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Psyche

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TEAM Psyche: Using the Team Emotional Intelligence Survey to help teams increase performance

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As a practitioner focusing on Emotional Intelligence (EI) since 1999, I have been using a variety of tests and surveys to assess aspects of Emotional Intelligence. My work has been largely aimed at both enhancing individual self-awareness and researching specific EI Success Profiles (for example, for a sales role) that can be used as part of a selection or development process to recruit and nurture professionals who closely match the success profile.

I have noticed over the years that for the purpose of working with teams or departments some test publishers offer the facility to generate group results from individual EI scores (i.e. aggregated scores to provide some sort of collective EI score). Although I recognize the utility of examining the

level of individual's emotional intelligence in a group, I have wondered about the value of assessing a group's environment through these aggregated individual-level scores. More importantly, I have found aggregated group scores on EI to be meaningless. Why after all would anyone want to aggregate the scores of a group of individuals and then discuss the group as if there is one single score describing the identity of the group on a scale like Empathy or Emotion Awareness? Can a group have a level of empathy, for example? And, if so, does an aggregated individual score measure it?

Whilst my personal process of discovering and learning what to measure and what to leave to one side within emotional intelligence assessment has been a lengthy work-in-progress, we have been receiving requests in my practice from clients wanting to review and understand the emotional intelligence of their teams. Hence I set out on a journey to identify the frameworks out there.

Through my association with the Ei Consortium (www.eiconsortium.org), a group of academics, researchers and practitioners focused on the research and application of emotional intelligence in organisations, I became familiar with various frameworks for measuring collective emotional intelligence. It was a simple task to choose which model to adopt in my organizational development work.

The work of Druskat and Wolff on Group EI is the only construct for team emotional intelligence that focuses on the team-level construct of team norms. Their research identified a set of norms that form a team culture that maps the ability of the team to facilitate an environment for effectively processing emotion within the team. The interesting background to their work is that these individuals were originally tasked by Goleman to explore the 'group' aspects of Emotional Intelligence (Please note that the word 'Group' is the term used for a collective, in academic circles, whereas the word 'team' is used in business circles). The rest is history now.

Over the last 15 years, Druskat and Wolff built a framework for Team Emotional Intelligence (TEI), validated their model with hundreds of teams and refined their approach to both measuring the status of a specific team and providing an action-oriented model to help develop the norms (or expectations) of team behavior that lead to effective processing

of emotion within the team as a whole, which is key to performance-related outcomes of the team. They first coined the term 'Group EI' in their 2001 Harvard Business Review and brought the notion of a collective emotional intelligence to wider attention. Group EI "build(s) the foundation for true collaboration and cooperation – helping otherwise skilled teams fulfill their highest potential."

The psychometrically validated Team Ei Survey, now in its 4th iteration, is authored by Druskat and Wolff. The Team Ei Survey was developed over the course of the last 15 years. It has 68 items and is designed to assess a team's emotional intelligence – that is, a team's ability to create a culture that raises awareness and constructively regulates emotions. The culture consists of norms at three levels – those related to individual interaction, team processes, and interactions with other key teams and stakeholders in the larger organization (see Figure 1). The items in the current version of the survey represent a process of continual refinement based on research including Christina Hamme's (2003) dissertation and continued research by Druskat and Wolff.

Team members, including the team leader, complete an online survey anonymously and 100% response is usually achieved. Team members receive a report summarizing the nine team emotional intelligence norms, including range bars to reveal the range of opinions/perspectives within the team. The report provides a rich source of data from which a team sparks dialogue about possible areas for change.

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for each of the Team Emotional Intelligence Norms range from a high of .884 for the norm of Interpersonal Understanding to a low of .740 for the norm of Addressing Counterproductive Behavior (mean=.823). The sample is based on 473 Team Members comprising 91 teams.

The survey has also been shown to be a valid predictor of performance. Figure 2 below shows the results of a study by Druskat, Wolff, Messer, Stubbs-Koman, and Batista (2012) consisting of 109 teams in 6 companies (4 Fortune 500). Performance was measured via the manager's assessment using a survey administered an average of 2.25 months after Group Emotional Intelligence was assessed. The TEI norms measured create social capital (safety, efficacy, and building

relations), which leads to performance. The model explains 25 % of the variance in performance. Additional studies, detailed in the technical manual, all indicate a strong connection between Team Emotional Intelligence and team performance.

Future Directions: The Team Ei Survey measures 9 TEI norms but also included, based on research, are 3 team fundamentals that form the foundation of performance for all teams. It is an exciting time to bring awareness of these norms to teams so they can move towards creating a culture of emotional intelligence and higher performance.

