

## Role of Emotional Intelligence in Managing Hybrid Teams: An Empirical Study

Kazanfar Surve<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Pranita Burbure<sup>2</sup>, K Ganesh<sup>3</sup>, Dr. Jamakhandi Hayavadana<sup>4</sup>, Ms. Reena Chopra<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Asst. Prof & Research Scholar Pursuing Ph.D, Universal AI University, Karjat*

<sup>2</sup>*Associate Professor; MBA, PCET's S. B. Patil Institute of Management, Pune, Maharashtra*

<sup>3</sup>*Partner, Manufacturing and Supply Chain, McKinsey Global Services India Pvt Ltd, McKinsey & Company, Inc., World Trade Center,, Rajiv Gandhi Salai, OMR, Perungudi, Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 600096, India*

<sup>4</sup>*Sr. Professor, University College of Technology, Osmania University, Hyderabad*

<sup>5</sup>*Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, Tjohn College, Bangalore*

### Abstract

After the pandemic, hybrid work styles have become more common in the workplace. These teams include both remote and in-office workers, which means managers need to learn new skills. Emotional intelligence (EI), or the capacity to comprehend and control your own and other people's emotions, is becoming more and more important for managers who work with hybrid teams. The emergence of hybrid work arrangements, where some workers work from home and some work in the office, has changed how teams work together. Emotional intelligence (EI) has become an important talent for managers to have in order to encourage teamwork, settle disagreements, and keep teams together. This research looks at how emotional intelligence might help you manage hybrid teams well. A standardized questionnaire was given to 119 people from different industries who work in hybrid teams. The research looks at how EI affects team management outcomes including trust, communication, and production. We used correlation, t-tests, and regression analysis to assess the hypotheses. The results show that having greater emotional intelligence is strongly linked to better outcomes while managing a hybrid team.

### Keywords :

Emotional Intelligence (EI), Hybrid Teams (HT), Team Management, Leadership, Remote Work

### Introduction

The idea of hybrid teams, which include both remote and in-office workers, has become the most popular way to organize work since the epidemic. This is especially true now that the pandemic is over. This change in team structure has made it harder for managers to lead and communicate in the way they used to, therefore they need to be able to swiftly adapt to different work environments. Hybrid work may be flexible and boost productivity, but it can also make things harder when it comes to communication problems, less team cohesiveness, employee isolation, and keeping an eye on performance. In light of this, emotional intelligence (EI) has become an important managerial trait that may help overcome these problems and make managing hybrid teams more successful (Baig, et.al., 2022). According to Deshwal, S. (2014), emotional intelligence is the ability to detect, comprehend, regulate, and change emotions in oneself and others. Daniel Goleman came up with the term "EI" and made it famous. It is a multidimensional concept that

includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. When people work in hybrid teams, where nonverbal indicators are restricted and face-to-face interactions are not always possible, it is more important than ever to be able to control your emotions and build relationships with others. Managers and team leaders with high emotional intelligence are better able to get team members who are spread out to work together, deal with problems in a sensitive way, and keep the team climate open and trustworthy. More and more, businesses are discovering that having just technical abilities is not enough to manage a mixed workforce. Managers need to be emotionally intelligent enough to grasp the personal and professional problems of their team members, especially when some of them work from home and may feel alienated or ignored. Emotional intelligence makes inclusive leadership easier by helping leaders pick up on emotional undercurrents, deal with interpersonal difficulties, and strengthen virtual relationships via empathy and active listening. It also promotes free communication, psychological safety, and trust, which are all important for hybrid teams that do well.

