



Faculty of Economics and Business

The Influence of Emotional Intelligence Towards Job Performance in Sarawak Government-Linked Companies in the Digital Sector: The Moderating Role of Leader-Member Exchange

Mohd Syafiq Osman

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Leader-Member Exchange

Mohd Syafiq Osman

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of University Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The dissertation has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

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Signature

Name: Mohd Syafiq Osman

Matric No.: 21040053

Faculty of Economics and Business

University Malaysia Sarawak

Date: 19th August 2025

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the influence of emotional intelligence (EI) on job performance in Sarawak's Government-linked Companies (GLCs), with a specific focus on SAINS and SDEC. It also studies the moderating effect of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on this relationship. This research utilizes Social Exchange Theory and Role Theory as theoretical frameworks and adopts a quantitative methodology with a sample size of 200 participants which consist of managers, mid-level managers and executives. The data were thoroughly analyzed using SPSS and Partial Least Squares (PLS) to test the stated hypotheses. The study seeks to fill important voids in the current body of research by investigating the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) components, including self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management, on job performance. Moreover, it explores the role of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in influencing the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and job performance, offering a detailed comprehension of the interaction between leaders and subordinates in improving work results. The results are anticipated to provide useful insights into the utilisation of emotional intelligence to enhance job performance, specifically within the unique cultural and organizational contexts of SAINS and SDEC. This research not only enhances the academic discussion on emotional intelligence and leadership but also offers practical insights for building effective policies and management methods to improve job performance in Sarawak's Government-Linked Companies (GLCs).

Keyword: Emotional Intelligence, Leader-Member Exchange, Job performance, Government-linked Companies.

***Pengaruh Kecerdasan Emosi Terhadap Prestasi Kerja dalam Syarikat Berkaitan
Kerajaan Sarawak: Peranan Pemoderatan Pertukaran Pemimpin-Ahli***

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneliti pengaruh kecerdasan emosi (EI) terhadap prestasi kerja dalam Syarikat Berkaitan Kerajaan (GLC) di Sarawak, dengan fokus khusus pada SAINS dan SDEC. Ia juga mengkaji kesan pemoderatan Pertukaran Pemimpin-Ahli (LMX) dalam hubungan ini. Penyelidikan ini menggunakan Teori Pertukaran Sosial dan Teori Peranan sebagai kerangka teori dan mengamalkan metodologi kuantitatif dengan saiz sampel sebanyak 200 peserta yang merangkumi pihak pengurus, pengurus peringkat pertengahan dan eksekutif. Data dianalisis dengan teliti menggunakan SPSS dan Partial Least Squares (PLS) untuk menguji hipotesis yang dinyatakan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengisi kekosongan penting dalam badan penyelidikan semasa dengan menyiasat kesan komponen Kecerdasan Emosi (EI), termasuk kesedaran diri, kesedaran sosial, pengurusan diri, dan pengurusan hubungan, terhadap prestasi kerja. Selain itu, ia mengkaji peranan Pertukaran Pemimpin-Ahli (LMX) dalam mempengaruhi hubungan antara Kecerdasan Emosi (EI) dan prestasi kerja, menawarkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang interaksi antara pemimpin dan bawahan dalam meningkatkan hasil kerja. Keputusan kajian ini dijangka memberikan pandangan yang berguna tentang penggunaan kecerdasan emosi untuk meningkatkan prestasi kerja, khususnya dalam konteks budaya dan organisasi yang unik di SAINS dan SDEC. Penyelidikan ini bukan sahaja meningkatkan perbincangan akademik mengenai kecerdasan emosi dan kepimpinan, tetapi juga menawarkan pandangan praktikal untuk membina dasar dan kaedah pengurusan yang berkesan untuk memperbaiki prestasi kerja dalam Syarikat Berkaitan Kerajaan (GLC) di Sarawak.

Kata kunci: *Kecerdasan Emosi, Pertukaran Pemimpin-Ahli, Prestasi Kerja, Syarikat Berkaitan Kerajaan.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CB SEM	Covariance Based Structural Equation Modeling
CR	Composite Reliability
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
eLASIS	Land Information System
EI	Emotional Intelligence
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
GLC	Government-Linked Companies
HR	Human Resource
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ID	Identity Document
IDECS	International Digital Economy Conference Sarawak
INT	Interaction Term
JP	Job Performance
JENDELA	Jalanan Digital Negara
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange

MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOD	Moderator Variable
MyDIGITAL	Malaysia Digital
NFI	Normed Fit Index
PCDS	Post COVID-19 Development Strategy
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
PMS	Performance Management Systems
PoP	Points of Presence
SALURAN	Sarawak Linking Urban, Rural and Nation
SAINS	Sarawak Information Systems
SDEC	Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SET	Social Exchange Theory
SMART600	Sarawak Multimedia Authority Rural Telecommunication
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
WCIT	World Congress on Innovation & Technology

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Job performance is a crucial factor in organisational success, especially in public institutions and government-linked corporations (GLCs) that influence national agendas. In Sarawak, GLCs play a crucial role in implementing significant socio-economic and digital transformation programs. Sarawak Information Systems Sdn. Bhd. (SAINS) and Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation Berhad (SDEC) are prominent agencies in the Sarawak Government's initiative to promote digital economy. SAINS, founded in 1991, facilitates e-government infrastructure and digital public service provision, whilst SDEC, formed in 2020, spearheads innovation and infrastructure initiatives within Sarawak's Post COVID-19 Development Strategy (PCDS) 2030. Collectively, these organisations employ more than 1,000 digital experts and function as technology facilitators for the state's aspiration to emerge as a regional digital powerhouse.

Nonetheless, despite their strategic significance, both SAINS and SDEC encounter intricate organisational and human capital difficulties. Recent organisational upheaval, shifting job requirements, and heightened expectations for innovation and efficiency have exerted pressure on workforce performance, leadership efficacy, and employee retention. Verbal evidence, encompassing internal HR bulletins and ministerial statements, indicates apprehensions regarding employee morale, deficiencies in leadership communication, and turnover especially within SDEC, which has seen swift expansion and evolving organisational roles since its establishment. The Minister for Utility and

Telecommunications, in a public statement during WCIT IDECS 2023, underscored the necessity for "strong leadership and workforce resilience" to achieve Sarawak's digital objectives, indirectly alluding to emerging performance and management challenges.

These problems underscore the growing significance of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in GLC environments. Emotional intelligence, which includes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, is widely acknowledged as a crucial factor in enhancing individual and organisational performance in complex and dynamic settings. Employees with high emotional intelligence are more adept at adapting to change, resolving conflicts, and collaborating across functional and cultural boundaries skills that are essential in swiftly digitising public sector contexts. Goleman (1995) contended that effective leadership relies more on emotional intelligence than cognitive ability, a perspective supported by later research emphasising emotional intelligence as essential for effective decision-making, communication, and adaptation.

The quality of connections between leaders and subordinates, as defined by Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, is essential in influencing employee engagement, commitment, and performance. High-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships, defined by trust, respect, and transparent communication, can mitigate the adverse impacts of organisational uncertainty and enhance performance in critical projects typical of digital transformation initiatives. Inconsistent leadership strategies, combined with the transitional characteristics of numerous GLCs, frequently lead to diminished LMX quality, therefore causing employee disengagement and decreased productivity.

In Sarawak, where collectivist cultural beliefs and hierarchical work systems are entrenched, the interaction between emotional intelligence (EI) and leader-member

exchange (LMX) may have unique consequences for job performance. Employees are likely to react variably to leadership depending on perceived relationship equity, cultural norms, and emotional signals. Comprehending how these psychological and relational aspects influence performance within SAINS and SDEC is crucial, particularly as both organisations experience swift digital transformation and workforce reconfiguration.

However, empirical research in this domain, especially within Southeast Asian or Malaysian GLC contexts continues to be scarce. Most current research on Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) predominantly focusses on Western organisational environments, failing to account for the cultural and structural variances that influence employee behaviour in Malaysian Government-Linked Companies. Considering the strategic significance of SAINS and SDEC in realising the state's digital vision, along with the urgent necessity to enhance internal capacities and workforce performance, there is a critical requirement for contextually relevant research on emotional and relational dynamics in the workplace.

This study intends to examine the association between emotional intelligence and work performance, while exploring the moderating influence of leader-member interchange within the distinct socio-organizational setting of SAINS and SDEC. This study, grounded in Sarawak's digital transformation agenda and the changing dynamics of public sector leadership, aims to deliver practical insights into the impact of psychological and relational constructs on performance in Malaysian Government-Linked Companies (GLCs), and how these can be utilised to enhance talent management and organisational resilience.

1.1.1 Job Performance in Malaysia Scenario

In the current intricate, volatile, and highly competitive landscape, organizations are increasingly prioritising efficiency and effectiveness (Jnaneswar & Ranjit, 2022). According to Vietor (2007), Government-Linked Companies (GLC) exert a certain degree of influence and movement on the Malaysian economy. The Malaysian government, via its established Government-Linked Corporation (GLC), has obtained significant ownership stakes in several Malaysian enterprises, notably those that relate to the provision which consist of utilities, products, and services to members of the public. This strategic move aims to align with Malaysia's strategic ambitions, address social needs, and assure a sustainable future in the face of global difficulties.

The GLCs in Malaysia serve as an instrument of strategy for the government to efficiently govern its economic performance and ensure an equitable socioeconomic environment. This includes considering the country's multi-racial composition, political issues, education, and social stability. The 2023 Malaysia Productivity Report released by the Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPR) emphasized in the year 2022, Malaysia exhibited a productivity rebound that exceeded initial projections, with a growth rate of 5.4 percent and a per capita income of RM95,628. The production performance of Malaysia showed a notable level of strength, exceeding that of countries such as Thailand and Indonesia. Although Malaysia has experienced above-average productivity development as well as demonstrated significant improvement, it has developed slightly slower than certain regional competitors such as Vietnam, Taiwan, and Singapore.

Job performance challenges in Malaysia's Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) are driven by various variables, one of which is the implementation of performance

management systems (PMS) that might not adequately align with organizational operations. The most essential purpose in the GLC Transformation Programme was to put in place a new habit within the organization. However, these activities frequently became habitual and lost their connection to tangible enhancements in performance. The absence of robust executive endorsement, adequate financial resources, and technical support has resulted in resistance and superficial acceptance of reforms, impeding significant transformation of the organizational culture. The dissonance between performance management systems and organizational activities can frequently result in the development of regular processes for evaluating employee performance, which lack synergy with broader organizational objectives (Johari et. al, 2019).

1.1.2 Emotional Intelligence and Job Performances

Emotional intelligence (EI) can effectively mitigate these performance difficulties. It includes the capability to identify, comprehend, and adjust one's personal emotions and the emotions of everyone else. Within the realm of GLCs, executives who holds a significant level of EI have the ability to facilitate communication, cultivate a positive work atmosphere, and boost employee engagement and motivation. As a result, this may foster improved collaboration, effective resolution of conflicts, and enhanced overall job performance. Introducing EI training and development programs can assist employees and leaders in cultivating these essential talents, hence enhancing the efficiency and adaptability of the organizational culture.

Sarawak has taken a significant step in order to assure sustainable economic advancement. The Sarawak Government has undertaken a significant measure by elevating the State's economic development strategy to a higher level. Specifically, by establishing to

the citizens of Sarawak the worldwide lucrative phenomenon known as the Digital Economy.

The Sarawak Digital Economy (SDE) represents the contemporary economic agenda of the State, alongside the objective of aligning the local society with the prevailing worldwide economic pattern of digitalization. According to the State Service Modernisation Unit (2017), the Sarawak Digital Economy programs aim to facilitate the community at large in leveraging and enhancing the economic prospects presented by the digital realm.

In the pursuit of the SDE goal, the establishment of robust Government-Linked Companies is imperative for the advancement of the state and the provision of services to the local populace. The local entities under investigation in this research pertain primarily to the Sarawak Information Systems Sdn.Bhd. (SAINS) and Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation (SDEC) as they have a direct role in the execution for the coordination of diverse digital economic activities, such as the establishment of facilities to facilitate the growth, exploration of business prospects for local youth entrepreneurs within the digital economy and telecommunication infrastructure projects. GLCs play a crucial part in the overall economy of Sarawak, serving as the primary service providers in the region.

SAINS and SDEC have been pivotal in advancing Sarawak's digital transformation initiative, each fulfilling unique but synergistic functions. Comprehending their projects offers critical insight into the obstacles and operational dynamics they encounter as digital facilitators within the state's overarching economic transformation agenda.

SAINS, the premier ICT systems integrator and solutions provider in the state, has concentrated on enterprise-level digitalisation initiatives within the Sarawak Government and public sector agencies. It is essential for the construction and maintenance of fundamental systems, including the state's financial management systems, human resources

systems, and the eLASIS land information system. SAINS has spearheaded significant digital governance initiatives, notably the creation of the Sarawak ID a unified digital identification facilitating effortless access to government services. Its profound engagement in legacy system integration, data protection, and user adoption across departments underscores its strategic significance. Nonetheless, these also pose considerable obstacles, including addressing opposition to change, modernising obsolete infrastructure, and maintaining interoperability among silos.

While SDEC, designated as the primary executing agency for Sarawak's digital economy blueprint, has led projects aimed at augmenting digital infrastructure, improving digital inclusion, and promoting innovation across multiple industries. A prominent initiative is the deployment of high-speed broadband in rural and underserved regions via programs like the Sarawak Linking Urban, Rural and Nation (SALURAN) and the Points of Presence (PoP) project. These projects seek to diminish the digital gap and facilitate fair access to online services, encompassing education, healthcare, and e-commerce. SDEC has also implemented talent development programs, like the Digital Tech Industry Training and eUsahawan projects, aimed at cultivating a technologically proficient workforce and empowering digital entrepreneurs. These initiatives demonstrate the organization's dedication to socio-economic advancement via technology while also underscoring the operational intricacies of implementing and maintaining infrastructure across a geographically extensive and varied area.

SAINS and SDEC represent dual facets of Sarawak's digital transformation: SDEC emphasises external connectivity and economic engagement, while SAINS concentrates on enhancing governmental efficiency and service provision. The interaction among these missions uncovers a wider array of dynamics harmonizing public-private collaboration,

merging old systems with contemporary digital platforms, and fostering digital literacy throughout society that are essential for comprehending their responsibilities, problems, and impact.

According to the Sarawak Digital Economy Blueprint 2030 (EPU Sarawak, 2023) in the past five years, significant investments have been made by both the Sarawak and Federal Governments in telecommunications infrastructure with the aim of ensuring connection for the whole population of Sarawak. At now, the coverage rate is at 66.48% and is projected to increase to 93.87% by the conclusion of 2023 through the implementation of several broadband programs such as SMART 600, JENDELA, Clawback, and others. This momentum of achievement by our state GLC's are crucial and this research will delve into how EI and LMX may influence the job performance of employees in the GLC's

1.2 Problem Statement

As per records by the Ministry of Finance (MOF), Malaysia's economy activity experienced a 3% growth in the last quarter of 2023, amid a difficult foreign environment. This growth was driven by a strong demand from consumers which increased by 5.2% in Q4 2023 (compared to 4.8% in Q3 2023). Thus, soften the 3.2% decrease in Malaysia's commerce, as exports weakened as a result of a decrease in global needs. Hence, the performance of businesses domestically plays a pivotal part in the input to Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The competitive business landscape is becoming increasingly complex, with external pressures and internal demands influencing the performance of organizations. Government Linked Companies (GLCs) like Sarawak Information Systems (SAINS) and Sarawak Digital Economy Corporation (SDEC) play a pivotal role in the economic progress of Sarawak. Their success depends largely on employee job performance, which is a critical determinant

of organizational productivity and effectiveness (Roy & Tiwari, 2019). Various factors influence employee job performance, as emphasized by Omar et al. (2020), one of the key factors affecting employee performance is emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions (Khassawneh et al., 2022).

In today's environment, organizations frequently prioritize their own success at the expense of considering the various elements that impact employee job performance (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). Omar et al. (2020) highlighted that workers job performance is influenced by elements such as employee accomplishments, acknowledgment, and the nature of the task. According to Wen et al. (2019), when organizations consistently evaluate and critique the way employees communicate and engage with the individuals they provide, there is a decrease in workers' job performance. As claimed by Sultana et al. (2020), the accomplishment or failure of a retail organization can be influenced by the performance of its personnel.

Despite the recognized importance of EI, there is limited understanding of its role in driving job performance within SAINS and SDEC. Research by Zainal et al. (2017) highlights how emotional intelligence can significantly influence job performance, particularly in product and service industries. However, the specific impact of EI on the performance of employees in Sarawak's GLCs has not been thoroughly investigated. This knowledge gap is critical because emotional intelligence has the potential to enhance employee engagement, communication, leadership effectiveness, and organizational outcomes.

The existence of this gap in the existing body of literature is of particular significance due to the distinct organizational cultures and leadership dynamics present within these

entities. These factors have the potential to impact the affiliation between EI and job performance. Job performance represents a crucial aspect that enhances organizational effectiveness and productivity, since it directly impacts the results at the organizational scale (Wang and Chen, 2020). The researchers' growing attention has focused upon the factors that influence employee performance, including motivation from within (Tran et al., 2021), employee innovation (Pattnaik and Sahoo, 2021), and leadership (Jang et al., 2022). However, the relationship between employees' performance and its impact on different results remains an issue that academics have never adequately explored (Ahmed et al., 2021).

In addition to the underexplored relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance, the moderating role of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) the quality of the relationship between leaders and employees has also been overlooked in the context of these organizations (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX theory emphasizes the importance of leader-subordinate relationships in achieving positive organizational outcomes, yet its interaction with EI in shaping employee performance in SAINS and SDEC remains an under-researched area.

The absence of empirical studies focusing on the link between emotional intelligence, LMX, and job performance within Sarawak's GLCs presents a significant gap in the current literature. Given the distinct organizational culture and leadership dynamics within these entities, understanding the role of EI could offer valuable insights into improving leadership strategies and enhancing employee productivity.

Therefore, to address this gap the primary objective of this research is to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on job performance within SAINS and SDEC. The research will specifically concentrate on exploring the moderating effect of Leader Member Exchange. The research aims to fill this gap by making a valuable contribution to the wider

conversation on how emotional intelligence may be applied to improve work performance, particularly in the distinct cultural and organizational settings of SAINS and SDEC.

1.3 Research Questions

The present study of the research questions is to examine the impact of emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange on the employee's job performance in SAINS and SDEC.

- i. Does emotional intelligence (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management) influence the employees' job performance) in SAINS and SDEC, considering that workplace performance may be shaped by perceived reciprocal relationships?
- ii. Does the quality of leader-member exchange moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of SAINS and SDEC, particularly in how individuals interpret and fulfill their roles based on the quality of their interactions with supervisors?

This study employs a quantitative research technique, utilising a structured questionnaire survey as the principal instrument for data collecting to address the specified research questions. The quantitative method is suitable for systematically analysing the correlations between dimensions of emotional intelligence (EI) including self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management towards employee job performance within the organisational frameworks of SAINS and SDEC.

1.4 Research Objectives

The specific objectives are as follows:

- i. To identify the relationship of emotional intelligence (such as self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management) on job performance in an organization.
- ii. To examine the moderating impact of leader-member exchange on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in an organization.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

The key terms used in this research will be discussed in this section.

- i. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence pertains to an individual's level of emotional, volitional, and resilience capacities (Dhani & Sharma, 2016).

- ii. Self-Awareness

Self-awareness refers to the cognitive capability to recognize oneself with certainty (Eurich, 2018), so enabling individuals to make themselves the focal point of their own attention.

- iii. Social Awareness

Social awareness refers to the ability to understand and conform to societal norms and behaviors. An individual who possesses empathy is characterized by their social awareness of the feelings and worries of others. Social awareness involves the capacity to identify and understand the experiences and emotions of people from various origins and societies (Huynh, 2018).

iv. Self-Management

Self-management pertains to the actions and habits that a person must take in order to achieve the desired transformation in their personal life and professional environment (Alsemgeest et al, 2017).

v. Relationship Management

According to Baloch et al (2014), relationship management comprise an area of competences, including fundamental social skills, the capacity to analyze and influence the emotions and behaviors of other people as well, and being able to elicit appropriate reactions in exchange.

vi. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is a leadership method that focuses on the connection involving subordinates (members) and their closest superiors (leaders). LMX refers to the variables that might help preserve relationships inside an organization (Terpstra-Tong et al., 2020).

vii. Job Performance

Job performance refers to the outcome of an employee's achievements, efficiency, or documented progress in relation to the organization's objectives throughout a specific time frame (Tyofyan et al 2022).

viii. Task Performance

Task performance could be assessed based on communication aspects, task abilities, dedication and action, problem-solving skills, teamwork and preparedness. This statement plainly indicates that all occupations necessitate their workers to establish connections and collaborate with employers,

consumers, or colleagues who are situated outside the organization (Cleveland et al., 2019).

ix. Contextual Performance

Contextual performance refers to a range of particular tasks required in employment, including social help, consciousness, and general organizational support (Cleveland et al., 2019).

1.6 Significance of Study

This study offers both practical and theoretical contributions, particularly within the context of Sarawak's Government-Linked Companies (GLCs), such as SAINS and SDEC, which are at the forefront of the state's digital transformation under initiatives like the Post COVID-19 Development Strategy (PCDS) 2030.

From a practical perspective, the study directly responds to critical organizational challenges faced by these GLCs, including rapid restructuring, evolving digital demands, and growing concerns over staff morale, performance, and retention. These challenges have been highlighted through public statements and ministerial speeches, underscoring the increasing pressure on leadership and human capital management amidst ongoing technological shifts. The study's findings demonstrate the significant influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on job performance, while also examining the role of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) as a moderating factor. These insights present strategic pathways for organizations to strengthen leadership effectiveness and workforce capability during digital transitions.

In this regard, the findings provide actionable recommendations for human resource practitioners and policymakers. Specifically, they highlight the importance of integrating EI competencies into recruitment strategies, performance evaluation systems, and leadership

development programs. Tailored EI training for both leaders and employees can improve workplace engagement, communication, and adaptability—critical attributes for GLCs navigating complex digital transformations. Moreover, enhancing LMX quality can lead to more cohesive, trusting, and high-performing teams, addressing the relational dimensions of workforce productivity.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study addresses a notable gap in the literature by investigating the EI–job performance relationship within a Southeast Asian, public-sector digital context. While much of the extant literature on EI and LMX is grounded in Western or private-sector settings, limited attention has been given to culturally diverse and structurally complex organizations such as Malaysian GLCs. This study contributes to the academic discourse by situating these constructs within Sarawak’s unique socio-cultural and institutional landscape.

Additionally, the research refines the application of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Role Theory by demonstrating how specific EI dimensions—such as self-awareness and relationship management—interact with organizational norms rooted in collectivist and hierarchical cultures. The partial and inconsistent moderating effects of LMX challenge the presumed universality of its role in enhancing performance and suggest that its influence may vary depending on job roles, organizational structure, and cultural expectations.

Finally, the study contributes methodologically through its use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which allows for robust testing of complex relationships between latent variables. It also validates established EI and LMX measurement instruments within a Sarawakian GLC context, thereby enhancing their cross-cultural applicability and providing a strong foundation for future research in similar Southeast Asian public-sector environments.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study examines the connections between emotional intelligence, the moderating effect of leader-member exchange, and job performance within the specific context of Sarawak Government-Linked Companies (GLCs). This study examines the viewpoints of personnel affiliated with SAINS and SDEC which consist of 200 staff members which is located in Kuching. The present study posits that there exists a reciprocal relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance, with leader-member interchange serving as a moderating factor in this association. The attainment of elevated emotional intelligence is likely to yield improved job performance among individuals. Furthermore, the integration of emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange may produce synergistic effects that mutually enhance one another, ultimately resulting in enhanced work performance.

The study focused on the performance of middle level managers and executives of SAINS and SDEC. The Digital Economy programme in Sarawak is based on the State's objectives of mitigating socioeconomic disparities and fostering the growth of business and job prospects within its primary economic sectors and facilitators. As per the statement made by Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg, the Premier of Sarawak, the current economic trajectory in Sarawak holds significant importance. This change is crucial for enhancing the State's plans for development and expediting its economic expansion by effectively addressing the obstacles posed by the global economy (Bong, 2017). According to Sarawak Digital Economy Blueprint 2030, several innovation hubs have been constructed in Sarawak with the aim of fostering the growth of high-tech start-ups and spin-ins. Presently, Sarawak has a total of twenty-two (22) innovation hubs that are financed by both the government and enterprises. Additionally, there is a Digital Village in place to expedite the development of

startups. These developments have led to the establishment of twenty-six (26) high-tech start-ups and twenty-seven (27) high-tech research projects that are currently experiencing a rapid progression approaching commercialization. A total of 45 Digital Community Centres were constructed with the aim of facilitating community socio-economic development. As a result, almost 3,000 community-based initiatives were implemented, benefiting a substantial number of participants, totaling 80,000 individuals. The study focused on collecting data from mid-level management (managers and assistant managers) and executive level personnel to capture the viewpoints of employees in SAINS & SDEC.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study comprises five interrelated chapters, each enhancing the understanding of the relationship among emotional intelligence (EI), leader-member exchange (LMX), and job performance (JP) within the framework of Sarawak's Government-Linked Companies (GLCs), specifically SAINS and SDEC.

