during the interviews started in the following sequence.

What are the characteristics of the entrepreneurial performance?

Entrepreneurial performance's essential characteristics and competencies include innovation, communication, negotiation, problem-solving, decision-making, learning, and social skills. Each of these competencies is extracted from an emotional intelligence branch.

The reaction of entrepreneurs to the influence of the emotional intelligence concept on the aspects of entrepreneurial performance was generally positive, in which the interviewees shared their perceptions on the emotional intelligence concept and its influence on business performance as per their own experiences. In addition, they have talked about their perceptions on how the concept of emotional intelligence has influenced their entrepreneurial abilities to operate and succeed in terms of rationally and the process of systematic thinking, interactive customer relationship management, communications, and building business relations as well as developing resilient change management solutions. Concerning the perception shared by each of the entrepreneurs, they showed different perceptions regarding how emotional intelligence influenced

their performance and abilities, as the types of their businesses differ. Innovation, problem-solving, decision-making, business relations, and communications are the main concepts coded in the interview questions that the entrepreneurs explained.

Do you think the characteristics of the behavior/ performance change over time?

The interviewed entrepreneurs stated that performance should be constantly improved. They expressed their perception of how they believe emotions influence individuals' thoughts. In addition, the entrepreneurs pointed out their perception of entrepreneurial performance and behavior, how it should be improved constantly, and became more assertive over time, positively enhanced by emotional streams.

What affects the performance of entrepreneurs?

Entrepreneurial performance is influenced by many factors that emphasize effectiveness and lead to business success. Entrepreneurs have indicated that the way they feel directly affects their performance. The influx of emotions that they experience daily now affects their performance level. They expressed that if they feel fulfilled and happy, their performance peaks; however, if they feel frustrated and undergo a series of negative emotions, they experience a low level of performance. Thus, the entrepreneurs confirmed from their real-life business experiences that the stream of emotions they go through daily directly impacts their performance level and business contribution. They confirmed the importance of recognizing and regulating emotions within oneself to perform better in their daily business settings. Therefore, the emotional intelligence factor is essential for enhancing the performance of entrepreneurs and higher productivity.

How do you think emotional intelligence helped you discover business opportunities?

Entrepreneurs are emotionally intelligent individuals, as the interviewed entrepreneurs interpreted. The ability to see and recognize opportunities is not a trait everyone knows, including managers, but rather an entrepreneurial experience. Furthermore, recognizing opportunity is a quality that only emotionally intelligent people

experience and possess. Therefore, entrepreneurs are emotionally intelligent individuals who can extract and create opportunities, generate business ideas, and design a business model to carry out operations and excel. Also, the interviewed entrepreneurs believe that emotional intelligence is positively related to organizing the cognitive activities that lead to practical actions and performance on both the intrapersonal and interpersonal scales. So, emotional intelligence is tied to competencies essential for cognitive and rational thinking, which relates to how entrepreneurs perform and make decisions.

How does emotional intelligence influence your problem-solving skills?

Entrepreneurs believe emotional intelligence is essential to human mental abilities and the mental capacity that influence rational and systematic thinking. This rationality effect positively contributes to how entrepreneurs diagnose and solve problems. The interviewed entrepreneurs think that problem-solving skills are not purely intellectual abilities but rather enhanced by individuals' emotional intelligence levels. The high level of emotional intelligence experienced by entrepreneurs influences mental skills related to identifying a problem and diagnosing the cause and therefore develops a list of alternative solutions to the problem and aids in deciding on the best decision. Accordingly, the influence of emotional intelligence on mental abilities leads to more answers and efficient decision-making skills.

Emotional intelligence has been associated with problem-solving skills and decision-making skills. Participants state that individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence deliver high levels of problem-solving and decision-making skills compared to those with low levels of emotional intelligence. The results prove that the ability to use emotions to facilitate thought is directly connected to problem-solving skills.

Does emotional intelligence leverage better negotiations?

Emotional intelligence-EI can influence information acquisition and enhance decision-making and tactical communications. Negotiators' verbal and nonverbal expressions provide indications supporting the negotiation process's phases. Additionally, the

individual's ability to self-control their own emotions may assist them in categorizing and compartmentalizing their emotions and avoiding potential impairments in the information gathering and processing phases, and aids in the nonverbal expressions of the negotiators.

