

**“Study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job  
performance in procurement professionals”**

Research dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of

**MSc in Procurement and Supply Chain Management**

Griffith College Dublin

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**28 / Aug / 2020**

## Candidate Declaration

I, **María Eugenia Moya Carreño**, hereby certify that the dissertation entitled ***Study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals***, submitted for the degree of: **MSc in Procurement and Supply Chain Management** is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

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## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family, who has always given me their unconditional support. Always supporting and encouraging every project, helping me to believe in myself and my abilities at moments where I doubted them. My brother and his wit, turning stressful situations to humorous ones; my dad, for supporting all my years of studying; and my mom, who encouraged me to work towards my goals from the start, being a rock-solid pillar where I could always lean on, always ready to impart words of wisdom.

You have been an incredible influence in my life. Thank you for always being there.

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## Abstract

### **Study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals**

*María Eugenia Moya Carreño*

In this study, it was shown a profile with the key emotional intelligence (EI) skills that relate to job performance in procurement professionals with the purpose of contributing to the improvement of job performance, the development of future procurement professionals and more accurate recruitment processes. The main skills identified were communication, empathy, negotiation, social skills, and interpersonal skills.

The main factors that influence job performance identified in the research were: relationship with suppliers, work overload and stress, work environment, profession, communication, recruitment process, financial issues and mood.

The research also revealed a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals, demonstrated by the extent of the impact of identifying emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions and managing emotions in job performance, adding to the findings of earlier studies. The role of emotional intelligence in the procurement sector was defined as fundamental to perform daily activities successfully and as one of the fundamental aptitudes procurement professionals need. It was also established that emotional intelligence skills are an asset for procurement professionals, describing it as the second most important tool for performance after technical skills and highlighting the importance of training professionals in EI skills.

The sample consisted of 6 procurement professionals from a construction company in Chile and the collection of data was done through in-depth interviews conducted by video-call using a hybrid type access to sources. The methodology approach to the research was done through an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative and inductive approach with the nature of an explanatory study and a cross-sectional time horizon.

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# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Overview**

The present research study focuses on the fields of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Procurement, looking at the role emotional intelligence may hold in procurement and therefore the impact emotional intelligence may have in procurement professional's job performance.

According to Chopra (2019) procurement is the process by which companies acquire raw materials, components, products, services or other resources from suppliers to execute their operations; and according to Salovey and Mayer (1990 cited in Jain 2018) emotional intelligence is the ability to watch one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this data to guide one's thinking and actions. Therefore, having the ability to manage one's own and other's feelings (amongst others) appears to be an asset for individuals whose purpose is to create relationships with suppliers to acquire what is needed to run operations: traditionally, negotiating skills are emphasised in procurement (Harrison, Van Hoek & Skipworth 2014) and procurement professionals handle personal relationships on a daily basis, having to negotiate, influence and manage their organisation's supply chain.

In the past, the importance and connection between emotional intelligence and leadership or management positions has been extensively explored but from a general approach, paying little attention to specific areas of development or less high-profile positions. In 2011, Gunavathy and Ayswarya conducted a study in India among women in IT (Information Technology) and concluded that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and job performance.

The focus of the present research is on the emotional intelligence skills of procurement professionals who work in the area of construction and how these skills may relate or not to their job performance.

## **1.2 Research Purpose**

The purpose of the research is to facilitate the creation of a more accurate screening process for selection (recruitment process) and training new professionals in the area of procurement by having a profile of the key emotional intelligence skills needed for efficient job performance.

The aim was to identify and define the role that emotional intelligence plays (if any) in the procurement sector and identify the key emotional intelligence skills required in a procurement professional.

The main questions that guided this research are presented in Figure 1 (Page 2).

*Figure 1: Research Questions*



Because of all the different approaches to emotional intelligence and how to measure it, it becomes necessary to provide a framework for the research questions, so for the purpose of this research, emotional intelligence will be viewed under the ability models and understood as a fairly well-defined set of emotion-processing skills (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts 2004).

By collecting the primary data, it was expected to identify the critical emotional intelligence skills for a procurement professional so this information can help create a more accurate screening process for the selection and training of new professionals in the area.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The interest in the topic arises from the author's background in psychology and current studies in procurement. Over the past quarter of a century, the expansion of the global marketplace, rapidly changing technologies, and workplace diversity with an increased emphasis on teams have created a demand for emotionally intelligent employees (Sigmar, Hynes & Hill 2012).

According to Tassabehji and Moorhouse (2008), empirical research is emerging to demonstrate the impact of specific procurement skills on firm performance. In a study of the impact of strategic purchasing on supply integration and performance, Paulraj et al. (2006) found that: (1) a more strategic purchasing function leads to better supply integration; (2) executives must understand the key role that purchasing can play in integrating buyer-supplier dyads by focusing

on “process, relational, information, and cross-organisational teams”; (3) strategic purchasing can create a win-win situation for both buyer and supplier firms which impacts positively on overall supply chain performance. There is a need for procurement personnel to update existing skills and develop new perspectives and abilities if they are to contribute effectively to the success of their organisations (Henke 2000; Giunipero et al. 2005, 2006; Cousins et al. 2006 cited in Tassabehji & Moorhouse 2008).

For the purpose of this research, job performance is conceived as a multidimensional concept (Borman 1991 & Campbell 1990 cited in Hochwarter 2004) involving task and contextual performance dimensions. Regarding emotional intelligence, Mayer and colleagues (cited in Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts 2004), distinguish between (1) ‘mental ability models’, focusing on aptitude for processing affective information, and (2) ‘mixed models’ that conceptualise EI as a diverse construct, including aspects of personality as well as the ability to perceive, assimilate, understand, and manage emotions. And as mentioned in the introduction, the framework for this research will be the ‘mental ability models’.