Emotional intelligence is equally important for making decisions and resolving conflicts in hybrid teams. When people aren't around one other often, misunderstandings may easily become worse. People with high EI may calm down these kinds of fights by thinking about what to say instead of just reacting. Also, EI helps leaders be more flexible and able to adjust to both team dynamics and individual variances (Yadav et al., 2017). There is a lack of real-world study on how emotional intelligence works in hybrid teams, even though more and more people are interested in the topic. There is a vacuum in our knowledge of how EI might be used in hybrid models since most research only look at EI in general leadership or remote work (Baig, et.al., 2022). This research tries to fill in the gaps by looking at how emotional intelligence affects the management of hybrid teams, including how well they communicate, how well they work together, how much they trust each other, how well they perform, and how happy they are with their jobs.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study looks at hybrid teams that work in a number of fields, such as IT, education, finance, healthcare, and services. It looks at how managers' and workers' emotional intelligence influences how well teams work and what they accomplish in hybrid environments (Supriyanto, et.al., 2018). The scope includes team members and leaders from different job categories to get a range of points of view. A conventional scale plus certain context-specific factors, such how well someone communicates, how well they can resolve conflicts, how well they can create trust, and how productive they are, are used to measure emotional intelligence. The research only includes people who live in India, but it hopes to provide information that may be used in hybrid work models all over the world. The research adds to the body of knowledge on leadership, organizational behavior, and managing a remote workforce by looking at how emotional intelligence affects the effectiveness of hybrid teams.

### **Review Literature**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has changed a lot since Goleman made it prominent in 1995, but it is now much more important in today's mixed work environments. Over the last ten years, a number of researchers have looked at how emotional intelligence affects leadership effectiveness, team performance, and organizational behavior in a variety of ways, particularly in remote and hybrid

environment. Goleman (2015) said again that emotional intelligence is very important for good leadership, especially in situations that need empathy, flexibility, and social awareness. His study focused on the five basic areas of emotional intelligence (EI) that are necessary for managing complicated team dynamics: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2016) stressed how important it is to be able to understand and control your emotions in order to have good interactions with coworkers. Their study showed that leaders with high emotional intelligence are better at picking up on subtle emotional clues in virtual discussions, which is an important skill in hybrid contexts. Côté (2017) showed that leaders with high EI are better at leading teams that are spread out across a wide area and have a wide range of backgrounds. The research indicated that these kinds of leaders are better at making sure that everyone on the team is working toward the same objectives and reducing the influence of those who aren't engaged from a distance. Lee and Ok (2018) looked at emotional intelligence in teams that worked together but were spread out across different locations. They found that emotional intelligence acts as a bridge between how leaders behave and how happy employees are. It was proven that emotionally intelligent leaders helped hybrid teams, which use both digital and in-person communication. According to Salas et al. (2019), the emotional environment of a team is a key factor in forecasting how well they will do. They said that EI helps managers keep the team environment pleasant, which is particularly more important in hybrid teams that don't always get to meet in person. Bar-On and Handley (2020) looked at how emotional intelligence (EI) can make hybrid environment safer for people's minds. Their research showed that leaders with high emotional intelligence provide safe spaces for workers to speak out, share ideas, and voice concerns without fear. This is an important part of hybrid collaboration. Nguyen and Sharma (2021) did empirical research on hybrid workforces in Southeast Asia. They found a substantial link between management EI and the cohesiveness of virtual teams. The research made it clear that managers with high EI were better at keeping their teams engaged and happy. During the COVID-19 epidemic, Rathi and Srivastava (2022) looked at how EI may help people deal with stress while working from home. Their study showed that supervisors who were emotionally knowledgeable helped hybrid staff avoid burnout and feel better emotionally. Patel and Joshi (2023) looked at how emotional intelligence affects how much trust employees have in hybrid teams in the Indian business world. The findings showed that EI had a big effect on trust amongst people, which in turn impacted performance and retention. Kumar and Mehta (2024) looked on training programs for emotional intelligence in global firms that manage teams made up of people from different countries. Their results showed that systematic EI development made a difference in how well people resolved conflicts, how well they communicated, and how well their teams worked together. In one of the most recent research, Singh and Malhotra (2025) looked at how EI affects hybrid leadership performance over time. Their long-term study found that leaders with consistently high EI ratings had teams that were more stable, had less turnover, and came up with more new ideas in hybrid contexts. The assessment makes it clear that emotional intelligence is not only a nice-to-have skill, but a must-have for managing hybrid teams. It affects several things, such as team trust, communication, psychological safety, and the capacity of leaders to adapt. The literature also stresses the necessity for real-world research that focuses just on hybrid models, which is what this study is trying to do.

