

# Emotional Intelligence and Human Resource Management: The Case of Municipal Sports Organizations

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**Abstract:** *Indoor sports facilities of the municipal sports organizations managed by persons that are sports managers, physical education teachers and others holding degrees by the human resource or business management department. This study's aim is to assess the psychometric properties of the Wrong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) in these managers. Ninety-nine directors of the indoor sports facilities of the East Attica municipal sports organization were randomly selected to participate in the study. All the subjects rated in the items of the questionnaire were validated in Greek by Kafetsios and Zampetakis. Exploratory factor analysis of the data confirmed the four factors of the scale as: 1. «Self emotion appraisal», 2. «Others' emotion appraisal», 3. «Use of emotion» and 4. «Regulation of emotion» and the Cronbach's alpha of the scale was 0.82, while the internal consistency of each factor revealed the coefficients from 0.70 to 0.75. Further studies with larger samples of the sports managers employed in the municipal sports organization are needed to confirm the results of the present study.*

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, sports managers, municipal sports organizations, human resource management, sports directors

## 1. Introduction

The athletic organizations of the Greek municipalities were founded in the 1980s. The pioneer of these sports organization was the youth and sports organizations of Athens municipality, which is the largest Municipality of Greece with 5 million populations [46, 49, 50, 51].

The municipal sports organization have indoor or outdoor facilities offered to their citizens, that is; the people with disabilities, general population, workers, elderly, children, people with different chronic diseases and specific rehabilitation categories of people, a variety of sports programs. In these programs, aerobics, strength training, Pilates, dancing (Greek traditional or modern), which are offered in the indoor sports facilities are included. The outdoor facilities organized different team sports such as volleyball, basketball and other recreational activities like hiking. Also, some municipal sports organizations do organize cycling, street races (Athens municipality), mountain biking or kayaking (Trikala municipality). The purpose of these sports activities is to help citizens improve their physical fitness or to rehabilitate some chronic diseases like osteoporosis or arthritis [47, 48].

The administration of these sports activities is carried out by the staffs, comprising the employees of the various specialties [45, 52].

## 2. Review of Literature

Mayer, DiPaolo and Salovey [27] and Salovey and Mayer [42] were the first theorists who adopted the term emotional intelligence and its usefulness in managing the human resources in the various organizations. Many other authors then argued that the organizations with high levels of EI might have a competitive advantage and suggested that they should be strengthened. Owen, [39] and Goleman [12], believed that SEM plays an important role in the

leadership and success of the top executives in an organization. Taking into account these suggestions, many authors point to a positive relationship between the leaders of the working group's emotional intelligence, the group's collective emotional intelligence and the overall performance of the group [1, 7, 9, 17, 28-31].

Emotional intelligence as a concept has been greatly influenced and made realistic by its popular book by Daniel Goleman's [11]. Wong and Law [57], were the first authors who approved the WLEIS scores using a large sample of Chinese directors and managers. The results of the factor analysis of their study showed that the 16 items on the scale grouped in four factors with a Cronbach  $\alpha = 0.80$ , while the internal consistency reliability for the four factors (each with four items) ranged from 0.83 to 0.90. The distribution of each item appeared to be similar. The means ranged from 4.25 to 4.94, with standard deviations ranging from 1.20 to 1.43. The scale was further tested by a confirmatory factor analysis and the measured parameters that approved the good fit of the instrument was 179.33 ( $df=98$ ). The standardized RMR was 0.07, the CFI was 0.91, and the TLI was 0.89.

The WLEIS four-factor self-report measure of EI proposed by Wong and Law [57], is described as (i) Others' emotional appraisal, (ii) Regulation of emotion, (iii) Self-emotional appraisal, and (iv) Use of emotion. The terminology (and sample questions) for these four factors are as follows. (i) Others' emotional appraisal is the ability to identify and recognize others' emotions (e.g., "Is sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others", "Has a good understanding of the emotions of people around him/her"). (ii) Regulation of emotion is the ability to control one's emotions (e.g., "Is able to control his/her temper and handle difficulties rationally", "Is quite capable of controlling his/her own emotions"). (iii) Self-emotional appraisal has been determined by the capacity to understand one's own broad emotions and to express them consistently (e.g., "Has a good

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sense of why he/she has certain feelings most of the time”, “Has a good understanding of his/her own emotions”).(iv) Emotion use indicates that the capability to use one’s emotions is to promote performance (e.g., “Always tells himself/herself, he/she is a competent person”, “ He/she would always encourage himself/herself to try his/her best” [41, 57].