Chapter One presents the study by delineating the background and contextual difficulties that warrant this research. The document outlines the research problem, aims, and questions, subsequently detailing the significance and scope of the study. This chapter elucidates the theoretical framework and delineates the essential terminology, so laying the foundation for the investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and leader-member exchange (LMX) in relation to employee performance within digitally evolving government-linked companies (GLCs).

Chapter Two offers a critical analysis of the literature pertaining to the essential constructs. It examines the evolution and aspects of emotional intelligence, the characteristics and significance of leader-member exchange, and diverse viewpoints on job performance. This chapter utilises Social Exchange Theory and Role Theory to identify

research gaps, especially within the Southeast Asian public-sector digital setting, and concludes with the development of a conceptual framework and hypotheses to direct the study.

Chapter Three delineates the research technique utilised to evaluate the suggested framework. It delineates the quantitative research design, sampling methodology, instrument formulation, and data collection protocols. This chapter delineates the application of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) for data analysis and discusses validity, reliability, and ethical aspects, thereby assuring methodological rigour in the study.

In accordance with the methodology, Chapter Four delineates the data analysis and principal conclusions. The document encompasses the demographic profile of respondents, evaluation of the measuring model, and findings from the structural model. Each hypothesis is evaluated, and the results are analysed in connection with the research questions and the previously established theoretical framework. The findings offer empirical evidence about the influence of emotional intelligence on job performance and the moderating effect of leader-member exchange (LMX).

Chapter Five ultimately examines the ramifications of the findings from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The study elucidates its contribution to the current literature and leadership practices within public-sector Government-Linked Companies (GLCs), specifically regarding Sarawak's digital transformation. This chapter discusses the study's shortcomings and suggests multiple directions for future research, so providing a thorough conclusion that integrates all preceding chapters and strengthens the study's overall contribution.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The majority of studies establish a strong correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance. Emotional intelligence has been a prominent subject of research throughout the developing countries for many years. Most of the research was conducted in private and government sectors. There is a lack of extensive research on how emotional intelligence affects job performance, particularly in the context of leader-member interaction (LMX), specifically among employees in Sarawak Government-Linked Companies. In addition, previous studies did not include a moderator of leader-member exchange (LMX) to moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance in the setting of government-linked companies (GLC).

Hence, this study employed emotional intelligence, encompassing self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management, as the independent factors, while job performance served as the dependent variable. The variable LMX was introduced as a moderator in the link between emotional intelligence and job performance.

Firstly, this chapter focuses on elucidating the study models, including emotional intelligence, LMX, and job performance. The foundational theories of this work will be further examined. The following sections shall be presented: the theoretical framework, the existing gap in the literature, validation of the framework, the definition of variables, and construction of hypotheses.

2.2 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability of persons with specific traits to recognise and analyse emotions within themselves as well as others (Alimni et al 2022). EI has a strong correlation with the performance of employees and organization. Emotional skills are essential abilities that individuals must possess in order to reach higher levels of accomplishment in their line of work. These skills are acquired and perfected through the process of emotional thinking (Edward and Purba, 2020). According to Tuyakova et al (2022), EI spans a broad spectrum of aptitudes and capacities with the ability to recognise, categorise, and understand emotions, as well as the ability to express, control, and handle emotions.

EI can also be considered as a form of self-help. It refers to the capacity for emotional stability, ability to adapt, collaboration, and the ability to regulate one's thinking through procedures that produce appropriate behavior, which has a significant influence on both people and the organization. Both leaders and individuals with emotional intelligence are able to contribute to the goal of enhancing the team's overall performance (Khesroh et al., 2022).

Cuéllar-Molina et al., (2019) stated that EI can be understood as a collection of skills or interconnected capabilities that people develop to manage their emotions. While Abdo et al., (2022) primarily emphasizes that EI as an individual's behaviors and mindsets instead of their reserved nature and reflexivity. It also encompasses an employee's mentality, ability to use knowledge, and capacity to take effective activities that influence their emotional characteristics in both interpersonal and professional connections (Udimal et al., 2019). The application of EI reflection to the pertinence and suitability of constructs in work settings

resulted in a substantial decrease in stress levels, a reduction in the occurrence of roaming thoughts, and an enhancement in employee performance upon cognitive duties (Liu et al., 2022).

EI is crucial for motivating individuals to fully dedicate themselves to their profession. An individual's demeanor whereas work significantly influences the application of EI, leading to improved efficiency within the organization (Ahad et al., 2021). While according to Ali (2020), individuals, groups, and organizations have the potential to cultivate confidence, allegiance, devotion, efficiency, and innovation by effectively regulating their emotions.

According to Merida & Extremera (2017), research has shown that EI has a favorable impact on several aspects of a job. Therefore, it is recommended that both leaders and employees receive professional development that includes EI. Extensive research indicates that EI provides a valuable asset for educators, because it is linked to burnout prevention and psychological well-being. Currently, there is significant focus among specialists in the concept of emotional intelligence. It has been discovered that possessing a high IQ doesn't always translate to success or happiness in life. Emotions have a crucial role in decision-making and interpersonal relationships, suggesting the existence of another significant factor beyond cognitive capacities (Norboevich, 2020).

Emotional intelligence is a very valuable attribute in today's professional environment, crucial for individuals and organizations striving for exceptional performance and groundbreaking ideas. The literature study demonstrates that possessing high emotional intelligence (EI) has positive effects on both individual job performance and the overall organizational environment, leading to increased productivity and a more vibrant

atmosphere. Based on these findings, it is evident that organizational leaders and HR professionals should prioritize investing in EI development.

Furthermore, the incorporation of Emotional Intelligence (EI) into organizational strategy is not just a passing fad, but a proactive method of developing a workforce that is robust and flexible enough to tackle a wide range of issues. Further investigation is necessary to thoroughly examine the many effects of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in diverse industries and cultural settings. This will allow us to fully utilize its potential in improving both organizational success and employee well-being. This will reinforce the position of emotional intelligence as a fundamental aspect of modern human resource strategies and leadership approaches. The business's effectiveness and result are significantly influenced by the standard of job performance exhibited by workers (Leitão, Pereira, & Gonçalves, 2019). The study's conceptual framework incorporates determinants such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, which have an impact on job performance.

2.2.1 Self-Awareness

Self-awareness, as defined by Eurich (2017), means the capacity to perceive ourselves accurately and becoming the focus of our individual observation. According to the most recent analyses by Carden et al. (2022) and Rasheed et al. (2019), there is consensus that the term of self-awareness among scholars is being conceptualized in multiple ways.

Self-awareness involves introspection and reflection on our own qualities, maintaining this consciousness, and employing it throughout our actions and interactions with other people. Thought processes encompass contemplation, reflection, and self-absorbed behavior (Chon & Sitkin, 2021). The steps involved are labelled by authors as

contemplation, rumination, metacognition, and awareness. Reflective self-awareness refers to a constant ongoing process of attentively examining oneself, with a particular emphasis on intentional and equitable learning driven by fascination or a desire for understanding our own identity and capacity for growth (Itzhakov et al., 2018).

Self-awareness brings about numerous advantages. For instance, those who engage in self-awareness possess a heightened knowledge of their personal beliefs and a comprehensive comprehension of their own requirements. Additionally, they facilitate the monitoring of an individual's mood fluctuations and enable the recognition of the potential impact of those mood swings on other people. They actively solicit input from others to advance and aren't frightened by unpredictability, as they're open to exploring the unfamiliar (Chow & Luzzi, 2019).

Self-awareness is a very useful characteristic that promotes greater personal understanding and more efficient social relationships. The literature unequivocally affirms that a highly cultivated sense of self-awareness not only amplifies personal comprehension but also strengthens interpersonal relationships. It enables individuals to negotiate intricate social contexts and synchronize their personal and professional lives with their genuine ideals and objectives.

Based on these observations, it is clear that promoting self-awareness should be a vital component of educational and professional development programs. Promoting the participation of individuals in reflective practices can result in a society that is more introspective, empathic, and adaptive. Future study should focus on investigating the pragmatic implications of self-awareness across different domains and societies in order to fully harness its capacity to enhance societal well-being and achievement. This will enhance

the recognition of self-awareness as a fundamental aspect of mental well-being and the efficiency of organizations.

2.2.2 Social Awareness

Social awareness refers to an individual capacity to perceive and acknowledge the existence of other individuals, as well as their ability to cultivate a sense of empathy for others (Lizein, 2023). This, in turn, demonstrates their capacity to empathize with others. The mentioned social awareness also coincides with the recognition of the challenges or hardships encountered by society. Individuals with empathetic abilities are more adept at discerning concealed social cues that show their understanding of others. Consequently, they are more inclined to accept alternative perspectives, exhibit sensitivity towards others' emotions, and actively pay attention to their viewpoints and interactions (Utami et al., 2017).

Social awareness involves the ability to effectively use respect, compassion, generosity, collaboration, motivation, self-regulation, social-emotional and emotional awareness. It also includes actively listening and interpreting nonverbal as well as verbal signals for negative emotions, such as anger and fear. Additionally, it entails assessing the confidence of others and utilizing this information to accomplish specific goals (Barinua et al., 2024).

Enhanced social awareness enables individuals to readily embrace alternative perspectives, demonstrate empathy towards others' emotions, and effectively engage in active listening while accepting divergent ideas. Social awareness may additionally foster stability and enhance societal harmony by adhering to social ideals and standards as guiding principles. Social awareness refers to an individual's complete understanding of their privileges and responsibilities within society. Every individual must cultivate social

awareness in their daily communal life. An effective approach to accomplish this objective is via cultivating social consciousness through the cultivation of empathy towards others. An effective approach to accomplish this can be achieved by cultivating social consciousness through fostering a profound understanding and compassion for others.

This social awareness will lead to the development of social competencies, which include the capacity to establish harmonious and fulfilling social connections, adjust to the social context, and resolve social challenges. It also involves the ability to cultivate ambitions and demonstrate oneself with qualities such as respect for others, independence, a sense of the meaning of life, discipline, and capability (Purwanti et al., 2015). Nevertheless, research findings indicate that the level of employee awareness direction, whether high or low, does not enhance the impact of input in predicting input replies among administrative service personnel (Zumria et al., 2019).

Developing social awareness is crucial for establishing significant and harmonious connections, both at an individual and societal level. It allows individuals to interact with empathy and respect, which are necessary for productive and fulfilling engagements. The literature emphasises the significance of cultivating social awareness to enhance the well-being of individuals and communities, boost communication, and support societal stability.

Based on these findings, it is clear that prioritising the promotion of social awareness is necessary in educational and professional environments. By incorporating social awareness training into curriculums and professional development programs, individuals can acquire the essential skills to interact effectively in their communities and workplaces.

To enhance the effectiveness of interventions and training programs, it is necessary to conduct additional research on the varying effects of social awareness in different

occupational domains and cultural settings. This will guarantee that social consciousness remains a constructive force in the ever-changing dynamics of contemporary societies and workplaces, promoting a more compassionate and comprehending global community.

2.2.3 Self-Management

According to Steyn and Staden (2018), self-management is a crucial skill for managers. It includes accepting responsibility for one's individual conduct and behavior. Another crucial point they made is that managers lacking strong self-management capabilities might have a detrimental impact on organizational performance. Self-management refers to the process of controlling and managing one's behaviors, thoughts, and emotions into alignment with one's desired objectives (Schweizer et al., 2020). While Opatha (2010) defines self-management as a purposeful and methodical effort to organize and regulate one's life in order to accomplish personal life objectives efficiently, without squandering resources, time, and energy. Moreover, he describes the term as "the comprehensive accumulation of knowledge, mindsets, skills, methods, and procedures that aid in the strategic management and regulation of one's valuable existence, with the aim of attaining personal aspirations and embodying exemplary personal attributes."

According to Antonopoulou et al. (2022) self-management refers to the mental and behavioral mechanisms that efficiently control one's emotions, feelings, and actions while also showing an innate capacity to adjust to changing external circumstances. While Goleman et al (1999) describes self-management as the ability to control and manage emotions, is a talent that is developed through self-awareness. Leaders as well as managers have the capability to establish an atmosphere characterized by trustworthiness and equality. The aspect of self-management is crucial for competitive purposes, since it operates in a setting where organizations are devalued, and work technology is rapidly evolving. Only

individuals who have achieved emotional mastery possess the ability to adjust and accommodate to these alterations. Self-management encompasses a complex framework that involves various aspects of both beneficial and detrimental adaptation, such as memory, focus, and inhibiting behavior (Astarlar, 2019).

Self-management is an essential ability for leaders and managers who aim to steer their organizations towards success in a competitive and continuously changing business environment. The research provides evidence that self-management not only improves individual leadership effectiveness but also has a substantial impact on organizational health and performance.

Organizations should give high importance to the cultivation of self-management talents among its leaders and managers. Targeted training programs that concentrate on emotional intelligence, resource management, and adaptable leadership skills can accomplish this. Additional research should investigate the precise effects of self-management training on various tiers of management and across diverse sectors to develop customized approaches that optimize leadership efficacy and organizational adaptability.

To summarize, in the face of technological breakthroughs and global competitiveness, self-management plays a crucial role in leadership for organizations. It continues to be a crucial factor in promoting a flexible, creative, and highly effective organizational culture.

2.2.4 Relationship Management

According to Oana et. al (2020), effective relationship management is crucial for fostering successful interpersonal relationships. Effective relationship management leads to improved employee performance. Certain managers struggle with managing interpersonal

relationships among staff. A manager who has excellent emotional intelligence (EI) will consistently handle relationships in the most effective manner. Leaders require the ability to effectively lead and cultivate successful relationships. This is essential as it enables them to connect with their people and interact with them in a meaningful manner.

Managers must possess the ability to cultivate relationships with employees in order to inspire and encourage them, alleviate work-related stress, garner their support for tasks, articulate and convey their goals, accomplish targets, and propel the organization as a whole to success (Popescu et al., 2016). Relationship management involves having a strong sense of self-awareness, effectively managing oneself, and being conscious of the various events and individuals involved in order to sustain beneficial relationships over an extended period of time (Arora et.al, 2010).

According to Kasturi (2018) relationship management skills make it simpler to meet the goals and targets of the organization, which leads to increased competitiveness. Moreover, Harris et al. (2022) emphasize that relationship management also promotes the manifestation and comprehension of emotions, hence fostering the development of emotional intelligence. For instance, individuals who possess exceptional relationship management skills are more proficient in understanding and sharing the feelings of others, skillfully handling disagreements, and offering valuable emotional assistance. These talents are essential aspects of emotional intelligence (Babatunde et al., 2023).

Effective relationship management is an essential ability for executives who aspire to steer their organizations towards triumph. In contemporary collaborative work contexts, the skill of proficiently handling relationships is essential. This is because the emotional dynamics of teams have a substantial impact on both productivity and morale. Organizations

should allocate resources towards training programs that bolster leaders' emotional intelligence and aptitude in managing relationships. This program would provide leaders with the essential skills to comprehensively comprehend and proficiently handle both their own emotions and the emotions of their teams.

Additional investigation is necessary to delve into the precise tactics by which relationship management impacts various facets of organizational performance, including innovation, employee retention, and customer happiness. Gaining insight into these dynamics can assist in improving leadership training programs and organizational policies to cultivate cultures where proficient relationship management is a fundamental skill. As organizations face intricate interpersonal dynamics and difficult market conditions, the importance of talented relationship managers becomes increasingly crucial. Their capacity to promote comprehension and cooperation can result in enduring competitive benefits and a more robust organizational culture.

2.3 Job Performance

Job performance is often defined as an assessment of how an employee's actions either helped or hindered the organization in achieving its objectives (Badrinarayan Shankar Pawar, 2019). If employees demonstrate exemplary performance and fulfil every requirement, the organization is going to be content to accept the employees' performance, as evaluated by the established standards for success in performance. The assessment evaluates various factors, including the employee's adaptability to their work environment and adherence to work processes, as well as the standard of the product or service delivered (Kundariyah et al., 2021).

According to Chen and Guo (2020), job performance refers to the actions that individuals execute within the workplace. While Malureanu et. al (2021) defined that work or job performance refers to any systematic manner in how workers effectively use an organization's resources to convert inputs become final goods. Individuals' job performance is heavily influenced by their leadership characteristics, expertise, and abilities. According to MacCann et al. (2020), individuals who have predetermined goals tend to succeed more than those who do not. The concepts of "intrinsic and extrinsic motivations" are factors that precede "job performance and satisfaction" (Yusuf, 2021). Removing extrinsic motivators from organizations may lead to a long-term decline in job performance. An effective leader fosters intrinsic motivation among employees, leading to a substantial increase in their level of efficiency and contributing to the long-term financial stability and sustainability of the organization (Zeng et al., 2022).

Performance is sometimes defined as a concept that represents the anticipated value comprising a series of individual actions during regular circumstances (Nyathi and Kekwaletswe, 2022). Put simply, this refers to (1) the execution of certain actions that were already predetermined, and (2) the behavioral traits associated with performance that are anticipated by the organization. Nyathi and Kekwaletswe further emphasized that performance could be categorized into two distinct groups: task-specific and context-specific. Performance is defined as the execution of activities that are specific to a job, mostly influenced by abilities and behaviors linked to the function, and to a certain degree by official job specifications.

However, it is important to note that success in most organizations can only be evaluated within a specific environment. Factors such as motivation as well as personality play a significant effect in determining extra role behavior, which is frequently not

acknowledged by formal incentive systems or indirectly by management (Meriläinen et al 2019).

Employee performance is a complex concept that is essential for the success of any organization. It encompasses not just the performance of specific work tasks, but also includes larger contributions that improve the overall organizational atmosphere and culture. Accurately evaluating performance requires acknowledging both the measurable outcomes and the intangible qualities, such as motivation and behaviors outside the assigned function.

Organizations should aim to create performance evaluation systems that recognize and provide incentives for a diverse array of employee contributions. This encompasses not just accomplishments related to specific tasks, but also behaviors that are tailored to the individual circumstances and contribute to a happy and efficient work atmosphere. Furthermore, it is crucial to ensure that training and development programs are synchronized to assist staff in improving both forms of performance. Additional research is required to investigate the interaction between various performance criteria and the outcomes of an organization. Gaining insight into these relationships helps enhance the optimization of performance management systems to more effectively correspond with ever-changing organizational objectives and the overall welfare of employees.

Hence, adopting a comprehensive method to comprehending and handling employee performance can result in improved organizational tactics, heightened employee contentment, and superior overall performance. Organizations can enhance their support for employees and achieve strategic objectives by acknowledging the intricate nature of performance and adjusting management strategies accordingly.

2.3.1 Task Performance

Task performance refers to the level of quality and amount of work that is expected from employees based on the fundamental responsibilities outlined in their job descriptions (Aggarwal et al., 2020). This is a scenario that involves the primary elements of a task, which is performed by the worker and overseen by the management. Put simply, it refers to a scenario where the person carries out their primary job responsibilities and associated behaviors (Nemteanu et al., 2021; Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021).

According to Arwab et al. (2022) the employees' behaviors facilitate the execution of technical tasks in the output phase. Task performance behaviors encompass planning, organization, prioritization, accountability, and a focus on achieving results efficiently. While Jonsson et al. (2021) emphasize that task performance has a crucial role in attaining both personal and organizational outcomes.

Assessing employee performance and managing organizations requires a focus on task performance. It has a direct impact on the productivity and efficiency of an organization by ensuring that personnel are efficiently carrying out their assigned responsibilities. Task performance at high levels not only demonstrates individual ability but also plays a vital role in accomplishing broader organizational objectives.

Organizations can prioritise improving task performance by implementing focused training programs, allocating resources effectively, and setting clear and quantifiable objectives. In addition, cultivating a conducive atmosphere that promotes responsibility and the act of assigning priorities can enhance job execution. Additional investigation should examine the correlation between task performance and other aspects of employee performance, such as contextual performance and adaptable performance. Gaining insight

into these relationships will enable organizations to create more holistic performance management systems.

To summarise, in the pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness, it is crucial to emphasize the significance of optimising task performance. Organizations may guarantee that their staff is both productive and in line with the strategic objectives of the business by prioritizing the fundamental aspects of task performance. Ensuring this congruence is essential for achieving long-term success and gaining a competitive edge in the ever-changing corporate landscape of today.

2.3.2 Contextual Performance

According to Díaz-Vilela et al. (2015), contextual performance refers to the behaviors exhibited by workers that go beyond what is required by their assigned duties while contributing to the successful completion of basic tasks. It guarantees the advancement of the psychological and social atmosphere within the organization (Aboagye et al., 2022). Put simply, it pertains towards the additional role performance of voluntary actions that assist the situation (Palenzuela et al., 2019).

Even though there's a vague differentiation between contextual performance and task performance, task performance refers to acts that are specifically related to tasks outlined by the organization, whereas contextual performance generally comprises steps aimed at enhancing task performance (Cleveland, 2019). Contextual performance refers to voluntary behavior that supports the organization, regardless of whether it does not meet an essential component of the function. It is an approach of social transformation centered around individuals choosing to act in favor of the organization (Erdilek Karabay et al., 2020).

Contextual performance refers to ethical conduct that promotes behaviors which include assisting others and cooperating, and are endorsed by the organization (Motowidlo et al., 1997). Voluntary engagement in work, provision of assistance to colleagues, adherence to organizational policies and processes, and embracing and advocating for organizational objectives (Jiang et al., 2022).

Contextual performance is crucial for fostering a robust organizational culture. It includes a variety of voluntary, cooperative actions that, although not directly related to specific job duties, are crucial in improving the efficiency and unity of the workplace. These behaviors enhance the supportive, engaging, and productive nature of the organizational environment.

Organizations should aim to develop a culture that acknowledges and incentivizes contextual performance. This can be accomplished by implementing leadership that exemplifies these behaviors, establishing systems that recognise and reward them, and implementing training programs that highlight the significance of voluntary contributions to the success of the organization. Additional investigation is needed to examine efficient approaches for incorporating contextual performance into conventional performance management systems and assessing its influence on organizational results. Organizations can improve their flexibility, employee satisfaction, and competitive advantage by comprehending and utilizing the complete range of employee behaviors.

To summarise, contextual performance is a potent element of organizational behavior that fosters a cooperative and nurturing work environment. Identifying and promoting these behaviors can result in substantial advantages for both individuals and the organization as a whole.

2.4 Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

LMX describes a scenario in which a leader cultivates interpersonal relationships with subordinates, resulting in reciprocal impact and an agreement of the subordinate's role across the organisation (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). LMX clarifies the relationship between leaders and their subordinates within a unit of organizational operations (Regts, Molleman, & van de Brake, 2019). The expert viewpoint above clarifies how leaders sometimes cultivate unique trade relationships with employees. A LMX denotes the interaction between leaders and subordinates within an organisational unit. Control over the desired outcomes of employees is attained via superior leader-member exchange. These outcomes encompass engaging and enjoyable tasks, enhanced distribution of responsibility and authority, improved knowledge dissemination, involvement in almost all of the leader's actions, real rewards (such as salary increments, distinctive perks, encouragement, personal recognition, and career facilitation for employees), and professional facilitation for employees (Arrasyid, Amaliyah, & Pandin, 2019).

According to Li Li et al (2022), the connection established between each employee with the leader differs from one individual to another. Alternative perspectives (Wynendaele et al., 2021) assert that Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) pertains to work-related behaviours, emphasising admiration for leaders' abilities and expertise, mutual loyalty, and personal affinity.

According to Shaalan et. al, (2019) the association between LMX (Leader-Member Exchange) and employee performance is attributed to the positive rapport between superiors and subordinates, characterized by mutual trust. This relationship results in a notable and beneficial impact on employee performance. A leader-member exchange connection of outstanding quality results in leaders perceiving workers as "insiders," whereas individuals

in poor-quality exchange relationships appear as "outsiders." The insiders have stronger emotional bonds with the leaders, who respect and prioritise their well-being (Herman et al., 2018). Furthermore, individuals who are part of the organization were happier and more efficient if they adhere to the directives of their leaders, as well as they have the ability to effectively utilise their intellectual capabilities to successfully complete their assigned work. Nevertheless, the connections between the individuals who are not part of the group and the person in charge are established solely on the grounds of hierarchical authority, resulting in a strictly professional association. They are given less interaction with the leader and seldom receive further incentives or prospects from the leader (Hu et. al, 2018).

Leader-member exchange offers numerous advantages to its members and businesses in the shape of excellent connections, better organizational results, and a reduction in work-related issues. Martin (2019) asserts that establishing excellent connections between leaders and members leads to enhanced job behaviors, reduced staff turnover, superior performance ratings, increased opportunities for promotion, heightened organizational dedication, and greater employee support, all of which contribute to the achievements of the organization. The leader-member exchange concept posits that successful leadership behaviors and procedures occur when leaders and subordinates/followers are able to establish and cultivate healthy connections, hence reaping the advantages derived from such interactions (Birtch et al., 2016).

The LMX theory analyses the interactions between leaders and their members, taking into account the level of relationships, interaction, and an understanding of prejudices in order to optimise these relationships (Northouse, 2019). Within a team, individuals that share identical positions of authority are surrounded by comparable organizational resources. They work together on jobs and tend to compare the level of their interactions with their immediate

supervisor, where they also use details about their LMX quality to assess their corresponding status (Matta & Van Dyne, 2020).