#### **1.4 Background to the research objectives and relevant issues**

There is little to no research conducted studying the relationship between procurement in particular with emotional intelligence. Among the studies found that related to the subject was the study ‘Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction as Correlates of Job Performance - a Study among Women Employed in the Indian Software Industry’ (Gunavathy & Ayswarya 2011), which supported their initial hypothesis of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and job performance being significantly related and emotional intelligence and job satisfaction having a significant effect on job performance. Setting precedent to develop new research on the subject, such as the present research study.

Emotional intelligence (EI) complements composure in that gaining awareness of one’s own emotions is essential to being able to better control them, and awareness of others’ emotions is an essential skill for any good leader. It also has practical application at all levels of the organisation; it can help to read and respond to a situation in ways that defuse rather than inflame (Stein 2015), which responds to qualities expected in a procurement professional.

Tassabehji and Moorhouse (2008) summarised the procurement skills found in the literature and then presented a new taxonomy that classifies procurement skills into five groups.

- (1) Technical skills (TS): fundamental and basic administrative skills necessary for any procurement professional in the 21st century. Among the skills relevant to the present

study, stands out the need to optimise supplier selection to ensure that they capitalise on the opportunities e-procurement avails (Croom, 2005; Ogden et al., 2005; Tassabehji et al., 2006).

- (2) Interpersonal skills (IS): necessary for interaction with people in teams and on an individual level including written and oral communication, conflict resolution, influencing and persuasion, group dynamics, leadership, problem solving and interpersonal and cultural awareness. These skills are required at every level for effective procurement management.
- (3) Internal enterprise skills (IE): these skills relate to the overall business and how the different functions interaction. IE skills will enable procurement professionals for example, to effectively conduct market analysis, manage internal relationships, global sourcing evaluation, internal change management and planning and organisational skills.
- (4) External enterprise skills (EE): these skills relate to the supply chain/network and its stakeholders. These skills will enable for example, the management of external relationships, and stakeholder change management.
- (5) Strategic business skills (SB): these skills relate to broader strategic issues and how procurement can impact on overall organisational value such as planning and managing strategic partnerships and alliances, risk management and adding value to the organisation.

Considering this background, the main issues identified are:

**Figure 2: Main Issues**



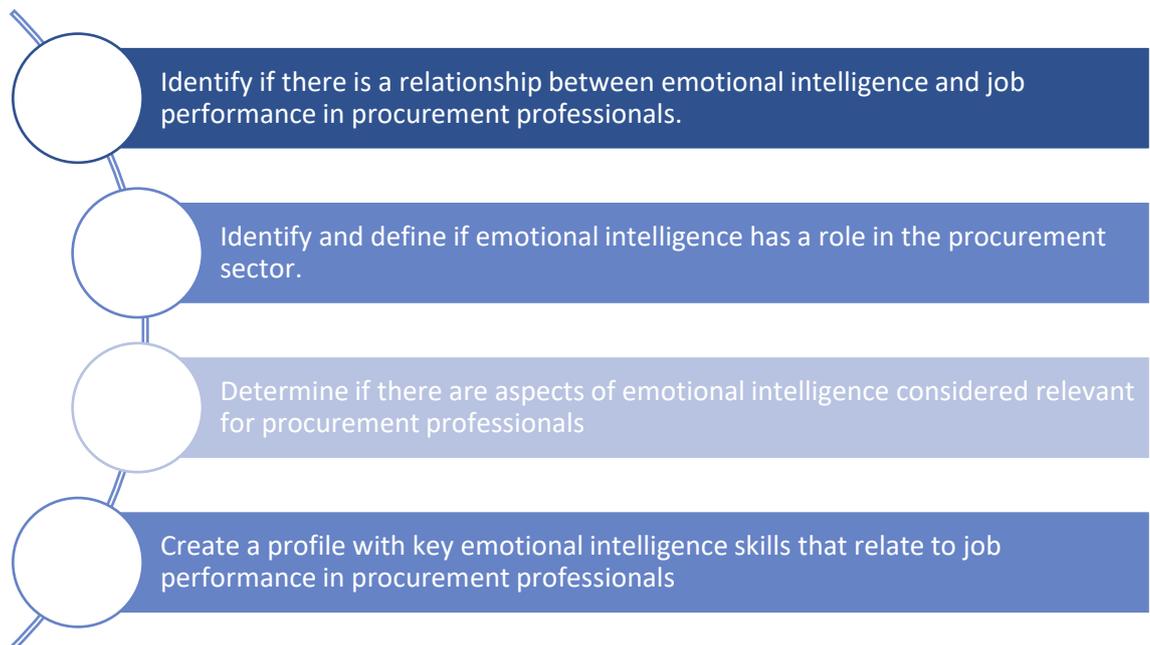
## 1.5 Research Objectives

The initial research questions that needed answer in order to begin the study were:

- Are the professionals working in the area trained in procurement?
- Are procurement professionals aware of what is emotional intelligence?
- How do procurement professionals manage interpersonal relationships and stress at work?
- Does procurement professional's job performance have any relation to how they handle their work relationships?

Having an answer to these initial questions, it was possible to ask ourselves the previously mentioned ones: what is the role emotional intelligence plays in the procurement sector? are emotional intelligence skills an asset for procurement professionals? what are the key emotional intelligence skills required in a procurement professional? And construct the objectives that would guide the research. Figure 2 (page 5) shows the research objectives.

*Figure 3: Objectives of the Research*



## 1.6 Structure of the Study

This study is structured in five different chapters.

The first chapter corresponds to the introduction, presenting some background to the research objectives and the main issues identified, the significance of the study, the research purpose, the research questions that guided the study and the research objectives that helped us analyse the data collected.

