Emotional Intelligence and Work Performance Relationship: A Study on Sales Personnel Working in the Organized Retail Stores

M.M.Munshi [1], Sanjay V. Hanji [2]

[1]*Associate Professor, Department of Post Graduate Studies, Visvesvaraya Technological University, "Jnana Sangama", Belgaum-590 018, Karnataka, India.*
[2]*Research Scholar, VTU-RRC, Visvesvaraya Technological University, "Jnana Sangama", Belgaum, and working as Associate Professor, Department of Management Studies, Basaveshwar Engineering College, Vidyagiri, Bagalkot-587102, Karnataka, India.*

Abstract: *In past few years, the organized retailing has seen a remarkable growth in Indian retail sector. Growing competition, lowering of trade barriers, and shift towards market economy are adding up more pressure on today's retail organizations to increase their performance levels. The organizations' performance heavily depends upon the individual sales person's performance at the workplace. The emotional intelligence has proved to be an important predictor of work place performance especially in the emotional labour jobs such as sales (Daus, Rubin, Smith & Cage, 2004; Glomb, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Rotundo, 2004). There have been many researches which have explored the emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in different organizational settings. However, the present research makes an attempt to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel working in the organized retail stores of Karnataka state, India. The emotional intelligence of the sales personnel was measured using TEIQue-SF scale developed by Petrides & Furnham, (2006). The results indicated that the sales personnel's emotional intelligence was significantly related with their work performance. Some of the dimensions of emotional intelligence also showed significant relationship with work performance. Based on the study results suggestions were made to the retail organizations.*
Keywords: *Emotional intelligence, Work performance, Sales personnel, Organized Retail Stores.*

I. Introduction

In past few years, the organized retailing has seen a remarkable growth in Indian retail sector. Many domestic and foreign players have shown interest and have made investment with a long term vision in the Indian retail sector. It is expected to have a potential growth in organized retail sector in the country (Chakraborty, 2014). However, increase in foreign direct investment has given way to increase in competition to existing retail organizations and to those organizations which are yet to open.

Growing competition, lowering of trade barriers, and shift towards market economy are adding up more pressure on today's retail organizations to increase their performance levels. The organizations' performance heavily depends upon the individual sales person's performance at the workplace.

One frequently discussed topic in work performance literatures is "Emotional Intelligence". Emotional Intelligence is skill set which helps a person to appraise one's own feelings and that of others. It will thus help to use those feelings to inspire & encourage one's own self & others to achieve success in life (Abraham, 2000). Emotional intelligence is one of those elements in human psychology which needs great attention of modern researchers as it explains the persons' success better than existing variables available (Extremera and Fernandez-Berrocal, 2004). Emotional intelligence is a well known concept in various areas like sociology, sales, education, psychology, business etc. Many debate that the social and emotional intelligences are key to an individual's achievements in life (e.g. Bar-On, 2004). The emotional intelligence has proved to be an important predictor of work place performance especially in the emotional labour jobs such as sales (Daus, Rubin, Smith & Cage, 2004; Glomb, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Rotundo, 2004).

It is seen in the literatures that emotional intelligence is a good predictor for work performance. The present literature review presented a gap and motivation to study the sales personnel's emotional intelligence and work performance relationship in the organized retail stores. Hence, the present research is focused on investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel working in the organized retail stores of Karnataka state, India.

II. Literature Review

There have been many researches which have studied emotional intelligence and work performance relationship. Most of the studies have shown that both have positive and significant relationship whereas some studies have shown otherwise. Bachman, Stein, Campbell, & Sitarenios (2000) reported a study which compared

more successful account officers (debt collectors) and less successful ones based on their emotional intelligence abilities. The emotional intelligence of the account officers was measured using BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory. The outcomes of the study substantiate the view that higher levels of emotional intelligence lead to enhanced job performance. In an another study conducted by Slaski and Cartwright (2002) where they studied on management employees of a big retail organization to investigate the relationship between their emotional intelligence and their stress level, health, morale, quality of working life and management performance. Their study found that the managers who scored high on emotional intelligence experienced reduced stress levels, better health and showed better performance. Lam and Kirby (2002) based on most famous opinions have established that emotional intelligence boosts performance and productivity at work place. They tried to find out whether emotional intelligence predicts individual cognitive based performance over and above general intelligence of a person. They used Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale to measure emotional intelligence. They found that emotional intelligence, emotional perception & emotional regulation explained performance over and beyond general intelligence.

