Emotional Intelligence:
Examining the interrelationship among EI constructs
Of Public officials in Central government of Korea

Lee, Hyun Jung (Ewha University)

I. Introduction

In 21st century, we are facing unprecedented challenges to meet the needs of many stakeholders: employers, society, administrators, and school staffs. With the growing pressures from global competition, along with the growth in private sector employment, today's organizations are seeking to hire potential employees with emotional intelligence competencies needed to gain a competitive advantage. In a recent speech, Goleman explained the current emphasis on emotional intelligence competencies, "Old hierarchies based on command and control mentalities are being replaced by networks with workers and management combining into flexible task–oriented teams" (Institute of Personal and Development, 2000).

Many precedent studies about emotional intelligence have been done in private sectors. However, a recent study by Berman and West (2008) demonstrated the usefulness of emotional intelligence for theoretical models in public administration and offered practical strategies for public managers in U.S., but few studies have done in Korea. People who work for public organization should have high emotional intelligence, because decision making is or from responsiveness to people's needs. Without understanding populations of citizens, government can't make a good policy and can face a huge communication gap with citizens.

Moreover, most scholars or theorists, so far, have interesting in what emotional intelligence actually predicts and have found out EI positively affected to academic performance (Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2003; Barchard, 2003; Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Lam & Kirby, 2002), leadership (Sosik & Megerian, 1999; Goleman, 1995; Bass, 1999; Wendelin & Jurgen, 2005), organizational behavior (Cote & Miners, 2006; Wong & Law, 2002; Quebbman & Rozell, 2002; Cote, Lopes, & Salovey, 2003), and even deviant behavior (Rubin, 1999; Trinida & Johnson, 2002; Swift, 2002). However, in order to develop more reliable concept of EI and training program for EI, we should also examine the internal relationship among EI constructs.

The present study is among the first attempts to empirically examine the internal relationship among constructs of EI with public officials in Korea.

II. Theoretical background of Emotional Intelligence
Emotions are an integral and inseparable part of everyday organizational life. From moments of frustration or joy, grief, fear, to an enduring sense of dissatisfaction or commitment, the experience of work is saturated with feeling (Ashforth, Humphrey, 1995). All these emotions are also affected to organizations as a leadership (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Higgs & Rowland, 2002; Goleman, Boyatzis, & Mckee, 2002), a coworker’s interaction (Lopes, et al, 2003; Gohm, Corser, & Dalsky, 2004), and group decisions (Collins, 2001; Gadot & Meisler, 2010). However, for a long time, the rationality has institutionalized in many organizations that the importance of personal emotion has been relatively ignored. And researches have generally neglected the impact of everyday emotions on organizational life that organizational scholars and practitioners hold pejorative view of emotion. This “overrationalized” (Morgan, 1986) view could noticeably causes side-effect in today’s chaotic world of organizations. Thus, many researchers and scholars (Matsumoto and Sanders, 1988; Sandelands, 1888; Feldman-Barrett and Salovey, 2002) in today have started to examining the role of emotions which affected the relationship between individual and organizational performance. One modality to examine the effects of emotions on performance is through an individual’s emotional intelligence. And individual emotional intelligence has been shown to be significantly related to job performance (Boyatzis, 1982; Bar-On, 1997; Lam & Kirby, 2002; Engstrom, 2005; Wong & Law, 2002). For this reason, the concept of emotional intelligence has been received organizational scholars’ and theorists’ attentions and many studies have been proved that IQ only contributed a small factor that determined success in life, and non-cognition intelligences (emotional intelligence) may greatly affected to individual success (Goleman, 1995; Gardner and Hatch, 1989).

There are ongoing debates in the literature about what constitutes the domain of emotional intelligence, about terminology used to describe the construct, and about the methods used to measure it. In general, there are 3 types of emotional intelligence model.

The first and the foremost model is an ability-based model. This model was developed by Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso (1990) and designed questionnaires to measure emotional abilities. The definition of E.I. based on ability-based model is “the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Thus, the ability model of emotional intelligence is focused on how emotions can facilitate thinking and adaptive behavior and measure the performance-based assessment (Mayer, Salovey, 1997). In short, this model views emotional intelligence as a cognitive-emotional ability, apart from emotion itself. In order to be accurately categorized as an intelligence, Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) pointed out two following criteria. First, emotional intelligence test items must measure an actual mental ability rather than preferred behavior.