The second chapter critically reviews the literature related to the topic and the main themes are supply chain management, procurement, emotional intelligence and job performance, their contextual and conceptual literature, empirical literature, debates in the literature, the implication for the research objectives and finally a conceptual framework that also assisted with approaching and presenting the findings.

Chapter three presents the methodology and research design, describing the research paradigm that shaped the study, the methodological choice, strategy, techniques used to collect data and analyse it, as well as quality of the research assessment.

The fourth chapter addresses the presentation and discussions of the findings, presenting the results of the data collection process, including quotations of the interviews and assumptions.

And the fifth and final chapter provides the implications of the findings for the research questions, recommendations for practice and future research, contributions and limitations of the research and final conclusions and reflections.

Additionally, after the last chapter are included references and appendices that comprise the interview guide, consent form, plain language statement sent to the participant, and the transcription of the interviews.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Overview**

This literature review mainly studies the concepts of emotional intelligence, procurement, and job performance, including supply chain management prior to commencing with the main topics, with the purpose of clarifying the general area in which the study was carried on. It will first address the contextual and conceptual literature, discussing the most relevant theories in the subjects, their authors and their suitability for the study, followed by the empirical literature found on the subject, debates in the literature, implication for the research objectives and finally the conceptual framework for the study.

### **2.2 Contextual and Conceptual Literature**

For a better understanding of the literature in this study, it has been divided into the main themes relevant to the research topic.

#### **2.2.1 *Supply Chain Management***

In order to add perspective to the research it is necessary to start by providing the context in which procurement activities develop and clarify some definitions.

Procurement is at the heart of supply chain management (Chick & Handfield 2014), thus the first step is to define what supply chain management is.

According to Chopra (2019) a supply chain consists of all parties involved, directly or indirectly, in fulfilling a customer's request, it is dynamic and involves the constant flow of information, product and funds among different stages. In a similar way, Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth (2014) describe it as a network of partners who collectively convert a basic commodity (upstream) into a finished product (downstream) that is valued by end-customers, and who manage returns at each stage. Supply chain management then involves planning (making a plan that defines how much of each product should be bought, made, distributed and sold each day week or month) and controlling all of the processes (keeping to plan - in spite of the many problems that may get in the way) from raw material production to purchase by the end-user to recycling, so that the needs of the end-customer are met correctly. Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth (2014) use the terms supply management, procurement and sourcing interchangeably in their definitions.

Moreover, the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (2013) provides a definition for Supply Chain Management (SCM): SCM encompasses the planning and management of all activities involved in sourcing and procurement, conversion, and all logistics management activities. Importantly, it also includes coordination and collaboration with channel partners, which can be suppliers, intermediaries, third-party service providers, and customers. In essence, supply chain management integrates supply and demand management within and across companies.

The importance of supply chain members developing symbiotic relationships with one another in order to benefit customers and the supply chain as a whole, increases the need of an understanding of inter- and intra-firm relationships and how they are developed, consummated and nurtured are vital to understanding SCM (Stock, Boyer & Harmon 2010).

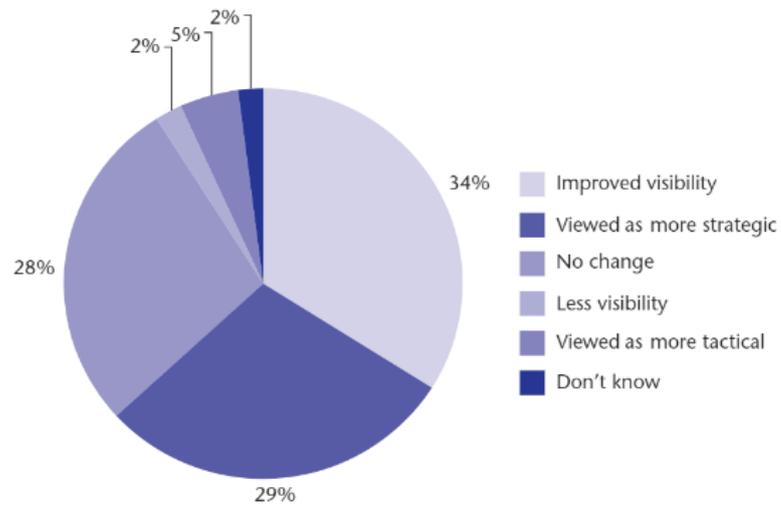
The importance of an academic perspective on Supply Chain Management and, more to the point, the role of procurement within it, is that it ensures that any possible gaps between research and practice can be minimised (Chick & Handfield 2014).

### 2.2.2 *Procurement*

Tassabehji and Moorhouse (2008) explain that historically, procurement has been recognised under the traditional administrative and transactional role, but now there has been a shift towards a role which involves strategic partnerships, cooperative alliances and supply network management (Carr & Smeltzer 1997; Scheuing 1997; Ramsay 1998; Lamming 2000; Handfield & Nichols 2002; Knudsen 2003). In the literature, procurement is now deemed a core component of many organisations and considered to be of major strategic importance (Humphreys 2001; Paulraj 2006), a survey carried out in 2011 (Figure 4, page 9) shows the change in perception procurement has had. In addition, empirical research is emerging to demonstrate the impact of specific procurement skills on firm performance (Tassabehji & Moorhouse 2008), which underlines the need for more studies to be conducted in the area in order to identify specific skills required and how to adapt to the changing role of procurement professionals.

According to Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth (2014), procurement is the upstream part of the supply chain that faces suppliers, a functional domain of the supply chain, just like manufacturing or distribution, with 3 foci: operational, ensures that supplies of goods and services are in place so that a local firm can produce its product and/or service and ship it to the end consumer; tactical, it contributes to basic value drivers - such as price competitiveness and service levels; and strategical, procurement holds the potential to accelerate innovation, and drive step changes in costs and performance levels.