Langhorn (2004) study revealed a strong correlation between emotional intelligence pattern of the general managers and the areas of their profit performance. Bar-On "Emotional Quotient Inventory" was used to measure the emotional intelligence of general managers in a pub restaurant in the UK, to discover its relationship with their key performance outputs. In another study conducted by Jennings and Palmer (2007), front line sales managers and sales representatives were put through a learning and development programme on emotional intelligence. The emotional intelligence and sales revenue of participants were measured before and after the programme. A significant improvement in the sales revenue was found with the experimental group when it was compared with the control group. This study revealed how sales person's emotional intelligence is linked to their sales revenue which is beyond just sales performance.

Research conducted by Kidwell, McFarland and Avila (2007) indicated that the sales person's ability to accurately appraise the emotions of others, moderated the sales person's practice of adaptive selling and customer-oriented selling on their performance. Further analyses revealed that, high ability to perceive emotions has beneficial effects on selling and low ability to perceive emotions not only limits the use of customer-oriented selling but also has a negative impact on sales performance. Both self-reported and supervisor-reported measures of selling performance were used in this study. Newman, Joseph & MacCann (2010) conducted a meta-analytic study in which they also studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. The results showed that in high emotional labour jobs emotional intelligence positively predicted job performance. Even the facets of emotional intelligence such as emotion regulation, emotion understanding and emotion perception were also related to job performance but in a different way.

Gryn (2010) examined the perceived emotional intelligence and job performance relationship of the leaders in call centres. The Emotional Competency Profiler (ECP) was used to measure emotional intelligence. The study results indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. However, self management dimension of emotional intelligence was having strong relation with job performance. It was concluded that managing one's own emotions contributes to the employees' job performance. Ahuja (2011) performed an empirical study to find the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of front-line sales executives in Indian Insurance sector. The data was collected from a sample of 100 sales executives on two variables: emotional intelligence and work performance. The correlation and regression tools were used to analyze the relationship and the findings signified the role of emotional intelligence in work performance of sales executives in insurance industry. Fauzan (2011) studied the impact of emotional intelligence on sales people performance. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and salesperson's performance in a medical organization. The author has suggested EI trainings in organizations to increase the performance of the employees.

Othman, Daud and Kassim (2011) made an attempt to find the moderating effect of neuroticism on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of service employees. The results revealed that the regulation of emotion had an impact on job performance even with high and low neuroticism. They have suggested the service organizations or companies to train their employees on emotional intelligence to improve customer service and customer relationship. Prentice and King (2011) has explored the influence of emotional intelligence on service performance of frontline employees in the casino industry. The main hypothesis of the study was EI predicts the service performance of casino service representatives. The results divulged that EI significant predicts the service performance of casino frontline employees. In another study, One, Sachau, Deal, Englert, & Taylor (2011) have examined in their study, the extent to which cognitive ability, the Big Five factor personality dimensions and emotional intelligence are related to training and job performance of U.S. federal criminal investigators. The results revealed that cognitive ability and emotional intelligence were positively correlated with job performance. Priya & Bisen (2015) conducted a research to analyze the effect of emotional intelligence on the faculty member performance in colleges. The results showed that emotional intelligence and all its dimensions namely well being, emotionality, self control and sociability contributed to the faculty

members' job performance. Similarly, Singh (2011) in an attempt to investigate the need and applications of emotional intelligence in retailing has concluded that individual competencies such as emotional intelligence of sales force of any organization are strong determinant of success in retail industry. The author has also urged the need of more studies relating to EI and its dimensions in retailing.

