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Emotional Intelligence and Digital Literacy in Relation to the Performance of Female Employees in the Private Sector

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation has changed workplace demands, requiring employees to possess both psychological and digital competencies to maintain effective job performance. This study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-reported digital literacy, and employee performance among women working in the private sector. Emotional intelligence is understood as the ability to recognise and regulate emotions, and digital literacy as the ability to use digital technologies and information effectively and responsibly. A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed. Primary data were collected through questionnaires in [place] in [month–year] from 125 women working in Private Sector selected through purposive sampling. Respondents were aged 18–35 years and held at least a Diploma (D3) qualification or were currently enrolled in an undergraduate (S1) programme. The data were analysed using multiple linear regression in Stata. Emotional intelligence was positively and significantly associated with employee performance (B = 0.200,p = .037), as was digital literacy (B = 0.498, p < .001). The model was statistically significant, F(2, 122) = 24.95, p < .001, R^2 = .290, adjusted R^2 = .279. As the sample was purposive and limited to young, educated women in [sector], the findings should not be generalised to all women working in the private sector. The study contributes to human resource management research and offers practical insights for organisations designing employee development programmes.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of information technology in Indonesia reflects an expanding digital environment that has become an integral part of people's lives, including the world of work. As technology becomes embedded in workplace routines, employees are expected to adapt to new systems, communicate through digital platforms, and complete tasks in changing work arrangements. In this setting, employee performance remains a central concern for organisations. Krijgsheld, Tummers, and Scheepers (2022), in a systematic review of job performance in the healthcare sector, identified task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive work behaviour as important dimensions of performance. Understanding which individual competencies are associated with performance is therefore relevant for organisations and for the employees themselves, including women working in the private sector.

One competence that has received considerable attention is emotional intelligence, understood here following the ability model of Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) as a set of abilities concerned with reasoning about emotions and using emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour. Research by Gong et al. (2019) examines the link between emotional intelligence and both the performance and psychological state of workers. A study by Nanda and Randhawa (2021) on women working in the education, healthcare, and information technology sectors in India demonstrates the relevance of emotional intelligence to performance through psychological mechanisms, such as emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. Doğru (2022) explores the relationship between emotional intelligence and various organisational outcomes using a meta-analytic approach, and Grobelny et al. (2021), in a meta-analysis of 99 studies, found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance that varied with job context and the type of performance measure. Collectively, these studies provide a basis for positioning emotional intelligence as a factor potentially linked to employee performance.

A second competence that is increasingly relevant is digital literacy. Van Laar et al. (2020) situate 21st-century digital skills within a broader scope than the technical ability to use devices, encompassing information management, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity. This perspective suggests that digital competence should be understood as a set of capabilities applicable to meeting job requirements, rather than simply the possession of devices or the frequency of internet usage. A similar view is reflected in the European Digital Competence Framework (DigComp 2.2), which organises digital competence into areas such as information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety, and problem solving (Vuorikari et al., 2022). Evidence on the link between digital literacy and performance is, however, mixed. In Indonesia, Putra et al. (2023) found no significant direct relationship between digital literacy and the performance of civil

registration employees in Padang City, and reported only an indirect relationship through innovative work behaviour.

While both emotional intelligence and digital literacy have the potential to support performance, they represent distinct aspects of competence. Emotional intelligence pertains to an individual's ability to understand and manage emotions and to interact with others, whereas digital literacy relates to the ability to use technology and digital information effectively and responsibly. Despite this distinction, the studies discussed above tend to examine the two competencies separately. The studies on emotional intelligence relate it to performance, psychological states, or organisational outcomes without considering digital competence in the same model, and the work of Van Laar et al. (2020) conceptualises digital skills for workers in general rather than for a specific group. The one study on women, by Nanda and Randhawa (2021), was conducted in India and focused on psychological mechanisms, while the Indonesian evidence on digital literacy comes from public-sector employees. It therefore remains unclear whether emotional intelligence and digital literacy are each associated with performance when considered together, and whether this holds for women working in the private sector in Indonesia, a group that has received little attention in this literature to the best of the authors' knowledge.