**Figure 4: Changing Perspectives of Procurement**

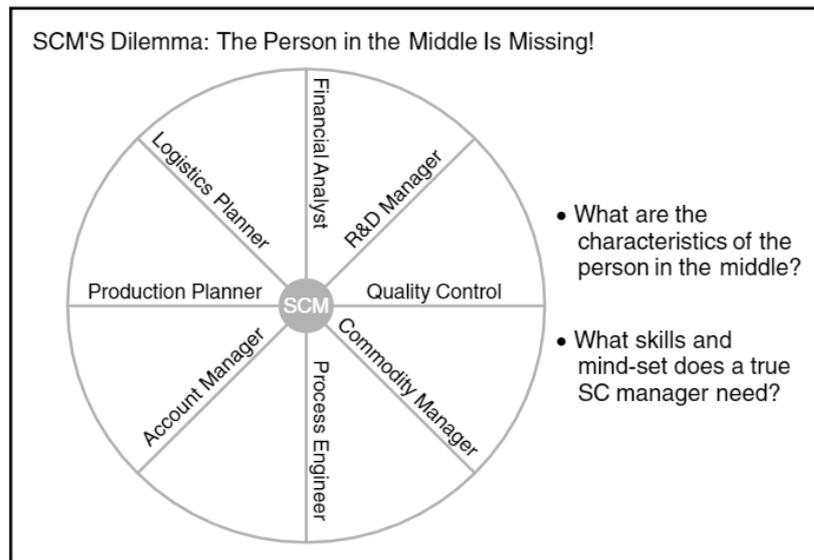


**SOURCE:** Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth, 2014.

Procurement provides an important perspective on the supply chain (Harrison, Van Hoek & Skipworth 2014). In Perez-Arostegui, Benitez-Amado and Huertas-Perez (2012) the importance of managing suppliers stems from the dependence of final product quality on the quality of the material supplied and on the reaction capacity or flexibility of suppliers in the face of changes in end customer demands (Ahire, Golhar, & Waller 1996). In addition, the cooperative firm–supplier relationship is a major source of competitive advantage for firms operating in industrial markets (Paulraj, Lado, & Chen 2008). Therefore, the relationship stability between buyer and supplier should have a key effect on quality practices and quality performance (Kuei, Madu, & Chinho 2008). The buyer–supplier relationship has an enormous influence on the overall profitability of the whole supply chain (Ghadimi *et al.* 2016).

The definitions found in the literature illustrate that the success of the procurement department or the procurement professional as an individual is dependent on the quality of the buyer–supplier relationship. Thus, procurement plays a key role ensuring critical suppliers, delivery service and product quality (Harrison, Van Hoek & Skipworth,2014) and procurement managers (Figure 5, page 10) must be defined by mind-set and skill set.

**Figure 5: Today's Supply Chain Manager**



**SOURCE:** Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth, 2014.

Most of the literature related to procurement advises of the importance of building long-lasting relationships with suppliers but not many focuses on how to achieve this relationship, the set of skills a professional of the area needs to have or how to develop these skills.

Companies are increasingly realising the importance of improving their knowledge and competence in procurement; they realise that they need to start filling this knowledge gap and to develop fundamentally new ways of thinking about procurement and its potential contribution in order to ensure sustained competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive global business landscape (Chick & Handfield 2014).

According to Brown (2019) tomorrow's procurement professionals need to be equally fluent in technology, data and relationship building. They must be able to zoom in to analyse processes and data points, and then zoom out to deliver strategic insights and collaborate with suppliers. In this manner, the role of procurement professionals is constantly evolving to adapt to the requirements of today's world and is moving now towards new ideas.

### 2.2.3 *Emotional Intelligence*

Emotional intelligence (EI), also called 'emotional quotient', or EQ, it was hierarchically sixth within the World Economic Forum's list of the highest ten skills that staff needs to possess to thrive within today's geographic composition (World Economic Forum 2016). Broadly speaking, EQ refers to someone's ability to understand, perceive and manage their own feelings and emotions (Jain 2018).

Although it is critical to demonstrate that emotional intelligence, defined and measured as an ability, can be measured reliably and can be differentiated from other constructs, it is also important to address what it predicts (Caruso, Mayer & Salovey 2002).

Chong, Falahat and Lee (2020) state in their study that recent research highlights the importance of emotional intelligence as a predictor in important domains such as academic performance, job performance, negotiation, leadership, emotional labour, trust, work-family conflict, and stress (Carter & Loh 2017; Falahat & Raman 2017; Subhashini & Shaju 2016; Zainal et al. 2017). EI is claimed to affect a wide array of work behaviours, including employee commitment, teamwork, development of talent, innovation, quality of service, and customer loyalty (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts 2004). The social and scientific communities have intensively explored the topic of emotional intelligence over the last few decades and the probable positive effect of EI has been uncovered in the family, institute and even office (Farrell 2015; Zainal, Zawawi, Aziz & Ali 2017). The results of Chong, Falahat and Lee's (2020) research showed that intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability and general mood are related in a positive way to job performance. These results allow emotional intelligence to remain a topic of interest in different fields because of its established impact on multiple areas and studies, and as a topic of interest for this case study.

In order to create an interview guide to assess the participants skills, approach and knowledge of emotional intelligence it becomes necessary to evaluate emotional intelligence theories from their birth in the 1990s.

In 1997, Mayer and Salovey stated emotional intelligence involves the "abilities to perceive, appraise, and express emotion; to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Caruso, Mayer & Salovey 2002). The definition posits four different abilities or skills, which Mayer and Salovey (1997) referred to as branches:

- (1) Identifying Emotions: this branch includes skills such as the ability to identify feelings, express emotions accurately, and differentiate between real and phony emotional expressions.
- (2) Using Emotions: includes the ability to use emotions to redirect attention to important events, to generate emotions that facilitate decision making, to use mood swings as a means to consider multiple points of view, and harness different emotions to encourage different approaches to problem solving (for instance, to use a happy mood to assist in generating creative, new ideas).