The LMX theory provides valuable insights into how the quality of connections between leaders and members can significantly impact organizational performance. Establishing strong leader-member exchanges is essential for cultivating an inclusive and supportive work environment that enhances performance, satisfaction, and loyalty. Organizations should prioritise the training of leaders to cultivate and sustain high-caliber interactions with all subordinates, rather than only a limited group. This entails promoting transparent communication, guaranteeing equitable treatment, and offering equal prospects for advancement and progress.

Additional investigation should focus on the methods by which LMX quality can be consistently improved throughout an organization and the subsequent effects of these enhancements on long-term organizational success. Moreover, gaining a comprehensive grasp of the difficulties associated with achieving superior Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in varied and extensive organizational contexts could offer valuable perspectives for multinational corporations.

Ultimately, in the face of intricate and ever-changing business landscapes, the significance of robust leader-member connections remains of utmost relevance for organizations. The LMX theory emphasises the need of leaders fostering meaningful connections with each member of their team, which in turn improves both the individual and organizational outcomes. Through proactive management of these relationships, organizations can harness a potent tool for enhancing engagement, performance, and gaining a competitive edge.

2.4.1 Meta-Analytic and Systematic Review Evidence

A significant amount of meta-analytic and systematic review literature has consistently shown a favourable correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance across many sectors and contexts. Joseph and Newman (2010) presented a cascading model of emotional intelligence, emphasising that persons with elevated ability-based emotional intelligence typically excel in professions requiring social engagement and emotional labour. O'Boyle et al. (2011), in their extensive meta-analysis of 213 research including over 27,000 individuals, identified moderate to substantial relationships between emotional intelligence and work performance across self-report, mixed, and ability models. These findings highlight the significance of emotional intelligence in forecasting occupational success. Both researches recognised that contextual factors such as cultural background, industry type, and organisational environment can influence the intensity and direction of these correlations. Notwithstanding their methodological precision, most of these studies are situated within Western corporate contexts, resulting in restricted generalisability to government-affiliated firms in culturally different areas such as Sarawak.

LMX has been thoroughly examined through meta-analytic perspectives. Gerstner and Day (1997) shown that high-quality LMX interactions are significantly correlated with job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and role clarity. Dulebohn et al. (2012) subsequently broadened these findings by identifying antecedents including leader behaviours, follower traits, and contextual variables, thereby reinforcing the significance of LMX in relation to performance outcomes. Martin et al. (2016), in a review of 247 papers, highlighted that the quality of LMX interactions differs between cultures, with collectivist societies typically prioritising loyalty, respect, and relational harmony.

These evaluations substantiate the theoretical framework of LMX in this study, serving both as a performance predictor and as a construct intricately intertwined with socio-cultural norms. Significantly, a deficiency persists in meta-analytic research examining LMX as a moderator, especially in conjunction with emotional intelligence. Ilies, Nahrgang, and Morgeson (2007) proposed that LMX could function as a moderator that either mitigates or amplifies the influence of emotional or motivational characteristics on performance. Breevaart et al. (2015) conducted a comprehensive review of leader-follower dynamics and observed that the interplay between human characteristics such as emotional intelligence and relationship conceptions like leader-member exchange necessitates further empirical exploration, especially within multicultural, hierarchical organisational settings. This study investigates how LMX moderates the link between EI and work performance in a public-sector context with unique cultural traits.

Moreover, cultural context significantly influences the effects of both Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). Miao, Humphrey, and Qian (2017) concluded in their meta-analysis of emotional intelligence and employment outcomes that the impact of emotional intelligence is frequently more pronounced in collectivist societies that prioritise emotional regulation and group cohesion. Rockstuhl et al. (2012) discovered that the efficacy of both EI and LMX varies markedly according on national culture and power distance, underscoring the necessity for context-specific research.

These findings affirm the significance of undertaking this study in Sarawak, where ethnic diversity, collectivist beliefs, and a public service attitude are notably prominent. In conclusion, although prior meta-analyses and systematic reviews offer substantial empirical evidence for the influence of emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange on job performance, a significant research gap exists regarding their interaction and

contextual relevance in non-Western public-sector organisations. This study addresses the gap by providing both theoretical and practical insights into the emotional and relational dynamics of job performance inside Sarawak's Government-Linked Companies.

2.4.2 Contextual Evidence from Malaysia, Southeast Asia and the Digital Sector

Although worldwide research has yielded significant evidence regarding the connections among emotional intelligence, leader-member exchange, and job performance, an increasing volume of literature in Malaysia and Southeast Asia offers contextually pertinent insights which are essential to the current study. This research focusses on Sarawak's Government-Linked Companies (GLCs), specifically SAINS and SDEC, which function within the developing digital infrastructure sector. Therefore, it is essential to consider regionally specific studies that reflect the distinct cultural, organisational, and technological dynamics involved.

In Malaysia, academics have progressively acknowledged the significance of emotional intelligence in public sector contexts. Abdullah, Othman, and Ahmad (2018) determined that emotional intelligence, namely self-awareness and relationship management, strongly forecasted work success among Malaysian government officials. Supramaniam and Kuppusamy (2021) highlighted the significance of emotional intelligence in enhancing team performance and collaboration within the Malaysian public service, which exhibits structural parallels with government-linked companies such as SAINS and SDEC. These outcomes correspond with Wong and Law's (2002) creation of a culturally responsive emotional intelligence scale, which remains extensively utilised in Malaysian research contexts owing to its robust psychometric reliability and cultural relevance.

The digital transformation has brought new complications into emotional and interpersonal relationships in Malaysian workplaces, extending beyond the broad public sector. Ismail, Abdul Rahman, and Norsidah (2020) investigated ICT professionals in Malaysia and discovered that emotional intelligence strongly impacted job flexibility, essential in dynamic, technology-oriented settings. Saferdin et.al (2023) expanded this viewpoint by demonstrating that emotionally intelligent leaders in Malaysia's digital GLCs, which are structurally and functionally similar to SAINS and SDEC, are more adept at managing transformation, motivating teams, and ensuring sustainable performance. These studies are especially pertinent to Sarawak's digital agencies, which are spearheading extensive digitisation initiatives and encountering distinct obstacles such as cross-functional collaboration, digital interaction, and cultural plurality.

Research on leader-member interchange in Malaysia and Southeast Asia has established that cultural values, notably collectivism, respect for authority, and the significance of interpersonal harmony, profoundly affect employees' perceptions and reactions to leadership. Abdul Halim et al. (2018) discovered that superior LMX connections in the Malaysian public sector are significantly associated with affective commitment and extra-role performance. Cheong et al. (2016) underscored the cultural significance of trust and mutual respect in the development of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in Southeast Asia, noting that relational leadership frequently surpasses transactional approaches in effectiveness within these contexts. These observations are essential considering that Sarawak's multi-ethnic workforce encompasses varied relationship norms and expectations about leadership, many of those being grounded in communal rather than individualistic principles.

Furthermore, recent policy efforts like MyDIGITAL and Sarawak's Post-COVID Development Strategy (PCDS) 2030 have heightened the focus on digitalisation in public services and government-linked companies (GLCs). This technological transition entails structural and procedural modifications, as well as new emotional and relational expectations for employees and managers. Consequently, emotionally savvy leadership and robust LMX relationships are crucial in assisting employees throughout times of unpredictability, system implementation, and process restructuring. This study's emphasis on the impact of emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange on work performance in digital government-linked companies such as SAINS and SDEC is both pertinent and pressing.

This research is grounded in the socio-cultural and operational reality of its context by embracing literature from Malaysia and Southeast Asia, notably research involving the public sector and digital transformation. The results substantiate the study's assertion that emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange are significant not only across organisations but especially influential within digital public sector organisations confronting cultural diversity, hierarchical norms, and swift technological advancements.

2.5 Underlying Theories

This study integrates two (2) fundamental ideas to investigate the connections between emotional intelligence, leader-member exchange, and job performance. The section will provide a further discussion on social exchange theory.

2.5.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory (SET) is often regarded as a very reliable framework for comprehending workplace behavior (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Understanding people's reactions, which are crucial to grasp this highly important theoretical idea. Patterns

of messages in social exchange give rise to duties. These exchanges are mutually dependent and rely on the actions of another individual. It is a pervasive occurrence that is profoundly ingrained in every aspect of our lives. Exchanges aren't limited solely to organizations, but also encompass our friends, family, acquaintances, occurring in discreet ways. In their study, Cropanzano et al. (2017) provided a definition of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) as consisting of three components: (i) an action initiated by one individual towards another individual, (ii) a reciprocal reaction from the second individual, either in terms of attitude or behavior, and (iii) the establishment of a connection as a consequence of that action. Corporate relationships are growing more intricate in our present-day business environment (Chernyak-Hai and Rabenu, 2018). Therefore, it is necessary to revise the SET to align against the growing intricacy of organizational operations and worker behavior (Cooper-Thomas and Morrison, 2019).

In the research conducted by, Cropanzano et al. (2017) used the concept of "initiating action" to describe the actions of the initial person. They further categorised these actions into positive and negative ones. Positive instigating activities encompass justice (Cropanzano and Rupp, 2008) and organizational support (Riggle et al., 2009), whereas negative actions encompass disrespect (Pearson et al., 2005), inappropriate leadership (Tepper et al., 2009), and intimidation (Rayner and Keashly, 2005). The reaction received by the individual in question may be categorised as behavioral and relational. According to Cropanzano et al., (2017), effective exchanges ultimately convert an initial economic exchange towards a social exchange relationship.

According to Blau (1964), the Social Exchange Theory (SET) acknowledges the involvement of organizations and managers in creating employee obligations and fostering positive work attitudes. Social exchange refers to any ongoing interaction or favorable action

initiated by an organization with the expectation of receiving something reciprocal from its personnel (Gould-Williams and Davies, 2005). Academics concur that cultivating a sense of duty based on reciprocity and trust might enhance favorable results (Kim and Qu, 2020) and reduce intents to leave a job (Chang and Busser, 2020).

The new study framework employs Social Exchange Theory to examine the correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and job performance. Emotional Intelligence is defined as the independent factor that has an impact on job performance, which is considered the dependent factor. Based on the concepts of Social Exchange Theory, the presence or absence of Emotional Intelligence in workplace interactions can result in either employee pleasure or dissatisfaction. Subsequently, this feeling of contentment or discontentment has an impact on the results of job performance. More precisely, when leaders and coworkers exhibit elevated Emotional Intelligence - including qualities like empathy, self-control, and proficient communication - it cultivates a favorable atmosphere for exchanging ideas. The presence of a good environment improves job performance. On the other hand, a deficiency in Emotional Intelligence can lead to unfavorable social interactions that hinder job performance, highlighting the importance of Emotional Intelligence in influencing constructive employee engagements and overall job efficiency. This is particularly true when the organization lacks emotional intelligence. This study posits that emotional intelligence engenders a feeling of duty among employees to enhance their performance, as viewed within the framework of social exchange theory. Consequently, employees respond by exhibiting favorable work-related attitudes and behaviors that align with the organizational objectives. This can be further elucidated by stating that when organizations embrace specific methods such as relationship management and self-awareness, it can facilitate employees in enhancing their job performance.

2.5.2 Role Theory

Role theory plays an important part in comprehending the functions of leaders and members. The supervisor's responsibilities and the subordinate's ability to fulfil these expectations form the relational framework of the exchange activity. Based on role theory, workers may face stress due to contradictory and overwhelming work responsibilities, therefore can have a detrimental effect on their job performance (Liu et al., 2020; Parke et al., 2020).

According to Ritter et al. (2016), there are three primary categories of role stressors are role conflict, role overload, and role ambiguity. Role conflict involves the presence of contradictory assumptions among coworkers, that hinder one another and create difficulties in accomplishing tasks (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Role overload describes the perception among staff members that their roles are burdened with an excessive number of obligations or tasks. Role ambiguity refers to the situation where workers are unsure about the standards that have been established for them, leading to a lack of clarity and understanding about what is anticipated of them (Eatough et al., 2011).

While Graen and Scandura (1987) in their study, proposed a three-phase model for the formation of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). These phases include role taking, role creation, and role routinization. Supervisors evaluate the workers they supervise by assigning them different tasks in a sequence of role-playing scenarios. The extent to which employees adhere to work requirements and exhibit trustworthiness directly affects the sort of leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship they establish. The kind of LMX, in turn, influences the degree to whether the leader reciprocates by providing work-related assets including information, demanding tasks, and flexibility. Leaders and followers establish a role relationship characterized by mutual dependency within allocated and acknowledged

roles. The performance of followers in their roles significantly influences the development of this role-making mechanism (Dienesch and Linden, 1986).

In the current study, Role Theory is applied to explore the influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as independent variables on employee job performance, the dependent variable, with Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) serving as a moderating factor. Role Theory explains how employees' perceptions of their roles within the organization, influenced by their emotional intelligence, impact their job performance. This framework investigates how well employees understand and fulfill their roles based on their emotional intelligence capabilities, such as empathy, self-awareness, and emotional regulation.

Further, the study examines reactions when there is a discrepancy between expected and actual emotional behaviors, assessing how this misalignment affects job performance. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is introduced as a moderator in this relationship, proposing that the quality of the relationship between leaders and their members can either amplify or mitigate the effects of emotional intelligence on job performance. For instance, a high-quality LMX may enhance the positive impact of emotional intelligence by providing more support and resources, while a low-quality LMX might reduce this effect. The research aims to elucidate how these dynamics between emotional intelligence and leader-member relationships influence employees' attitudes and behaviors in delivering their job performance. Thus, Table 2.1 provides a concise overview of the underlying theories utilised in the current investigation.

Table 2.1: Summary of Underlying Theories

Variables	Social Exchange Theory	Role Theory
Self- Awareness	✓	
Social Awareness	✓	
Self-Management	✓	
Relationship Management	✓	
Job Performance	✓	
LMX		✓

2.6 Gaps in Literature

The primary objective of every human resource department is to optimise and enhance the job performance among its personnel, resulting in the best potential level of production. According to Shiqian (2018), numerous books and articles have discussed different aspects that are capable of being utilised to suggest and assess work success, including leadership style, organizational commitment, and self-efficacy. However, there is a scarcity of research efforts which have specifically examined the correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance in government-linked companies, particularly in Sarawak. Furthermore, according to Chin (2018) prior research on job performance has predominantly focused on the manufacturing business, the banking sector, and the education and training industry, examining the impact of job performance on workers.

No empirical research has been conducted to investigate the moderating role of LMX affecting the association between emotional intelligence and job performance, especially among government-linked companies. According to Liang (2017) in the past, scholars concentrated on comprehending the behavioral consequences of leader-member exchange, such as citizenship behavior. Nevertheless, researchers currently prioritise psychological

outcomes. This study examines the role of LMX as a moderator in the association between emotional intelligence and work performance in government-linked companies. LMX has a crucial role in enhancing the efficiency of emotional and communicative aspects, hence positively impacting employees' performance in the GLC. This study aims to establish a correlation between the progression of emotional intelligence and job performance through the use of LMX. Hence, the objective of this study is to establish a connection and ascertain whether the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) has a moderating effect on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance, as perceived by the employees.

2.7 Justification of the Study

According to the present theoretical paradigm, emotional intelligence is considered an independent variable, whereas job performance is considered a dependent variable. Emotional intelligence can significantly impact employee job performance and be utilised to develop effective tactics for improvement.

This study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. Emotional intelligence is treated as the independent variable, while job performance is considered the dependent variable. The past literature has shown that emotional intelligence has a significant and substantial impact on job performance. Furthermore, emotional intelligence is closely linked to favorable outcomes for companies, job satisfaction, and job performance (Marius & Mahmud, 2022).

Hence, this theoretical study establishes a connection between emotional intelligence and job performance. In addition, LMX serves as a moderator in the link between independent variables and the measured dependent variable.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1, depicted below, illustrates the conceptual structure of the present investigation, which comprises two primary variables and one moderator variable. The framework mentioned in Sections 2.2.1 to 2.2.4 focuses on emotional intelligence as the independent variables.

These variables include self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management. Section 2.3 focused on the dependent variable, job performance. Lastly, the moderator variable, LMX, influences the connection between emotional intelligence and job performance in the present study.

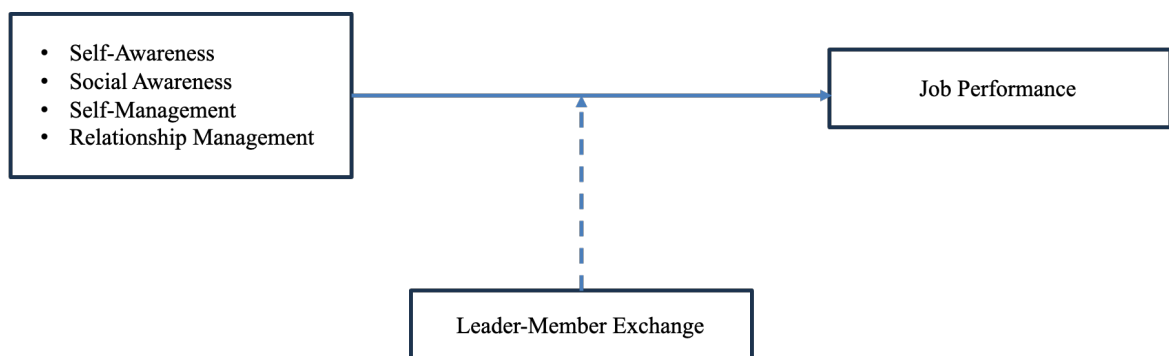


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

2.9 Development of Hypotheses

There are a total of 8 hypotheses in the suggested conceptual framework (Figure 2.2) that investigate the link between independent variables, moderator variables, and dependent variables.

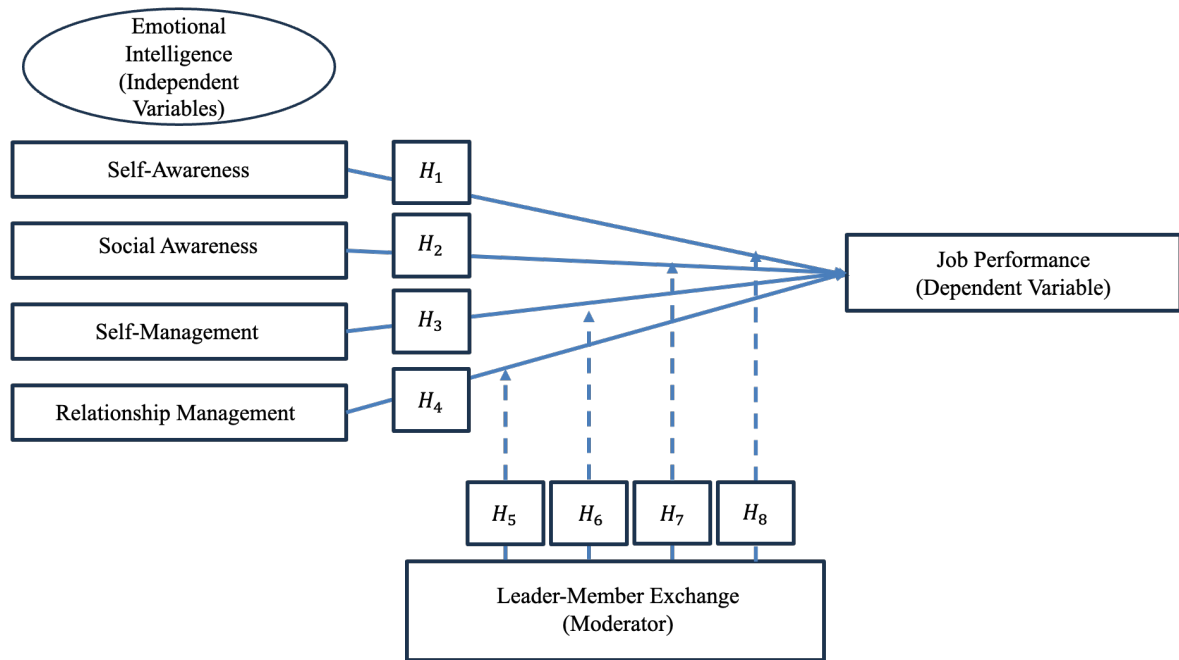


Figure 2.2: Proposed Model LMX Moderates on Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance (adapted from Kaplan and Norton 2005).

2.9.1 Self-Awareness and Job Performance

Walker et al. (2022) defines self-awareness as the process of comparing oneself through reflection and evaluating one's own actions and characteristics. While Rasheed et al. (2019) argue that self-awareness can be either circumstantial or temperamental. According to Kishkilev (2018), circumstantial self-awareness involves the inherent capacity of an individual to recognize their own inner characteristics and then implement the necessary changes to reduce any unpredictability or inconsistency. Newman and Nezlek (2019) argue that temperamental self-awareness can have both positive and negative outcomes. Negative self-perception focuses on negative feelings, despair, state of mind, vulnerability, and barriers to resolving social issues (Altan-Atalay et al., 2022).

On the other hand, Huggins et al. (2021) stated that self-awareness is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various ideas whereby the concept encompasses the processes of

comparing oneself, reflection, self-examination and repetitive. Individuals exhibit situational self-awareness, an internalized attribute that facilitates consistent and stable behavior (Carden, Jones, & Passmore, 2022). Individuals commonly engage in introspection to gain insight into their own thoughts and emotions, a process referred to as behavioral self-awareness. This procedure carries both harmful and beneficial implications (Adil & Kamal, 2020). Individuals who have a negative self-perception tend to concentrate on negative feelings, despair, mood, and frailty. As a result, it poses an obstacle in resolving societal issues (Gopinath, 2020).

The positive and negative outcomes of self-awareness possess significant impacts on job performance. A recent study suggests that over 90% of managing directors perceive a correlation between the office environment and the physical and mental well-being for those who work for them (Hall et al., 2019). Self-awareness is linked to significant results, including enhanced job performance and fulfilment (Budworth and Chummar, 2022), as well as improved business decision-making (Kim et al., 2020). Consequently, self-awareness improved the job performance of employees. The following hypothesis is put forward as previously mentioned:

H1: Self-awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

2.9.2 Social Awareness and Job Performance

When considering the influence of social awareness on the job performance of staff members, the extent of this impact will probably to have been determined by the duration of interpersonal interactions. This duration allows individuals to develop a deeper understanding of the individuals they communicate with and enables them to effectively engage with particular people in different circumstances. Therefore, the longer an employee

dedicates to the onboarding process, the higher their performance will be in carrying out daily activities. Alternatively, the connection will be focused solely on work (Victoroff and Boyatzis, 2012).

Social awareness refers to the set of skills that govern human interactions. These abilities are crucial for enhancing job efficiency and performance (Yu et al., 2022). Researchers argue that social awareness plays a crucial role in effectively handling and disciplining personnel, in addition to emotional intelligence (Idris et al., 2022). On the other hand, Zaman et al. (2019) argues that managers who are without social awareness might find it difficult to work together with employees and could fail to successfully lead their staff. According to Spade (2020), researchers argue that social awareness encompasses the fundamental abilities required for solving disputes, which are crucial for survivability and interpersonal interactions.

It has been argued that effective implementation of prior performance can have significant effects on both individuals and the workplace. Moreover, individuals who have strong social connections with their coworkers are more probable to exhibit excellent performance in contrast to those who are introverted or considered anti-social. It was considered that those who are socially aware have the capacity to seek guidance from experienced superiors or subordinates regarding job-related concerns. Consequently, this will inspire workers to eagerly pursue their tasks and engage with peers, so enhancing their own efficiency. In contrast, colleagues who are antisocial and solely concerned with their personal matters are less likely to achieve the same level of performance (Treadway et al, 2013). Social awareness can have an impact on the performance of employees. Therefore, the subsequent hypothesis is formulated as previously mentioned:

H2: Social awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

2.9.3 Self-Management and Job Performance

Based on a study conducted by Schumacher et al. (2020) in India, engaging in self-management has been found to enhance self-awareness and thus enhance a worker's job performance. The success and long-term viability of organizations rely on establishing a conducive climate that fosters individuals' self-management attributes, which are essential for job performance (Bakker & de-Vries, 2021). On the other hand, Bakker and Oerlemans (2019) propose that organizations can enhance employees' self-management attributes by clearly conveying their desires concerning dress rules, spoken language, and other behaviors. Companies should promote a culture where people are motivated to proactively take charge and be accountable for their actions (Wolters & Brady, 2021).

Mitchell et al. (2019) argue that companies should establish a supportive atmosphere in which workers can talk openly with no apprehension or censure. A setting of this nature is positively associated with employees' ability to regulate themselves and their job performance. Furthermore, supplying workers with the resources they need for their personal growth and offering constructive criticism helps improve their self-management skills and job performance. In addition to motivation, recognition and incentives contribute to the development of workers' self-control behaviors (Van-Hooft et. al., 2021).

In the framework of an organization, the primary activities of a manager are facilitating collaboration among employees in order to achieve specified desired outcomes (Stent and Staden, 2018). Implementing self-management practices among employees enhances the extent of commitment towards their task. Furthermore, the independent regulation of employees plays a significant role in the achievement of organizational

performance (Ghali et al., 2018). According to Alvernaz (2019), self-management support is highlighted as a means to develop self-awareness. This will help us accomplish our aims and objectives. By acquiring self-management skills, we can gain an understanding of how emotions and thoughts influence our actions. This will enable us to become better held accountable and capable of assessing our work and deciding upon the appropriate course of action. Self-management is crucial for an individual's professional achievement because it serves as a vital aspect within the behavioral psychology of performance elements, and this in return provides a significant influence in job performance, efficiency, and work (Hamdan, 2018). Therefore, the implementation of self-management resulted in enhanced job performance among employees. The following hypothesis is proposed, as noted earlier:

H3: Self-management has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

2.9.4 Relationship Management and Job Performance

Effective relationship management is a crucial component of job performance across various professional settings, encompassing the skills and strategies necessary for fostering positive interactions with colleagues, supervisors, and clients. These capabilities are fundamental to improving communication, enhancing teamwork, and increasing job satisfaction, ultimately leading to superior job performance.