Participants stated that negotiation is an interpersonal competence that encourages navigating the basic conciliations that arise in group relations that influence the negotiation process and results in positive outcomes. Also, individuals with high emotional intelligence are typically more satisfied with their interpersonal relationships and have positive experiences in the negotiation process.

So, negotiators with high self-regulation can use emotional management tactics or classify the extreme emotional reactions of others, to reach their own goals in the negotiation process.

How does emotional intelligence - EI effects business networks and impact the relationship level of entrepreneurs with other partners/suppliers, etc.?

The interviewed entrepreneurs discussed that when individuals can recognize, express, understand, and manage their own emotions, they better understand their behaviors and the behaviors of those they deal with through understanding their emotions and why they act the way they do. Consequently, on an interpersonal scale, this results in more balanced and improved relationships and interactions with the people they interact with, leading to successful relations. They expressed that; this is what happens in the entrepreneurial processes. Entrepreneurs with high levels of emotional intelligence are better in communications and building business relations, as they are smart enough to read others and predict their next move. They are intelligent enough to develop a channel of relations, choose partners and suppliers, and be assertive in making decisions. Also, they consider that being an emotionally intelligent entrepreneur means that you can understand how your team thinks and acts. Therefore, they can distribute tasks to peers and groups based on the best-fit competences and the personality and best qualities of their teams and peers.

For example, on an interpersonal scale, the entrepreneurs expressed the emotional intelligence impact on the role of salespeople in today's complex marketing environment. The salespeople's part is to develop a resilient customer relationship in a competitive market. In addition, salespeople play a crucial role in creating, communicating, and setting values for their customers through building an interactive customer relationship management that influences the sales performance level of the companies. Thus, emotional intelligence is vital for the salesperson to build interactive customer relationship management and deliver customer value.

Moreover, some of the entrepreneurs talked about relationships in business settings. The entrepreneurs described business relationships within the teams and with business partners and suppliers as a process involving changes in communications patterns. The business communications and relations process goes from self-centric to listening, empathy, and responsive interaction. Entrepreneurs believe emotional intelligence directly affects their behavior and business performance regarding relationships and decision-making. It has been recorded by the entrepreneurs that they think their social awareness level has played a vital role in their business success. Entrepreneurs perceive the supply chain cycle to be directly affected by two main emotional intelligence factors named social awareness and relationship management. Business relations depend on a high level of communication essential to building a strong and resilient customer relationship. Managing client relationships requires high social understanding and awareness, which is found in emotionally intelligent entrepreneurs.

Nevertheless, all interviewed entrepreneurs agreed that emotional intelligence enhanced the social effectiveness of themselves as well as their peers. They believe that social effectiveness is an essential element contributing to business success. They described the relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial performance: the higher the emotional intelligence level, the better performance; the more significant the social network, the stronger the business relations. In addition, they elaborated that the high emotional intelligence level reflects how entrepreneurs recognize emotions in themselves and others, then make the best use of it to maximize their performance, manage their communications and business relations, and positively impact their problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Emotionally intelligent entrepreneurs are prosocial individuals who can build quality relationships. Participants indicate that emotional intelligence can promote positive social functioning and produce effective interpersonal relationships, enabling individuals to recognize and regulate emotions, improve communication, and manage performance. Additionally, emotional intelligence has been associated with sympathy and positively relates to interpersonal relationships between individuals and teams. However, it negatively associates with opposed and conflictual relationships between individuals and groups. The participant said that individuals with high emotional intelligence experience empathy and sympathy with others, which encourages them to develop authenticity and be comfortable with others.

Self-awareness, self-control, and emotional understanding significantly enhance interpersonal relationships and human interactions, especially when speaking about leader-to-follower and peer-to-peer connections. Social interaction and communications depend on self-regulation and self-control. Participants state that self-regulation and impulse control involves regulating emotions, managing personal goals, developing strategies to achieve these goals, and efficiently handling complications.

The ability of entrepreneurs to understand their teams and peers and regulate their emotions assists in the effective management of processes, enhances business success, and aids in change management. Moreover, effective self-regulation and relationship management allow teams and business owners to establish effective communication by knowing the strengths and weaknesses of each other's and by working collectively to bridge any gap in individual and team performance by strengthening the emotional intelligence abilities of individuals.