- (3) Understanding Emotions: is the ability to understand complex emotions and emotional “chains,” how emotions transition from one stage to another, the ability to recognise the causes of emotions, and the ability to understand relationships among emotions.
- (4) Managing Emotions: includes the ability to stay aware of one’s emotions, even those that are unpleasant. Empirical evidence supporting the four-branch model is reported elsewhere (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey 1999; see also Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews 2001).

This model offers insight into the emotional intelligence skills a person requires to promote emotional and intellectual growth and as it describes each of the four branches in detail it also allows flexibility to develop assessment instruments.

On the other hand, scientist Goleman (cited in Jane, 2018) says the 5 core components of emotional intelligence are: cognisance – the power to recognise and perceive your moods and emotions, and the way they have an effect on others; self-regulation; internal (or intrinsic) motivation; empathy; and social skills – the power to manage relationships and build networks.

In 1995 Goleman built on the work of Salovey and Mayer (1990), adding new components and presenting a list of competencies with anywhere from 4 to 2 dozen abilities and popularising the term “Emotional Intelligence”. As a result, there are 2 types of models for emotional intelligence that contrast each other: (1) Mixed Models, with Goleman’s work (1995), and (2) Ability Models, where Salovey and Mayer’s (1997) 4 branches can be found. As mentioned, providing a framework for the research is the ability-based approach, which has also seen the development of self-report measures (e.g., Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995; Schutte et al., 1998). This approach appeared to be the most appropriate for the research to assess performance given that it focuses on the cognitive aspects instead of affective aspects and it views emotional intelligence as a well-defined and conceptually related set of cognitive abilities for the processing of emotional information and regulating emotion adaptively (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts 2004).

#### 2.2.4 *Job Performance*

Borman and Motowidlo (1997 cited in Sekhar, Patwardhan & Vyas 2018) state that job performance is a multidimensional construct that comprises task performance and contextual performance (Motowidlo & Schmit 1999). Task performance has a direct relationship with an organisation’s technical core. Through job performance, employees implement technical processes or maintain service in the organisation’s technical processes. However, contextual performance includes organisational citizenship behaviours that do not support the

organisation's technical core; in contrast, it involves the organisational, social, and psychological environment of the technical core functions (Borman & Motowidlo 1997; Chen 2015).

Aboul-Ela (2017) provides a similar definition of task and contextual performance.

- (1) Task or in-role performance: 'the proficiency with which incumbents perform activities that are formally recognised as part of their jobs; activities that contribute to the organisation technical core either directly by implementing as part of its technological process or indirectly by providing it with needed material or services' (Borman & Motowidlo 1993, p. 73). As such, task performance is tied to a pre-set agreement and identification of job targets and objectives.
- (2) Contextual or extra-role performance: 'behaviours that support the organisational, social and psychological environment in which the technical core must function' (Borman & Motowidlo 1993, p. 73). It is the performance that focuses on the discretionary and flexible behaviour of employees that directly influence the overall productivity (Mackenzie, Podsakoff & Fetter 1991); the actions and steps that employees undertake willingly and are not stated on the job description (Mackenzie et al. 1991). Behaviours that demonstrate contextual performance are exerting efforts, enhancing and supporting team performance, communication and transparency, cooperation and offering unconditional support (Campbell 1990; Rotundo & Sackett 2002).

The task and contextual dimensions of job performance as presented here, provide a holistic view of the professionals' performance evaluating both in-role and extra-role performance, allowing a thorough evaluation of the professional.

Despite the many approaches to measure job performance, most of the literature agrees that the most objective way to measure job performance is by using scales that consider describing the job dimensions to be evaluated (Mikulecky & Ehlinger 1986) and are specific to the occupation that is being applied to. With this in mind, the task and contextual performance are the dimensions selected to measure job performance.

### **2.3 Empirical Literature**

Amongst the relevant empirical literature found on the topic, stands out the study conducted by Chong, Falahat and Lee in 2020. This study explored the predictive utility of an emotional intelligence measurement that is based on the Role-Based Performance Scale (RBPS) measure of job performance; the study aimed to investigate whether the level of emotional intelligence

score of each academic staff in the selected private higher educational institutions affected job performance. The research applied a quantitative method approach to cast the researchers' net wider to include selected higher educational institutions to obtain as much data as possible. The results showed that intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability and general mood are positively related to job performance, demonstrating a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of academic workers in private higher educational institutions. Therefore, these significant findings shed further light on the theoretical and practical utility of the construct of emotional intelligence and job performance and have proven the fact that emotional intelligence is accountable for and could predict job performance. Even though one of the limitations of the study is that it represented only the Klang Valley private higher education institution's academicians, this research proves the feasibility of the proposed research study.

Weinzimmer et al. (2017) also explores the correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance. In this case, a web-based survey was used for data collection, study participants were recruited through the use of social media, which has become a widely accepted method of data collection in the social sciences (c.f., Barchard & Williams 2008; King, O'Rourke & DeLongis 2014). Performance was measured using employees' most recent performance evaluation rating. Results of the study indicate strong positive correlations between emotional intelligence, work-family balance and job performance.

Once again it is possible to see how the subject has been explored in several studies in other disciplines with results that support a relationship between emotional intelligence and performance, mainly in social sciences, but not in the procurement sector. The closest approach related to procurement was a description of what does top procurement talent look like in Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth (2014), presenting a list of skills requirements for procurement professionals. The mentioned skills requirements include:

- Strategic thinking: in order to approach supply markets more smartly and with company strategic priorities in mind.
- Entrepreneurial focus: to be able to spot opportunities in the supply market against end-market needs.
- Creativity and solution orientation: to be able to find ways around supply market constraints and barriers.
- Communications skills: to engage internally and build bridges to suppliers.