One of the key impacts of proficient relationship management is the facilitation of clear and efficient communication among team members. This is vital for coordinating activities, resolving conflicts, and promoting a harmonious work environment. Research underscores that effective communication is directly linked with higher productivity and job satisfaction (Guerrero, et al., 2011). According to Deming (2017), financial analysts who possess superior relationship management are able to cultivate stronger relationships and

engage in more successful interactions with their peers. Relationship management has been proven to decrease the expenses associated with sharing knowledge. The decreased cost additionally enables the transmission of information and permits these social analyzers to obtain a greater amount of information from other sources. Improved relationship management can enhance analysts' ability to effectively communicate with management throughout business trips to locations, financial meetings, and individual phone conversations. Moreover, effective relationship management fosters trust and cooperation within teams. Teams characterized by strong social ties are more innovative and capable of efficiently resolving complex problems, as highlighted by Costa, Passos, & Bakker (2014). Hence, effective relationship management is crucial for all employees to optimise job performance. The subsequent hypothesis is suggested, as previously mentioned:

H4: Relationship management has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

2.9.5 The Moderating Effect of LMX

The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) idea offers a distinct perspective on how various interactions in the workplace impact employee outcomes. This hypothesis suggests that leaders establish diverse relationships with different members of their team, varying from high-quality to low-quality interactions. The fluctuations in Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) can greatly influence the correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and job performance. Eisenberger et al. (2010) found that there is a strong and positive correlation between LMX (leader-member exchange) and job performance and participation. This demonstrates that LMX exerts a direct impact on the performance of employees.

According to Kong et. al (2019), leaders' disposition varies towards different subordinates. The level of variation differs among employees (Kong, Xu, Zhou, & Yuan, 2019). The leader-member exchange paradigm posits that a leader maintains numerous dyadic ties. Research has shown that variables such as loyalty, reciprocal confidence, admiration, and responsibility contribute to the development of a mutually beneficial connection between leaders and subordinates (Pichler et al., 2019).

The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) idea posits that the caliber of the connection between a leader and an employee can have a substantial impact on how Emotional Intelligence (EI) manifests in job performance. A high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) is distinguished by the presence of mutual trust, respect, and obligation. Conversely, a low-quality LMX is characterized by the absence of these aspects, resulting in reduced personal support and limited prospects for professional growth.

In environments characterized by high LMX quality, the beneficial impacts of emotional intelligence on job performance are expected to be more prominent. Leaders that provide assistance and value to their employees can increase their motivation and engagement. Individuals with high emotional intelligence (EI) can successfully utilise their emotional talents in this supportive atmosphere, leading to improved performance outcomes. The research conducted by Rockstuhl et al. (2012) provides evidence that a high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) can enhance the positive influence of emotional intelligence (EI) on job performance. This is achieved by creating a favorable environment that allows emotional competences to flourish. On the other hand, in situations where the quality of leader-member exchange (LMX) is low, the positive effects of emotional intelligence (EI) on job performance may be limited. Employees may struggle to properly utilise their emotional talents if they lack the support and trust of their bosses. They may

encounter obstacles in acquiring essential resources or obtaining assistance for their endeavours, which can impede their capacity to excel, notwithstanding their high emotional intelligence.

Ongoing research is now investigating these processes. Amina et. al (2021) study highlighted that in settings characterized by high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX), emotional intelligence (EI) has a notably positive effect on work performance. The function of LMX in moderating the connection between EI and job performance emphasises the intricate nature of workplace dynamics and the significance of high-quality relationships in leadership. Organizations can optimise the emotional capabilities of their people and enhance job performance and overall organizational success by comprehending and improving the quality of leader-member exchange (LMX). As previously indicated, LMX was identified as a probable significant moderating factor in this investigation. It served as a mediator in the connections between emotional intelligence (such as self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management) and job success. The hypotheses presented in this study are grounded in the concept of LMX (leader-member exchange) moderating the impact of emotional intelligence on job performance are as follows:

H5: LMX moderates the relationship between self-awareness and job performance.

H6: LMX moderates the relationship between social awareness and job performance.

H7: LMX moderates the relationship between self-management and job performance.

H8: LMX moderates the relationship between relationship management and job performance.

2.10 Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review of emotional intelligence, leader-member exchange (LMX), and job performance. There are a total of four components of emotional intelligence which are being discussed: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management. Further discourse encompassed the moderator function of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in conjunction with job performance. In addition, this chapter also covers the underlying ideas, identifies gaps in the recent research, justifies the theoretical framework, and provides an explanation of variables. The research approach utilised in this study will be elaborated upon in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides additional clarity on the methodology employed in this research. This research aims to analyse the impact of emotional intelligence on the job performance of employees at government-linked companies in Sarawak. This section will focus on the research site, sampling approach survey instrument, data collection process, and statistical analysis methodologies that are going to be employed in this research.

3.2 Research Design

A study design serves as a crucial framework or strategy for conducting research. The document outlines the elements and approach that the researcher aimed to investigate (Rusli et al., 2014). This study will employ a quantitative survey to assess the connection between emotional intelligence and job performance, specifically within the digital sector of Sarawak Government Linked Companies. The researcher selected quantitative data due to its reliance on numerical data to tackle enquiries regarding who, how much, what, where, when, how many, and how.

Aliaga et. al (1998) elaborate in the idea by integrating it into quantitative research methodologies, that involve understanding a problem or phenomenon through numerical data and mathematical techniques, especially statistics. Creswell (2014) emphasises that addressing social research issues requires a specific methodology. For example, when the issue at hand requires pinpointing elements that influence a result, evaluating the success of a strategy, understanding the most reliable indicators of results, or examining a hypothesis

as well as rationale, the quantitative method is the best approach to take. Utilising quantitative research offers a variety of advantages, including:

- a. Researchers often depend on broad publicly available information in quantitative studies due to its perceived objectivity. When researchers step back from the everyday activities of the subjects they are examining, the potential for bias in data collection or analysis is significantly minimised (Daniel, 2016).
- b. The quantitative research findings can be applied to a broader audience and utilised in different settings. The reason for the change is that employing systematic methods for collecting and analysing data enables the inclusion of a larger sample size, resulting in greater accuracy and compatible outcomes (Xiong, 2022).
- c. Quantitative research facilitates effective data collecting and analysis. Bryman (2012) asserts that quantitative research approaches predominantly depend on data with numbers for analysis. Data is predominantly gathered by surveys and experiments, thereafter analysed using statistical and computational techniques to enhance efficiency and efficacy. Connolly (2007) demonstrates that data from computers can be analysed and utilised in educational research employing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. These technologies may diminish the time and effort researchers use on technical support.

3.3 Sampling Design and Procedures

Employing advanced, replicable data collection methods and meticulous sampling is crucial for formulating generalised hypotheses that result in insights or possess predictive capabilities (Johnson & Duberley, 2000).

3.3.1 Target Population

This research will be undertaken inside the Sarawak region. The focus of this study will be on employee from Government-linked companies (GLCs) which is SAINS and SDEC whereas both are within Sarawak where they play a crucial role in facilitating digital economy efforts through strategic collaborations, investments, and infrastructure enhancement. These GLCs promotes innovation and entrepreneurship in Sarawak's digital ecosystem by partnering with local startups and IT enterprises. In addition, these GLCs have the ability to allocate funds towards digital infrastructure initiatives, such as expanding broadband access and establishing data centers. These investments aim to enhance connectivity and support the growth of enterprises in the digital era. Moreover, these GLCs have the potential to support skills development initiatives and offer mentorship programs to prepare the people of Sarawak with the essential digital skills required for the future job market. By making coordinated and determined efforts, these GLCs may make a substantial contribution to the digital transformation of Sarawak. This will create a path for long-lasting economic development and prosperity (Economic Planning Unit, 2023).

The data will be collected from the mid management level (Managers and Assistant Managers) and executives (senior and junior level) from both organizations. These middle management workers and executives, who are in charge of certain departments or projects, can provide vital insights into the influence of emotional intelligence and LMX on their job performance inside their organization.

Several factors justified the decision to limit the study's sample size to these two government-linked companies (GLCs). These organizations are at the forefront of spearheading digitalization initiatives in Sarawak, playing a pivotal role in managing a

substantial portion of the region's data centers and serving as critical drivers in shaping the Sarawak digital economy agenda (Economic Planning Unit, 2023).

Secondly, restricting the attention to these two GLCs facilitates a more accurate and thorough examination of the topics being studied. This focused method enables a comprehensive comprehension of the companies' distinctive methods, operational dynamics, and corporate environments. The study improves the reliability and significance of its findings by reducing its scope, facilitating more precise comparisons and generalizations within the particular setting of the Sarawak digital economy sector.

3.3.2 Sampling Size

The sample size was established with Cohen's statistical power analysis method. The method utilises the interrelationships among the five variables essential for effective statistical inferences. Every relationship is contingent upon each of the four in any statistical model. Considering this, the requisite sample size for any specific statistical test can be determined by inputting values for the following four variables: (1) significance level, (2) effect size, (3) desired power, and (4) expected variance. The objective of determining the sample size through Cohen's statistical power analysis is to identify what qualifies as a statistically significant sample while remaining practical regarding time and resources. The risk of inconclusive inference resulting from a lack of respondents can be mitigated by enhancing the procedure for sampling. Conversely, maximised sampling transpires when an excess of information is collected above what is requisite for significant conclusions, resulting in the squandering of limited resources.

To guarantee representativeness in the purposive sampling technique, multiple strategic measures were executed. The total population consisted of 1,250 employees,

approximately 1,100 from SAINS and 150 from SDEC. Due to the varied composition of this workforce, it was crucial to obtain a broad spectrum of viewpoints to thoroughly assess the influence of emotional intelligence on employees' job performance. This method guaranteed that the sample represented the distinct organisational frameworks and workforce dynamics of both organisations.

Initially, explicit inclusion and exclusion parameters were formulated. The criteria for inclusion emphasise people with direct experience in team and project environments, since these individuals can offer pertinent and meaningful data related to the research issue. According to the exclusion criteria, personnel in interim or contract roles were disqualified. This aims to obtain more stable and long-term insights into emotional intelligence and its effects.

Due to the absence of comprehensive positioning data from HR departments, the survey was structured to guarantee geographical diversity via a self-reported demographic portion. This section contained a query requesting responders to specify their job title. This strategy enabled us to confirm post-data collection that our sample encompassed individuals from diverse positions, so ensuring it appropriately reflected the geographical dispersion of the population. Data was collected by distributing Google Forms to HR representatives from GLC, who subsequently shared the survey link with all employees. This approach guaranteed extensive reach, albeit participation was optional. To guarantee that only pertinent respondents continued with the survey, a filter question was incorporated: "Upon comprehending the information above, I hereby confirm my voluntary participation in this research." A precise definition of emotional intelligence was presented. If respondents replied "Yes," they proceeded to the following questions; if "No," the poll ended for them. This filter guaranteed that the data gathered was relevant to the study's aims.

The G*Power tool is utilised to determine the sample size through power analysis for this investigation, following the suggested parameters established by Memon et al. (2020). The selected statistical tests were "F tests" analysis and "Linear multiple regression: fixed model, R2 deviation from zero." The power analysis method is designated as "A-priori: Calculate necessary sample size based on α , power, and effect size." The effect size was designated as 0.15 (medium effect) and α as 0.05. The suggested power value is 0.80. Nonetheless, due to the individual unit of analysis in this study, the researcher opted for a power value of 0.95 with a little 0.05 error probability. This study's hypothesised model determined that the number of predictors is four. The analysis indicated that a sample size of 129 was necessary for the study. This study intended for a greater sample response rate to yield more robust results, therefore establishing a target of 200 respondents. The G*Power calculation and its setting are presented in Figure 3.1 below:

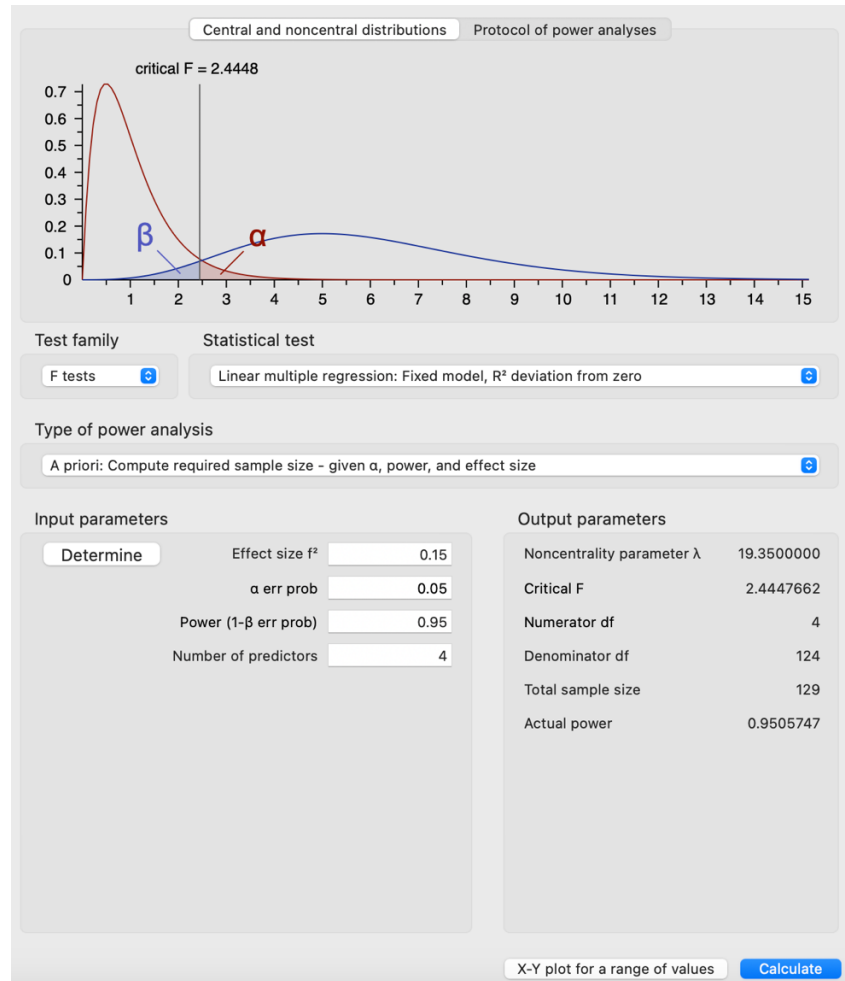


Figure 3.1: Results of G*Power Analysis

Considering that the response distribution is affected by voluntary involvement, it is prudent to distribute the questionnaires equitably amongst both organisations to guarantee fairness and representative sampling. This method recognises that participation rates may differ, yet it offers an equitable opportunity for both organisations to engage in the survey. Equitable distribution in survey sampling facilitates balanced representation and mitigates potential biases arising from nonresponse (Groves & Peytcheva, 2008). To mitigate typical technique bias and uphold the integrity and trustworthiness of acquired data, a key strategy involved safeguarding the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents. The study sought to mitigate social desirability bias and promote truthful and precise responses by

guaranteeing respondents that their answers would remain anonymous and confidential. This guarantee alleviated respondents' concerns over the traceability of their data, consequently fostering more accurate reporting.

3.4 Data Collection Process

The initial strategy was to utilize basic random sampling, a technique known for its neutrality and representativeness. The confidential nature of information possessed by government-affiliated enterprises posed a substantial barrier, as they were reluctant to disclose personnel names due to apprehensions regarding data security and employee privacy. In addressing these problems, the researcher engaged in transparent communication with the organizations, and following multiple talks, a consensus was achieved: purposive sampling was going to be utilized in lieu of conventional random sampling. Both SAINS and SDEC consented to disseminate the Google link, encouraging staff to participate on a voluntary basis. This led to self-selection bias, while it honored the privacy concerns of the organizations and the autonomy of prospective respondents.

Purposive sampling seeks to incorporate specific categories of instances within the final collection of the research. A purposive sample technique is employed in accordance with the study's aims and objectives, as it is posited that specific individuals may possess distinct and significant viewpoints on the relevant ideas and topics (Mason, 2017; Robinson, 2013). Previous research have examined the feasibility of purposive sampling, notwithstanding their differences. Nonetheless, each approach, despite its intentional design, includes a convenience element. This arises from the voluntary element intrinsic to all consent procedures, wherein the researcher depends on the accessibility of a pool of possible responders. Due to the voluntary nature of participation, researchers can infer that respondents not only satisfy the study's inclusion criteria but additionally possess a sincere

interest in the topic and a desire to enhance their understanding, thereby contributing significantly to the existing body of knowledge in this field (Campbell et al., 2020).

Online survey data collection is categorised into three primary methods based on the medium employed to engage respondents and gather responses: (1) face-to-face, (2) email, and (3) web-based. Questionnaires will be disseminated via Google Forms or online surveys for the purpose of this research. Google Forms is a survey management program that is part of the complimentary, web-based Google Docs Editors suite provided by Google (Stanton, 1998). It is a versatile program with numerous possible applications, including the creation of rapid quizzes or the collection of contact information from event participants.

It is essential to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of web-based surveys prior to their adoption, notwithstanding their status as the most advanced methodologies presently accessible. Web-based surveys, in contrast to email-based surveys, exhibit a brief turnaround time and can promptly engage several potential respondents. Web-based surveys can enhance the reliability of the information they gather through multiple-question formats, direct database access, data quality verification, tailored instrument dissemination, and guaranteed confidentiality (Jansen & Corley, 2007).

Data collection commenced in October 2024 with the completed questionnaires. Questionnaires were disseminated to Human Resources (HR) representatives from both firms, and a Google link was provided for broader circulation. By the conclusion of November 2024, hardly 20% of the intended respondents had taken an active role in the study. To rectify this, the researcher implemented proactive strategies, such as subsequent communication via WhatsApp and telephone calls, which markedly enhanced the rate at which people responded. By early December, a response rate of around 82% was attained.

To improve the study's generalisability, the researcher guaranteed thorough representation from both organizations—SAINS and SDEC. This geographical variety aimed to obtain an accurate representation that reflects the larger population for study and to mitigate biased selection via purposive sampling. By mid-November, the assiduous efforts and effective follow-up resulted in 164 responses, exceeding the minimum number of responses established by G-Power. This thorough data collection procedure guarantees statistical validity and improves the study's capacity for generalisation throughout both firms.

3.5 Measures

This study employed established scales published in trustworthy sources to enhance the validity and reliability of the evaluation tools. This method guarantees the reliability of the research's scales, which have undergone rigorous testing. Researchers may depend on prior studies to validate their findings and ensure reliability by employing established scales. The utilisation of established scales also streamlines comparative investigations, enhancing knowledge accumulation within the discipline. Integrating established scales into research methods is a judicious decision that improves the reliability and quality of evaluation tools (Hyman et al., 2006). Notwithstanding the biases and limitations inherent in prior research, the agree-disagree scale continues to be extensively utilised in social science investigations.

Previous experts advocated adopting a 5-point Likert scale; however, contemporary research indicates that a scale of 7 to 10 points could be employed to achieve comparable findings and provide greater detail. This study will utilise a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 5 ('strongly agree'), and a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 7 ('strongly agree'), based on the findings of Ravilla, Saris, and Krosnick (2014), which demonstrate the enhanced measurement quality of 5-point and 7-point scales. This

method is employed to guarantee the acquisition of high-quality data that precisely represents respondents' views and beliefs.

3.5.1 Demographic

Section A of the questionnaire consisted of seven questions pertaining to the demographic and personal information of the respondents. Within the present organization, participants were queried regarding their gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, level of education, and years of employment. Table 3.1 below shows the questionnaires used for demographic:

Table 3.1: Questionnaire on Demographic

Section	Measures	Dimension	Number of Items	Sources	Rating Scale
A	Demographic Information	-	7	-	-

3.5.2 Emotional Intelligence

The Emotional Intelligence Appraisal comprises of 26 items, written in 2012 by Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves, assesses emotional intelligence (EQ) through four fundamental competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Each of the four abilities are derived from the paradigm established by Daniel Goleman. This approach is a framework based on competencies that is straightforward and readily applicable in practical contexts, hence establishing a strong connection between the Appraisal and job performance. The initial two talents concentrate on the individual, while the third and fourth skills pertain to their interactions with others. Respondents in Section C were asked to assess their emotional intelligence using a 7-point Likert scale. The scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). This

assessment has been standardized in Iran, with its accuracy and reliability validated by Lotfi et al. (2012). Table 3.2 below shows the questionnaires used for emotional intelligence:

Table 3.2: Questionnaire on Emotional Intelligence

Section	Measures	Dimension	Number of Items	Sources	Rating Scale
C	Emotional Intelligence	Self-Awareness	7	Bradberry & Greaves (2012)	1= Strongly disagree and 7=Strongly agree
		Social-Awareness	6		1= Strongly disagree and 7=Strongly agree
		Self-Management	6		1= Strongly disagree and 7=Strongly agree
		Relationship Management	5		1= Strongly disagree and 7= Strongly agree

3.5.3 LMX

The LMX integrated assessment in Section C of the questionnaire includes 5 items prepared by Liden and Maslyn (1998). The 5-item scale was created to measure the moderating influence of LMX on emotional intelligence and job performance. The rating was based on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The items were developed based on insights from existing Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) literature and direct experiences from individuals in the workplace. These items were subsequently subjected to content validation and administered to a large, diverse sample of working students for evaluation. Table 3.3 below shows the questionnaires used for leader-member exchange:

Table 3.3: Questionnaire on Leader-Member Exchange

Section	Measures	Dimension	Number of Items	Sources	Rating Scale
D	LMX	-	5	Liden & Maslyn (1998)	1= Strongly disagree and 7= Strongly agree

3.5.4 Job Performance

The items used to assess job performance were adopted from Caliskan and Koroglu (2022) and were included in Section B. The rating was based on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Organizations utilize this scale to achieve significant enhancements in job performance and to maximize the opportunities presented by this context.

The scale is relevant not only in academic, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors but also broadly across various industries within both public and private sectors, including businesses and institutions. Furthermore, the scale is adaptable to diverse cultural settings across different countries (Caliskan & Koroglu, 2022). Table 3.4 below shows the questionnaires used for job performance:

Table 3.4: Questionnaire on Job Performance

Section	Measures	Dimension	Number of Items	Sources	Rating Scale
B	Job Performance	-	6	Caliskan & Koroglu (2022)	1= Strongly disagree and 5= Strongly agree

3.6 Questionnaire Pre-Testing

Administering pre-tests to the research participants was essential to ascertain their comprehension of the questions. In the pretesting phase, researchers may collect data from a limited sample of participants by administering questionnaires that evaluate the clarity of the research's questions and their appropriateness for the research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). A researcher can rectify any issues with the study instrument by doing a pre-test prior to data collection from a substantial sample. A pre-test sample size of 5–30 is enough for the revision of questionnaires (Perneger et al., 2014). Consequently, this study involved 30 participants from the GLC's in the pre-testing of the questionnaires. The surveys were evaluated for comprehension and readability by a human resource professional and an academic researcher.

3.7 Pilot Test

A pilot test is a preliminary examination conducted on a limited scale to evaluate feasibility, duration, expense, adverse occurrences, and impact size. The objective is to determine an adequate sample size and enhance the study design prior to executing the comprehensive survey. It provides multiple benefits, such as the appropriateness of enquiries and the precision of directives. It evaluates the efficacy of the survey category, conserves

financial resources, and serves as a valuable method to determine the feasibility of a large-scale study (Cheah, 2023). A prevalent guideline suggests utilising a sample size of approximately 5-10% of the anticipated final sample size of the primary study; yet, the generally accepted minimum size is 30 (Hair et al, 2016). This can furnish sufficient information to discern prospective concerns without necessitating a substantial quantity of responses.

The choice of a sample size of 30 for the pilot test is based on the Central Limit Theorem (CLT), which asserts that the pattern of distribution of sample means approaches a normal distribution when the sample size increases, regardless of the population's original distribution. A sample size of 30 or greater is generally considered sufficient for the Central Limit Theorem to be dependably applicable, to guarantee the distribution of sample means resembles a normal distribution (Cheah, 2023).

During the preliminary part of the project, pre-testing was performed just with SDEC workers to evaluate the pertinence and readability of the constructed questionnaires. This method was selected due to the company's openness and its operational congruence in line with the overarching research goals. This strategy may create biases associated with SDEC's distinct culture; nonetheless, it is crucial to emphasise that the objective of this stage was solely to enhance research equipment, not to gather data for analytical findings. This regulated pre-testing facilitates prompt and pertinent feedback, which is crucial for verifying the efficacy of the questionnaires in later extensive use.

The Human Resources department facilitated the selection of 30 participants to participate in the pre-testing stage. Human Resources chose probable respondents depending

on their immediate availability and willingness to engage in the survey at their ease, providing little disturbance to their normal job schedules.