This study addresses that gap by examining whether emotional intelligence and self-reported digital literacy are each associated with employee performance among young, well-educated women working in the private sector in Indonesia. Specifically, it asks: (1) Is emotional intelligence associated with employee performance when digital literacy is held constant? (2) Is digital literacy associated with employee performance when emotional intelligence is held constant? The novelty of the study lies in analysing the two competencies simultaneously in a single model for a specific and under-examined workforce group in the Indonesian context. The study uses a cross-sectional design and self-reported data, so it describes associations and does not establish causal effects. The findings are intended to contribute to human resource management research and to inform the design of employee development programmes for young women professionals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is defined here following the ability model of Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004), which conceptualises it as a set of mental abilities concerned with reasoning about emotions and using emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour. The model comprises four branches: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions in oneself and others (Mayer et al., 2004). This ability-based view differs from trait and mixed models, which combine emotional abilities with personality dispositions and social competencies. In this study, emotional intelligence was measured through a questionnaire in which respondents rated themselves on items reflecting these four branches, so the measure captures

perceived rather than performance-tested emotional intelligence. In the workplace, emotional intelligence is relevant because employees are required to manage emotional responses, maintain interpersonal relationships, respond to work-related challenges, and adapt to different social situations. These capabilities may contribute to more effective decision-making, communication, collaboration, and task completion.

Recent research provides evidence of a relationship between emotional intelligence and employee outcomes. Doğru (2022), through a meta-analysis of the relationships between emotional intelligence and employee outcomes, examined the relevance of emotional intelligence to outcomes such as job performance, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and organisational citizenship behaviour. The findings provide a broad empirical basis for understanding emotional intelligence as a relevant individual characteristic in organisational settings. Similarly, research by Grobelny et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance using meta-analytic methods. The findings supported the predictive relevance of emotional intelligence, although the strength of the relationship varied according to contextual factors, including job context and the measures used to assess performance.

Evidence specifically concerning female employees is provided by Nanda and Randhawa (2021), who studied women working in the education, healthcare, and information technology sectors in India and showed that emotional intelligence is relevant to performance through psychological mechanisms, namely emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. The present study is consistent with that work in direction, in that emotional intelligence was positively associated with performance among women, although the association found here was small and imprecise ($B = 0.200$, $\beta = 0.18$, 95% CI [0.012, 0.387]). The two studies differ, however, in context and design. Nanda and Randhawa (2021) examined mediating mechanisms among women in India across three sectors, whereas the present study involved young, well-educated women in the private sector in Indonesia and tested only a direct association. Emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction were not measured here, so it cannot be determined whether they account for the observed association, and the mediating pathways reported by Nanda and Randhawa (2021) could not be tested or replicated. The similarity in direction should therefore not be read as confirmation of those mechanisms in the Indonesian setting. Future studies could include emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction as mediators and examine whether the mediation holds across sectors and between women and men.

Do Emotionally Intelligent Female Employees Perform Better on the Job? A Serial Mediation Model (2022). The research examined female employees in education, healthcare, and information technology/business process outsourcing sectors. Its findings indicated that emotional intelligence was indirectly and positively associated with job performance through emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. This suggests that emotional intelligence may be relevant to employee performance partly because of its relationship with employees' psychological

experiences at work. Taken together, these studies suggest that emotional intelligence may be associated with employee performance through emotional regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, and psychological well-being. For female employees in the private sector, emotional intelligence may be particularly relevant when work involves communication, collaboration, competing demands, and the management of workplace relationships. However, the strength of this relationship may vary across occupations and organisational contexts. Based on this literature, the present study examines emotional intelligence as an independent variable associated with employee performance.

H1: Emotional intelligence is positively associated with employee performance among female employees in the private sector.

Digital literacy is defined here in line with the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp 2.2), which describes digital competence as the confident, critical, and responsible use of digital technologies for learning, work, and participation in society (Vuorikari et al., 2022). The framework organises digital competence into five areas: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety, and problem solving (Vuorikari et al., 2022). In the workplace, these areas correspond to activities such as locating and evaluating information, communicating through collaborative platforms, producing digital work outputs, protecting data and devices, and resolving technical problems. In this study, digital literacy was measured through a questionnaire in which respondents rated their own competence on items reflecting these areas. The instrument therefore captures perceived rather than objectively tested digital competence. In contemporary workplaces, digital literacy extends beyond basic technical skills to include the ability to locate and evaluate information, use digital communication platforms, manage digital content, and adapt to changing technological environments. Chan and Hooi (2021) examined the role of digital literacy in employee engagement within digitalised workplaces. Their findings indicated that digital literacies can strengthen the relationships between workplace digitalisation, innovative culture, and employee engagement. Although employee engagement is distinct from employee performance, the findings demonstrate that digital literacy is relevant to how employees respond to digital transformation and workplace innovation. Nikou, De Reuver, and Kanafi (2022) investigated how information literacy and digital literacy relate to employees' perceptions and adoption of digital technologies in the workplace. Their study conceptualised these literacy skills as relevant factors in employees' acceptance and intended use of workplace technologies. The findings provide a basis for understanding digital literacy as an organisationally relevant capability that supports the effective integration of technology into work practices.