- Quality and improvement focus: to continue to improve the performance of the supply base over time.
- Relationship skills: not to 'wheel and deal' but to develop joint ongoing improvement focus with suppliers and grow those relationships over time.
- Stewardship skills: to represent suppliers internally and ensure they achieve proper alignment with the business.
- Consultative skills: to engage with the business and ensure proper articulation of business needs for suppliers to fulfil.
- Service posture: towards business partners who specify and order, and towards suppliers who actually do the majority of the work. Whilst it is fine to report results, procurement talent should not seek the spotlight over suppliers and its internal customers.

Among the skills presented here it is possible to see glimpses of emotional intelligence, it is argued what the skills are for, but as categories and not specific ones; skills that could be developed or encouraged as presented in Salovey and Mayer's (1997) 4-branch model.

## **2.4 Debates in the Literature**

In contrast with the literature presented previously, in Caruso, Mayer and Salovey (2002) some researchers have cast a critical eye toward the emotional intelligence field, aiming to tease out the fad from the science (e.g., Davies, Stankov & Roberts 1998; Mayer et al. 2000; Roberts et al. 2001). The key issues appear to be (a) whether emotional intelligence can be operationalised; (b) whether reliable emotional intelligence tests can be constructed; (c) whether emotional intelligence is a new construct and can be differentiated from existing personality trait models; (d) what emotional intelligence predicts and the level of such prediction; and (e) how to determine correct answers for such tests (Caruso, Mayer & Salovey 2002). Regardless, most research papers and theorists confer validity to the hypothesis of emotional intelligence being a valid field of study.

Regarding procurement, in Tassabehj and Moorhouse (2008) some argue that the procurement role is still essentially a support function and that as a tactical role, it performs essentially low value adding activities (Kaufmann & Carter 2004; Cox et al. 2005). Tassabehj and Moorhouse (2008) conducted a study that concluded that although skills have a direct impact on the ability of procurement professionals to fulfil their role proficiently, the degree of organisational support and internal acknowledgement of the role's importance, were found to be a major barrier to the development and progress of procurement professionals. Although this provides

some insight into the means of how to progress in procurement, this research focuses on how to help the individual improve their skills and manage what is under their control.

There are also some limitations for the general application of different studies, and these are the target samples. The findings of the studies just represent one sector of the population and therefore the results cannot be extrapolated to other sectors without further research or adapting instruments for the different characteristics of the population.

## **2.5 Implications for the Research Objectives**

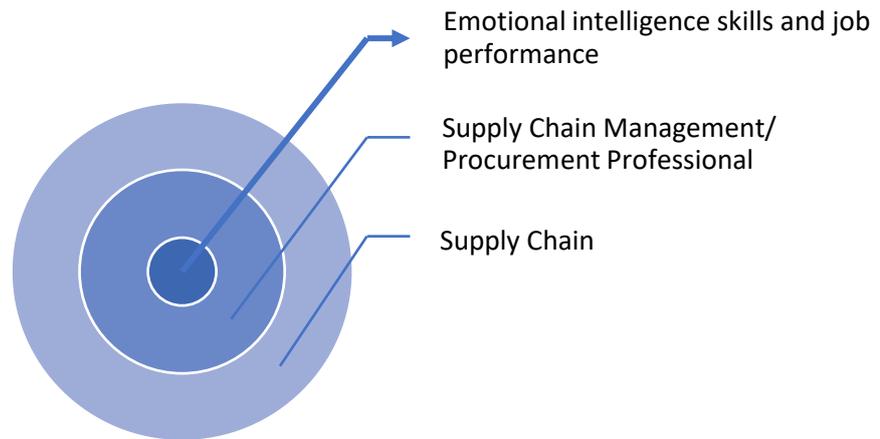
As reviewed in the conceptual, contextual and empirical literature, there has been an increase in interest in emotional intelligence and its relationship with job performance, especially in the areas of leadership, management and job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence has immense significance and relevance for self-emotional management, development of human potential, relationship management at home and work, teamwork, effective leadership, job performance, organisational development, creativity and innovation, educational development, stress reduction helper and so on (Chopra and Kanji, 2010). Therefore, the implications of this review for the research objectives are crucial, the objectives are centred on the assumption that the study is feasible and is a subject of interest not only for the procurement sector but also the educational sector that has an interest in training new procurement professionals, all based on the literature review, particularly empirical literature.

With the creation of a list of personality attributes about EI, individuals will then have the opportunity to exploit their personality attributes and to curb their emotions in raising their job performance. As stated in Chong, Falahat and Lee (2020), organisations can hire exemplary employees by targeting their recruitment or headhunting on potential candidates with good profiles (Gunu & Oladepo 2014; Law 2008 and Pekaar 2017).

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

Although procurement professionals operate in the context of a supply chain, the research study is focused on the specific characteristics of the individual: emotional intelligence skills and job performance, being the possible relationship between these 2 variables the center of the research (figure 6, page 17) that will allow to answer the research questions. As stated in the literature review, trying to establish if a relationship exists between emotional intelligence and job performance has been done several times in the past, but since it has never been attempted in procurement professionals, as far as the literature shows, this study with a focus on procurement professionals is a contribution to further knowledge in the area.

**Figure 6: Research Focus**



**SOURCE:** created by the author.

The literature review has given some insight on how to answer the research objectives and achieve the research objectives, providing a conceptual framework on which to base the study, as models and theories have been chosen to drive the overall research. These have been summarised and illustrated in figure 7 (page 18).

