

# Chapter 4

## Bridging the EI Gap: A Comparative Analysis of Emotional Intelligence and Public Sector Reform in Greece

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter investigates the role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in the public sector, using the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form (TEIQue-SF) developed by Petrides and Furnham (2006) as its theoretical framework. The review aims to identify how key EI dimensions—well-being, self-control, emotionality and sociability, motivation, and adaptability—impact organizational effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and leadership in public administration. Special attention is given to the Greek public sector. Findings suggest that Emotional Intelligence significantly influences employee performance, resilience, and cooperation within public organizations. Internationally, high EI correlates with better leadership outcomes and workplace climate. In the Greek context, although awareness of EI*

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*is increasing, its integration into recruitment, training, and evaluation systems remains limited. Cultural and systemic constraints often inhibit the full development and application of EI in Greek public administration.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a pivotal determinant of organizational performance, leadership effectiveness, and employee well-being in both private and public sector institutions (Goleman, 1995; Petrides & Furnham, 2006). While traditional human capital frameworks emphasize cognitive intelligence (IQ) and technical expertise, a growing body of literature underscores the significance of non-cognitive abilities such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, adaptability, and interpersonal skills in shaping professional outcomes (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2016). The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form (TEIQue-SF) developed by Petrides and Furnham (2006) has been particularly influential in operationalizing and measuring EI within organizational settings, offering a multidimensional model that captures six key sub-dimensions: well-being, self-control, emotionality, sociability, motivation, and adaptability.

In the public sector, the relevance of EI has become increasingly pronounced in light of the sector's unique challenges. Unlike private organizations, public administration often functions under conditions of bureaucratic rigidity, political oversight, resource constraints, and high stakeholder expectations (Boyatzis, 2018). Within such environments, the ability of civil servants, managers, and leaders to regulate emotions, foster cooperation, and sustain morale becomes a central factor in service delivery and policy implementation. EI is therefore not merely a desirable trait but a strategic competency in public governance (Cherniss, 2010; George, 2021). From a comparative perspective, international evidence demonstrates a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and public sector performance. Studies across countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia show that high levels of EI among public employees correlate with improved citizen satisfaction, reduced workplace stress, and enhanced organizational trust (Clarke, 2010; Lee & Cheung, 2016). Furthermore, in contexts of crisis management, such as public health emergencies or natural disasters, EI has been found to improve resilience and adaptive capacity, enabling governments to respond more effectively (Sharma & Sharma, 2015).

In the Greek context, the role of EI in the public sector acquires particular importance. The Greek public administration has traditionally been characterized by hierarchical structures, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and a cultural emphasis on formal authority (Sotiropoulos, 2004). Over the past two decades, the combined effects

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