In the current literature, there are studies carried out on the WLEIS. For example, Shi and Wang [44], in a very good methodological study, assessed the validity and reliability of the WLEIS in China. 1458 students participated in the study (62.3% of them were males). The authors carried out a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the 16 items to determine the structure validity. The results showed that the four-factor model fit well since all indices are well:  $\chi^2=381.42$ , RMSEA=0.045, GFI=0.97, AGFI=0.96 and CFI=0.97. Also, Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of the total scale was 0.86, while the variation of factors was within 0.72 to 0.87.

Sebnem Aslam and Ahmet Erkus’s [43] study determined the validity and reliability of the WLEIS instrument in 292 government officers in Ankara, Turkey. Results showed that the overall Cronbach alpha of the WLEIS items was  $\alpha = 0.89$ , while the internal consistency of the four factors was between 0.81 and 0.87. Also, a confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the structural validity of the WLEIS.

Li, Saklofske, Bowden, Yan and Fung [23] assessed the reliability and validity of the WLEIS questionnaire in 680 Chinese university students who attended the Beijing University and the University of Calgary (the subjects came from China). The results revealed that Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the total WLEIS and for each factor were 0.78, and 0.91.

The four-factor structure of the WLEIS confirmed in some other countries such as Taiwan Wang & Huang [55], Japan, Fukuda et al. [10] and Belgium, Libbrecht, Lievens, & Schollaert [26]. Also, the mentioned WLEIS scale has also been used in South Korea

By Kim, Cable, Kim, & Wang [20], United States by Christie et al., [4], Joseph and Newman [16], Whitman et al. [56], Canada by Kaushal and Kwantes [19], Israel by Zysberg and Rubanov [58], Barbados by Devonish and Greenidge [6], Nigeria by Salami [40] and the UK by Lindebaum and Cartwright [25].

In Greece, two studies were carried out: The first by Kafetzios and Zampetakis [18], who validated the WLEIS instrument in 523 educators. The analysis of their data showed an internal consistency of the 16 items to be 0.90, while the four factors Cronbach’s alpha was within 0.77 to 0.83. The second study carried out Petsos [37], determined the EI by using the WLEIS instrument in the Physical Education Teachers, employment in the Thessaloniki area. After the results analysis, it was found that the total Cronbach’s alpha of the questionnaire was 0.80, while the Cronbach’s alpha of the four factors ranged within 0.74 to 0.91.

While the EI has been widely used in different business settings and education, there has not been an analogous study in the athletic sectors in our country and specifically in the municipal sports organizations. As such, the aims of this paper are to explore (a) the construct validity of the WLEIS by using the factor analysis and (b) to assess their reliability.

### 3. Methods

The present investigation was conducted by the Department of Sports Management, Faculty of Human Movement and Quality of Life, University of Peloponnese. It started in December 2016 and was completed at the end of June 2017. The investigation was carried out with the cooperation of Directors from the sports municipalities of the East Attica region.

#### Questionnaire

The questionnaire that was used for the evaluation of emotional intelligence in the present study was the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). The 16-item scale was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). The research instrument consisted of four factors, namely, the self, emotional appraisal, others’ emotional appraisal, regulation of emotion and use of emotion (WLEIS, Wong and Law) [57]. This scale was validated in the Greek language by Kafetzios and Zampetakis [18].

#### Procedures

Before the beginning of the study, the sports managers were informed about the aim of the present investigation. Then, the Wong Law Emotional Intelligence Scale were distributed to them via the municipal sports organization managers (presidents?). The researcher sent a research package to them that included a cover letter and the study scale. In the cover letter, the researcher described the study details. The municipal sports organization president informed all the sports managers about the investigation and requested them to participate in the study project. Afterwards, all the subjects who decided to participate completed the Wong Law Emotional Intelligence Scale returned it to the municipal sports organization presidents and from there to the investigators. Finally, ninety-nine questionnaires were completed and transferred to the sports municipality investigator.