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The literature review provided clarity regarding core terminology and key elements of the research objectives for the development of the research study, as well as to identify the main theories and models to be used, offering background and empirical evidence to the feasibility of the research study.

As the main focus of the research, this literature review has also established the framework to assess emotional intelligence as described by the 'Ability models' with 4 main abilities referred to as branches, and the evaluation of job performance based on 2 dimensions: task and contextual, for a more holistic view of the participants job performance.

Figure 7: Conceptual Framework

Activities	Procurement	Emotional Intelligence	Job performance
<b>RQ: Is there a relationship between job performance and emotional intelligence in procurement professionals?</b>			
Characterisation of the main topics for the research	Upstream part of the supply chain that faces suppliers (Harrison, Van Hoek & Skipworth 2014).  Managers must be defined by mind-set and skill set.	Predictor of job performance. Someone's ability to understand, perceive and manage their own feelings and emotions (Jain 2018).	Multidimensional construct affected by task and contextual elements (Hochwarter et al. 2004).
Model Selection	Strategic role  Constantly evolving	Mental Ability Models  (Identifying emotions, Using emotions, Understanding emotions and Managing emotions)	2 dimensions:  - Task performance - Contextual performance
Interview process		Assessment of Emotional Intelligence	Assessment of Job performance
Analysis		Analyse data results using 'Data display and Analysis' to determine whether there is relationship between EI and job performance (Objective 1).	
<b>RQ: What is the role emotional intelligence has in the procurement sector?</b>			
<b>Are emotional intelligence skills an asset for procurement professionals?</b>			
Determine role of emotional intelligence in procurement (Objective 2).	Analyse results to determine the role of emotional intelligence and whether is an asset or not for procurement professionals.		
<b>RQ: What are the key emotional intelligence skills required in a procurement professional?</b>			
Create a profile with the key emotional intelligence skills (objective 3 and 4).	With the results of the interviews and based on the literature models used and literature review, determine if there are aspects of emotional intelligence considered relevant for procurement professionals and create a profile with the key emotional intelligence skills identified.		

### 3 Methodology and Research Design

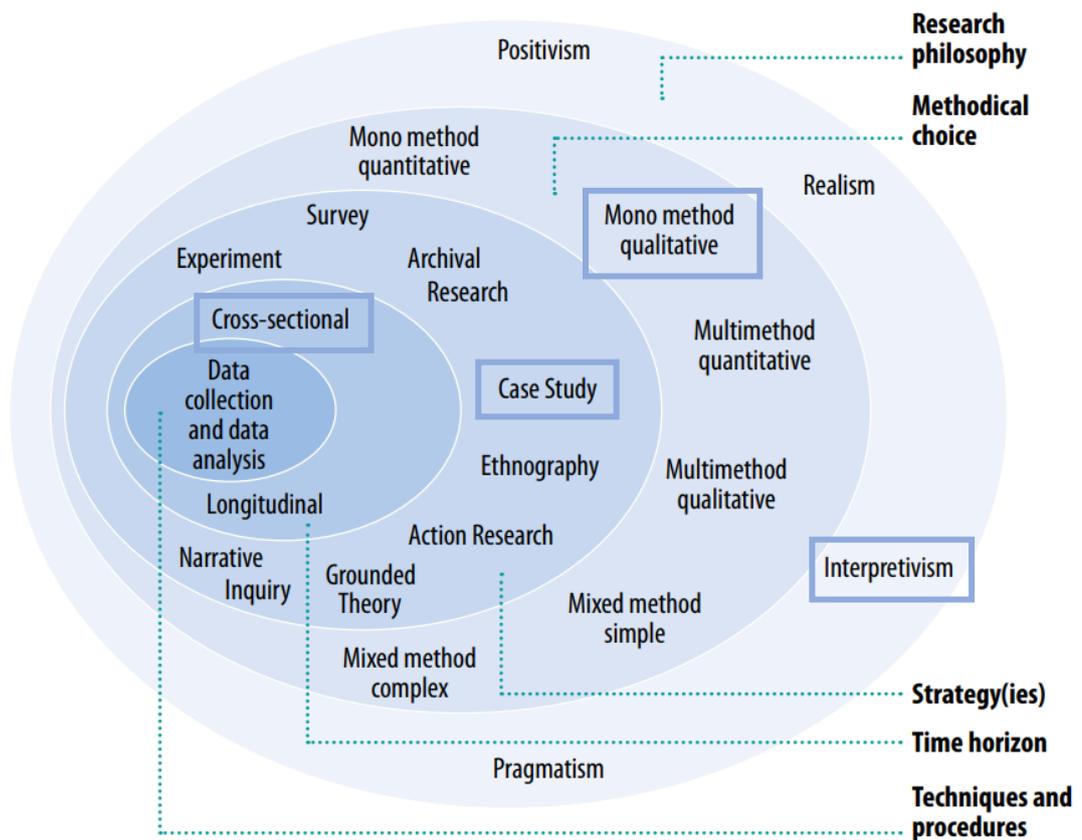
#### 3.1 Overview

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015), research design is the way a research question and objectives are operationalised into a research project.

#### 3.2 Research Philosophy

Given that the proposed research study focuses on answering a set of research questions regarding constantly evolving social processes like the significance of emotional intelligence in a particular sector and how it could impact the individual job performance, an interpretive paradigm with a qualitative, inductive approach and a mono method is considered suitable.

Figure 8: Research Onion for the Study



SOURCE: Adapted from Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015.

An interpretive research philosophy implies a focus on the perceptions and interpretations of the individuals of their own realities, which facilitates the use of small samples and the researcher interpretations as key to contributions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2015). The objective of interpretive research is to create new, richer understandings, and in the proposed study this objective is met by attaining a new understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals. As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015) explain, some would argue the interpretivism perspective is highly appropriate in the case of business and management research.