III. Problem Statement
Many studies have been carried out in the literatures to assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the employees in different organizational settings. Most of the studies indicate that employees' emotional intelligence has predicted their work performance (eg. Lam and Kirby, 2002; Slaski and Cartwright, 2002; Langhorn, 2004; Kulkarni, Janakiram, Kumar, 2009; Khokhar & Kush, 2009; Joseph and Newman, 2010; Jorfi, Jorfi, & Moghadam, 2010; Mishra & Mohapatra, 2010; Prentice and King, 2011; Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver & Story, 2011; Chaudhry & Usman, 2011; One, Sachau, Deal, Englert, & Taylor, 2011). However, this relationship has not been investigated on the sales personnel working in organized retail stores, especially in Indian retailing context. Investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel could be beneficial to the organized retailing sector. Hence, the main research problem of this study is to find whether there is any relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel working in the organized retail stores of Karnataka state, India.

IV. Research Questions
1. Is there any relationship between the overall emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores.
2. Is there any relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores.

V. Objectives Of The Study
1. To investigate the relationship between the overall emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores.
2. To investigate the relationship between the each dimension of emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores.
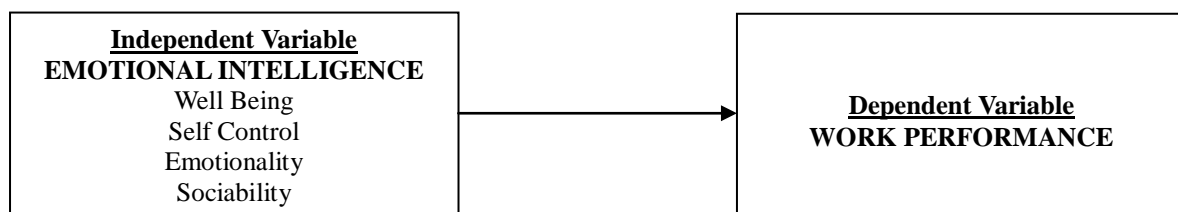
VI. Hypotheses
H_1: The overall emotional intelligence has a positive linear relationship with the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores.
H_2: The dimensions of emotional intelligence (i.e. well being, self control, emotionality, sociability) have a positive linear relationship with the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores.

VII. Theoretical Framework
The context of present study is carried out to identify the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores. The theoretical framework linking these variables is provided in fig. 1.


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│   Independent Variable       │                    │                             │
│ EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE       │  ───────────────►  │   Dependent Variable        │
│       Well Being             │                    │   WORK PERFORMANCE          │
│      Self Control            │                    │                             │
│      Emotionality            │                    │                             │
│       Sociability            │                    │                             │
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Fig 1: Theoretical framework of the study

Variables under investigation:
The variables included in this study are as follows:
Emotional Intelligence: Goleman (1998) refers emotional intelligence as the "capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships." Bar-On (1997) has defined emotional intelligence as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures." K.V. Petrides has defined trait EI as "a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality" (Petrides et al., 2007).

Work performance: Work performance in this study is referred to the evaluation of how well an individual sales person has performed in the following areas of work in the organized retail stores such as customer service, sales enhancement, store management, product knowledge and presentation, and team work.

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence:

Well-being: The high scores on this dimension mean that the individuals are fulfilled, happy, and positive. The low scores indicate that the individuals are having low self esteem and are dissatisfied with their life.

Self-control: The high scores on this dimension mean that the individuals have great amount of command over their urges and impulsiveness. They tend to possess a great ability in dealing with stress and external pressures. The low scores indicate that individuals fail to deal with stress and have no control over their impulsiveness.

Emotionality: The high scores on this dimension means that the individuals are capable of perceiving their own emotions and others emotions and are also good at expressing their feelings and emotions to others which will help them in building sustainable close relationship with others who are important to them. The low scores on this dimension means that those individuals are less capable of identifying their own emotional states and that of others and they also fail to communicate their feelings to others. All this leads them to struggle in maintaining relationship with others.