#### Statistics

The data collected from the sports managers responders were entered into SPSS 21.0 statistical package for data analysis. The factor analysis was conducted to determine the number of factors in the instrument, while the Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was used to confirm the internal consistency reliability between each item. Also, the Bartlett Sphericity Test, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin KMO Statistical Test, and the Scree plot were used for the analysis of the data factor [5, 8, 21, 24, 53, 54].

### 4. Results

Ninety nine sports directors participated in the study. Out of the 99, 74 (74.7 %) were men and 25 (25.3 %) women. Forty-one (41.4 %) were under 35 years, 34 (34.3

%) between 35-49 years old and 24 (24.2 %) were up to 50 years. Fifty-four (54.5 %) of the sample were graduates from the physical education departments, 35 (35.4 %) from the sports management, general management, business and economic departments and 10 (10.1 %) from the technological institutes. Thirty-one (31.3 %) of the sample had a master's degree, 7 (9.09 %) a PhD degree, while the rest sixty one did not hold a post-graduate degree. Sixty-nine (69.7 %) employment as directors from 0 to 5 years, 18 (18.2 %) between 6 and 10 years and 12 (12.2 %) up to 11 years.

Before the factor analysis was implemented, the sample of the investigation was tested to confirm its efficacy. The values of the common factor fluctuations, screen plot, Cattell's scree test, parallel analysis (Monte Carlo PCA and adds a similar table). Also, the detailed data control (Bartlett Sphericity Test, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin KMO Statistical Test, the Common Factor Fluctuation Values, Scree plot, Cattell's scree test, the Parallel Analysis (Monte Carlo PCA adds a similar table). So, a measurement with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was yielded with a result of 0.699. Brace et al. [2], suggested that a KMO value of 0.60 and higher values nearing 1 indicates the satisfactory results (table 1). These obtaining results are considered good and therefore the sample was adequate for the factor analysis to be executed. The result was further strengthened by a Bartlett Sphericity test which yielded a significant result ( $p < 0.001$ ). According to Brace et al. [2], the factor analysis can be carried out if Bartlett Sphericity is significant.

The exploratory factor analysis was carried out in order to replicate the four-factor structure as proposed by Wong and Law [57], and if the questionnaire items are grouped using the varimax rotation with eigenvalues. The questions grouped into each factor should have an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. With the reliability analysis (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  factor), it was found that each of the factors showed a satisfactory overall internal cohesion ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ). For a consistent consistency, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ratio should be at least 0.70. It should also be noted that significant loadings greater than 0.35 were taken into account in the factor analysis [5, 8, 22, 24, 53, 54]. The principal component analysis gave the expected four factors. Table 2 shows the eigenvalues and percentages of the dispersion that interprets each eigenvalue. From the table, it appears that the eight factors explain 58.025 % of the dispersion of the variables.

Analytically, the factors that emerged from the factorial analysis of the 16 questions are as follows:

Factor 1 «self emotion appraisal», that resulted from questions 1, 2, 3 and 4, get a Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.71$  and explained the 28.714 of the variable dispersion. The loadings of items in this factor were between 0.733 and 0.624.

Factor 2 «others' emotion appraisal», that resulted from questions 5, 6, 7 and 8, get a Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.74$  and explained the 11.589 of the variable dispersion. The loadings of items in this factor were between 0.765 and 0.522.

Factor 3 «use of emotion» that resulted from questions 9, 10, 11 and 12, get a Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.70$  and explained the 10.060 of the variable dispersion. The loadings of the items in this factor were between 0.814 and 0.535.

Factor 4 «regulation of emotion» that resulted from questions 13, 14, 15 and 16, get a Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.79$  and explained the 8.112 of the variable dispersion. The loadings of items in this factor were between 0.657 and 0.517.

The Internal consistency, reliability, calculated by the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each factor and the WLEIS total scale across showed variation within 0.70 to 0.79.