Further evidence is provided by Nuraini, Chaniago, and Efawati (2024), who examined digital behaviour and employee performance in Indonesia. Their study identified digital knowledge and skills, the availability of digital technology, and the adoption of technological innovation as relevant dimensions of digital behaviour. The findings indicated positive relationships between these dimensions

and employee performance, particularly among Generation Z employees. This evidence supports the relevance of digital capabilities to work performance in a contemporary organisational setting. Taken together, the literature suggests that digital literacy may support employee performance by enabling employees to use technology effectively, access and evaluate information, communicate digitally, and adapt to technology-driven work processes. Nevertheless, digital literacy alone may not guarantee higher performance because its practical value can depend on the availability of technological infrastructure, the nature of job responsibilities, and the extent to which digital tools are integrated into daily work.

In the context of female employees in the private sector, digital literacy may be particularly important as organisations increasingly rely on digital communication, information systems, online collaboration, and technology-supported decision-making. Accordingly, the present study examines digital literacy as a second independent variable associated with employee performance.

H2: Digital literacy is positively associated with employee performance among female employees in the private sector.

Employee performance refers to the behaviours and work-related outcomes through which employees contribute to organisational objectives. It is an important construct in human resource management because it reflects how effectively employees carry out their responsibilities, meet work expectations, and contribute to organisational effectiveness. Contemporary literature increasingly conceptualises employee performance as a multidimensional construct rather than a single measure of productivity.

Patnaik (2020), in Operationalizing Employee Performance: A Literature Review, discussed the development of employee performance as a multidimensional concept, including task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behaviour. This perspective highlights the importance of distinguishing between the completion of formal job responsibilities and behaviours that contribute to the broader work environment. Similarly, Rathnaweera and Jayatilake (2020) reviewed the conceptualisation and dimensions of employee job performance. Their review identified task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive performance as commonly discussed dimensions. This framework suggests that employee performance includes not only the execution of assigned tasks but also the ability to adapt to changing work demands and demonstrate appropriate workplace behaviours. Further evidence is provided by Krijgsheld, Tummers, and Scheepers (2022), whose systematic review of job performance in the healthcare sector identified task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive work behaviour as important dimensions of job performance. Their review also indicated that performance among healthcare workers may be influenced by factors operating at different organisational levels, including individual characteristics, organisational practices, and workplace conditions. As the review focused on healthcare settings, its findings offer a useful conceptual

reference for understanding the dimensions of performance, but they may not apply directly to the private-sector employees examined in the present study.

Abbasi et al. (2022) also examined the dimensions and indicators of individual job performance, identifying task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive work behaviours as key components of individual performance. Their work provides additional support for a multidimensional approach to defining and measuring employee performance. Based on these studies, employee performance in the present research is understood as the extent to which employees effectively carry out their work responsibilities and contribute to organisational objectives. This conceptualisation provides a foundation for examining whether emotional intelligence and digital literacy are associated with differences in the performance of female employees working in the private sector.

The literature reviewed above suggests that emotional intelligence may be relevant to employee performance through emotional regulation, job satisfaction, and interpersonal effectiveness. Meanwhile, digital literacy may support work performance by enabling employees to use digital technologies, access information, and adapt to technology-driven work processes. These capabilities may be particularly relevant in private-sector organisations where employees are expected to demonstrate both effective interpersonal behaviour and the ability to work with digital systems.

However, the two variables represent different dimensions of employee capability. Emotional intelligence does not necessarily imply technological competence, and digital literacy does not necessarily imply effective emotional regulation. Therefore, examining both variables in a single regression model provides an opportunity to assess their respective statistical associations with employee performance while accounting for the other variable.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey design to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence, digital literacy, and the performance of female employees in the private sector. The quantitative approach was selected because the study aims to empirically test the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable using statistical analysis. The research methodology was designed to provide a systematic framework for examining the proposed relationships and drawing evidence-based conclusions.

This study adopts a quantitative research design using an explanatory survey approach. This design is appropriate because the primary objective is to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence, digital literacy, and employee performance among women working in the private sector. The explanatory approach enables the researcher to assess the extent to which

emotional intelligence and digital literacy are statistically associated with employee performance.