Operating business ventures depend highly on communications and business relations. The ability of us entrepreneurs to build business relations and to sustain a resilient process of contacts with other business owners, entrepreneurs, suppliers, teammates, and peers, defines our business longitude and aids in business success. Maintaining business communications require interpersonal skills and a high level of social skills critical to business success. Entrepreneurs with a high level of emotional intelligence are referred to as socially competent business owners. In addition, developing,

maintaining, and sustaining qualified business relations is associated with the emotional intelligence abilities of entrepreneurs.

How are decisions influenced by the emotional intelligence - EI level of entrepreneurs?

The interviewees discussed their perception of how emotional intelligence- EI impacts decision-making through systems thinking on the intrapersonal scale. They reported that they believe businesses and organizations are systematic entities directly affected by decisions. The organizational changes produce consequences that require rapid problem-solving and high decision-making skills. The concept of systems thinking emphasizes the importance of making the right decisions and the implications it makes to structures and processes within businesses. The interviewed entrepreneurs think systems thinking also takes place in discussing and addressing the emotional issues during organizational/ business change that require entrepreneurs to make rapid decisions. Therefore, entrepreneurs identified that emotional understanding and emotional management play an essential role in making the right decisions; in which they reported that the ability of an entrepreneur to understand and acknowledge the emotional cycles and the emotional transitions leads to assertiveness in decision-making that directs entrepreneurs, employees, and teammate to predict the implications of decisions and any possible change, as well as enabling everyone in the business to be prepared and positive about the resulted change.

Entrepreneurs think their attitude toward themselves, their teams, and their peers towards sudden change is as important as the decisions applied. They believe a positive attitude towards change or problems helps businesses seek the right decisions, transcends any change or crisis, and aids in developing resilient change management solutions. Consequently, the entrepreneurs concluded that Individuals with a high level of emotional understanding and emotional management could certainly and easily make decisions and practice systems thinking, which results in a direct positive relationship between decision-making and emotional intelligence. In addition, participants declared that rationality is best functioned by emotions, which is essential for complex judgment and decision-making processes. Also, the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making is commonly viewed as a helpful asset

that aids in interpreting and managing the social environments that businesses operate in.

The role of emotional intelligence in the decision-making process is critical in that it evaluates differences in risk from a cognitive and emotional perspective. Decision makers should be aware of the difference between the intellectual and emotional impacts on the information and data-gathering process that influence their decisions. Therefore, combining intellectual and emotional perspectives in dealing with risks and evaluating decisions reflects his emotional intelligence.

How an individual's positive or negative feelings can impact, or hinder information processing indicates the role of emotional intelligence in decision-making, as the positive stream of emotions enhances problem-solving skills, resulting in an effective decision-making process. Also, the positive stream emotions lead to greater creativity and the ability to develop more ideas in the brainstorming process in the information-gathering process to reach a best-fit decision. Therefore, the participant said the urge to promote more positive emotions at work would likely encourage us to make the right decisions and have a more innovative and motivated team. Professional entrepreneurs and skilled negotiators can use emotional intelligence and rely on emotional appeals to help convey their messages and make decisions.

How do you think emotional intelligence - EI triggers innovation?

The world embraces complex technology and artificial intelligence without human factors and connection; businesses announce failure. Integrating the intellectual part of the human brain with the emotional aspect is essential for business prosperity. Emotional intelligence is increasingly perceived as a competitive advantage. Therefore, participants discussed how important it is to be self-aware to be able to design, think out of the box and be innovative.

Participants believe that self-awareness can trigger a person's creativity, enabling them to create something from nothing. Self-awareness can be manifested in business aspects such as innovation, creation, and design, as creative entrepreneurs are those with self-awareness who can guide their emotions to achieve high goals. Creating a

business strategy and process is positively related to the self-awareness factor of the emotional intelligence concept. In addition, self-awareness helps entrepreneurs recognize emotions in themselves and others, allowing them to design innovative processes that enable entrepreneurs to lead their businesses.