**Table 1: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (K.M.O.) and Bartlett's tests**

K.M.O. and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.699
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	552,284
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

**Table 2: Factors extracted from the principal component analysis with varimax rotation**

Factors	Number of items	Eigen values	% Variance	Total of variance	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Self emotional appraisal	4	4,594	28,714	28,714	0.71
Others' emotional appraisal	4	1,854	11,589	40,303	0.74
Use of emotion	4	1,610	10,060	50,364	0.70
Regulation of emotion	4	1,306	8,162	58,525	0.79

**Table 3: The loadings for each factor**

Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>				
Items	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Q1 I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time	.733			
Q2 I have good understanding of my own emotions	.712			
Q3 I really understand what I feel	.625			
Q4 I always know whether or not I am happy	.624			
Q5 I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior		.765		
Q6 I am a good observer of others' emotions		.721		
Q7 I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others		.687		
Q8 I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me		.522		
Q9 I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them			.814	
Q10 I always tell myself I am a competent person			.790	
Q11 I am a self-motivated person			.623	
Q12 I would always encourage myself to try my best			.535	
Q13 I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally				.657

Q14I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions				,636
Q15I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry				,625
Q16I have good control of my own emotions				517
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.				
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.				

## 5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the emotional intelligence in a sample of sports managers of the indoor sports facilities of the East Attica municipal sport organizations by using the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) validated in Greek language by Kafetsios and Zampetakis [18] with the main purpose to construct its validity and reliability.

According to our results, the present study supported the validity and reliability of the measure of emotional intelligence, the WLEIS [57].

It is well accepted that the main initial purpose of evolving the WLEIS was to be helpful for future management and leadership research. In this investigation, we found that this questionnaire can also be used in a municipality sports organizations sample since our results showed a positive acceptance of the scale in the mentioned professions. In the following section, these results are discussed.

### *Factors extracted from the principal component analysis*

The factor analysis revealed that the 16-questions of the instrument were ranked in four factors: «self emotion appraisal», «others' emotion appraisal», «use of emotion» and «regulation of emotion».

Also, the Cronbach of the four dimensions ranged between 0.70 and 0.79, while the Cronbachalpha of the 16 items was 0.82.

The reliability coefficients of many EI instruments were found to have a variation between the acceptable limit of Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.70$  and 0.85.

For example Shi and Wang [44], found a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the total scale 0.86 and a variation between 0.72 to 0.87, Sebnem Aslam and Ehmet Erkus's (2008), determined a Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.89$ , and 0.81 to 0.87 between the variation factors, Li, Saklofske, Bowden, Yan and Fung [23], found a Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.92$  and an alteration of 0.78 to 0.91, Kafetzios and Zampetakis [18] an  $\alpha=0.90$  showed a Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.77$  to 0.83 and Petsos [37], an  $\alpha=0.80$  and 0.74 to 0.91. Our results are in line with the above studies and some others previous investigations as Fukuda et al., [10], Law, Wong and Song, [22], Li, Saklofske, Bowden, Yan and Fung [23].

It seems that within this context, the studies carried out to evolve a questionnaire that best measures the emotional intelligence still going on. While establishing these investigations, cultural differences were taken into account in order to construct analogous scales which would be more appropriate for people from different places over the world, for example, Sebnem Aslam and Ehmet Erkus [43].

### *Factorloadings*

According to our results, majority of the items showed good factor loadings, that is, the representative loading for the first factor ranged within 0.733 and 0.624, in the second within 0.765 and 0.522, in the third within 0.814 and 0.535, and in the fourth within 0.657 and 0.517. The results are similar not only in the original Wong and Low scale [57] but also with other researchers [3, 14, 15, 31, 34, 35, 36, 38].

### *Studyweaknesses*

The weaknesses of this study were (a) The sample size was small, 100 to 200 subjects are considered a «medium sample size» and it is in the limit of five subjects needed to complete a question as proposed by the research methods [5, 8, 21, 24, 53, 54] and (b) Because the study is part of a larger project, we did not carry out a confirmatory factor analysis, that is scheduled to take place in a larger PanHellenic sample.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The present study evaluated the psychometric properties of the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). Since it is validated in the Greek language by teachers, we investigated its validity in a sample of the municipality sports organization's directors and the result provides documentation for the validity of the WLEIS in these sports managers. The statistical analysis approved the generalization of the scale in the municipality samples since the construction and criterion validity internal consistency was high. However, further studies with a larger sample and to more municipal sports are needed, in order to confirm the results of the present study.

## 7. Conflict of Interests

The author declared no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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