The research model consists of two independent variables and one dependent variable. Emotional intelligence is designated as the first independent variable (X1), digital literacy as the second independent variable (X2), and employee performance as the dependent variable (Y). The proposed relationships are examined using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the individual and joint associations of the independent variables with employee performance. The population of this study comprises female employees working in the private sector who meet the eligibility criteria established by the researcher. Purposive sampling was selected because the study requires respondents with specific demographic, educational, and employment characteristics relevant to the investigation of emotional intelligence, digital literacy, and employee performance. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) female respondents aged 18–35 years; (2) currently employed in the private sector. These criteria were established to ensure that the selected respondents correspond to the target population and research objectives. The final sample of 125 respondents provides the empirical basis for examining the relationships among the variables. However, because the study uses non-probability sampling, the generalisation of the findings beyond the characteristics of the sampled respondents should be undertaken with appropriate caution.

This study uses both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through structured questionnaires distributed to female employees in the private sector who met the predetermined inclusion criteria. The questionnaire was designed to collect information relevant to the measurement of emotional intelligence, digital literacy, and employee performance.

Secondary data were obtained from relevant academic publications, research articles, and other scholarly sources to support the theoretical framework, conceptual development, and selection of the research variables. These sources were used to establish the theoretical basis for the proposed relationships and to contextualise the empirical findings within the existing literature. The collected data were subsequently reviewed and prepared for analysis using Stata statistical software.

The primary research instrument was a structured questionnaire designed to measure the three principal variables: emotional intelligence (X1), digital literacy (X2), and employee performance (Y). The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale to capture respondents' perceptions of the statements associated with each variable. The response categories were coded as follows: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores indicate stronger agreement with the statements presented in the questionnaire. The use of a consistent response scale facilitates the quantification of respondents' perceptions and supports subsequent statistical analysis. The collected data were analysed using multiple linear regression with the assistance of Stata statistical software. Multiple linear regression was selected because the study examines the

relationship between one dependent variable and two independent variables. This technique enables the researcher to estimate the association of emotional intelligence and digital literacy with employee performance while statistically controlling for the other independent variable in the model.

Where applicable, the measurement items are evaluated to determine whether they adequately represent their intended constructs and demonstrate acceptable internal consistency. The selected procedures and decision criteria should be reported based on the measurement approach and the tests actually conducted.

Before interpreting the regression estimates, the suitability of the model is evaluated using appropriate diagnostic procedures. These may include assessments of multicollinearity, heteroskedasticity, and model specification. Where relevant, the analysis should also consider the assumptions underlying the statistical inference procedures used. Any corrective measures, including the use of robust standard errors, should be reported if applied. Multiple linear regression is conducted to estimate the relationships between emotional intelligence, digital literacy, and employee performance. The regression coefficients indicate the direction and estimated magnitude of the association between each independent variable and employee performance, conditional on the other variable in the model.

Hypotheses concerning the individual relationships of emotional intelligence and digital literacy with employee performance are evaluated using the relevant coefficient tests. The joint statistical significance of the independent variables is assessed using an appropriate overall model test. The coefficient of determination R Square is used to describe the proportion of variation in employee performance explained by the independent variables included in the model.

The results are interpreted based on the estimated coefficients, standard errors, confidence intervals, p-values, and overall model statistics. Statistical significance was assessed at the 5% level ($\alpha = 0.05$), with two-tailed tests. Effect sizes were reported as standardised regression coefficients (β), which express the change in employee performance, in standard deviations, associated with a one-standard-deviation change in each predictor, holding the other predictor constant.The findings are then synthesised to determine whether the empirical evidence supports the proposed relationships. The validity and reliability of the research findings depend on the quality of the measurement instruments, the accuracy of the collected data, and the appropriateness of the statistical procedures. Several measures are therefore relevant to establishing the credibility of the empirical results.

The questionnaire items should be evaluated for their alignment with the conceptual definitions and indicators of emotional intelligence, digital literacy, and employee performance. Content validity may be supported through a review of the questionnaire by subject-matter experts and examination of the relevant

academic literature. Additional empirical validity assessments should be reported where such tests have been conducted.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire items should be assessed using an appropriate reliability measure, such as Cronbach's alpha, where suitable for the measurement structure. The results should be reported for each construct separately, together with the criteria used to interpret reliability. Reliability should not be assumed solely because the questionnaire uses a standardised Likert scale.

The collected responses should be checked for completeness, coding accuracy, missing observations, and inconsistencies before statistical analysis. These procedures help minimise data-processing errors and improve the accuracy of the regression estimates.