Positive emotions experienced by the participant motivated them to exploit and dig for business opportunities. Considering that recognizing business opportunities is a skill only practiced by entrepreneurs, this led us to link the role of emotional intelligence to our performance as entrepreneurs, as stated by the participants. Additionally, exploiting business opportunities need a certain level of innovation and creation to be practiced distinguishing influence the performance of entrepreneurs. Consequently, entrepreneurs with higher emotional intelligence proved to perform more effectively than those who lack these competencies.

Innovation is a human-specific intellectual and cognitive process that aims to produce new ideas that help solve existing problems. Therefore, emotional intelligence plays a role in regulating this mental process to achieve better goals. Innovation is an intellectual process that involves activities such as being aware and sensitive to problems, detecting difficulties in the awareness of inadequacy and information deficiencies, scheming solutions, testing hypotheses, making predictions, and communicating results.

Innovation is a quality experienced by high-profile people with high levels of emotional intelligence, as innovation incorporates a process of idea generation that ordinary people cannot apply. An innovative person is a person who can reach the same goal as others but by applying different advanced methods and using various tools. So, individuals with a high level of self-awareness and self-regulation can experience a high level of innovation and idea creation. Also, the ability to recognize business opportunities, which is an ability practiced by entrepreneurs, allows individuals to be open to generating and designing creative ideas. Therefore, this indicates that entrepreneurs with high levels of emotional intelligence who can exploit opportunities prove to practice high innovation and idea creation.

Moreover, entrepreneurs with high emotional intelligence have better chances of experiencing motivation rapidly, as they control their emotions in a positive way that directs and regulates them in productive ways. Motivation experience by entrepreneurs encourages them to generate ideas that lead to innovative results continually. Therefore, creative entrepreneurs have characteristics that enable them to be durable and persistent, resulting in business prosperity. Additionally, openness to new experiences and innovation allows entrepreneurs to recognize more opportunities and produce positive results. Furthermore, Innovative entrepreneurs are identified as explorers and risk-taker adventurers who are open to new experiences and can tolerate uncertainties. These competencies and features combine to create an innovative entrepreneur with creative thinking skills who practice freedom of thought and flexible performance incorporating social values.

How can emotional intelligence - EI be achieved, and what are the most effective strategies to improve emotional intelligence - EI?

The importance of developing and using performance appraisal reports and forms to assess the performance of employees and peers is a must to identify the current level of expertise and develop techniques for improvements later. The performance appraisal is critical for businesses because it determines the level of corporate performance and aids in expecting the success ratio of the business entities. Therefore, successful entrepreneurs are expected to combine high social competencies to influence their teammates to perform effectively and positively. The performance of the employees and teammates indicates the business venture's performance and helps enhance venture success. Also, building a group of good team members is critical for a business to succeed. Socially skilled teams significantly impact the success and performance of the company. Emotional intelligence is undoubtedly related to the social skills imperative for teamwork success. Entrepreneurs with high levels of emotional intelligence are expected to influence their teams and positively impact business performance. Emotional intelligence plays a vital role in entrepreneurship and is related to entrepreneurial performances, in which emotional intelligence positively influences entrepreneurial performance.

4.4. Discussion

According to the analysis done on the influence of emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial performance, the findings have been presented to match what had been discussed previously in the literature review chapter. The emotional intelligence elements – based on the Goleman model - which are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, do positively relate to and influence the performance of entrepreneurs in terms of communication, innovation, negotiation, decision-making, and problem-solving. The emotional intelligence construct is a powerful tool that can emphasize business success when practiced by entrepreneurs and business owners.

Therefore, businesses need to identify and measure the abilities and skills of the industry's staff, assess their performance, and apply appraisals to test their overall business contribution. Hence, the human brain comprises two main sections: the intellectual side, which represents the left side, and the emotional side, which means the right side. The performance level of individuals is affected by their cognitive and intellectual abilities, as well as by their emotional abilities to recognize opportunities and manage themselves and those with whom they work in complex business settings. Moreover, research indicated that individuals with high levels of intellectual abilities - IQ only, which is assigned to the left side of the brain-don't perform well and demand training to compensate for the skills lacking. Therefore, studying the right side of the human brain, which represents emotional abilities, is as essential as learning the left side, which means intellectual and mental abilities and the techniques and tools businesses require to acquire to employ. Consequently, this raised the need for a combined study of both sides of the human brain to search how both sides work and intersect at a point that enhances the performance of entrepreneurs. Finally, the end of intersection represents emotional intelligence, which is sought to influence the performance of individuals generally and entrepreneurs specifically.