References

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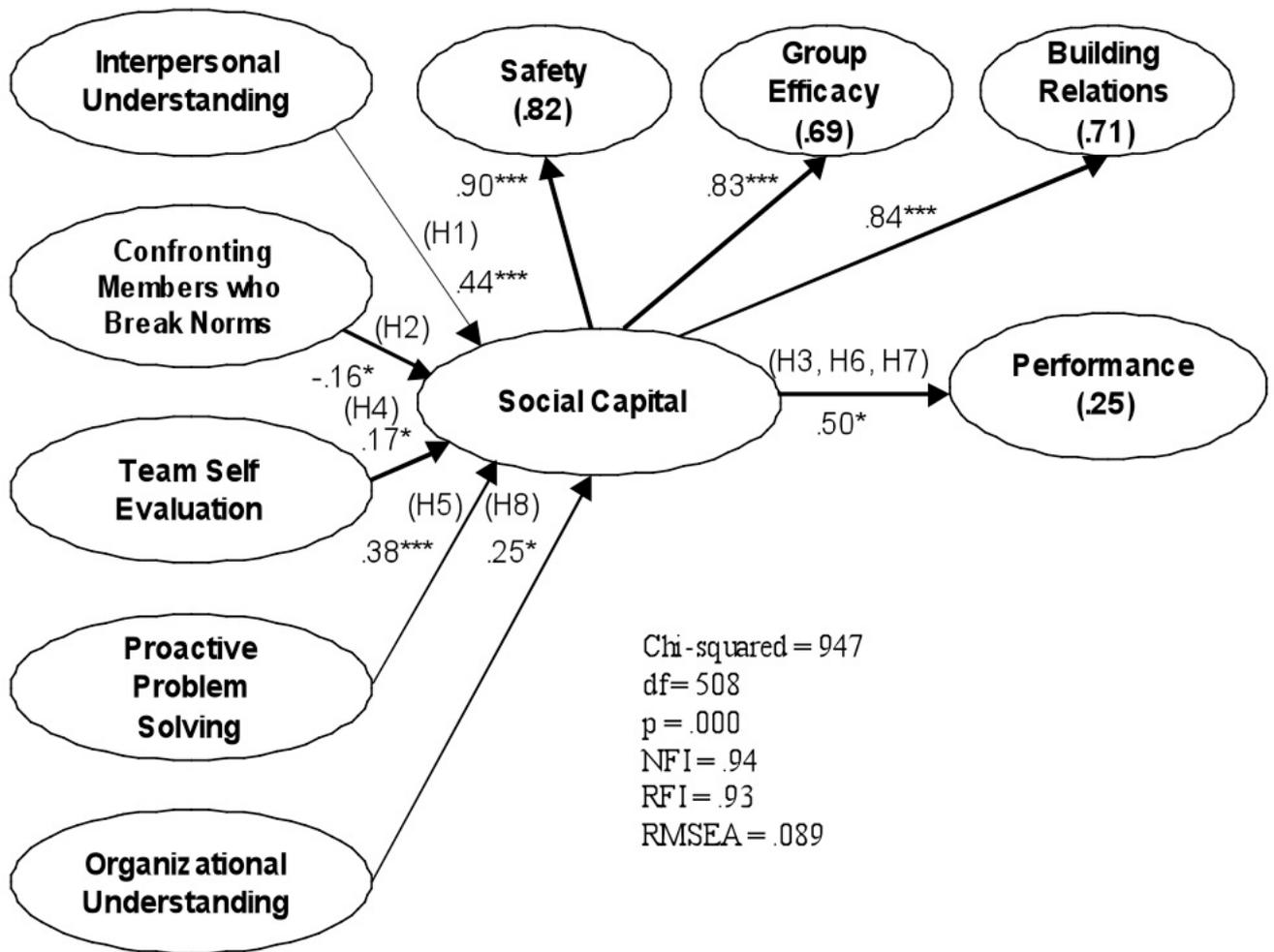
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Geetu Bharwaney is Founder of Ei World, a specialist in Emotional Intelligence. She is collaborating with Druskat and Wolff on accreditation in Team Emotional Intelligence and this is available in 2013 in 3 locations – England, Ireland and the US. More information can be found at www.eiworld.org and www.geipartners.com

FIGURE 1: Team Emotional Intelligence Norms

3 Levels	Behavioural Norms	Evidence
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal Understanding • Addressing Counterproductive Behavior • Caring Behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do members understand what they need to know about each other to work together effectively? • Do members address counterproductive behaviors that hurt team performance? • Do members value, respect, and support each other?
Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Self-Evaluation • Creating Emotion Resources • Creating an Affirmative Environment • Proactive Problem Solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the team evaluate how well it is doing? • Does the team create the time and language needed to discuss difficult issues and feelings? • Does the team maintain a “can do” attitude? • Is the team proactive about solving and preventing problems and avoiding a “victim” mentality?
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Understanding • Building External Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the team understand the organization and those who can affect its performance? • Does the team build relationships that help its performance?

FIGURE 2: Druskat and Wolff Performance Model for Team Emotional Intelligence



Note: Numbers in parentheses represent squared multiple correlations. This is similar to r-squared and represents a measure of the variance explained by the model for the particular construct. Not shown but included in the model are covariances among the GEC norms and the measurement model. Social Capital is a combination of Safety, Group Efficacy, and Building External Relations (which we considered a proxy for network ties).

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Source: Druskat, V.U. & Wolff, S.B. (2006). Group Emotional Intelligence Survey. Technical Manual. 2006.