The regression model should be evaluated using appropriate diagnostic tests to identify potential violations of relevant statistical assumptions. These assessments help determine whether the selected estimation and inference procedures are appropriate for the data. The specific diagnostic results and any adjustments made should be documented transparently.

This study acknowledges several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings.

The study uses purposive sampling and includes 125 female employees aged 18–35 years who work in the private sector and are currently pursuing an undergraduate degree or have completed at least a diploma-level education. These eligibility criteria restrict the scope of the sample and may limit the generalisability of the findings to female employees with different educational backgrounds, age groups, employment characteristics, or work settings. Furthermore, the use of non-probability sampling means that the sample cannot automatically be considered statistically representative of all female employees in the private sector.

The primary data are collected through structured questionnaires, which rely on respondents' self-reported perceptions. Consequently, the responses may be influenced by subjective assessments, social desirability, or differences in how respondents interpret the questionnaire items. All variables, including employee performance, were measured through self-report using the same questionnaire at the same point in time. This design is susceptible to common-method bias, which may inflate the observed associations between variables. In addition, respondents may have rated their own digital literacy, emotional intelligence, and performance more favourably because of social desirability. The reported coefficients should therefore be interpreted as associations among perceived measures rather than as estimates of objectively assessed competence or performance. Future studies should reduce this risk by using a longitudinal design, performance ratings provided by direct supervisors, or objective performance data, and by including a marker variable in the questionnaire.The explanatory survey design and multiple linear regression analysis enable the researcher to examine statistical relationships among the variables. However, if the data are cross-sectional and observational,

the results do not, by themselves, establish causal relationships. Other factors not included in the model, such as work experience, organisational support, job characteristics, or workplace conditions, may also be associated with employee performance.

Future research could address these limitations by expanding the sample, including respondents from different employment and educational backgrounds, incorporating additional explanatory variables, and using longitudinal data or alternative research designs where feasible. Such extensions could provide a broader understanding of the factors associated with the performance of female employees in the private sector.

RESULT

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using Stata software to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence (X1) and digital literacy (X2) and the performance of female employees in the private sector (Y). This analysis aimed to determine the direction of the relationships between each independent variable and the dependent variable, as well as to assess their statistical significance both individually and jointly

Based on the data analysis results, the regression coefficient for emotional intelligence was 0.1996164, while the regression coefficient for digital literacy was 0.4981474. The probability value of the F-test was 0.0000. In the partial significance tests, emotional intelligence had a p-value of 0.037, while digital literacy had a p-value of 0.000. At the 5% significance level (α = 0.05), both independent variables exhibited positive and statistically significant relationships with employee performance.

Table 1 *Multiple Linear Regression Results ormance (N = 125)*

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	95% CI for B
Constant	23.615	6.173	–	3.83	< .001	[11.394, 35.835]
Emotional intelligence	200	95	[lihat catatan]	2.10	.037	[0.012, 0.387]
Digital literacy	498	98	[lihat catatan]	5.09	< .001	[0.304, 0.692]

Table 2 *Analysis of Variance of the Regression Model*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Regression	1,820.67	2	910.34	24.95	< .001
Residual	4,452.13	122	36.49		
Total	6,272.80	124	50.59		

Based on these results, the estimated multiple linear regression equation can be expressed as follows:

$$\mathbf{Y = 23.61473 + 0.1996164X1 + 0.4981474X2 + \varepsilon}$$

The overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 122) = 24.95$, $p < .001$, indicating that emotional intelligence and digital literacy together were

associated with employee performance. The model explained 29.0% of the variance in employee performance (R^2 = .290; adjusted R^2 = .279), which suggests that a substantial share of the variance remains unexplained by these two predictors. The root mean squared error was 6.04, meaning that observed performance scores deviated from the model's predictions by about six points on average. Emotional intelligence was positively and significantly associated with employee performance (B = 0.200, SE = 0.095, t = 2.10, p = .037, 95% CI [0.012, 0.387]). Holding digital literacy constant, a one-unit increase in emotional intelligence was associated with an average increase of 0.200 units in employee performance. The lower bound of the confidence interval lies close to zero, so the estimate is relatively imprecise and the association should be interpreted with caution. Digital literacy was also positively and significantly associated with employee performance (B = 0.498, SE = 0.098, t = 5.09, p < .001, 95% CI [0.304, 0.692]). Holding emotional intelligence constant, a one-unit increase in self-reported digital literacy was associated with an average increase of 0.498 units in employee performance. Because the two predictors may be measured on different scales, the unstandardised coefficients are not compared directly. All variables were self-reported and the data were cross-sectional, so these results reflect associations among perceived measures and do not indicate causal effects.