The feedback obtained from participants during this pre-testing stage is essential for enhancing the study questionnaire. Modifications will be implemented according to respondent feedback to improve the simplicity, significance, and efficacy of the questionnaire, so guaranteeing that the primary study produces solid and reliable outcomes. A multi-faceted validation approach was utilised to guarantee the comprehensiveness and relevance of the questionnaires utilised in this research. This procedure required collaboration between industry and academic experts to evaluate the tools for their practical use and theoretical validity.

The questionnaires were initially evaluated by an industry expert—an HR manager with over 20 years of expertise in the field. The expert's responsibility was to evaluate the real-world significance of the questions, confirming they are significant and specifically pertinent to the daily realities encountered by industry professionals. Their significant experience offered important perspectives into the functional and strategic dimensions of emotional intelligence and its impact on job performance, aiding in the refinement of the surveys to more accurately represent contemporary workplace dynamics and challenges.

An academic specialist with extensive research experience and a profound comprehension of theoretical ideas undertook additional validation, evaluating the questionnaires for scientific rigour and conformity with contemporary academic norms. The review emphasized theoretical consistency, construct validity, and applicability to contemporary research in the discipline. Input provided by the industry expert and the academic reviewer resulted in significant revisions to the questionnaires. The revisions were

refinements of specific topics, alignment of language with business norms and academic concepts, and upgrades to guarantee complete understanding of the topic.

3.7.1 Pilot Test – Construct Reliability and Validity

In this research, reliability denotes the assessment of the construct's internal consistency. A construct is deemed credible if the Alpha (α) value exceeds 0.70 (Hair et al., 2020). Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The findings indicated that the job performance scale consisting of 6 items ($\alpha = 0.840$) and the emotional intelligence scale including 24 items ($\alpha = 0.897$) demonstrated reliability. The results revealed that the leader-member exchange scale, comprising 5 items, attained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.879. This result, exceeding 0.70, indicates a high degree of internal consistency, signifying that the scale is dependable and accurately assesses the construct of leader-member interchange. Table 3.5 presents the reliability results:

Table 3.5: Reliability Statistics

Constructs	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Job Performance	6	0.840
Emotional Intelligence	24	0.897
LMX	5	0.879

Validity testing evaluates the degree to whether the measurement instruments used in the research are valid, indicating their precision in measuring the specified constructs. In this instance, validity guarantees that the research instruments accurately assess their intended constructs. The validity testing criteria encompass a correlation coefficient exceeding 0.30, a correlation value surpassing the essential r-table value ($DF = n-2$), and a significance threshold of 0.05 or 0.01 (Cham, 2023). The validity leads to indicate that job performance, emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange show correlation values greater than 0.30, above the critical r-table value, with a significance level below 0.05.

3.8 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is characterised as the degree of data aggregation obtained throughout the next data analysis phase (Cavana et al., 2001). Virtually any subject can be the primary focus of a social science study; nevertheless, the discipline frequently constrains, if not rigidly defines, the choices for the unit of analysis in the study. Workers, supervisors, senior managers, clients, work teams, departments, and organisations are prevalent subjects of examination in organisational behaviour and management sciences.

The rationale for this choice is based on the premise that all employees within an organization, regardless of their hierarchical position, interact with leaders and are influenced by their emotional intelligence. These interactions provide valuable insights into how emotional intelligence shapes leadership behaviors, such as inclusivity, and how these behaviors, in turn, impact employees' job performance.

The varied participant cohort was chosen to guarantee that the study encompasses a wide array of viewpoints and personal experiences related to emotional intelligence. The research seeks to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence on job performance and leader-member exchange by incorporating both executives and senior managers throughout various levels of authority and responsibility.

3.9 Instrumentations

To get the quantitative data required for this investigation, the survey method was employed. Malhotra et al. (2007) assert that surveys are a prevalent, standardised, and systematic tool for collecting data from individuals within the research population. The survey method was selected due to its cost-effectiveness, appropriateness for the research, the type of data needed, demographic information, as well as resource availability.

The researcher chose the survey instrument for its relevance, affordability, and capacity to gather anonymous data which precisely reflects the target population. However, a notable limitation of utilising a questionnaire is the worse quality of the obtained data, which may result from insufficient information, poorly constructed questions, and negligent design. These challenges are critically significant nevertheless can potentially be avoided (Gillham, 2008). Consequently, employing a validated survey is an effective approach to guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the utilised questionnaires. Furthermore, it will diminish the time and monetary resources dedicated to the development and validation of its reliability and accuracy (Boynton, 2004).

3.10 Data Analysis Tools and Techniques

This section of the research provides a detailed examination of the methodologies and approaches employed to evaluate hypotheses and interpret the collected data. This investigation employed contemporary tools and widely accepted statistical techniques to evaluate reliability, validity, and hypotheses. In the realm of data analysis, software programs like SPSS and PLS-SEM are utilised; these selections are made due to their widespread application and recognised credibility.

PLS-SEM provides a detailed framework that presents a fresh viewpoint on analysing the complex interconnections among variables. This approach offers a strong solution to overcome the shortcomings of traditional covariance-based SEM, rendering it especially attractive in today's research environment. The growing adoption of PLS-SEM can be attributed to its ability to manage complex relationships between latent constructs and observed indicators. In research where variables demonstrate complicated interdependencies, PLS-SEM's flexibility enables the uncovering of latent trends that could stay hidden beneath more rigid approaches (Hair et al., 2012).

The collected data underwent analysis in two distinct phases: (i) preliminary data analysis and (ii) hypothesis testing through PLS-SEM. The subsequent sections will elaborate on the techniques and procedures employed for data analysis.

3.10.1 Preliminary Data Analysis

The initial data analysis for the current study has been conducted using SPSS, a widely recognised tool for statistical analysis (Rahman & Muktadir, 2021). The methods utilised in initial data analysis encompass data coding, data editing and screening, analysis of missing data and how it is handled, assessment of data normalcy and evaluation of outliers, data transformation, and scrutiny of internal consistency. The relevant assessments, including frequency distribution, reliability estimation methods, and outlier detection, are further evaluated using the Mahalanobis distance test in SPSS. The identical statistical methods were employed to analyse the descriptive statistics and demographic characteristics of the respondents. The details of these tests will be elaborated upon in the following chapter.

3.10.2 Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)

Numerous published works have made use of PLS-SEM, including those on organisational management (Sosik et al., 2009), international management (Richter et al., 2014), human resource management (Ringle et al., 2019), and hair et al. (2012). The research data is examined using Smart PLS and generated partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The data gathered is analysed in this work using smart PLS, a modified form of partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

The sample, or data, is the decisive element in choosing this analytical approach. PLS-SEM is particularly appropriate for research contexts with small sample sizes, non-normally distributed data, or complex inter-variable relationships. This method of data

analysis has significantly enhanced the empirical investigation of management and associated disciplines, finding application in various sectors and prediction research (Hair et al., 2020).

PLS-SEM generates less contradictory results compared to regression analysis (Ramli et al., 2018) and is frequently regarded as the optimal method for forecasting the impacts on the dependent variable. PLS-SEM is employed to assess reporting methodologies, perform robust analyses in management science, and uncover mediating factors (Ramli et al., 2018).

3.10.3 Measurement Model

In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), the measurement model delineates the associations between latent constructs and their observable indicators. The measurement model is a crucial element of PLS-SEM since it evaluates the reliability and validity of the measurement equipment. Confirmatory factor analysis is employed to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs included in the study.

Stage one of SEM involves the execution of two essential activities. The initial phase entails assessing the causal relationship between conceptions and related observable variables (items). The subsequent phase entails evaluating the validity and reliability of each of the conceptions. The primary objective of the initial stage is to validate the unidimensionality of constructs. This entails ascertaining the component composition of each observed variable (item) of the construct, evaluating reliability, and enhancing the precision of predictions regarding the discriminant and convergent validity of the constructs (Meyers et al., 2006; Hair et al., 2010).

Two prominent methodologies for factor analysis are exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is typically employed when the theoretical conceptions are indeterminate, whereas Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) evaluates the congruence between the theoretical framework and the empirical data (Zikmund et al., 2013). In this research, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is preferable as multiple hypotheses require testing, and the research purpose is predominantly confirmatory. Moreover, the constructs of this investigation utilise established scales, validating the application of CFA over EFA.

The current study employed confirmatory factor analysis to evaluate the validity of the constructs. Items exhibiting low factor loadings were omitted from the analysis. The established standard for accepting factor loadings is 0.50 or higher (Holmes-Smith et al., 2006; Hair et al., 2010). Consequently, items with factor loadings under 0.5 were omitted from subsequent analysis.

To guarantee precise and pertinent results, it is advisable to utilise dependable and valid devices in data collection. The ability of an instrument to yield consistent results throughout time is termed its reliability (Segal & Coolidge, 2018). Despite the widespread utilisation and demonstrated reliability of the selected investigative instruments in previous studies, their efficacy in a distinct context, specifically the digital sector, need validation. Cronbach's alpha is a well recognised metric for evaluating the dependability of constructs (Meyers et al., 2006). Bonett and Wright (2014) characterise Cronbach's alpha as an indicator of internal consistency, reflecting the mean correlation across items in a survey tool, hence evaluating its reliability.

As Cronbach's alpha value rises and nears 1, the reliability and internal consistency of a scale improve. This study employs Cronbach's alpha values to assess the reliability of constructs, with a consensus among researchers that reliability predictions exceeding 0.70 are considered credible. This standard is well acknowledged and endorsed by numerous research (Nunnally, 1978; Ruane, 2004; Hair et al., 2010). This study will adhere to the established benchmark for Cronbach's alpha, setting a minimum permissible level of 0.70.

Table 3.6: Internal Consistency of Constructs

N=150	Cronbach's Alpha
Job Performance	0.851
Emotional Intelligence	0.934
LMX	0.863

Table 3.6 presents the reliability coefficients derived from the Cronbach alpha values. All three constructs employed exhibit values beyond the 0.70 criterion. Emotional intelligence demonstrates the most internal consistency (0.934), but job performance displays the lowest consistency (0.851), despite having a high Cronbach's alpha. The results demonstrates that the scale employed for the sample in the current study is reliable.

Reliability pertains to a construct's ability to yield consistent results over time, whereas validity pertains to a construct's capability to accurately assess the same concept on a rating scale (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2011). The validity of a construct is essential as it guarantees a correct evaluation of the desired idea or feature. A valid construct must encompass a significant number of measurable things that are related to the construct and other constructs (MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2011).

Content validity, sometimes known as face validity, pertains to the quality and clarity of an idea. Burns (2000) asserts that expert opinion is a dependable approach for evaluating the content validity of an idea. Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2012) assert that expert

evaluations of content quality are appropriate for assessing content validity. The suggestions were adhered to, and specialists deliberated on the study's methodologies. To achieve this purpose, the researcher secured validation from HR specialists with over twenty years of industry experience. The individual assessed the quality and content of the measures enacted by the concept.

3.10.4 Structural Model

Structural equation modelling entails hypothesis testing and analyses the relationships among many constructs in study. The route diagram, commonly employed in social and behavioural research, is being utilised to analyse and visually depict the relationships among variables (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2016). The graphical representation facilitates comprehension of the interconnections between constructs. The variables and their relations are shown using ovals, rectangles, and arrows. Ovals represent latent variables, rectangles denote observable variables, and arrows depict their connections. Single-headed arrows show direct relationships between the independent variables (e.g., Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management, and Relationship Management) and the dependent variable (Job Performance). Moderation effects, as represented by Leader-Member Exchange, are shown with dashed arrows to indicate their moderating influence on the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

3.11 Assumptions of PLS-SEM

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) is recognised for its reduced constraints regarding assumptions in comparison to Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM). Table 3.7 holds several assumptions and concerns.

Table 3.7: Assumptions of PLS-SEM

Statistical Test	Assumptions
PLS SEM	Smaller sample size No Missing Data No Outliers No Multivariate Normality Assumption No Multicollinearity

3.11.1 Small Sample Size

PLS-SEM is frequently seen as stronger with smaller sample sizes in comparison to CB-SEM. The precise sample size required may vary based on the model's complexity and the particular research question. When probabilistic sampling approaches are frequently challenging to implement due to the absence of a sample frame (Memon et al., 2017), non-probabilistic sampling becomes the sole alternative.

3.11.2 No Missing Data

Outliers are values that are significantly elevated or markedly reduced in comparison to the other replies (Pallant, 2016). Reviewing the data prior to analysis is typically advised, as outliers may substantially impact the results and conclusions. Outliers must be addressed appropriately to prevent their impact on the research findings. The Mahalanobis distance test is a prevalent method for identifying outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The results of the Mahalanobis distance test are presented in the subsequent chapter.

3.11.3 No Multivariate Normality Assumption

Numerous statistical approaches require regularly distributed data for analysis. While normally distributed data is the fundamental assumption for CB SEM, PLS-SEM does not necessitate adherence to a particular normal distribution sequence. Conventional techniques such as maximum likelihood-based Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) typically presume a normal distribution, whereas PLS-SEM does not depend on this

presumption. Rather, it estimates models via a sequence of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions, enhancing its adaptability to various data distribution patterns.

PLS-SEM computes latent variable scores by systematically aggregating manifest variables, using these ratings as optimal substitutes for the manifest variables (Martinez et al., 2023). This procedure, unlike other approaches, effectively captures critical information for elucidating the latent variables. PLS-SEM considers these latent variable scores as ideal substitutes for the manifest variables. It presumes that those ratings precisely reflect the underlying concepts (Manley et al., 2020).

3.11.4 No Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity arises when more than one independent variable in a regression model exhibits a high degree of correlation. A robust linear correlation can be found among multiple predictor variables. This complicates statistical analysis since it gets difficult to isolate the distinct impacts of every factor on the dependent variable. In the setting of PLS-SEM, "No Multicollinearity" posits that the manifest variables (indicators or observable variables) employed to assess latent constructs must not display significant multicollinearity.

This assumption is essential for acquiring dependable approximations of the associations across latent and manifest variables (Martinez et al., 2023). Severe multicollinearity complicates the interpretation of every indicator's unique input to the latent variable. Researchers may struggle to discern the distinct influence of every factor when they exhibit strong correlation. Multicollinearity may result in increased standard errors and hence broader confidence intervals. This diminishes the accuracy of parameter estimates and impacts the dependability of the outcomes (Latan et al., 2023).

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the methods employed to investigate the correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance, with leader-member exchange serving as a mediator, within the framework of Sarawak Government-linked companies in the digital sector. The chapter examines the quantitative research methodology, outlining the sampling strategy, data gathering techniques, and the statistical instruments utilised for analysis, including SPSS and PLS-SEM. The chapter provides comprehensive details regarding the sample size, sourced from workers of SAINS and SDEC. It additionally examines the justification for employing purposive sampling, motivated by privacy considerations. The chapter discusses the measures implemented to guarantee the reliability and validity of data obtained from different pre-tested questionnaires.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This section examines the research's results utilising diverse data analysis techniques. The results were delineated into five sections. The initial section provides a comprehensive account of data planning, including an overview of the response rate. The subsequent section encompasses data cleaning, analysis of missing data points, examination of data outliers, assessment of multivariate normality, evaluation of non-response bias, and preliminary data analysis. This section examines the respondents' profiles, evaluating their survey replies item-by-item for every study aspect and addressing the implications of this analysis. The issue of common technique variance pertains to all four methodologies. The research model undergoes comprehensive evaluation following the presentation of latent components and robustness analysis. Subsequently, PLS-SEM was employed to analyse the route linkages of the endogenous constructs and the model's explanatory power, hence facilitating accessibility to the model's measures and structure. The hypotheses of the study were ultimately evaluated by direct and moderated methodologies.

4.2 Data preparation

4.2.1 Data Cleaning

Before doing any statistical analysis, it proved imperative to meticulously scrutinise and amend the collected data to eliminate input errors, incomplete entries, and absent values, while also confirming its appropriateness for utilisation (Singh et al., 2006). Data

preparation, encompassing "editing, addressing missing data, coding, transformation, and data entry" (Hair et al., 2016), is equally essential as data analysis and interpretation. Data editing entails verifying whether the data is thorough, coherent, and readable prior to its preparation for coding and storage (Zikmund et al., 2013). This entails guaranteeing data integrity and guaranteeing that researchers exclusively employ accurately edited, cleansed, and tagged data suitable for future analytical purposes.

The data was encoded into SPSS utilising the data compilation approach, forming the initial phase of the process of preparing the data. SPSS was employed to evaluate the prevalence of absent values in the dataset. Consequently, the dataset is devoid of any incomplete values. A total of 164 replies were received from the questionnaires disseminated via Google Forms.

Following an initial assessment, 164 valid instances were uploaded into SPSS version 26 for further analysis. Findings from the descriptive analysis were produced with the SPSS statistics database. A comprehensive assessment of absent data was conducted for every variable, succeeded by a data analysis to evaluate the existence of common technique variance. Thereafter, the prior data in SPSS was transferred to a Microsoft Excel file to provide the Smart-PLS 4.0 application with organised input. The evaluation of the structural and measurement models was conducted using Smart-PLS 4.0 software.

4.3 Respondents' Profile

Table 4.1 presents the profile of the respondents. The majority of the responses come from female participants. Approximately 61% of the participants are female, whereas 39% are male. The age group of 21 to 30 was the largest segment of survey respondents at 43.3%,

followed by the 31 to 40 age group at 36.6%. Individuals aged 41 to 50 represent 15.9%, while those aged 50 and older account for a mere 4.3%.

Table 4.1: Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Description	Frequency	%age
Gender	Male	64	39
	Female	100	61
Age	21 to 30 years	71	43.3
	31 to 40 years	60	36.6
	41 to 50 years	26	15.9
	Above 50 years	7	4.3
Marital Status	Single	83	50.6
	Married	75	45.7
	Divorce	6	3.7
Ethnic	Bumiputera	137	83.5
	Non Bumiputera	27	16.5
Education Level	High School or Below	3	1.8
	Diploma	23	14.0
	Degree or	104	63.4
	Professional	32	19.5
	Master	2	1.2
	PhD		
Experience	Less than 1 year	32	19.5
	Less than 5 years	89	54.3
	Less than 10 years	20	12.2
	More than 10 years	23	14.0
Job Position	Executive	84	51.2
	Senior Executive	26	15.9
	Assistant Manager	16	9.8
	Manager	22	13.4
	Senior Manager	16	9.8

The bulk of respondents held a Bachelor's degree at 63.4%, followed by Master's degree holders at 19.5%, and PhD holders at a mere 1.2% of the total respondents. In terms of professional experience, 19.5% of respondents possessed less than one year, 54.3% had

under five years, and 12.2% had between five and 10 years of experience. The most seasoned group, consisting of 23 respondents (14.0%), has more than ten years of professional experience. This data reveals a workforce primarily consisting of younger, degree-holding professionals. This detailed demographic profile offers essential background for analysing the study's results, especially on the interplay of emotional intelligence, leadership, and job performance inside the organisation.

Concluding the demographic profile, the job levels of the respondents exhibit a notable variety. Specifically, 51.2% hold executive positions, 15.9% are senior executives, 9.8% serve as assistant managers, 13.4% are managers, and 9.8% occupy senior manager roles. This distribution provides a detailed overview of the professional roles represented within the study group, offering important context for interpreting the research findings and their applicability across different levels of organizational hierarchy.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics

The mean and standard deviation of each indicator were computed using SPSS version 25. Table 4.2 presents the descriptive statistics for all variables in this research. The outcomes are as follows:

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics for All Variables

Construct	Indicator	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job Performance	JP1	4.10	0.709
	JP2	4.23	0.635
	JP3	4.14	0.672
	JP4	4.37	0.578
	JP5	4.36	0.596
	JP6	4.21	0.650
Emotional Intelligence	SA1	5.88	1.035
	SA2	5.26	1.113
	SA3	5.44	0.998
	SA4	5.62	1.183
	SA5	5.76	1.030

Table 4.2 continued

	SA6	5.75	0.993
	SA7	5.53	0.999
	SOA1	5.40	1.098
	SOA2	5.18	1.199
	SOA3	5.53	1.029
	SOA4	5.50	1.076
	SOA5	5.51	0.968
	SOA6	5.54	0.980
	SM1	6.07	0.896
	SM2	6.08	0.790
	SM3	6.03	0.835
	SM4	5.57	1.079
	SM5	5.92	0.857
	SM6	6.07	0.779
	RM1	5.85	1.014
	RM2	5.62	1.006
	RM3	5.92	0.906
	RM4	5.60	1.132
	RM5	5.51	1.110
	LMX1	4.15	0.890
LMX	LMX2	3.74	1.012
	LMX3	3.90	0.951
	LMX4	4.29	0.742
	LMX5	4.18	0.954

The highest mean score for Job Performance (JP) is recorded for JP4 (4.37), reflecting robust consensus among respondents about this particular facet of job performance. This indicates that individuals demonstrate superior performance behaviours or practices related to JP4, potentially encompassing aspects such as collaboration, dependability, or goal attainment. In contrast, the lowest mean score is noted for JP1 (4.10), indicating a domain where performance judgements, possibly linked to particular tasks or responsibilities, may be less favourable. The standard deviations for the JP indicators vary from 0.578 to 0.709, signifying substantial variability in responses. Elevated standard deviations, exemplified by JP1 and JP3, indicate increased variability in employees' opinions of certain facets of job performance, potentially suggesting disparate degrees of consensus or divergent experiences among respondents. This heterogeneity highlights the necessity for

customised tactics to target specific performance factors and promote sustained high performance throughout the organisation.

The evaluation of employee emotional intelligence reveals that the average results reflect a predominantly favourable perception among participants. Self-Management (SM2) achieved the highest mean score (6.079), indicating that this facet of self-management is a significant strength among employees, demonstrating their capacity to regulate emotions and sustain focus efficiently. In contrast, Social Awareness (SOA2) recorded the lowest mean score (5.182), suggesting a possible area for enhancement in cultivating a deeper knowledge and responsiveness to the feelings and needs of others. The standard deviations for emotional intelligence markers are predominantly below 1, indicating a rather uniform consensus among respondents regarding their emotional intelligence levels. This uniformity indicates a common understanding of strengths and areas needing improvement, highlighting the necessity of focused efforts to bolster weaker aspects such as social awareness while reinforcing strengths like self-management.

For Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), the mean scores range from 3.743 to 4.292, reflecting variations in perceptions of different aspects of the leader-member relationship. LMX4, associated with trust, respect, or mutual obligation between leaders and members, has the highest mean score (4.292), suggesting that this aspect is a particular strength within the organization. In contrast, LMX2, likely related to perceptions of support or fairness, has the lowest mean score (3.743), highlighting an area where the quality of the leader-member exchange may be perceived as weaker. The standard deviations for LMX indicators range from 0.742 to 1.012, indicating moderate variability in responses. This variability suggests that while there is overall agreement on certain strengths, perceptions of aspects like support or fairness (LMX2) show more diversity, pointing to potential inconsistencies in leader-

member relationships across the organization. Addressing these weaker elements could enhance the overall quality of LMX and its impact on organizational dynamics.

4.5 Data Verification

This section examines the analysis used to verify the attributes of the gathered data. The data verification method encompassed multiple essential processes to guarantee the dataset's quality and dependability. Initially, absent values were adeptly addressed with Google Forms, that mandated responses to every query, thus eradicating any data deficiencies. Outliers were detected and evaluated utilising the Mahalanobis distance test, indicating the absence of significant outliers in the sample.

Skewness and kurtosis values were computed to verify normality, and all variables were determined to be inside acceptable limits. The study also assessed common method bias through the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), revealing no substantial bias in any of the values. Collinearity assessments were performed, revealing VIF values beneath the limit, hence confirming the absence of multicollinearity among the independent variables. These thorough verifications established that the data was pristine, dependable, and prepared for analysis utilising PLS-SEM.

4.5.1 Handling the Missing Value

Missing data points are considered a common issue in data analysis. Data points are often absent in survey research due to both deliberate and inadvertent acts by respondents who may opt to exclude specific items (Hair et al., 2010). This study employs Google Forms as the survey platform to guarantee the absence of missing data. Respondents must answer all questions, as each is marked as mandatory, inhibiting their advancement to succeeding questions without a response.

4.5.2 Outliers Analysis

Tabachnick et al. (2013) assert that statistical outcomes may be distorted whenever any of the variables exhibit extreme values or an atypical pattern of scores throughout the variables. Hair et al. (2010) assert that social science research frequently encompasses data sets containing outliers. Outliers can manifest in both continuous and categorical variables. Either multivariate and univariate datasets may contain outliers. Faulty statistical conclusions and misinterpretation of findings may arise from outliers in the dataset. The calculation of Mahalanobis distance can be helpful in identifying multivariate outliers. Hair et al. (2010) assert that Mahalanobis distance (D^2) is a metric which quantifies the distance of a case from the centroid of a collection in a multidimensional space. A larger D^2 value signifies an increased distance from the central point in a three-dimensional space.

A comprehensive outlier analysis was conducted using the Mahalanobis distance test, which accounts for the multivariate characteristics of the dataset. The results indicated that all data points fell within the acceptable range of Mahalanobis distance values, confirming the absence of outliers. This outcome suggests that none of the data points significantly deviated from the multivariate mean, ensuring that the dataset is free from extreme observations or influential cases. Consequently, the dataset demonstrates robustness and reliability for further research and analysis.