Sociability: This dimension focuses on social relationships and social influence rather than personal relationships with close friends and family. The high scores on this dimension means that the individuals are frank, forthright and confident while interacting with people from all kinds of backgrounds. The low scores on this dimension indicate that individuals are less capable in influencing others' feelings and emotions. They fail to be good in networking and negotiations.

VIII.   Research Methodology

In this research, both exploratory and descriptive research designs have been used. The exploratory research design was used to get more insights and understanding about the overall organized retail stores, about the sales personnel working in them, their functions, key performance areas and various other things concerning them. Several personal interviews were conducted with the sales personnel and their managers in the organized retail stores of different types and formats. In some of the stores, sales personnel were observed while they were doing their jobs. For example, sales personnel were observed while they were interacting with their customers and their colleagues, making product demonstrations, performing sales activities, managing the stocks etc. These observations revealed the practical aspects of the sales personnel's job and also helped to understand their major work performance indicators. In an abstract way, it helped to understand how emotional intelligence of the sales personnel might influence their work performance in these types of stores. The descriptive research design was mainly employed to test the research hypothesis and examine the relationships between emotional intelligence and work performance. Well structured questionnaires were used to collect the data and later analysis was done using SPSS 16 version. Two questionnaires were used in this study. The first questionnaire was used to measure the emotional intelligence of sales personnel, where it used self report emotional intelligence scale called TEIQue-SF developed by Petrides & Furnham, (2006). This scale consisted of 30 items where it measured the four EI dimensions and overall EI of the sales personnel. This questionnaire also included questions on sales personnel demographics. This scale was rated using five point rating scale starting from completely disagree to completely agree. The four EI dimensions measured by this scale were well being, self control, emotionality and sociability. It was administered to the sales personnel to measure their emotional intelligence. The sales personnel were not informed that their emotional intelligence was being measured through the particular questionnaire and also the questions in the questionnaire were very general in nature which encouraged them to give true information. The second questionnaire was used to measure the work performance of the sales personnel and it used a self developed scale (Munshi & Hanji, 2014) to measure the work performance. This scale consisted of 23 items and it used five point rating scale starting from poor, below average, average, above average, and outstanding. This questionnaire was administered to the managers of sales personnel and not to the sales personnel themselves. The managers reported the work performance of sales personnel working under them. This avoided the chance of false reporting by sales personnel as the questions in the second questionnaire were very obvious to be measuring work performance. The study used two stage cluster sampling technique and a sample size of 700 respondents (sales personnel). The survey was conducted in many different types of organized retail formats in Karnataka state such as the hypermarkets, department stores, exclusive retail stores, specialty stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, etc.

IX.   Data Analysis And Interpretation

The data analysis and interpretation is carried out for the above set hypotheses.

H$_1$: The overall emotional intelligence has a positive linear relationship with the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores.

The objective of testing this hypothesis is to know whether the overall emotional intelligence has a

statistically significant linear relationship with the work performance. This helps to understand, how the overall emotional intelligence of the sales personnel in organized retail stores is related to their work performance.

A simple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relation between the emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores. This overall regression model produced an R^2 of .31 which means that the overall emotional intelligence explained 31% of variance in the dependent variable work performance. The overall model was significant, $F(1, 698) = 315.85$, $p < .001$ and it accounted for 31% of the variance. The results indicated that the sales personnel's emotional intelligence ($\beta = .558$, $p < .05$) was having statistically significant and positive relationship with their work performance (see table 1). The strength of relationship between the sales personnel's emotional intelligence ($\beta = .558$) and work performance was also found very high.