Regression assumption testing was conducted to assess the suitability of the regression model. The reported tests include residual normality, heteroskedasticity, and multicollinearity.

Table 3 *Skewness and Kurtosis Test for Normality of Residuals*

Variable	n	Pr(skewness)	Pr(kurtosis)	Adj. $\chi^2(2)$	p
Residuals	125	.041	.374	4.95	.084

Table 4 *Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg Test for Heteroskedasticity*

Test	$\chi^2(1)$	p
Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg	2.19	.139

Table *Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Test for Multicollinearity*

Predictor	VIF	1/VIF
Emotional intelligence	1.25	800
Digital literacy	1.25	800
Mean VIF	1.25	

Table 3 presents the skewness and kurtosis test for the normality of the residuals. The joint test was not statistically significant, adjusted $\chi^2(2)$ = 4.95, p = .084, so the null hypothesis of normally distributed residuals was not rejected at the 5% level. However, the test of skewness alone was significant (p = .041), whereas the test of kurtosis was not (p = .374), which indicates a mild departure from symmetry in the residuals. Normality is therefore best regarded as approximately, but not clearly, satisfied.

Table 4 reports the Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity. The test was not significant, $\chi^2(1)$ = 2.19, p = .139, so there was no evidence against the assumption of constant error variance. Because this

version of the test assumes normally distributed errors and the normality result above is borderline, the result should be interpreted with caution, and heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are recommended as a sensitivity analysis.

Table 5 shows the variance inflation factors. Both predictors had a VIF of 1.25 (tolerance = 0.800), well below the commonly used threshold of 5, indicating that multicollinearity between emotional intelligence and digital literacy was not a concern. Taken together, these diagnostics address residual normality, heteroskedasticity, and multicollinearity only. Other assumptions, namely model specification, linearity, influential observations, and independence of errors, were not formally tested.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that emotional intelligence has a positive and statistically significant relationship with the performance of female employees in the private sector, with a regression coefficient of 0.1996164 and a p-value of 0.037. Since the p-value is below the 0.05 significance level, The hypothesis proposing a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance received statistical support, but the support is modest. Emotional intelligence was positively associated with employee performance (B = 0.200, β = 0.18, p = .037), holding digital literacy constant. The standardised coefficient indicates a small association, and the 95% confidence interval for B is wide (0.012 to 0.387), with a lower bound close to zero. The estimate is therefore imprecise, the result is only marginally significant at the 5% level, and it should not be interpreted as evidence of a strong relationship. Replication with larger and more diverse samples is needed before firm conclusions are drawn. The direction of the relationship also cannot be established from these data. Because the study is cross-sectional and all variables were self-reported, the association may run in the opposite direction: employees who perform well may rate their own emotional intelligence more highly, for example because successful work experiences raise their confidence in handling emotions and relationships. A third factor, such as general self-esteem or social desirability, may also influence both ratings. The result is therefore best read as an association between perceived emotional intelligence and perceived performance, not as evidence that emotional intelligence improves performance.The positive coefficient suggests that higher emotional intelligence is associated with better employee performance, holding the other variable in the model constant.

The present study did not measure the mechanisms through which emotional intelligence may be associated with performance, so the following account is a theoretical explanation that remains untested rather than an explanation of the observed result. In theory, emotional intelligence may help individuals recognise, understand, and regulate their emotions, which could support the management of work pressure, communication with colleagues and clients, and the handling of interpersonal conflict. These processes may be particularly relevant for the women in this sample, who work in the private sector,

where performance is often tied to client interaction, team collaboration, and target achievement, and where employees may have to manage work demands alongside other responsibilities. It is therefore plausible that emotional abilities support performance in this setting, but this proposition was not tested here. Future studies could measure pressure management, communication quality, and conflict handling directly and test whether they mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance, ideally comparing women with men and across sectors. while maintaining effective interpersonal relationships. Employees who are better able to manage emotional responses may be more capable of handling workplace pressures, communicating effectively, resolving interpersonal conflicts, and maintaining productive working relationships. These capabilities may contribute to the effective completion of work responsibilities and the achievement of organisational objectives.