4.5.3 Data Normality Test

SmartPLS, being a non-parametric structural equation modelling approach, is less vulnerable to issues of data normalcy in comparison with its parametric counterparts (Hair et al., 2014). Conversely, preserving data normality enhances data analysis, and the characteristics of the data can be more effectively comprehended through multivariate

skewness and kurtosis. The symmetry within a variable's distribution can be assessed through its skewness. Skewed distributions arise when a variable's response distribution is disproportionately concentrated towards one of the two extremes, typically the right or left tail. Negative skewness indicates a higher frequency of larger values, whereas positive skewness signifies a higher frequency of smaller values.

Values beyond -2 and +2 suggest substantial non-normality (Hair et al., 2022). Kurtosis assesses if the distribution is excessively peak or excessively flat, with the majority of responses focused in the centre. A positive kurtosis value signifies a distribution which appears more sharply peaked than usual. A negative kurtosis signifies a distribution that is flatter than the average. Data is considered normal if the skewness is between -2 and +2 and the kurtosis is between -3 and +3, as stated by Hair et al. (2010) and Bryne (2013).

Table 4.3: Skewness and Kurtosis

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Stat	Stat	Stat	Stat	Stat	Stat	Std Error	Stat	Std Error
JP1	164	2.00	5.00	4.109	.70938	-.369	.190	-.257	.377
JP2	164	3.00	5.00	4.237	.63500	-.245	.190	-.638	.377
JP3	164	2.00	5.00	4.140	.67276	-.418	.190	.167	.377
JP4	164	3.00	5.00	4.378	.57856	-.280	.190	-.722	.377
JP5	164	3.00	5.00	4.365	.59676	-.343	.190	-.666	.377
JP6	164	2.00	5.00	4.207	.65039	-.369	.190	-.087	.377
SA1	164	2.00	7.00	5.884	1.0355	-.872	.190	.700	.377
SA2	164	2.00	7.00	5.268	1.11376	-.251	.190	-.550	.377
SA3	164	3.00	7.00	5.445	.99848	-.165	.190	-.786	.377
SA4	164	1.00	7.00	5.628	1.1835	-1.08	.190	1.57	.377
SA5	164	2.00	7.00	5.768	1.0308	-.712	.190	.312	.377
SA6	164	2.00	7.00	5.750	.99307	-.621	.190	.322	.377
SA7	164	2.00	7.00	5.530	.99953	-.514	.190	.237	.377
SOA1	164	1.00	7.00	5.402	1.0893	-.856	.190	1.62	.377
SOA2	164	1.00	7.00	5.182	1.1994	-.812	.190	.886	.377
SOA3	164	1.00	7.00	5.536	1.0295	-.919	.190	1.98	.377
SOA4	164	1.00	7.00	5.506	1.0767	-.643	.190	1.14	.377

Table 4.3 continued

SOA5	164	2.00	7.00	5.512	.96876	-.650	.190	.808	.377
SOA6	164	1.00	7.00	5.548	.98020	-.732	.190	1.79	.377
SM1	164	2.00	7.00	6.073	.89690	-1.07	.190	1.86	.377
SM2	164	3.00	7.00	6.079	.79094	-.594	.190	.362	.377
SM3	164	4.00	7.00	6.036	.83549	-.644	.190	-.052	.377
SM4	164	1.00	7.00	5.579	1.0795	-.755	.190	1.08	.377
SM5	164	4.00	7.00	5.920	.85791	-.496	.190	-.324	.377
SM6	164	4.00	7.00	6.073	.77981	-.679	.190	.317	.377
RM1	164	1.00	7.00	5.859	1.0145	-1.03	.190	2.09	.377
RM2	164	1.00	7.00	5.524	1.0066	-.754	.190	1.69	.377
RM3	164	1.00	7.00	5.920	.90659	-1.29	.190	2.37	.377
RM4	164	1.00	7.00	5.603	1.1329	-1.01	.190	2.01	.377
RM5	164	1.00	7.00	5.518	1.1103	-.591	.190	.510	.377
LMX1	164	1.00	5.00	4.152	.89026	-1.25	.190	1.90	.377
LMX2	164	1.00	5.00	3.743	1.0129	-.686	.190	.245	.377
LMX3	164	1.00	5.00	3.908	.95168	-.853	.190	.686	.377
LMX4	164	2.00	5.00	4.292	.74286	-.804	.190	.178	.377
LMX5	164	1.00	5.00	4.182	.95452	-1.27	.190	1.564	.377

Table 4.3 indicates that the information collected in the research is considered normal, as the skewness and kurtosis fall between the range of -3 to +3.

4.5.4 Common Method Bias

Rather than employing Harman's test, the common method bias was evaluated by the variance inflation factor (VIF) values of the inner model. The current investigation indicates that all VIF values are below 3.33, suggesting that the model is devoid of common method bias (Kock, 2015).

Recent empirical research and methodological evaluations in the social sciences have endorsed the VIF methodology. Fuller et al. (2016) underscore the shortcomings of Harman's test and recommend employing more sophisticated methods such as VIF. Kock and Lynn (2012) likewise proved the efficacy of VIF in identifying common technique bias across diverse social science environments. The broad acceptance highlights the precision and dependability of VIF in the social sciences, rendering it a favoured option for

researchers. Rodríguez-Ardura and Meseguer-Artola (2020) advocate for employing VIF and alternative statistical techniques to avoid and identify common method variance, rather than relying on conventional methods such as Harman's test. They underscore contemporary methodologies that enhance diagnoses and controls for prevalent technique bias in empirical research.

Podsakoff et al. (2003) proposed five specific strategies to mitigate common method bias.

- a) Distinguishing the measurement by temporal, spatial, and methodological parameters
- b) Employing distinct sources to evaluate the predictor and criteria variables
- c) Enhancing scale elements
- d) Reorganising the order of questions to mitigate bias
- e) Safeguarding respondents' confidentiality

These procedures are often implemented throughout the research design and questionnaire development phases. This study employed one of these strategies to maintain the secrecy of its respondents. The anonymity of the polls allowed respondents to answer boldly and accurately, free from concerns of repercussions due to the protection of their identities. The comprehensive collinearity assessment was conducted to examine common technique bias. Kock and Lynn (2012) describe it as a systematic method for simultaneously assessing lateral and vertical collinearity.

The statistical test for this research was conducted using SmartPLS, necessitating the calculation of variance inflation factors (VIFs) for every latent variable included in the model (Kock 2015). A VIF score below the 3.3 threshold is recommended for this test; scores

over this indicate potential common method bias and pathological collinearity (Kock 2015). As stated by Kock (2015), all VIFs in this investigation were below 3.3; therefore, common method bias was not a significant issue. Consequently, the data analytics indicate that typical process bias is not a significant concern.

The study's VIF results are as follows:

- a) Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a predictor of Job Performance (JP) (VIF = 1.144).
- b) Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) predicts Job Performance (JP) (VIF = 1.108).
- c) Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) predicts Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Job Performance (JP) (VIF = 1.038).

All VIF values are significantly below the threshold, indicating that multicollinearity and common technique bias do not pose substantial issues in the analysis of this research. Consequently, there is assurance in the legitimacy of the study's conclusions concerning the correlations among emotional intelligence, job performance and LMX.

4.5.5 Collinearity Test

A different statistical way to assess common method bias involves the collinearity test, a systematic process that simultaneously analyses simultaneously vertical and horizontal collinearity (Kock and Lynn, 2012). The examination was once more executed using PLS-SEM.

Multicollinearity, or collinearity and inter-correlation, takes place when the independent variables in a regression model exhibit substantial correlation with each other (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014). This behaviour may result in inaccurate estimations of the regression coefficients, since it becomes challenging to distinguish the separate impacts of the linked variables. The variance inflation factor (VIF) test is a frequently

employed method in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to tackle this issue. The VIF test assesses the degree of multicollinearity by quantifying the rise in variance of an estimated regression coefficient attributable to collinearity. A VIF score exceeding 5 generally signifies multicollinearity, indicating that the associated independent variable is strongly correlated with other variables included in the model (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017).

Mitigating multicollinearity in PLS-SEM necessitates a thorough analysis of the correlations between independent variables. Modifications to the model may be necessary, including the elimination of duplicate variables or the application of techniques that include ridge regression to alleviate the impact of multicollinearity on the results.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for the constructs in the study model indicate that multicollinearity is not a major issue. The VIF values for the Job Performance (JP) construct range from 1.471 to 2.195, all remaining below the threshold of 5. This outcome indicates that the instruments assessing Job Performance provide distinct contributions to the construct without significant redundancy.

Likewise, for the emotional intelligence (EI) construct, VIF values span from 1.178 to 3.931, all remaining beneath the threshold of 5, indicating an absence of significant multicollinearity between the items assessing this construct. The VIF values for the leader-member exchange (LMX) construct range from 1.865 to 2.591, remaining below the requisite threshold.

The items assessing LMX exhibit low intercorrelation, indicating strong construct validity. The VIF values for all constructs in this research are under the standard threshold of 5, suggesting that multicollinearity is not a substantial concern in the research model. This

indicates that the independent variables in the present research are not overly linked, facilitating a more dependable interpretation of their interactions with the dependent variables. Table 4.4 presents the collinearity analysis of the variables.

Table 4.4: Collinearity Test

Construct	Items	Outer VIF Value
Job Performance	JP1	1.471
	JP2	2.195
	JP3	1.708
	JP4	1.668
	JP5	1.822
	JP6	1.863
Leader-Member Exchange	LMX1	2.168
	LMX2	1.968
	LMX3	1.865
	LMX4	2.252
	LMX5	2.591
Emotional Intelligence	RM1	3.498
	RM2	3.114
	RM3	3.616
	RM4	3.252
	RM5	2.727
	SA1	2.209
	SA2	2.698
	SA3	2.263
	SA4	3.747
	SA5	3.931
	SA6	3.308
	SA7	2.314
	SM1	2.720
	SM2	3.466
	SM3	3.743
	SM4	2.951
	SM5	3.665
	SM6	3.519
	SOA1	2.108
	SOA2	1.718
	SOA3	2.662
	SOA4	2.513
	SOA5	3.193
	SOA6	3.426

4.6 Assessment of the Measurement Model

This research evaluated the research model utilising PLS-SEM. The measurement and structural model of the research are frequently assessed using SmartPLS 3.0 (Ramayah et al., 2018). PLS initially assesses the reliability and validity of reflective constructs by examining the internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the measurement model. The subsequent subsections delineate the analysis and findings of this measuring methodology.

4.6.1 Internal Consistency Reliability

The reliability of internal consistency is the primary criterion to be assessed. Cronbach's alpha is the predominant metric for assessing internal consistency, offering a preliminary evaluation of reliability by examining the correlations among predictor variables. Cronbach's alpha, a metric of internal consistency, is influenced by the total number of items and seeks to minimise its effectiveness. This restriction renders composite reliability a more technically appropriate metric (Hair et al., 2017). A higher composite reliability score, ranging from 0 to 1, signifies a more reliable system. Founded during exploratory research, a composite reliability score between 0.6 and 0.7 is regarded as good, however a value from 0.7 to 0.9 is viewed as extraordinary.

Values over 0.9 or 0.95 are unfavourable as they indicate that all indicator variables represent identical occurrences, hence undermining the construct's validity. The composite dependability varied between 0.857 and 0.941, which was considered acceptable. The results indicate that the elements employed to define the structure are accurate in terms of internal consistency.

4.6.2 Indicator Reliability

Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) define indicator reliability as the extent whereby items (i.e., indicators) created for a particular construct accurately measure the core concept in a specific study. Indicator reliability is deemed satisfactory whenever an item's loading surpasses 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014). Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2017) assert that one method to assess the dependability of indicators is by evaluating their outer loadings. This entails assessing the correlations between the reflective latent variables and their indicators.

Conversely, indicator reliability loadings must exceed 0.7, 0.6, 0.5, or 0.4 to be deemed adequate according to Hulland (1999) and Byrne (2016); however, this is dependent on the presence of additional items with high loading scores to enhance the composite reliability and average variance extracted value. Table 4.5 following presents the item loadings for the constructs:

Table 4.5: Item Loading for the Construct

Construct	Items	Loadings/ Weights	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job Performance	JP1	0.637	0.887	0.568
	JP2	0.803		
	JP3	0.741		
	JP4	0.764		
	JP5	0.782		
	JP6	0.784		
Leader-Member Exchange	LMX1	0.846	0.894	0.630
	LMX2	0.682		
	LMX3	0.716		
	LMX4	0.849		
	LMX5	0.857		
	RM1	0.746	0.941	0.405
	RM2	0.664		
	RM3	0.691		
	RM4	0.684		

Table 4.5 continued

Emotional Intelligence	RM5	0.688		
	SA2	0.707		
	SA3	0.672		
	SA4	0.543		
	SA5	0.642		
	SA6	0.625		
	SA7	0.674		
	SM1	0.719		
	SM2	0.654		
	SM3	0.706		
	SM4	0.649		
	SM5	0.695		
	SM6	0.697		
	SOA3	0.557		
	SOA5	0.695		
	SOA6	0.670		

To ensure construct reliability and convergent validity, items that do not align with their corresponding constructions are eliminated. The emotional intelligence concept excludes SA1, and SOA1, SOA2, and SOA4 are omitted.

The measurement model was calculated, revealing that four items had factor loadings below 0.5: SA1 (0.461), SOA1 (0.455), SOA2 (0.264), and SOA4 (0.491). Consequently, these items were excluded from future analysis, and the model was re-estimated using the remaining items. The factor loadings have markedly improved, with all remaining items exhibiting excellent factor loadings between 0.5 and 0.8, as illustrated in Table 4.5.

Subsequent to the factor loading procedure, numerous items were omitted from the inclusive leadership construct, namely those assessing the dimensions of "Self-Awareness" and "Social Awareness." This reduction prompts apprehensions over the possibility of an inadequate assessment of the construct. Upon evaluating the remaining objects, it is clear that some items somewhat encapsulate the essence of these eliminated dimensions.

The exclusion of certain items can be attributed to a variety of factors unique to the context of Sarawak's GLCs in the digital sector. The digital sector in Sarawak operates with specific operational dynamics and standardized practices that may influence how employees perceive and respond to items related to emotional intelligence, job performance, and LMX. These standardized practices might render some items less distinctive or less variable in responses, resulting in low factor loadings.

Furthermore, some items may have been interpreted differently by respondents, leading to inconsistencies in responses. For example, items related to social awareness, such as recognizing and understanding the emotions of colleagues, may have been viewed as compliance-driven tasks, such as following workplace policies or fulfilling formal obligations during team interactions, rather than as interpersonal behaviors like empathizing with colleagues or addressing their concerns. This misalignment in interpretation may explain why these items failed to effectively capture the intended construct and were subsequently excluded.

The remaining items may adequately address parts of emotional intelligence that are more immediate and apparent to employees, such as relationship management and self-management. This may render other elements unnecessary or less significant, leading to diminished loading values.

Despite the exclusions, the remaining items offer valuable insights into the dimensions of "LMX" and "Job Performance." These dimensions are critical for understanding the dynamics of workplace relationships and employee outcomes and have been effectively captured by the current measures. The construct validity of the remaining items has been rigorously tested and found to be acceptable, ensuring that the dimensions

measured are valid representations of the intended constructs. While some specific dimensions may be underrepresented, the retained items still provide a robust foundation for analyzing emotional intelligence and its impact within the organizational context.

4.6.3 Reliabilities and Validities

Following the evaluation of the indicator loading, constructed reliabilities were assessed utilising Cronbach's alpha composite reliability (CR). Cronbach's alpha levels between 0.600 and 0.700 are deemed acceptable, and values from 0.700 to 0.900 are regarded as satisfactory to good (Hair et al., 2010). Given that Cronbach's alpha is considered a lenient reliability index and is limited by its dependence on the quantity of indicators, Composite Reliability (CR) is deemed more robust.

The CR value ranges from 0 to 1, with a good range between 0.7 and 0.9 (Hair et al., 2014). Following the removal of items, the reliability constructions are presented in Table 4.6 below. All Cronbach's alpha values above 0.650, and CR rho values surpass 0.7, indicating that the constructs of the study possess enough reliability for subsequent analysis.

Table 4.6: Construct Reliabilities and Validities

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	CR (rho)	AVE	VIF
Job Performance	0.848	0.859	0.568	1.049
LMX	0.857	0.911	0.630	1.108
Emotional Intelligence	0.936	0.939	0.553	1.157

4.6.4 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity denotes the extent whereby a latent variable is assessed by its indicators. The average variance extracted (AVE) serves as an indicator of convergent validity. Urbach and Ahlemann (2010) define convergent validity as the degree to which

specific indicators reflect a convergent concept in relation to assessments of other constructs. The squared loading of a construct-related indicator must surpass the highest mean value of this criterion. It denotes the extent that a latent construct accounts for the variance of its indicators (Hair et al. 2016). Constructs exhibit adequate convergent validity when the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is 0.5 or above. The aforementioned results indicate that the AVE exceeds 0.5, signifying that all constructs possess enough convergent validity.

4.6.5 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses the degree to which a construct is distinct from other constructs. It assesses the distinctiveness of constructs within a specified model. Discriminant validity can be assessed by the following methods: a) the Cross-loading criterion, b) the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion, and c) the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT).

The cross-loading criterion is the initial approach for evaluating discriminant validity. Ramayah et al. (2018) assert that the loadings of the indicators on their designated latent variable must exceed the loadings on all other latent variables inside the model. Another condition stated is that there must be a minimum difference of 0.1 between the loadings of latent variables. Table 4.7 below presents all bolded criteria that surpass 0.1, signifying that the requisite requirement has been fulfilled.

Table 4.7: Loadings and Cross Loadings

	EI	JP	LMX
JP 1	0.374	0.631	0.164
JP2	0.483	0.801	0.201
JP3	0.485	0.743	0.292
JP4	0.596	0.765	0.199

Table 4.7 continued

JP5	0.615	0.785	0.252
JP6	0.596	0.783	0.265
LMX1	0.256	0.282	0.846
LMX2	0.088	0.130	0.681
LMX3	0.199	0.171	0.716
LMX4	0.363	0.328	0.850
LMX5	0.193	0.217	0.857
RM1	0.762	0.537	0.233
RM2	0.671	0.425	0.261
RM3	0.706	0.452	0.252
RM4	0.695	0.424	0.243
RM5	0.696	0.465	0.219
SA2	0.714	0.517	0.213
SA3	0.670	0.452	0.231
SA4	0.516	0.352	0.173
SA5	0.623	0.482	0.209
SA6	0.601	0.399	0.165
SA7	0.682	0.497	0.172
SM1	0.731	0.542	0.151
SM2	0.662	0.552	0.190
SM3	0.728	0.537	0.168
SM4	0.669	0.510	0.097
SM5	0.705	0.538	0.239
SM6	0.711	0.552	0.281
SOA3	0.530	0.359	0.235
SOA5	0.676	0.470	0.200
SOA6	0.661	0.369	0.200

The Fornell-Larcker criterion, as articulated by Ramayah et al. (2018), is employed to evaluate discriminant validity in structural equation modelling. This criterion particularly evaluates the extent to which a particular concept is differentiated from others within the same model. The evaluation might additionally be conducted by ensuring that the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) surpasses the off-diagonal correlation values (Ramayah et al., 2018).

The Fornell-Larcker criterion was applied to assess the discriminant validity among the constructs: Emotional Intelligence (EI), Job Performance (JP), and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). The results indicate that JP and LMX satisfy the criterion, as the square roots of their AVE values (0.754 for JP and 0.794 for LMX) are greater than their correlations with other constructs. This confirms that these constructs are distinct and well-separated in the model. However, EI does not meet the criterion, as its correlation with JP (0.710) exceeds the square root of its AVE (0.673), indicating potential overlap and poor discriminant validity between these constructs. This suggests that EI and JP may not be adequately differentiated. Table 4.8 presents the outcomes of the Fornell-Larcker criteria.

Fornell and Larcker introduced evaluation techniques for assessing discriminant validity, but a recent study on cross-loading performance did not consistently reveal issues related to discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). Consequently, Henseler et al. (2015) advocated for the utilisation of the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) to assess the correlations as a viable approach.

Table 4.8: Fornell and Lacker's Criterion

Construct	EI	JP	LMX
EI	0.673		
JP	0.710	0.754	
LMX	0.305	0.307	0.794

HTMT represents the ratio of correlations among constructs to those between constructs (Ramayah et al., 2018). An HTMT score over 0.9 suggests a possible concern regarding discriminant validity (Ramayah et al., 2018). Henseler et al. (2015) contended that a more stringent threshold of 0.85 is warranted when the constructs in the path model are conceptually unique.

The HTMT analysis confirms discriminant validity among the constructs with Emotional Intelligence (EI), Job Performance (JP), Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), and their interaction term (LMX x EI). The HTMT value between EI and JP is 0.774 as shown in Table 4.9, which falls below the conservative threshold of 0.85, indicating a clear distinction between these constructs. Similarly, the HTMT values for EI and LMX (0.312), and JP and LMX (0.331), are well below the threshold, further supporting their discriminant validity. The interaction term (LMX x EI) also demonstrates strong discriminant validity, with HTMT values of 0.211 (with EI), 0.125 (with JP), and 0.100 (with LMX), all of which are significantly below the threshold of 0.85. These findings indicate that the respondents clearly differentiate between the individual constructs and the interaction term.

All HTMT values meet the recommended criteria for discriminant validity, confirming the distinctiveness of the constructs used in the model. This ensures the validity and reliability of the measurement model, providing a strong foundation for further structural model analysis. The results validate that the constructs of EI, JP, LMX, and their interaction are perceived as distinct and appropriate for examining their relationships in the study.

Table 4.9: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlation (HTMT)

Construct	EI	JP	LMX
EI			
JP	0.774		
LMX	0.312	0.331	
LMX x EI	0.211	0.125	0.100

4.7 Assessment of Structural Model

The subsequent sections examine the findings derived from the analysis of the study's structural model, conducted using SmartPLS 3.0. This entailed assessing the model's predictive accuracy and the interrelations among various components. Multiple evaluations were performed to ascertain the validity of the structural model's assessment. The assessments encompassed the examination of lateral collinearity concerns, analysis of path coefficients, calculation of the coefficient of determination, evaluation of effect size, assessment of predictive relevance, and validation of hypotheses.

4.7.1 Full Collinearity Test

Multi-collinearity can occur in both horizontal and vertical dimensions, termed full collinearity when both are taken into account. In variance-based structural equation modelling (SEM) methods like PLS-SEM, full collinearity may remain despite constructs being unique and having successfully undergone conventional discriminant validity tests, including the Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loading evaluations (Kock & Lyn, 2012). This is due to the fact that constructs may remain repetitive even when they seem statistically diverse according to these prevalent validity assessments. In PLS-SEM, full collinearity serves as an enhanced criterion for evaluating discriminant validity, particularly when the model incorporates a combination of reflective, composite (formative), or single-item components (Kock, 2015).

The study emphasises the importance of evaluating inner VIF values to mitigate any collinearity concerns within the structural model. Although discriminant validity could be something that was previously considered, it is crucial to independently assess collinearity inside the structural model to guarantee the trustworthiness of the results (Ramayah et al., 2018). Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2006) assert that a VIF value below 3.3 or 5 is deemed acceptable, but values over these criteria suggest a possible collinearity issue.

All VIF values are much below the thresholds of 3.3 and 5, demonstrating an absence of substantial collinearity issues in the structural model. It indicates that the associations among emotional intelligence (EI), job performance (JP), and leader-member exchange (LMX) are sufficiently unique and do not exhibit significant overlap. Consequently, the findings of these correlations might be deemed reliable and valid for interpretation. Table 4.10 indicates that all VIF values are below 3.3 and 5, signifying the absence of collinearity concerns.

Table 4.10: Full Collinearity Test

Construct	Items	Outer VIF Values	Inner VIF Values
Job Performance	JP 1	1.471	1.049
	JP2	2.195	
	JP3	1.708	
	JP4	1.668	
	JP5	1.822	
	JP6	1.863	
Leader-Member Exchange	LMX1	2.168	1.108
	LMX2	1.968	
	LMX3	1.865	
	LMX4	2.252	
	LMX5	2.591	
	RM1	3.335	
	RM2	3.070	
	RM3	3.450	
	RM4	3.072	
	RM5	2.695	
	SA2	2.616	
	SA3	2.121	

Table 4.10 continued

Emotional Intelligence	SA4	2.993	1.157
	SA5	3.907	
	SA6	2.911	
	SA7	2.255	
	SM1	2.613	
	SM2	3.170	
	SM3	3.614	
	SM4	2.882	
	SM5	3.607	
	SM6	3.388	
	SOA3	2.256	
	SOA5	2.759	
	SOA6	3.314	

4.7.2 Path Coefficient

Path coefficients are essential as they denote the proposed links among constructs (Ramayah et al., 2018). Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis is non-parametric and is not predicated on data distribution, which can influence t-values and potentially result in Type I errors in instances of non-normal data (Ramayah et al., 2018). Path coefficient values span from +1 to -1, with values approaching +1 signifying a robust positive link and those around -1 denoting a strong negative relationship.

The importance of these coefficients is ascertained by their standard error, derived by bootstrapping (Hair et al., 2016). The current investigation employed bootstrapping with 500 subsamples, utilising a one-tailed test at a significance level of 0.05. The t-statistics output demonstrates the significance of each relationship. The findings for the path coefficient (β), standard error, t-value, and p-value are reported appropriately. The results are utilised to evaluate the support for the study's presented hypotheses, as elaborated in section 4.7.8.