Nevertheless, the discussion was guided and proceeded into two main streams of talk and perceptions: the intrapersonal intelligence influence and the interpersonal intelligence influence of emotional intelligence on the performance of entrepreneurs and business owners. Accordingly, the interviewees introduced the emotional

intelligence concept and entrepreneurial performance. The researcher shared a brief on what emotional intelligence is and defined it as a person's ability to recognize, understand, and regulate the emotions within oneself and the emotions of others, as well as to use this emotional information to guide their thoughts and actions.

The discussion with the interviewees started with a brief introduction about what emotional intelligence is to help them relate and reflect upon their professional experience regarding the emotional intelligence construct. After that, a set of coded questions was shared and discussed with them to share their perspectives and opinions from their real-life experiences on how emotional intelligence impacted and generally influenced their performance and precisely their motivation and innovation, decision-making, problem-solving as well as communications and business relations aspects, as per the coded questions. The findings and results confirmed the literature review and indicated a positive relationship between the two constructs and the influence of emotional intelligence on the performance of entrepreneurs.

Emotional intelligence helps individuals to understand why people perform/ behave the way they do. Emotional intelligence - EI is briefly about understanding and managing people and oneself. Additionally, emotional intelligence refers to the power of an individual to recognize and address the emotions within oneself as well as the feelings of others, to differentiate between the positive and negative stream of emotions, and to be able to use the emotional information to guide individual's thinking, decisions, and actions, which had been presented in the analysis and finding supported the literature review.

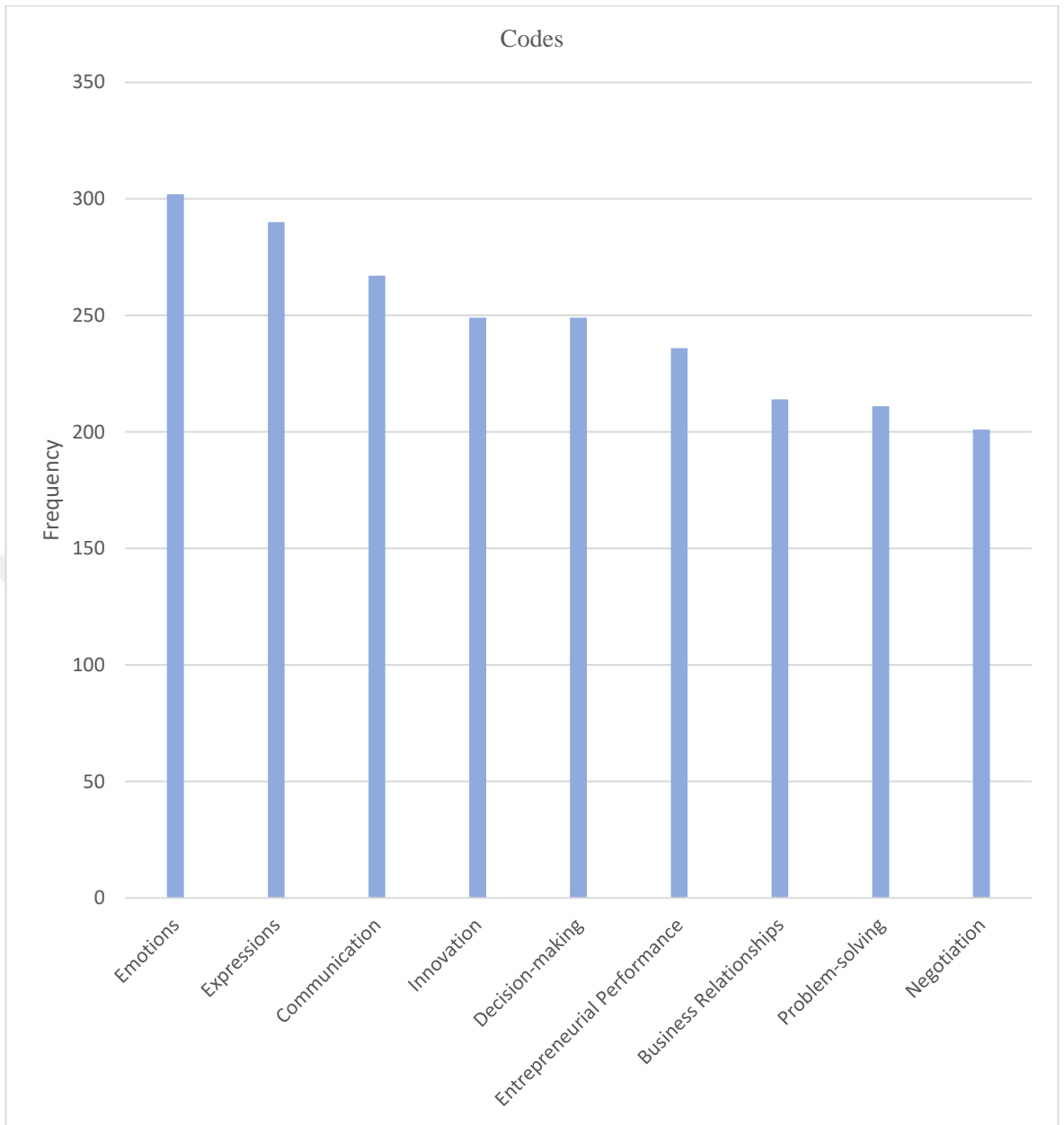
The difference between emotional intelligence and other types of intelligence is that emotional intelligence deals with the awareness and the management of emotions, which therefore influence the complex processes that connect the right side of the brain with the left side (combines cognition with emotion). Thus, emotional intelligence is a multi-dimensional model that has four main branches, according to Goleman, emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. The four aspects of the emotional intelligence concept relate to and enhance human abilities and guide the interaction in human relations, business relations, and settings. Therefore, effectively perceiving, understanding, and managing