The result is consistent with Doğru (2022), whose meta-analysis identified a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and employee outcomes, including job performance. It is also in line with Grobelny et al. (2021), whose meta-analysis of 99 studies (N = 17,889) reported an operational predictive validity of 0.45 for emotional intelligence in relation to job performance, and found that this relationship is moderated by job context and by the type of performance measure used. The direction of the present finding thus agrees with the wider literature. However, the association observed here is considerably smaller (B = 0.200, β = 0.18), and several reasons may account for this. First, meta-analytic estimates are correlations corrected for measurement error, whereas the coefficient reported here is a partial coefficient estimated while holding digital literacy constant, so the two are not directly comparable. Second, Grobelny et al. (2021) showed that the strength of the relationship depends on job context and performance measure, and the present sample, consisting of young, well-educated women in the private sector, may represent a context in which emotional intelligence matters less than other competencies. Third, a relatively homogeneous sample in terms of age and education may restrict the variance in emotional intelligence and thereby attenuate the observed association. Fourth, both emotional intelligence and performance were self-reported, and the estimate from a single sample of 125 respondents is imprecise, as shown by the wide confidence interval (0.012 to 0.387). These explanations are plausible but were not tested in this study. Comparisons of effect magnitude should therefore be made cautiously because of differences in analytical methods, sample characteristics, and measurement instruments across studies.

The findings of this study are correlational and based on self-reported, cross-sectional data, so they cannot show that developing emotional or digital competencies would improve performance. The implications below should therefore be read as cautious suggestions rather than evidence-based prescriptions. The study did not evaluate any training programme, and no data on training effectiveness were collected. Digital literacy showed the stronger and more precisely estimated association with performance (B = 0.498, β = 0.43, p < .001), whereas the association for emotional intelligence was small and imprecise (B = 0.200, β = 0.18, p = .037; 95% CI [0.012, 0.387]). Together, the two competencies

explained 29.0% of the variance in performance, so most of the variation is attributable to other factors that were not examined. Given this pattern, organisations employing young, well-educated women in the private sector might consider including digital competence and emotional skills such as emotional regulation, interpersonal communication, and conflict handling among the areas of employee development, but without expecting large performance gains from either alone. A sensible approach would be to pilot such initiatives and evaluate their effects with objective or supervisor-rated performance before wider adoption. Because the sample was purposive and limited to this group, these suggestions should not be extended to other workforces without further evidence. into employee competency development programmes. Such initiatives may help employees manage workplace demands and maintain effective professional relationships. However, emotional intelligence should not be considered the sole determinant of employee performance, as work outcomes may also depend on technical competencies, work experience, workload, organisational support, and career development opportunities. Overall, the findings highlight emotional intelligence as one factor associated with the performance of female employees in the private sector, while recognising the importance of other individual and organisational factors.

The results show that digital literacy has a positive and statistically significant association with employee performance (unstandardised coefficient B = 0.498, $p < 0.001$; standardised β = [isi]). Holding emotional intelligence constant (B = 0.200; β = [isi]), higher self-reported digital literacy is associated with better employee performance. Because digital literacy and emotional intelligence were measured on different scales, the unstandardised coefficients are not directly comparable, and no conclusion is drawn about which predictor is stronger. Moreover, digital literacy was measured through self-perception, so the estimate reflects employees' perceived rather than objectively assessed competence and may be affected by over- or under-estimation. The finding highlights the relevance of perceived digital competence for understanding individual performance as technology becomes increasingly integrated into workplace activities.

The present study did not measure the mechanisms through which digital literacy may be associated with employee performance, so the following explanations should be regarded as propositions for future research rather than as accounts of the observed findings. Digital transformation requires employees to adjust continuously to information systems, collaborative platforms, and applications used within organisations. It may therefore be hypothesised that employees with adequate digital literacy adapt more readily to technological change and evolving work procedures, learn new systems more quickly, and identify alternative solutions to work-related problems more effectively, and that these capabilities in turn enable more efficient task completion and better responses to changing workplace demands. These propositions remain untested here. Future studies could examine them by measuring adaptability, system learning speed, and problem-solving behaviour explicitly, and by testing whether these variables mediate the relationship between digital literacy and employee performance.

The finding is consistent with Chong and Zainal (2024), who investigated the relationships between digital literacy, employee vitality, transformational leadership, and job performance among human resource practitioners in manufacturing companies in Malaysia. Their study identified a positive relationship between digital literacy and job performance, with employee agility playing a mediating role in the relationships examined. This evidence strengthens the argument that digital literacy is relevant not only as a technical capability but also in relation to employees' capacity to adapt to changing work environments.