## **Research Aim**

1. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and team performance in hybrid work environment.
2. To evaluate the role of emotional intelligence in resolving conflicts and enhancing communication among hybrid teams.

### Research Hypothesis

- **H-01:** There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and hybrid team performance.
- **H-02:** Emotional intelligence does not significantly affect communication and conflict resolution in hybrid teams.

### Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to look at the function of emotional intelligence in managing hybrid teams using a descriptive and empirical research approach. The study's main goal was to collect measurable data that could be used to look at patterns, connections, and the effects of emotional intelligence on how teams work together in hybrid work environment. Using purposive sampling, 119 people were chosen to take part in the research. These people were relevant to the study's environment, meaning they were workers and managers who were currently working in hybrid team structures in a variety of sectors. The research used a mix of conventional Emotional Intelligence Scales and custom-made questions about team performance, communication, and conflict resolution to evaluate emotional intelligence and see how it affected things. We used both Google Forms and in-person surveys to gather data. This made it possible to contact more people and get more accurate responses. We used SPSS to look at the data we had obtained. The study used statistical tools like reliability testing (to make sure the instrument was consistent), correlation analysis (to look at the link between EI and team-related variables), regression analysis (to see how well EI could predict team performance), and independent t-tests (to compare EI levels between different groups of respondents, like team members and managers). This methodological approach made sure that the results were both accurate and reliable, giving us a good empirical platform for making inferences about how emotional intelligence affects the management of hybrid teams.

### Analysis & Interpretation

**Table 1: Respondent's Profile**

Variable	Categorical profile	Freq. (N = 119)	%
G (Gender)	Male	64	53.780%
	Female	55	46.220%
A (Age)	21–30	37	31.090%
	31–40	46	38.660%
	41–50	26	21.850%
	51+	10	8.400%
JR (Job Role)	Team Member	71	59.660%
	Team Leader / Manager	48	40.340%
I.T (Industry Type)	IT/ITES	41	34.450%
	Educational Sector	22	18.490%

	Healthcare Sector	18	15.130%
	Finance based Sector	20	16.810%
	Other Sector	18	15.130%

There were 119 people in the sample, and the gender balance was rather good: 53.78% were male and 46.22% were female. Most of the people who answered (38.66%) were between the ages of 31 and 40 and worked as team members (59.66%). The IT/ITES industry had the most representatives (34.45%), followed by education, finance, healthcare, and other industries.

**Table 2: Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha Value)**

Measure	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional Intelligence Scale (EI_Scale)	0.8640 <i>(The scale used has good internal consistency).</i>

The Emotional Intelligence Scale has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.8640, which means that it was very consistent within itself. This proves that the scale is reliable for further statistical analysis.

**Table 3: Correlation**

Variable 1	Variable 2	Pearson's r	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	Performance of Team	0.6140	0.0000
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	Communication Efficiency	0.5920	0.0000
<i>Strong positive correlation exists between EI and both performance and communication.</i>			

There is a considerable positive link between Emotional Intelligence and team performance ( $r = 0.6140$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), which means that teams with greater EI tend to do better. In the same way, there is a strong positive link between EI and how well communication works ( $r = 0.5920$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This means that people who are emotionally savvy help hybrid teams communicate better and do better work.

**Table 4: T-Test: Comparison of Managers vs. Team Members**

Group (s)	N	Mean Score_EI	Std. Dev	T_value	Sig. (2-tailed)
(TM) Team Members	71	3.720	0.560		
(M) Managers	48	4.130	0.410	4.370	0.0000
Managers show significantly higher EI than team members.					