the emotions within oneself and those we work with will enable entrepreneurs to work in harmony and maximize the business impact that results in growth and success.

The entrepreneurs and business owners discussed briefly what is meant by entrepreneurship, as well as performance. They defined performance as what individuals do and don't do during a specific period. Additionally, the individual performance measures the contribution level of entrepreneurs/ employees to the business. Performance is a construct that must be continuously improved, trained, and supervised. To monitor the performance of individuals, staff appraisal tools are used to assess the contribution level of individuals to the operating business and to help identify the lacking skills that demand training to be improved.

Therefore, businesses must identify and measure the skills of the staff to assess their performance and overall business contribution. Hence, the performance level is affected by individuals' cognitive and intellectual abilities and emotional skills to recognize opportunities and manage themselves and those with whom they work.

Therefore, this study carried out this aim by holding interviews with the entrepreneurs and discussing how to employ the emotional information and see how it impacted their performance and helped them manage their performance and the behavior of those they work with, leading to business success.



Graph 4.4. The Highest Recorded Frequencies 2

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

This study contributes to the business psychology field. The research aims to investigate and evaluate the vital role of emotional intelligence in influencing entrepreneurial performance, which determines business growth and leads to business success. The study was conducted with the participation of seventeen entrepreneurs and business owner members at the Arab Association of Engineers in Turkey to encourage them to express their perspectives and perception on how emotional intelligence influenced their business performance.

Concerning the in-depth interviews conducted while working on this research with the seventeen entrepreneurs and business owners, their responses were generally relatable concerning the five principal codes with the highest frequencies. The highest frequencies recorded for principles of the performance elements are for communication, innovation, negotiation, problem-solving, and decision-making. The responses recorded for each of the seventeen participants of each code/ performance competency are divided into two main streams based on the Emotional competence inventory (ECI) by Goleman Model:

- Intrapersonal intelligence: which includes innovation and systems thinking competencies.
- Interpersonal intelligence: which includes communication and negotiation competencies.

Intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand and manage the emotions within oneself. The interviewees discussed their perception of intrapersonal intelligence and how emotional intelligence- EI impacted their systems thinking and

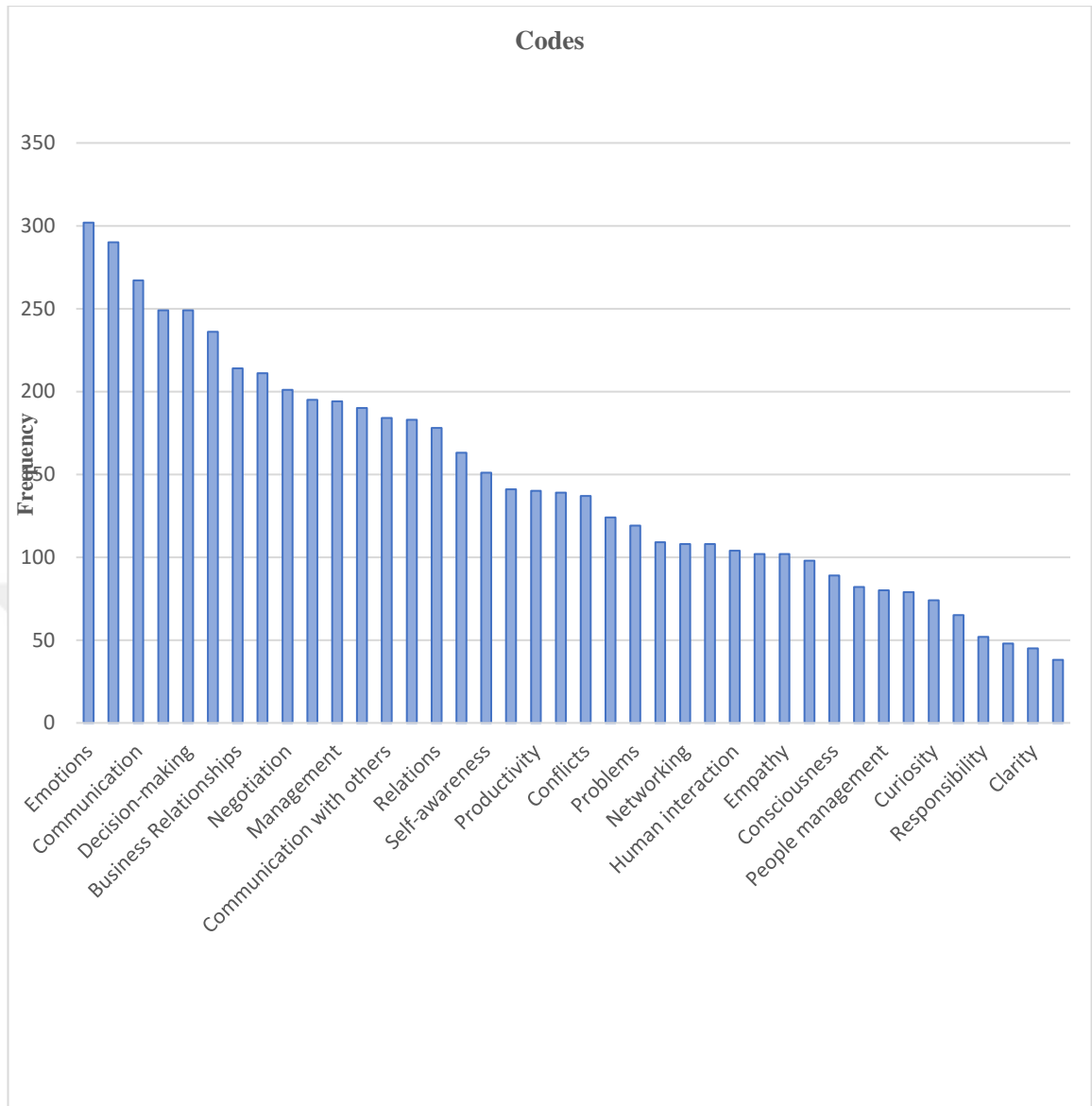
decision-making afterward. They reported that they believe businesses and organizations are systematic entities directly affected by decisions. Therefore, any organizational changes produce consequences that require many problem-solving processes and high decision-making skills. The interviewed entrepreneurs think systems thinking takes place in discussing and addressing the emotional issues during business change that requires entrepreneurs to make rapid decisions. Therefore, entrepreneurs identified that emotional understanding and emotional management play an essential role in making the right decisions; in which they reported that the ability of an entrepreneur to understand and acknowledge the emotional cycles and the emotional transitions leads to assertiveness in decision-making, that direct entrepreneurs, employees, and teammate to predict the implications of decisions and any possible change, as well as enabling everyone in the business to be prepared and optimistic about the resulted change.