Table 1: Results of simple regression analysis between emotional intelligence and work performance					
Model Summary					
Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1.	.558ᵃ	.312	.311	.326	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence					
b. Dependent Variable: Work Performance					
ANOVAᵇ					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1.	Regression	33.628	1	33.628	315.848	.000ᵃ
	Residual	74.315	698	.106		
	Total	107.943	699			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence					
b. Dependent Variable: Work Performance					
Coefficientsᵃ					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1.		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.568	.183		3.114	.002
	Well Being	.898	.051	.558	17.772	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Work Performance					

H₂: The dimensions of emotional intelligence (i.e. well being, self control, emotionality, and sociability) have a positive linear relationship with the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores.

The objective of testing this hypothesis is to know whether the dimensions of emotional intelligence have a statistically significant linear relationship with work performance. This helps to understand how each dimension of emotional intelligence i.e. well being, self control, emotionality, and sociability of sales personnel in the organized retail stores are related to their work performance.

Table 2: Correlation analysis between dimensions of emotional intelligence and work performance				
Dependent Variable	**Independent Variables**			
Work Performance	Well Being	Self Control	Emotionality	Sociability
Pearson Correlation	.551**	.241**	.581**	.125**
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.001
N	700	700	700	700
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)				
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)				

Correlation and regression are best applied together to test whether continuous variables are associated with each other, and whether the dependent variable can be explained by some independent variables, or predicted from them (Nargundkar, 2008). A correlation analysis was conducted to determine the bi-variate relation between each independent variable with the dependent variable work performance. This was carried out to find how each independent variable was correlated individually with the dependent variable. Later, multiple regression analysis was conducted, where each independent variable and dependent variable relationship was assessed in effective presence of other independent variables. Table 2 represents the correlation results. The table showed that all the independent variables well being ($r = .551$, $p < .01$), self control ($r = .241$, $p < .01$),

emotionality (r = .581, p < .01) and sociability (r = .125, p < .01) were significantly and positively correlated with work performance. Here, emotionality (r = .581) and well being (r = .551) were strongly correlated with work performance than self control (r = .241) and sociability (r = .125).

Table 3: Results of multiple regression analysis between dimensions of emotional intelligence and work performance					
Model Summary					
Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square		Std. Error of the Estimate
1.	.685[a]	.470	.466		.287

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sociability, Emotionality, Self Control, Well Being
b. Dependent Variable: Work Performance

ANOVA[b]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1.	Regression	50.681	4	12.670	153.779	.000[a]
	Residual	57.262	695	.082		
	Total	107.943	699			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sociability, Emotionality, Self Control, Well Being
b. Dependent Variable: Work Performance

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1.		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.445	.161		2.769	.006
	Well Being	.398	.034	.359	11.683	.000
	Self Control	.089	.018	.141	5.042	.000
	Emotionality	.369	.029	.398	12.819	.000
	Sociability	.056	.029	.053	1.906	.057

a. Dependent Variable: Work Performance

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relation between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores. The dimensions of emotional intelligence included well being, self control, emotionality and sociability. The main objective of regression analysis is to explain the variation in dependent variable based on the variation in the independent variables (Nargundkar, 2008). This overall regression model produced an R^2 of .47 which means that the dimensions of emotional intelligence explained 47% of variance in the dependent variable work performance. The overall model was significant, $F (4, 695) = 153.78$, $p < .001$ and it accounted for 47% of the variance. The results indicated that the sales personnel's well being ($\beta = .359$, $p < .05$), self control ($\beta = .141$, $p < .05$), and emotionality ($\beta = .398$, $p < .05$) were having statistically significant and positive relationship with the work performance (see table 3). On the other hand, their sociability ($\beta = .053$, $p > .05$) had no statistically significant relationship with the work performance. The strength of relationships (beta scores) indicated that emotionality of the sales personnel ($\beta = .398$) had a greater positive relationship with work performance followed by their well being ($\beta = .359$) and self control ($\beta = .141$), where their sociability did not show any significant relationship with their work performance.

X. Results And Discussion
The findings which answer the two main research questions are discussed in detail.

Research question 1: Is there any relationship between the overall emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores.