4.7.3 Coefficient of Determination (R-squared)

The coefficient of determination, or R-squared (R^2), is a statistical metric that signifies the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be predicted from the independent variables. It is fundamentally the square of the correlation between the observed and expected values of the endogenous variable. An elevated R^2 value indicates enhanced prediction precision of the model. Determining appropriate R^2 values can be difficult, as they fluctuate based on the model's complexity and the particular research domain. In marketing research, R^2 values of 0.75, 0.5, and 0.25 are often regarded as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively (Hair et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2009).

The R-squared (R^2) value for Job Performance (JP) is 0.536, while the adjusted R-squared value is 0.527. This means that 53.6% of the variance in Job Performance is explained by the independent variables (such as Emotional Intelligence, Leader-Member Exchange, and their interaction) in the model. According to the benchmarks suggested by Hair et al. (2011) and Henseler et al. (2009), an R^2 value of 0.5 is considered moderate. Therefore, the R^2 value in this case indicates a moderately strong explanatory power of the model, suggesting that the independent variables significantly contribute to predicting Job Performance. The adjusted R-squared value (0.527) is slightly lower, reflecting a small adjustment for the number of predictors in the model. This indicates that the model is stable and robust, with minimal overfitting. Overall, the results demonstrate a reliable predictive capability of the independent variables for Job Performance in this context.

4.7.4 Effect Size (f-squared)

The F-square (f^2) effect size is utilised in PLS-SEM to evaluate the relative influence of a predictor variable on the R-square value of the dependant variable. It assists in assessing

the strength of the relationship between the constructs inside the model. A variable in a structural model may be influenced by several factors, and the removal of exogenous variables (IV) might impact the dependent variable. Consequently, F-Square alters R-Square when the independent variable is excluded from the model. Cohen (1988) posits that F-square values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 signify minor, medium, and large effects, respectively.

The F-square (f^2) values elucidate the comparative influence of independent factors on the dependent variable, Job Performance (JP), inside the model. Cohen (1988) posits that f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 correspond to modest, medium, and large impacts, respectively. The correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Job Performance (JP) exhibits a f^2 value of 0.951, indicating a substantial effect size. This illustrates that Emotional Intelligence is a crucial predictor of Job Performance, suggesting that its exclusion from the model would result in a notable decrease in the R^2 value for Job Performance.

The correlation between Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and Job Performance (JP) exhibits a f^2 value of 0.015, signifying a minor effect size. This indicates that although LMX is a component of the model, its influence on Job Performance is negligible and may lack practical significance. The relationship between Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) regarding Job Performance has a f^2 value of 0.048, indicating a small-to-moderate effect size. This suggests that the moderating influence of LMX and EI on Job Performance exists but is comparatively limited, providing a minor enhancement in elucidating the variance of Job Performance.

Thus, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the primary component affecting Job Performance, demonstrating a significant and considerable influence inside the model. Although Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) exerts a minor influence and its combination

with Emotional Intelligence yields a slight effect, their collective impact does not surpass the significant predictive capacity of Emotional Intelligence. These findings highlight the significance of prioritising Emotional Intelligence as a primary determinant of Job Performance, while LMX serves a supportive though comparatively minor role. Table 4.11 presents pertinent F-square values for all examined relationships.

Table 4.11: F-squared values

Relationship	F-squared
EI -> JP	0.951
LMX -> JP	0.015
LMX x EI -> JP	0.048

4.7.5 Predictive Relevance (Q-squared)

Q² (Q-squared) is computed using the blindfolding procedure in SmartPLS, serving as an indicator for evaluating the model's predictive relevance or its potential for out-of-sample prediction. Blindfolding serves as a technique for sample recycling, systematically excluding data points from the indicators of an endogenous construct and recalibrating the parameters with the residual data (Henseler et al., 2009; Tenenhaus et al., 2005). A Q² value greater than zero indicates that the model has predictive relevance for a certain endogenous construct. A Q² score below zero signifies a lack of predictive usefulness (Hair et al., 2016).

The results from the analysis indicate that the model demonstrates predictive relevance for Job Performance (JP), with a Q² value of 0.286. This suggests that the model can explain approximately 28.6% of the variance in JP, reflecting a moderate effect size and indicating that the predictors in the model contribute meaningfully to the prediction of Job Performance. This finding highlights the model's capability to provide relevant out-of-sample predictions for JP, making it a valuable component of the structural framework.

Therefore, the Q^2 values for Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) are both 0.000, indicating that the model lacks predictive relevance for these constructs. This means that the structural relationships within the model do not explain any variance in EI or LMX beyond what is accounted for by the measurement. These results suggest that while the model effectively predicts Job Performance, it may require refinement or the inclusion of additional predictors to enhance its predictive capacity for Emotional Intelligence and Leader-Member Exchange.

4.7.6 Model Fit

In structural equation modelling (SEM), model fit denotes the degree to which a proposed model accurately reflects the observed data. It is a vital component of SEM analysis, as it demonstrates the degree to which the theoretical model, with its proposed correlations among variables, corresponds with the actual data patterns. An acceptable model fit indicates that the proposed model accurately reflects the underlying data structure, and the hypothesised relationships align with empirical observations (Kline, 2016). In PLS-SEM, model fit evaluation is less prioritised compared to covariance-based SEM, as PLS-SEM emphasises prediction and variance elucidation. Nevertheless, indices like SRMR continue to be utilised for evaluating the overall fit of the model in PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2017).

Evaluating model fit is essential in SEM analysis, since it demonstrates the extent to which the theoretical model aligns with the actual data. Researchers employ many fit indices to assess model adequacy, and an acceptable model fit enhances the validity of research findings. The findings indicate that the SRMR values for both the saturated and estimated models are 0.079. This number slightly falls short of the widely recognised threshold of 0.08 for an optimal fit, signifying a satisfactory alignment of the model with the data. The NFI

values are 0.805 for the saturated model and 0.804 for the estimated model. NFI levels approaching 1 signify a superior fit, with values exceeding 0.90 often regarded as satisfactory. The NFI values approximate this threshold, indicating a moderate to acceptable match. The model fit indices demonstrated a satisfactory fit to the data. The SRMR number is just below the threshold, while the NFI readings are near the ideal level. The results suggest that the estimated model adequately fits the observed data (Zainab et al., 2019).

In refining the measurement models for Emotional Intelligence (EI), Job Performance (JP), and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) as a moderator, several key factors were considered to ensure the robustness and validity of the constructs within the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) framework. The retained questions for EI, JP, and LMX demonstrated statistically significant correlations with their respective constructs, underscoring their importance in capturing the essence of emotional intelligence, job performance, and leader-member interactions. This statistical significance reflects that these questions are vital for accurately measuring the constructs and their interrelationships in the model.

Additionally, the retained questions exhibited strong factor loadings, indicating they effectively represent the underlying dimensions of each construct. For example, the retained items for EI align with its theoretical dimensions, such as self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness, which are critical for influencing job performance. Similarly, the retained items for JP focus on task performance, collaboration, and innovation at work, while the LMX items highlight leader-member trust and support as moderators of the EI-JP relationship. The retained items were carefully selected to improve the model's overall fit, as evidenced by improved goodness-of-fit indices, demonstrating the model's ability to accurately reflect the relationships between EI, JP, and LMX. This alignment ensures that

the SEM analysis provides valid insights into how emotional intelligence drives job performance and how LMX moderates this relationship.

Moreover, the retained items revealed meaningful variability and consistency across constructs, indicating that they effectively captured employees' diverse perceptions and experiences of emotional intelligence, job performance, and leader-member exchanges. For EI, the retained items focus on its role in fostering better interpersonal relationships and emotional regulation, which directly impact job performance. For JP, the emphasis is on performance outcomes and innovation at work, while for LMX, the retained questions emphasize how leader-member dynamics moderate the influence of emotional intelligence on performance outcomes. These results strengthen confidence in the validity and reliability of the measurement models, affirming that the constructs capture meaningful aspects of employee experiences and contribute to understanding the overall model fit within the SEM framework.

4.7.7 Moderation Analysis

Moderation analysis is a statistical method employed to investigate the extent to which the strength or direction of the relationship between an independent variable (IV) and a dependent variable (DV) is affected by a third variable, referred to as the moderator variable (MOD). In the framework of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), moderation analysis examines the interaction effect between the independent variable and the moderator on the dependent variable (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017).

The interaction term (INT) is established through the multiplication of the independent variable and the moderator variable, represented as $INT = IV \times MOD$. The significance and strength of this interaction term within the model are critical in assessing

the presence and magnitude of the moderation effect. Should the interaction term demonstrate significance, it indicates that the moderator variable has a substantial effect on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The moderation effect's direction, whether positive or negative, is ascertained by the sign of the path coefficient associated with the interaction term (Hair et al., 2017).

According to the research findings, the evaluation of moderation effects in PLS-SEM is generally conducted using bootstrapping techniques. This resampling technique calculates the standard errors and significance levels of the path coefficients, incorporating the interaction term. This enables researchers to assess the statistical significance of the moderation effect and its influence on the model (Hair et al., 2017). The analysis of path coefficients demonstrates that Emotional Intelligence (EI) has a strong and statistically significant impact on Job Performance (JP). The path coefficient from EI to JP is 0.715, with a T-statistic of 16.956 and a p-value of 0.000, confirming a highly significant positive relationship. These findings highlight that higher levels of emotional intelligence among employees are strongly associated with improved job performance, making EI a critical factor in this context.

However, the direct effect of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on Job Performance (JP) is not statistically significant. The path coefficient for LMX to JP is 0.089, with a T-statistic of 1.468 and a p-value of 0.142, which exceeds the commonly accepted threshold of significance ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that while LMX may influence workplace dynamics, it does not directly impact job performance in this model, suggesting its role may be more indirect.

However, the interaction term (LMX x EI $\rightarrow$ JP) reveals a statistically significant and positive moderation effect, with a path coefficient of 0.133, a T-statistic of 2.563, and a p-value of 0.010. This indicates that Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) significantly enhances the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. These results underscore the importance of high-quality leader-member interactions in amplifying the positive effects of emotional intelligence on job performance, highlighting the synergistic role of LMX as a moderator in this relationship.

4.7.8 Hypothesis Testing

Following the assessment of the measurement mode, the subsequent step entails the evaluation of the structural path to ascertain the path coefficients, which indicate the relationships within the research constructs, along with their statistical significance. Bootstrapping is performed to evaluate the hypothesis. Bootstrapping plays a vital role in hypothesis testing as it offers a technique for estimating the distribution of samples of a statistic while imposing minimal assumptions regarding the distribution of the data. The method enhances accuracy through the generation of multiple estimates, demonstrates robustness to non-normality, and exhibits adaptability across a range of statistical tests and models. Bootstrapping improves the reliability of hypothesis testing through the provision of robust parameter estimates and the ability to accommodate complex research designs.

H1: Self-awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

Based on the findings, the hypothesis assessing whether self-awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance is supported. The results indicate a path coefficient ($\beta=0.196$), T-statistic ($t=2.089$), and p-value ($p=0.037$), demonstrating a statistically significant relationship. The observed 95% confidence interval (0.012; 0.372)

excludes zero, confirming the validity of the hypothesis. This evidence highlights that self-awareness significantly contributes to job performance, underscoring its importance in enhancing individual self-regulation and workplace behaviors.

H2: Social awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

The hypothesis assessing whether social awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance is not supported. The results show a path coefficient ($\beta=0.035$), T-statistic ($t=0.381t$), and p-value ($p=0.704p$), indicating no statistically significant relationship. Furthermore, the observed 95% confidence interval ($-0.151; 0.216$) includes zero, confirming the lack of significance. These findings suggest that social awareness does not significantly contribute to job performance within this context.

H3: Self-management has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

The hypothesis assessing whether self-management has a significant and positive impact on job performance is strongly supported. The results revealed that the path coefficient ($\beta=0.379$), T-statistic ($t=5.360t$), and p-value ($p=0.000p$) confirm a statistically significant relationship. The observed 95% confidence interval ($0.236; 0.516$) excludes zero, validating the robustness of the findings. As a result, the study rejects the null hypothesis and determines that self-management is a crucial predictor of job performance, likely due to its influence on personal discipline and task completion.

H4: Relationship management has a significant and positive impact on job performance.

The hypothesis assessing whether relationship management has a significant and positive impact on job performance is supported. The results revealed that the path coefficient ($\beta=0.257$), T-statistic ($t=2.964$), and p-value ($p=0.003$) demonstrate a statistically significant relationship. The observed 95% confidence interval ($0.099; 0.452$) excludes zero,

confirming the robustness of the findings. As a result, the study rejects the null hypothesis and determines that relationship management significantly contributes to improved workplace collaboration and job performance.

H5: LMX moderates the relationship between self-awareness and job performance.

The hypothesis assessing whether Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) significantly moderates the relationship is not supported. The results revealed that the path coefficient ($\beta = -0.038$), T-statistic ($t = 0.414$), and p-value ($p = 0.679$) demonstrate no statistically significant moderation effect. Additionally, the observed 95% confidence interval ($-0.225; 0.135$) includes zero, confirming the lack of significance. To clarify, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis on the grounds that the T-value does not exceed the critical value, and the p-value is above the predetermined significance level of 5%. As a result, it is determined that the moderation effect of LMX is not statistically significant in this context.

H6: LMX moderates the relationship between social awareness and job performance.

The hypothesis assessing whether Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) significantly moderates the relationship is not supported. The results revealed that the path coefficient ($\beta = -0.011$), T-statistic ($t = 0.111$), and p-value ($p = 0.911$) indicate no statistically significant moderation effect. Additionally, the observed 95% confidence interval ($-0.214; 0.147$) includes zero, confirming the lack of significance. To clarify, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis on the grounds that the T-value does not exceed the critical value, and the p-value is above the predetermined significance level of 5%. As a result, it is determined that the moderation effect of LMX is not statistically significant in this context.

H7: LMX moderates the relationship between self-management and job performance.

The hypothesis evaluating the moderating effect of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on the relationship is not supported. The results indicated that the path coefficient ($\beta = 0.028$), T-statistic ($t = 0.403$), and p-value ($p = 0.687$) demonstrate no statistically significant moderation effect. The observed 95% confidence interval ($-0.103; 0.170$) encompasses zero, thereby confirming the absence of statistical significance. The study does not reject the null hypothesis because the T-value is below the critical value, and the p-value is greater than the established significance level of 5%. The analysis indicates that the moderation effect of LMX is not statistically significant in this context.

H8: LMX moderates the relationship between relationship management and job performance.

The hypothesis evaluating the moderating effect of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on the relationship between relationship management and job performance is affirmed. The findings indicate that the path coefficient ($\beta=0.168$), T-statistic ($t=2.011$), and p-value ($p=0.044$) demonstrate a statistically significant moderation effect. The observed 95% confidence interval ($-0.030; 0.310$) does not include zero, thereby validating the hypothesis. The study concludes that the null hypothesis is rejected due to the T-value surpassing the critical value, while the p-value remains below the established significance threshold of 5%. The findings indicate that LMX increases the influence of relationship management on job performance, thereby enhancing its positive effects.

The results of direct relationships and moderation effects are presented in Table 4.12 and Table 4.13. The structural model is presented below:

Table 4.12: Results of Direct Relationships

Hypothesis	β	SE	T	P	Confidence Interval Bias	Decision	Results
H1: Self-Awareness -> JP	0.196	0.094	2.089	0.037	0.012; 0.372	Reject Ho	Supported
H2: Social Awareness -> JP	0.035	0.093	0.381	0.704	-0.151; 0.216	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Supported
H3: Self-Management -> JP	0.379	0.071	5.360	0.000	0.236; 0.516	Reject Ho	Supported
H4: Relationship Management -> JP	0.257	0.087	2.964	0.003	0.099; 0.452	Reject Ho	Supported

Table 4.13: Moderation Effect of LMX on Emotional Intelligence towards Job Performance

Hypothesis	β	SE	T	P	Confidence Interval Bias	Decision	Results
H5: LMX Moderates Self-Awareness -> JP	-0.038	0.093	0.414	0.679	-0.225; 0.135	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Supported
H6: LMX Moderates Social Awareness -> JP	-0.011	0.100	0.111	0.911	-0.214; 0.147	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Supported
H7: LMX Moderates Self-Management -> JP	0.028	0.069	0.403	0.687	-0.103; 0.170	Fail to Reject Ho	Not Supported
H8: LMX Moderates Relationship Management -> JP	0.168	0.084	2.011	0.044	-0.030; 0.310	Reject Ho	Supported

4.8 Discussion of Research Findings

This section analyses the findings derived from the data analysis in the previous chapter. The findings will be examined in connection with the research objectives established in this study, alongside a comparison with the findings of prior studies. Theories previously addressed will be employed to analyse the findings' alignment with existing literature. Inconsistencies with prior literature will be addressed, providing probable clarification and justifications.

4.8.1 Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

RO1: To identify the relationship of emotional intelligence (such as self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management) on job performance in an organization.

The first research objective of this study was to confirm the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and job performance (JP). The analysis highlights the varying impact of emotional intelligence dimensions on job performance within organizations like SAINS and SDEC, which are pivotal in Sarawak's digital transformation. The findings align with existing research emphasizing the importance of EI in dynamic, innovation-driven industries. Self-awareness exhibited a significant positive effect on job performance ($\beta = 0.196$, $T = 2.089$, $p = 0.037$), demonstrating that employees who understand their emotions can better align their actions with organizational goals. This finding is particularly relevant given that the majority of the study participants hold at least a degree-level education (63.4%), indicating a higher capacity for reflection and self-awareness. Previous studies support this, noting that self-awareness enhances employees' ability to manage tasks effectively and adapt to changing environments, which is critical in the fast-evolving digital

sector (Thapa, 2023). This is particularly relevant as adaptability and proactive responses are essential for organizations driving technological change (Carmeli et al., 2010).

Self-management showed the strongest positive relationship with job performance ($\beta = 0.379$, $T = 5.360$, $p < 0.001$), emphasizing the value of disciplined and stress-resilient employees. The finding is notable given that 54.3% of participants reported less than five years of work experience, suggesting that newer employees may rely heavily on self-management skills to cope with the challenges of adapting to novel and demanding work settings. Similarly, 12.2% of participants with less than ten years of experience may find self-management crucial for establishing their roles in evolving digital environments. Employees with robust self-management skills contribute effectively in high-pressure environments, such as those involved in digital transformation initiatives (Gun et al., 2024). Relationship management also had a significant positive impact on job performance ($\beta = 0.257$, $T = 2.964$, $p = 0.003$), highlighting the importance of fostering collaboration and teamwork. Research has shown that strong interpersonal relationships enhance workplace innovation and productivity, particularly in cross-functional and collaborative environments that are common in digital organizations (Modise, 2023). Social Exchange Theory (SET) posits that individuals participate in a reciprocal relationship with their organisation, trading efforts, rewards, and recognition. In organisations characterised by a robust innovative culture, employees are likely to view their contributions as recognised and rewarded, which motivates ongoing innovation (Kmieciak, 2020).

However, social awareness did not significantly impact job performance ($\beta = 0.035$, $T = 0.381$, $p = 0.704$), suggesting that recognizing others' emotions may be less critical in highly technical contexts. This aligns with findings that, in task-oriented industries like

Sarawak's digital sector, interpersonal awareness may not directly influence individual contributions as much as technical skills do (Vallasamy et al., 2024). Additionally, the high levels of autonomy and independent work structures in such industries may further reduce the immediate importance of social awareness (Jolly et al., 2021). Based on the finding, participants with advanced education, such as the small proportion of participants holding PhDs (1.2%), may focus more on technical competencies and research contributions, where social awareness is less central.

In light of this, the findings underscore the critical role of self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management in enhancing job performance in Sarawak's digital sector. The participants' demographics, particularly their education level and work experience, shape the significance of these EI dimensions. These results suggest that future organizational strategies should focus on strengthening self-management and relationship-building skills, while acknowledging the reduced relevance of social awareness in this specific context.

4.8.2 The Moderating Effects of LMX on the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance.

RO2: To examine the moderating impact of leader-member exchange on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in an organization.

The findings provide critical insights into the moderating effect of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) dimensions and job performance (JP). While some EI dimensions demonstrated no significant moderation by LMX, relationship management emerged as a key area where LMX plays a significant role in enhancing job performance. For self-awareness, LMX did not significantly moderate

its relationship with job performance ($\beta = 0.038$, $T = 0.414$, $p = 0.679$). This suggests that self-awareness operates as an intrinsic characteristic rather than an externally influenced one. Role theory explains this by emphasizing the predefined expectations of executive roles, where self-awareness is presumed to be inherent. Given that 51.2% of participants occupy executive-level roles, the performance impact of self-awareness may stem more from internal reflection and alignment with organizational goals than from relational influences like LMX. Prior research supports this, indicating that self-awareness is often linked to individual introspection and goal setting in professional roles (Bratton et al., 2011).

Similarly, no significant moderation effect of LMX was observed for social awareness ($\beta = 0.011$, $T = 0.111$, $p = 0.911$). This finding implies that recognizing others' emotions may not be pivotal in highly technical or task-oriented contexts such as Sarawak's digital sector. Role theory highlights that the demands of technical roles, particularly those held by senior executives (15.9%), focus on achieving tangible results and operational efficiency rather than fostering interpersonal connections. Furthermore, the high proportion of early-career professionals (54.3% with less than five years of experience) might indicate that participants prioritize technical skills over relational skills like social awareness in their roles.

For self-management, LMX also did not significantly moderate its relationship with job performance ($\beta = 0.028$, $T = 0.403$, $p = 0.687$). Self-management is largely a self-regulated process, where employees rely on personal discipline to meet role expectations. Role theory suggests that individuals in professional roles, such as the managers and senior executives who represent 23.2% of participants, often rely on their own capabilities rather than relational dynamics to navigate workplace challenges. This aligns with the demographic data showing that a large proportion of participants are early in their careers, with 54.3%

having less than five years of experience. These individuals may prioritize internal self-regulation skills as they establish themselves in the workforce. Supporting research suggests that self-management is critical for early-career employees adapting to high-pressure environments, as highlighted by Wilhelm & Hirschi (2019).

However, LMX significantly moderated the relationship between relationship management and job performance ($\beta = 0.168$, $T = 2.011$, $p = 0.044$). This finding underscores the importance of strong leader-member relationships in enhancing collaboration and interpersonal effectiveness. Role theory supports this, highlighting that relationship management aligns with the relational and contextual aspects of leadership roles. Executives and managers (13.4% of participants) often rely on relationship management to navigate team dynamics and foster a collaborative work environment. The presence of high-quality LMX appears to amplify these efforts, providing trust and support that facilitate better performance outcomes. Additionally, participants with longer tenure (12.2% with 5-10 years of experience) likely leverage established relationships with leaders to enhance team cohesion and productivity. This is consistent with the findings of Atkins (2011), who identified trust and collaboration as pivotal in leadership roles.

These findings have important implications for organizations like SAINS and SDEC, particularly in Sarawak's digital sector. The lack of significant moderation for self-awareness, social awareness, and self-management suggests that these EI dimensions are primarily self-driven and align with predefined role expectations, making them less reliant on LMX. However, the significant role of LMX in relationship management highlights the need for organizations to foster high-quality leader-member relationships, particularly in roles requiring collaboration and interpersonal influence. Leadership development programs should prioritize trust-building and collaboration between leaders and team members to

maximize the benefits of relationship management. For early-career employees, initiatives to develop self-management skills independently of LMX should also be emphasized. Social Exchange Theory (SET) posits that the quality of the exchange relationship between leaders and employees can affect employee outcomes (Blau, 1964). This study indicates that the limited influence of LMX on employees' emotional intelligence may imply that the perceived exchange relationship is insufficient to significantly improve job performance.

Hence, the findings demonstrate the nuanced role of LMX in moderating the relationship between EI and JP. While LMX enhances the impact of relationship management on job performance, its influence on other EI dimensions appears limited. This highlights the importance of tailoring organizational strategies to the specific demands of different roles and the developmental needs of employees. Future research could further explore how LMX interacts with other organizational factors, such as culture and job design, to influence EI and performance outcomes in dynamic and technical industries (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the results of the research, that included the analysis of data and respondents' profiles utilising SPSS for descriptive analysis. SmartPLS 4.0 was utilised to analyse the structural and measurement aspects of the study model. The model's constructs have been examined for reliability and validity via measurement analysis, yielding satisfactory results. In the measurement assessment phase, the model paths were examined through bootstrapping to provide confidence intervals and degrees of significance for the study results. Empirical evidence has established several significant relationships between emotional intelligence and job performance. The findings indicate a substantial positive effect of emotional intelligence on job performance. The expected moderating effect of

LMX on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance was not confirmed. This chapter presents a discussion of the results, implications, and proposed avenues for future research, as well as the associated research limitations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a thorough examination and discourse on the results of the data analysis. The debate commences by reiterating the study's purpose and research questions to establish context for the ensuing discourse. The chapter subsequently explores the principal findings, providing explanations and justifications for the notable results discovered. The research's contributions to the existing research and its managerial implications, that may benefit decision-makers, are then delineated. The chapter subsequently examines the study's weaknesses and suggests possible avenues for future investigation. In conclusion, the chapter presents a summary that incorporates the course of the research, providing an in-depth review of the research and its findings.

5.2 Recapitulation of the Study

This study aimed to examine the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Job Performance among employees of two Sarawak-based Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) in the digital sector, SAINS and SDEC. It also examined if the quality of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) moderates this relationship. These organisations are essential to Sarawak's digital transformation initiative and function within a culturally heterogeneous public-sector context. The study provides significant insights into workplace dynamics within a technologically advancing and multiracial environment.