However, the findings should also be considered alongside those of Putra et al. (2023), who examined digital literacy, transformational leadership, and employee performance at the Population and Civil Registration Service of Padang City, Indonesia, with innovative work behaviour as a mediating variable. Their results indicated that digital literacy had no statistically significant direct relationship with employee performance but was associated with performance indirectly through innovative work behaviour. This differs from the direct positive relationship found in the present study, and several characteristics of the samples and contexts may help explain the discrepancy. First, the present sample consisted of young, well-educated private-sector employees, who are likely to have higher baseline digital proficiency and greater familiarity with digital tools. For such workers, digital skills may be directly embedded in daily tasks and thus translate more immediately into performance. In contrast, government employees typically have a more varied age and educational profile, so differences in digital literacy may be less closely tied to performance differences. Second, private-sector work is generally characterised by more flexible workflows, faster adoption of technology, and performance appraisals oriented towards measurable output, which may allow digital competencies to affect performance directly. Public-sector work, by comparison, is often shaped by standardised procedures, hierarchical structures, and regulated service routines, which may limit employees' discretion to apply digital skills unless they are channelled through innovative behaviour. Third, differences in how performance was assessed and in the model specification, such as the inclusion of transformational leadership, may also have contributed to the divergent results. These explanations are plausible rather than tested, and they indicate that the link between digital literacy and performance is likely to depend on workforce characteristics and organisational context.

From a practical standpoint, the positive relationship found in this study suggests that developing job-relevant digital competencies can be an important component of employee development, particularly for young professionals in private organisations. Organisations may therefore consider providing targeted digital skills training, supporting the adoption of appropriate workplace technologies, and encouraging employees to apply digital tools to their daily responsibilities. At the same time, the findings of Putra et al. (2023) imply that, in more bureaucratic settings, digital skills training may need to be accompanied by efforts that foster innovative work behaviour, such as giving employees room to experiment with new ways of working, so that digital competencies can be converted into better performance.

Within this context, emotional intelligence and digital literacy represent relevant competencies for strengthening human capital in contemporary workplaces. Emotional intelligence may help employees regulate emotions, adapt to workplace demands, and maintain effective professional relationships. Digital literacy, meanwhile, may support the effective use of technology, access to information, and the completion of work-related tasks in increasingly digitalised environments. Chigbu and Nekhwevha (2023) highlight the importance of decent work within the SDG 8 framework, while Vuorikari et al. (2022) provide a framework for understanding digital competence in terms of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for appropriate and effective technology use. Together, these perspectives provide a broader context for considering how individual competencies may contribute to workforce development.

The findings suggest that developing emotional intelligence and digital literacy may form part of organisational efforts to strengthen the capabilities of female employees in the private sector. Nevertheless, the relationship between these competencies and employee performance should be understood as one component of a broader decent-work agenda that also encompasses employment opportunities, fair compensation, working conditions, and organisational support. Importantly, this study examines the relationships between emotional intelligence, digital literacy, and employee performance rather than directly measuring the achievement of SDG 8. Consequently, its contribution to the SDG 8 agenda is conceptual and contextual rather than a direct assessment of progress towards the goal.

CONCLUSION

The results indicate that emotional intelligence is positively and significantly associated with employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.1996164 and a p-value of 0.037. Digital literacy also demonstrates a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.4981474 and a p-value of less than 0.001. Furthermore, the F-test indicates that emotional intelligence and digital literacy are jointly significant in explaining variations in employee performance.

Future research should address the limitations of the present cross-sectional design in several concrete ways. First, longitudinal designs, such as multi-wave panel surveys, or quasi-experimental designs, such as comparing employees before and after a digital skills training program, would allow researchers to examine the temporal ordering and causal direction between digital skills and employee performance. Second, because self-reported performance may be subject to common method bias and social desirability, future studies should use performance ratings provided by direct supervisors, ideally matched with employee self-assessments to enable multi-source analysis. Third, the mechanisms linking the focal predictors to performance warrant formal testing. Mediation models could examine whether innovative work behaviour and individual agility explain how these factors translate into performance, using bootstrapped indirect effects in PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2022). Fourth, boundary conditions should be

tested through moderation analysis. In particular, gender and employment sector could moderate the strength of the hypothesised relationships, and multigroup analysis could be used to assess whether the path coefficients differ across groups. Finally, as the present sample consisted of female workers, future studies should include male workers and compare the two groups to determine whether the findings are specific to women or hold across genders. Such comparisons would also help overcome the limits of non-probability sampling (Etikan et al., 2016) by drawing on larger, more diverse samples from multiple regions and sectors.

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