Innovation is a quality that high-profile people experience with a high level of emotional intelligence. Furthermore, individuals with interpersonal intelligence enjoy a high level of self-awareness and self-regulation and can experience a high level of innovation and idea creation. Also, the ability to recognize business opportunities, which is an ability practiced by entrepreneurs, allows individuals to be open to generating and designing creative ideas. Therefore, this indicates that entrepreneurs with high levels of emotional intelligence who can exploit opportunities practice high innovation and idea creation. High levels of innovation impact the process of problem-solving and decision-making positively.

The ability of us entrepreneurs to build business relations and sustain a resilient communication process with other business owners, entrepreneurs, suppliers, teammates, and peers defines our business longitude and aids in business success, as operations within business ventures depend highly on communications and business relationships. Maintaining business communications require interpersonal skills and a high level of social skills critical to business success. Entrepreneurs with a high level of emotional intelligence are referred to as socially competent business owners. In addition, developing, maintaining, and sustaining qualified business relations is associated with the emotional intelligence abilities of entrepreneurs.

Moreover, the code map shows that all coded competencies are interconnected with each other and influence the performance of entrepreneurs. Thus, the highest frequented competencies from the recorded research results are the main competencies of both branches of Goleman emotional intelligence –intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence - that reflect better decision-making skills and problem-solving skills.

After conducting the interviews with seventeen entrepreneurs and business owners, the analysis was done throughout the study, and statistics were provided from the perspective of the participants on how emotional intelligence triggered and affected their entrepreneurial performance generally and communication, innovation, decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, and negotiation, specifically in a positive way. Although we cannot generalize our findings, we can comment on our sampling. The conclusion of our research findings is presented in the chart below for a better understanding of the results.



Graph 5.1. Recorded Frequencies

The analysis of the data collected from the in-depth interviews that have been conducted has shown that emotional intelligence-EI is directly impacting the performance of entrepreneurs in terms of innovation, communications, business relations, problem-solving, negotiation as well as decision-making, as these were the performance competencies that scored the highest frequencies. Moreover, the level of emotional intelligence implications has proved to differ according to the essentiality of the competence and how many other sub-competencies can stem from it.

In addition, for entrepreneurs with high levels of interpersonal skills, Emotional intelligence has proven to impact their performance positively and directly in terms of communication and negotiation, which has proven to influence their decision-making and problem-solving skills.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence-EI has shown importance for entrepreneurs with high intrapersonal competencies. Emotional intelligence showed a positive relationship with the performance of entrepreneurs who practice high levels of intrapersonal competencies in innovation and systems thinking. This influence, therefore, has proved to positively lead to a high level of problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Therefore, the practical application of emotional intelligence is crucial for leveraging and maximizing entrepreneurs' performance and enhancing their entrepreneurial skills, which is proven to lead to successful, long-lasting businesses. Entrepreneurial performance is affected by the challenges that entrepreneurs face daily. Thus, employing the correct set of competencies and abilities will improve the performance of entrepreneurs and enhance business success. Emotional intelligence traits can be acquired, and abilities can be learned and taught.

Entrepreneurs who can learn about emotional intelligence have better chances to be competitive in communication, innovation, negotiations, problem-solving, and decision-making, which are essential competencies for managing ventures and for entrepreneurial success in challenging business settings. When entrepreneurs leverage their emotional intelligence, they will increase innovation and creativity, enhance communication in their experience, and make better decisions by exploiting EI for their benefit. Positive emotions motivate entrepreneurs to solve problems and negotiate better offers. Accordingly, emotional intelligence has demonstrated the skills and abilities entrepreneurs need to overcome business challenges, leading to business success.

5.2. Research Limitations

This preliminary study has a few limitations that are presented as the following:

- The study expresses the perception of seventeen entrepreneurs, which reflects a small number of responses to be considered valid results.
- The mono perspective of male perception, as all the participants are men.
- Participants are working in the same business sector, as they all are engineers managing ventures in the production sector.
- The age group of participants is relatively close.

The preliminary study findings would open doors for other researchers interested in business psychology and emotional intelligence to explore and examine the impact of business emotional intelligence on different performance aspects on a large scale that will lead to entrepreneurial success.

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