The results of simple regression analysis showed that the sales personnel's emotional intelligence had statistically significant and positive relationship with their work performance. The beta score indicated that there was a strong positive relation between sales personnel's emotional intelligence and work performance in the organized retail stores. The regression model containing independent variable emotional intelligence explained 31% of variance in the dependent variable work performance and the overall model was also found significant. The emotional intelligence is the broad manifestation of basic emotional functioning in an individual (Petrides,

2009). It simply pertains to a person's self perceptions of his emotional abilities which affect his individual and group behaviour across all areas of life. The research finding that the overall emotional intelligence of sales personnel is related to their work performance is concurred in many of the previous research studies (Bachman, Stein, Campbell, & Sitarenios, 2000; Lam and Kirby, 2002; Slaski and Cartwright, 2002; Langhorn, 2004; Kulkarni, Janakiram, Kumar, 2009; Khokhar & Kush, 2009; Joseph and Newman, 2010; Jorfi, Jorfi, & Moghadam, 2010; Mishra & Mohapatra, 2010; Prentice and King, 2011; Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver & Story, 2011; Chaudhry & Usman, 2011; One, Sachau, Deal, Englert, & Taylor, 2011). All the above research studies have found that emotional intelligence is positively related to work performance in all kinds of jobs other than sales. However, a few studies have also found evidence that the emotional intelligence predicts sales personnel's performance in different sales fields such as general sales (Jennings and Palmer, 2007), in insurance sales (Ahuja, 2011) and in medical sales (Fauzan, 2011), but there were no studies which endeavored to examine this relationship in retail sales field which this research has identified and bridged the research gap.

Research question 2: Is there any relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores.

The results of correlation analysis divulged that the each dimension of emotional intelligence i.e., well being, self control, emotionality, and sociability was having significant bi-variate relationship with work performance. The results of multiple regression analysis revealed that only well being, self control and emotionality dimensions were having significant linear and positive relationship with the work performance of sales personnel whereas sociability dimension did not show any significant linear relationship. The dimensions of emotional intelligence explained 47% of variance in the dependent variable work performance and the overall model was significant. The strength of relationships (beta scores), indicated that the sales personnel's emotionality had a greater relationship with their work performance followed by their well being and self control abilities.

The research finding, that the emotionality trait of the sales personnel was related to their work performance is supported by previous researches conducted by (Kidwell, McFarland and Avila, 2007; Newman, Joseph & MacCann, 2010; Priya & Bisen, 2015). The research finding, that the well being trait of sales personnel is related to their work performance is strengthened by the previous research conducted (Priya & Bisen, 2015). The research finding, that the self control trait of sales personnel is related to their work performance is underpinned by the previous studies conducted by (Newman, Joseph & MacCann, 2010; Gryn, 2010; Othman, Daud and Kassim, 2011; Priya & Bisen, 2015). Overall, the research gave evidence that emotional intelligence is related to the work performance of the sales personnel even in organized retailing sector.

XI. Conclusion

The main objective of this thesis was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and work performance of the sales personnel in organized retail stores. To achieve this research objective, a sample of sales personnel were selected from various organized retail stores from Karnataka state, India. The relationships were analysed using multiple regression analysis. The results of this research revealed that the emotional intelligence explained a significant portion of variance in the work performance of sales personnel in the organized retail stores. Further, the evaluations of emotional intelligence dimensions in relation to the work performance showed that only well being, self control and emotionality were having significant linear and positive relationship with the work performance whereas sociability dimension showed no significant linear relationship. It is suggested to the organizations in the organized retail business to train their sales personnel on emotional intelligence skills which will help them to improve their overall performance at workplace. The human resource managers can consider including emotional intelligence as one of the important criteria for conducting recruitment & selection process; for performance appraisal process and while making promotion decisions. In conclusion, this research has provided insights into emotional intelligence and work performance relationships of the sales personnel in the organized retail stores and has contributed to the body of knowledge pertaining to the emotional intelligence.

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