The conceptual framework identified emotional intelligence as the independent variable (IV), job performance as the dependent variable (DV), and leader-member

exchange as the moderating variable. Utilising Social Exchange Theory and Role Theory, the study posited that individuals with elevated emotional intelligence will exhibit enhanced job performance, especially when bolstered by high-quality leader-member connections. Emotional Intelligence (EI) was conceptualised through four fundamental dimensions: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management.

Data were gathered from 164 persons throughout Sarawak through an online questionnaire survey, focussing on employees from SAINS and SDEC. Validated measures tailored for the Malaysian context were employed to assess the constructs. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was utilised to examine both direct and interaction effects within the suggested model. The results indicated a robust and favourable correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance across all four domains of EI. This corroborates the theoretical premise that emotionally intelligent persons are more adept at navigating interpersonal relationships, self-regulating in intricate contexts, and achieving enhanced professional results. Contrary to original assumptions, LMX did not significantly alter the association for three domains of EI: self-awareness, social awareness, and self-management. These aspects seem to be more internally governed and congruent with individual role expectations, rendering their influence on performance less reliant on leader-subordinate relationships.

Although moderation is absent in those particular domains, the analysis underscores the overarching significance of LMX within the organisational framework. High-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) interactions continue to correlate with favourable workplace outcomes and may interact more significantly with other relational or contextual variables in forthcoming studies. The study significantly contributes cultural uniqueness by analysing these dynamics within Sarawak's collectivist, high power-distance workplace

culture, a facet frequently neglected in mainstream emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange literature.

This research theoretically extends the application of Western-centric conceptions, such as Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), to the under-explored context of Southeast Asian digital Government-Linked Companies (GLCs). It provides practical benefits for leadership and human resource development, especially in organisations experiencing digital transition. Leaders must be educated to strengthen their emotional intelligence and cultivate high-trust, emotionally attuned relationships with subordinates to facilitate performance improvement.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is a vital psychological asset in organisations that are digitally advancing and culturally intricate. The moderating role of LMX was not entirely substantiated, however its relational significance persists. Collectively, these findings highlight the necessity for emotionally intelligent leadership that is attuned to technological advancements and cultural diversity, especially within Malaysia's evolving public sector environment.

5.3 Summary of Findings

The comprehensive research findings are shown in Table 5.3, including all study hypotheses and their respective outcomes. Four hypotheses received statistical validation, resulting in their approval. The moderation effect indicates that the link between LMX and JP lacks any moderating effects except for one. Table 5.1 presents an overview of the findings regarding all the hypotheses.

Table 5.1: Overview of the Findings Regarding All the Hypotheses

RQ1 Do emotional intelligence (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management) influence the employees' job performance) in SAINS and SDEC?		
Hypothesis	Descriptions	Results
H1	Self-awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance.	Accepted
H2	Social awareness has a significant and positive impact on job performance.	Not Accepted
H3	Self-management has a significant and positive impact on job performance.	Accepted
H4	Relationship management has a significant and positive impact on job performance.	Accepted
RQ2 Does leader-member exchange moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of SAINS and SDEC?		
H5	LMX moderates the relationship between self-awareness and job performance.	No Moderation
H6	LMX moderates the relationship between social awareness and job performance.	No Moderation
H7	LMX moderates the relationship between self-management and job performance.	No Moderation
H8	LMX moderates the relationship between relationship management and job performance.	Moderate

5.4 Implications of Research

This study examined the impact of emotional intelligence on job performance in Sarawak GLCs within the digital sector, with LMX serving as a moderating variable. This study was informed by social exchange theory (SET) and role theory to elucidate the interplay of emotion, job performance, and leader-member relationships. A comprehensive

conceptual model was created to fill the theoretical and contextual gaps revealed in a thorough literature assessment.

The conclusions of this investigation possess considerable theoretical and practical ramifications. This research theoretically enhances the current literature by investigating the correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance, a generally neglected domain within the Sarawak GLC's digital sector. Moreover, the studyvclarify how LMX moderates this link, offering novel insights into the complex interplay between emotion and performance.

5.4.1 Theoretical Implications

This study's findings provide substantial theoretical insights into the correlation between emotional intelligence (EI) and job performance (JP), analysed through the frameworks of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Role Theory. Both theories provide a conceptual framework for comprehending how emotional and relational competences influence workplace results, especially within the digital public-sector organisations of Sarawak, namely SAINS and SDEC.

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) asserts that workplace interpersonal behaviour is regulated by reciprocity, leading individuals to do constructive activities when they foresee reciprocal advantages. This study demonstrates that emotional intelligence (EI) positively impacts job performance (JP), as emotionally intelligent individuals tend to foster trust, engage in supportive interactions, and reciprocate positive treatment, resulting in enhanced performance. The moderating effect of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) was not entirely validated. Although high-quality LMX enhanced the impact of relationship management on job performance, it failed to substantially alter the other dimensions of emotional intelligence. This nuance contests the

universality of SET in this situation, indicating that certain EI traits may function independently of mutual leader-subordinate dynamics.

Role Theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978) clarifies the findings by demonstrating how emotional abilities aid employees in comprehending, internalising, and meeting their job expectations. Self-awareness had a significant positive correlation with job performance, reinforcing the idea that people who comprehend their emotional responses are better equipped to align their behaviour with organisational objectives. This discovery is particularly pertinent for those in distinctly defined positions such as executives, comprising 51.2% of the sample who depend on internal self-regulation instead of outward relational signals, hence reinforcing Role Theory's premise of internal role alignment.

Self-management substantially affected job performance, especially among early-career employees (54.3% with under five years of experience) who typically receive minimal supervisory guidance. This observation is consistent with Role Theory, emphasising the significance of personal regulation and adaptability in fulfilling job expectations. Conversely, from the standpoint of Social Exchange Theory, self-management seems to operate less as a reaction to social interactions and more as an individual competency.

The influence of relationship management was considerable, bolstering both theoretical viewpoints. The affirmative moderation by LMX in this aspect indicates that trust and mutual respect augment an employee's capacity to cultivate collaboration and cohesion especially in mid- to senior-level positions (23.2% of respondents) where interpersonal efficacy is essential. This substantiates SET's argument that relational quality enhances workplace behaviours and corroborates Role Theory's premise that role demands, especially in leadership and coordinating positions, necessitate elevated relational competency.

The insignificant correlation between social awareness and job performance (H2), along with the lack of LMX moderation (H6), suggests potential environmental constraints. In task-oriented settings such as Sarawak's digital industry, technical proficiency may be emphasised over interpersonal acumen. Consequently, whereas Social Exchange Theory generally posits that interpersonal awareness enhances productive interactions, the results indicate a more limited relevance in positions with restricted job parameters. Role Theory elucidates that specific tasks may not require elevated degrees of social perception when performance is contingent upon technical execution instead of relational dynamics.

These findings enhance theoretical comprehension by differentiating between the role-based components (self-awareness, self-management) and the relational component (relationship management) of emotional intelligence. Theories such as SET are augmented by the understanding that relational quality selectively amplifies the performance effects of EI, contingent upon the role's character and the organisational context. Simultaneously, Role Theory is substantiated by the finding that emotional intelligence enables individuals to autonomously interpret and meet role expectations, especially within formalised, hierarchical frameworks like those present in Sarawak's government-linked companies.

In conclusion, the amalgamation of Social Exchange Theory and Role Theory provides a comprehensive framework for elucidating the impact of many dimensions of emotional intelligence on job performance. It further illustrates the conditional significance of LMX as a moderating variable, intricately linked to role specificity and organisational culture. Future study could enhance understanding by integrating additional dimensions, such as organisational culture or job design, as mediating variables to clarify the contextual dynamics influencing emotional intelligence's effect on performance in digital and GLC settings.

5.4.2 Practical Implications

This study offers significant practical consequences for Sarawak GLC's in the digital sector, which includes SAINS and SDEC and their employees. The research emphasises the significance of emotional intelligence in enhancing employees' job performance, essential for sustaining a competitive advantage in the swiftly changing digital industry. Nonetheless, given that LMX exerts only a marginal influence on employees' job performance, organisations within the digital sector should contemplate numerous practical ramifications.

This study offers significant practical implications for organisations, leaders, and policymakers, especially in dynamic and innovation-centric sectors like Sarawak's digital industry. The substantial correlation between the components of emotional intelligence (EI)—self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management—and job performance (JP) highlights the necessity for organisations to incorporate emotional intelligence training into their staff development initiatives. Organisations such as SAINS and SDEC can improve overall employee performance by creating courses and interventions aimed at cultivating self-awareness and self-management abilities. These skills empower employees to synchronise their activities with organisational objectives and handle stress efficiently, which is essential for high-pressure positions in swiftly changing industries.

The findings underscore the necessity for leaders to cultivate high-quality Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) connections, especially in enhancing the influence of relationship management on job performance. Leaders that cultivate trust and facilitate open communication with their subordinates foster an environment that promotes collaboration and teamwork. This is particularly pertinent for mid-level and senior leaders, who are instrumental in overseeing team interactions. Leaders should undertake practical measures such as conducting one-on-one meetings, offering constructive feedback, and promoting

collaborative decision-making procedures. These measures not only improve relationship management but also foster a favourable organisational climate that promotes innovation and productivity.

The study provides practical insights for early-career employees, who represented a substantial number of the participants. More than 54% of respondents possess fewer than five years of experience, indicating that self-management is an essential competency for overcoming workplace problems and building a professional identity. Organisations can implement specialised mentoring programs for junior staff to cultivate discipline, adaptability, and emotional management. These programs can reconcile the high technical demands of the digital economy with the interpersonal skills essential for sustained performance and professional advancement.

The findings underscore the necessity for policymakers to integrate emotional intelligence development into educational and professional training frameworks. With 63.4% of participants possessing at least a degree-level certification, there exists a substantial possibility to integrate EI-focused courses into higher education programs. Providing graduates with emotional intelligence skills before they enter the employment can facilitate a more seamless transfer into organisational positions and improve their job performance from the beginning. Policymakers ought to partner with educational institutions and industry leaders to formulate and execute such initiatives.

The study emphasises the importance of promoting inclusive leadership approaches that utilise LMX, alongside practical organisational ramifications. Although many aspects of emotional intelligence, including self-awareness and self-management, are predominantly self-directed, relationship management flourishes through robust leader-member exchanges.

This knowledge can guide leadership development programs, highlighting the significance of relational attributes, including trust-building, empathy, and collaboration. Stakeholders must guarantee that leadership evaluations and training initiatives align with these aims, empowering leaders to serve as catalysts for improved team performance.

The study ultimately offers a framework for tackling the distinct issues faced by technical industries, where social awareness may be less vital to job success. Organisations might emphasise the enhancement of technical skills while fostering relationship-building competencies in designated roles. Aligning employee development programs with job-specific objectives enables stakeholders to attain a balanced approach that improves both individual and organisational results. These insights collectively provide a strong basis for enhancing employee engagement, productivity, and overall organisational efficacy in the digital sector and beyond.

By addressing these practical implications, stakeholders in SAINS and SDEC can collaboratively establish an ecosystem that promotes emotional intelligence and enhances leader-member relationships, thereby improving performance and contributing to the industry's sustained success and competitiveness in both national and global markets.

5.4.3 Research Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study has provided significant insights into the relationship among emotional intelligence (EI), leader-member exchange (LMX), and job performance (JP) inside Sarawak-based digital government-linked firms (GLCs). Nonetheless, several constraints present opportunities for future research that can enrich theoretical comprehension and improve practical implementation.

The cross-sectional design of this study limits the capacity to infer causality among the primary variables. While substantial correlations exist between emotional intelligence dimensions especially self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management and job performance, the chronological sequence and causal direction of these interactions are ambiguous. Future research should apply longitudinal designs to examine the evolution of these variables over time, especially during periods of employment, organisational transition, or digital revolution. This would enable researchers to examine how emotional abilities and relationship exchanges evolve and impact job performance dynamically.

Secondly, dependence on self-reported data engenders the potential for response biases, including social desirability or the inflation of one's emotional abilities and performance. This is particularly pertinent in assessing conceptions such as self-awareness and self-management, because they're naturally reflective. Future study should integrate multi-source data gathering methods such as supervisor ratings, peer evaluations, or behavioural assessments to triangulate findings and achieve a more comprehensive knowledge of emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange in practice.

A further drawback is the comparatively restricted moderating impact identified for LMX, which was significant solely for relationship management. This result may indicate the industry-specific characteristics of Sarawak's digital sector, wherein technical positions and job autonomy may diminish the dependence on leader-subordinate relational dynamics. Consequently, subsequent research should investigate the operation of LMX across various industries and cultural contexts, especially those that prioritise team-oriented collaboration and interpersonal dynamics, to determine if the moderating influence of LMX becomes more significant in differing organisational environments.

The demographic concentration within the sample is an additional topic of concern. More than fifty percent of the participants were entry-level executives with fewer than five years of experience, thereby constraining the generalisability of the findings to more senior or diverse workforce groups. Subsequent study ought to investigate the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) across a wider spectrum of job levels, roles, and generational cohorts to ascertain whether the identified relationships persist during various phases of the employee lifecycle.

Furthermore, the study did not investigate the bidirectional characteristics of the LMX connection. This research assessed the moderating role of LMX on the relationship between EI and JP, although it overlooked the potential influence of emotionally intelligent behaviours on the evolution of LMX quality over time. Future study should investigate this reciprocal dynamic, potentially employing longitudinal or diary-based methodologies, to analyse how employees with high emotional intelligence foster the development of high-quality leader-member interactions.

This study also did not consider external contextual factors such as organisational structure, technological change, or economic conditions that may affect the association between emotional intelligence, leader-member exchange, and job performance. Future research may employ a multi-level or systems-based framework to analyse the interaction of larger determinants with individual capabilities and relationship mechanisms, influencing performance outcomes in dynamic organisational contexts.

To enhance the conceptual base, further research should incorporate alternative or complementary theoretical frameworks. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory elucidates how emotional competences and relational quality serve as personal and social resources in mitigating job pressures. Affective Events Theory (AET) offers a detailed

comprehension of how emotionally significant workplace occurrences affect behaviour and performance over time, especially in emotionally intricate positions or dynamic workplaces.

Moreover, researchers ought to investigate possible mediating and serial mediating mechanisms. Concepts such as psychological empowerment, work engagement, and organisational commitment may elucidate the indirect impact of emotional intelligence on job performance. Emotional intelligence can augment work engagement, hence enhance commitment and ultimately result in superior performance. Evaluating such models would enhance comprehension of the fundamental psychological mechanisms linking emotional intelligence, leader-member exchange, and job performance.

Enhancing the research context is essential. This study focused on two Sarawak GLCs; future research may compare outcomes across public and private sectors, digital and non-digital businesses, or even cross-nationally within Southeast Asia. Comparative analyses of collectivist cultures, including Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines, may provide insights into the influence of cultural values on the EI–LMX–JP relationship.

Ultimately, several potential research enquiries arise from the present findings. How does digital transformation influence the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance in government-linked companies (GLCs)? Does organisational culture act as a mediator or moderator in the relationship between emotional intelligence, leader-member exchange, and job performance in high power-distance contexts? In what manner can emotional regulation tactics influence perceived organisational support to improve performance? Addressing these enquiries would enhance both theoretical understanding and practical application in organisational behaviour, particularly in culturally varied and technologically advancing workplaces.

5.5 Conclusion

The research investigated the complex relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in Sarawak GLCs within the digital sector, highlighting their impact on job performance. Anchored on the theoretical constructs of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Role Theory, the research offered refined insights into the intricate relationships between leadership practices, organisational culture, and performance outcomes. The study examined the interaction between emotional intelligence characteristics and leader-member exchange to determine their impact on work performance, emphasising the contextual and relational aspects that affect leadership efficacy and organisational innovation in the swiftly changing digital industry.

5.5.1 Key Findings

The results indicate that dimensions of emotional intelligence (EI), including self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management, significantly and positively influence job performance in organisations such as SAINS and SDEC, hence affirming their critical role in improving employee outcomes. Nonetheless, social awareness was determined to exert no substantial impact on job performance, indicating its minimal relevance within these organisations. Furthermore, although Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) was anticipated to moderate the associations between emotional intelligence (EI) dimensions and job performance, the results indicated no significant moderation effects for self-awareness, social awareness, and self-management. LMX strongly influenced the connection between relationship management and job performance, highlighting the critical role of leader-member interactions in promoting effective collaboration and interpersonal dynamics in the workplace.

The findings indicate that although emotional intelligence is essential for job performance, the impact of leader-member exchange (LMX) on amplifying some aspects of emotional intelligence is restricted, with the exception of relationship management. This comprehensive knowledge underscores the necessity for customised leadership development methods that emphasise the cultivation of high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) connections, especially in positions necessitating collaboration and teamwork, to optimise the advantages of relationship management for job performance.

5.5.2 Contributions to the Sarawak GLCs in the Digital Industry

This study significantly contributes to Sarawak GLCs in the digital sector by providing empirical facts and practical insights to improve leadership and organisational practices. The results indicating that self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management substantially affect job performance offer practical insights for creating specialised emotional intelligence (EI) training initiatives. These programs may assist individuals in aligning their emotional competencies with organisational goals, particularly in dynamic and innovation-oriented environments such as the digital sector. The negligible impact of social awareness indicates that leadership development initiatives should prioritise self-regulation and interpersonal collaboration over solely enhancing emotional recognition in others.

The lack of a moderating effect of LMX on the associations between self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness with job performance highlights the autonomous influence of these emotional intelligence aspects on job outcomes. This indicates that Sarawak's GLCs ought to concentrate on enhancing individual competences via organised training initiatives that prioritise self-management and goal alignment. In relationship management, LMX was identified as a strong moderator of job performance, underscoring

the essential importance of leader-member trust and collaboration. Organisations ought to invest in cultivating robust leader-member relationships through mentorship programs and trust-building efforts to augment team cohesion and boost job performance.

This study indicates that employees in Sarawak's digital sector may prioritise technical abilities and personal qualities over social awareness, due to the technical and task-focused nature of their positions. Leadership initiatives should customise their strategies to correspond with the particular competencies demanded in this area. Integrating technical training with emotional intelligence development can more effectively equip people to meet the dual requirements of technical proficiency and interpersonal effectiveness.

The study's contributions to the Sarawak GLCs underscore the necessity for a balanced strategy that integrates targeted leadership strategies with the cultivation of emotional intelligence. This comprehensive framework may serve as a blueprint for organisations to improve job performance outcomes in the digital sector.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Questionnaires

ACADEMIC SURVEY



Department of Business and Management,
Faculty of Economics and Business,
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak,
94300, Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia

Subject: Invitation to Participate in Research Study on The Influence of Emotional Intelligence Towards Job Performance in Sarawak Government-Linked Companies in the Digital Sector: The Moderating Role of Leader- Member Exchange

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am a DBA student at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), and as part of my degree requirements, I am conducting a research study on " The Influence of Emotional Intelligence Towards Job Performance in Sarawak Government-Linked Companies in the Digital Sector: The Moderating Role of Leader- Member Exchange".

In order to successfully complete my degree, I need your assistance in completing this questionnaire attached to this letter. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and there will be no consequences if you choose not to participate or decide to withdraw at any stage. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential, and all data will be analyzed anonymously, ensuring the utmost privacy and confidentiality.

The survey/questionnaire will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete, and your responses will be of immense value in shaping the outcomes of this research. Should you choose to participate, please click on the following link to access the questionnaire: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdPommfKrkG17-hWrASZPuLZA9-W6kp6SAmmG9nRv4iKsk5Lw/viewform?usp=sf_link

If you have any questions or concerns about the research or your participation, please feel free to contact me at living.end3@gmail.com. I am more than happy to provide any clarifications you may need.

Thank you in advance for considering participation in this study.

Warm regards,

Mohd Syafiq Osman

This survey consists of four sections and respondents are required to answer all the questions in each section. The survey sections are as follows:

- 1. Section A: Demographic Statistics**
- 2. Section B: Job Performance**
- 3. Section C: Emotional Intelligence**
- 4. Section D: Leader-Member Exchange**

You may reach out to us at living.end3@gmail.com if you have any queries or concerns regarding the questionnaire.

Thank you for your kind cooperation in contributing into this research, it is very much appreciated.

**Indicates required question*

Informed Consent Form

Please be assured that:

1. Your information will be kept confidential and used strictly for research purposes.
2. None of the information we collect will be personally identifiable.
3. You can withdraw from this study at your own will, at any given time.

1) After understanding the information above, I hereby confirm my voluntary participation in this research. ***

Check all that apply.

Tick all that apply.

☐ Yes

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Please answer the following items by placing marking only one oval or by writing your answer above the line.

1) Gender*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2) Age*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 21 to 30 years old
- ☐ 31 to 40 years old
- ☐ 41 to 50 years old
- ☐ Above 50 years old

3) Marital Status*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Divorce

4) Ethnic*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Bumiputera
- ☐ Non Bumiputera

5) Education Level*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ High school or below
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Degree or Professional
- ☐ Master
- ☐ PhD

☐

Other:

6) Number of years worked in current organisation*

Mark only one oval.

☐

Less than 1 year

☐

Less than 5 years

☐

Less than 10 years

☐

More than 10 years

7) Job Position*

Mark only one oval.

☐

Senior Manager

☐

Manager

☐

Assistant Manager

☐

Senior Executive

☐

Executive

SECTION B: JOB PERFORMANCE

For question 1 to 6, please choose your answer based on the Likert-scale below:

1: Strongly Disagree

2: Disagree

3: Neutral

4: Agree

5: Strongly Agree

JP1) I possess the necessary competencies for my job.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

JP2) I work effectively and efficiently.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

JP3) I follow work-related procedures accurately.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

JP4) I take extra initiative and responsibilities in my work.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

JP5) I contribute to fostering a positive work environment.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

JP6) I resolve challenges that prevent tasks from being completed.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SECTION C: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

This section is divided into four sections, containing:

- i) Self-Awareness
- ii) Social Awareness

- iii) Self-Management
- iv) Relationship Management

SECTION C:

i) Self-Awareness

There are 7 questions in this part.

For question 1 to 7, please choose your answer based on the Likert-scale below:

- 1: Strongly Disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 3: Somewhat Disagree
- 4: Neutral
- 5: Somewhat Agree
- 6: Agree
- 7: Strongly Agree

SA1) I am aware of how my emotional state affects my performance at work.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SA2) I respond positively to workplace challenges that frustrate me.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SA3) I handle criticism from colleagues constructively. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SA4) I am conscious of how my emotions influence my decision-making in the workplace. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SA5) I am aware of my emotions in relation to work tasks. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SA6) I can easily identify my own emotions based on my reactions and behaviour at work. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SA7) I effectively manage situations that annoy me in order to maintain my work performance. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SECTION C:

ii) Social Awareness

There are 6 questions in this part.

For question 1 to 6, please choose your answer based on the Likert-scale below:

- 1: Strongly Disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 3: Somewhat Disagree
- 4: Neutral
- 5: Somewhat Agree
- 6: Agree
- 7: Strongly Agree

SOA1) I consider my colleagues' emotions when making decisions at work. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SOA2) I am sensitive to the emotional states of others in the workplace. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SOA3) I have a good understanding of my coworkers' emotions, which helps me perform my job effectively. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SOA4) I am skilled at observing the emotions of others. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SOA5) I respond appropriately to others' emotional expressions, which helps me perform effectively in my job. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SOA6) I can accurately understand situations from the perspectives of my colleagues, which helps me improve my job performance. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SECTION C:

iii) Self-Management

There are 6 questions in this part.

For question 1 to 6, please choose your answer based on the Likert-scale below:

- 1: Strongly Disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 3: Somewhat Disagree
- 4: Neutral
- 5: Somewhat Agree
- 6: Agree
- 7: Strongly Agree

SM1) I consistently look for better ways to accomplish tasks. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SM2) I attempt to enhance my performance in all areas of my job.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SM3) I initiate actions to improve my work performance.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SM4) I set measurable and challenging goals to enhance my own performance.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SM5) I strive continuously to improve my work outcomes.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SM6) I put effort into improving myself in the workplace.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SECTION C:

iv) Relationship Management

There are 5 questions in this part.

For question 1 to 5, please choose your answer based on the Likert-scale below:

- 1: Strongly Disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 3: Somewhat Disagree
- 4: Neutral
- 5: Somewhat Agree
- 6: Agree
- 7: Strongly Agree

RM1) I contribute to creating a positive work environment, which enhances my overall job performance.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

RM2) I help others resolve conflicts at work, which contributes to improving my job performance.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

RM3) I provide meaningful support to my colleagues, which positively impacts my job performance.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

RM4) I assist others in managing stressful situations.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

RM5) I positively influence the emotional climate of my workplace.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

SECTION D: LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE

There are 5 questions in this section.

For question 1 to 5, please choose your answer based on the Likert-scale below:

1: Strongly Disagree

2: Disagree

3: Neutral

4: Agree

5: Strongly Agree

LMX1) I have a supportive and positive relationship with my superior.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

LMX2) My superior would defend me if I were criticized by others.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

LMX3) My superior would support me if I made an honest mistake.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

LMX4) I am willing to give my best effort for my superior.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

LMX5) I am impressed with my superior's knowledge and competence.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

End of Questionnaire

Thank you! We highly appreciate your contribution to this important research!