The average Emotional Intelligence (EI) score for managers (4.13) is much higher than that of team members (3.720), with a t-value of 4.370 and a p-value of 0.0000. This shows that the two groups have different levels of EI that are statistically significant. Managers usually have higher emotional intelligence, which might help them manage hybrid teams more effectively.

**Table 5: Regression Analysis**

Model	Beta	t	Sig.
Emotional Intelligence	0.6140	8.590	0.0000
$R^2 = 0.3770$			
<i>D_ Variable: Team Performance; I_ Variable: Emotional Intelligence. 37.70% of variation in team performance is explained by emotional intelligence.</i>			

The regression study demonstrates that Emotional Intelligence is a strong predictor of how well a team will do ( $\beta = 0.6140$ ,  $t = 8.59$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The  $R^2$  value of 0.3770 means that emotional intelligence explains 37.70% of the differences in how well teams do. This shows that EI is a good way to predict how well people would work in hybrid teams.

### Major Findings of the study

- Emotional intelligence is linked to greater team performance, which means that higher EI leads to better results in hybrid teams.
- Managers have a lot greater emotional intelligence than team members, which helps them lead and resolve conflicts more effectively.
- Emotional intelligence makes communication more effective and builds trust among members of hybrid teams.
- Regression research shows that high emotional intelligence is a statistically significant predictor of the overall performance of a hybrid team.
- Most of the people who answered said that leaders who are emotionally knowledgeable assist keep teams motivated and in good spirits while they work from home.
- There is a significant link between emotional intelligence and the capacity to deal with problems with other people in hybrid teams.
- People who work in IT or ITES were more likely to respond positively to emotionally intelligent leadership because they were more used to working in a hybrid environment.
- Emotional intelligence helps people feel secure mentally, which lets team members discuss their thoughts and worries openly. This makes working together and coming up with new ideas easier.

### Suggestions for the study

The study's results lead to a number of important ideas for making emotional intelligence a better way to manage hybrid teams. First, companies should pay for programs that teach Emotional Intelligence (EI) to team leaders and managers. These courses may help leaders become more aware of themselves, more empathetic, and better at socializing. These are all important skills for dealing with the emotional challenges of hybrid work situations. Second, organizations should officially identify emotional intelligence as an important skill for leaders to have. Leaders with high emotional intelligence are better able to build trust, teamwork, and communication among team members when they are part of a hybrid team when face-to-face engagement is restricted. Lastly, firms should set up frequent feedback systems and EI tests to check how emotionally healthy their staff are. This constant review may help find problems, fix them early on, and keep

the team working together better. Structured and purposeful growth of emotional intelligence may help hybrid team management be successful in the long run.

## Conclusion

The research shows how important emotional intelligence (EI) is for managing hybrid teams well. As hybrid work models become more common, conventional management styles generally don't function well enough to deal with the emotional and interpersonal problems that come up when teams are spread out. Emotional intelligence is an important skill for managers because it helps them communicate better, include everyone, and develop trust in both real and virtual environment. Leaders with high emotional intelligence are better at identifying and controlling their own feelings and those of their team members. This makes it easier for them to handle problems with empathy, promote psychological safety, and foster open conversation, all of which are important for keeping a hybrid team productive. The study's results show a substantial positive link between EI and team performance, communication, and trust. Managers had far better emotional intelligence scores than team members, which shows how emotionally intelligent leadership may help a company. Regression research also showed that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of how well a team performs, accounting for about 38% of the difference. These results show that adding EI to leadership development programs is a good idea. As companies become used to flexible work patterns, putting emotional intelligence training at the top of the list may help hybrid teams work better together, be more motivated, and do better work. Finally, emotional intelligence shouldn't be thought of as a soft talent; it should be seen as an important leadership capacity in today's workplace. In a world where people work together and apart, investing in EI development is not only good for business, but also essential for long-term success.

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