The premise of interpretivism is that, as humans, we 'interpret' our experiences in the social world to produce and reproduce meanings (Blaikie 2004 cited in Salmons 2016) and that suites the objectives of the research, what was expected of this study was for the participants to interpret their experiences as procurement professionals in the environment of one particular construction company and compare their experiences, assess if there are shared interpretations that allow to make general statements to answer the research questions or their interpretations of their work experience are so widely different that is not possible to draw any assumptions, or maybe somewhere in between, the aim is to construct knowledge on the subject. It is understood that by sharing common interpretations communities emerge and define values, cultures, or norms. Yet even when members of a group seem to share the same experiences and perspectives, their interpretations of events or ideas may be different (Salmons 2016). Therefore, other research philosophies such as positivism, whose purpose is to predict, control and generalise (Merriam & Tisdell 2015), and operates on the basis of hypothesis, were not suitable for the study.

The main criticism of the chosen paradigm is the apparent loss of objectivity. As stated by Loseke (2013, p.22 cited in Salmons 2016), the goal of the research is to understand the complexity of the human experience, the research is a student of social life and the researcher is a social member; hence, complete objectivity is not possible. The data collected are interpretations of the participants experiences at work, it is implicitly biased by the participants own set of believes and that is taken into account in the research design end assessment of quality of design.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

Regarding the methodological choice, the collection of data was to be done through interviews with the use of an emotional intelligence and job performance interview guide with the aim of gathering the participants work experiences and interpretations on the subject. The content of the interview related to experiences, such as how individuals self-report emotional intelligence

skills and performance in their work environment, which requires verbal analysis and interpretation rather than statistical analysis, and therefore a qualitative research method, more specifically, a mono method of analysis appears adequate.

The label 'qualitative research' covers a heterogeneous field (Hammersley, 2012). Qualitative research seeks to understand how people construct the world around them, what they are doing, how they are doing it or what is happening to them in terms that are meaningful and that offer rich insights (Flick, 2017).

Hammersley (2012) asserts that qualitative researchers are frequently concerned with discovering which factors tend to produce some outcome, and they seek to do this through describing in detail changes in a small number of cases studied, which is why the present study focused on 6 procurement professionals from the same construction company in Chile. As stated in the research objectives, the study seeks to determine key skills by comparing the participants experiences and interpretations on 2 subjects and evaluate whether there is a relationship between them or not; qualitative researchers may also compare one or more cases in order to try to assess which of several factors involved seem to play the crucial role in the sort of social process being investigated (Hammersley, 2012), which is why the results of each of the 6 participants of the study were compared. According to Flick (2008), this comparison often is based on contrasting cases (or events) with each other.

For the purpose of the case study, as the emphasis is to study a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationship (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015) between emotional intelligence and job performance, it is straightforward to identify the research as an explanatory study.

### **3.3.1 *Data collection approach***

The data expected to be collected responded to the individual's real world in their own words, not hypothetical situations or statements, thus the instrument used to collect data was built to help the researcher travel into the subject's world. Most qualitative work investigates what goes on in the ordinary settings in which people live and work, and/or uses interviews that are designed to approximate to ordinary conversations in key respects (Hammersley, 2012).

Given the need for data collection to explore a phenomenon and create a profile, as well as to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance, the open-ended and exploratory approach of reasoning present in an inductive approach to theory development is appropriate for the research. Using inductive reasoning, a researcher starts 'bottom-up' and begins by collecting data about the topic.

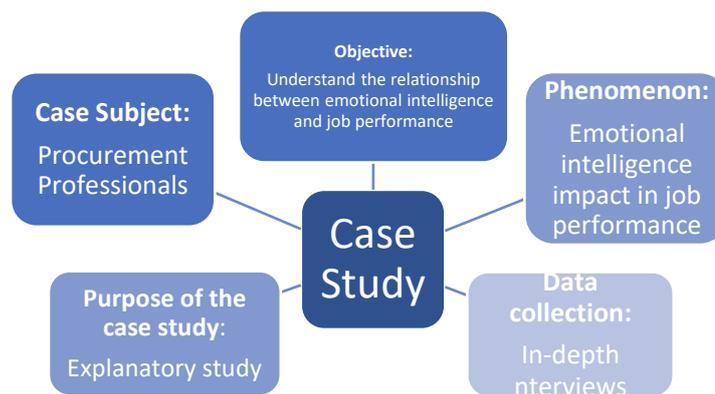
Qualitative researchers place more emphasis on generating and developing descriptions and explanations than upon testing pre-defined hypotheses. This is also reflected at the stage of analysing data, where the task is to generate categories rather than to place data into pre-determined ones (Hammersley, 2012).

It is also relevant for the overall approach to establish that since the research study took place in the context of the completion of a dissertation with time constraints, the time horizon was cross-sectional and comparisons of a number of cases/participants were made on one occasion. The disadvantage of the timeline that applies to this case is that it is only a snapshot (Levin 2006) of the moment of data collection. Cross-sectional research involves the study of a particular phenomenon at a particular time (Saunders, Thornhill & Lewis 2019), in this case during a pandemic, which has inevitably affected the work dynamic and influenced the participants experiences; and is strongly linked to a comparative perspective (Flick 2008).

### 3.4 Research Strategy

Amongst the existing strategies available, the most suitable strategy identified for the research is a case study. The value of case study research for business is that it allows the researcher to examine a problem or question in a practical, real-life situation (Farquhar, 2012) and the present research is an in-depth inquiry into the phenomenon of emotional intelligence possibly affecting job performance on procurement professionals in its real-life setting, procurement professionals being the case subject (Figure 9, page 22).

**Figure 9: Case Study Strategy**



**SOURCE:** created by the author.

The research was designed to understand if there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance and the implications for the individual, and quoting Yin 2009

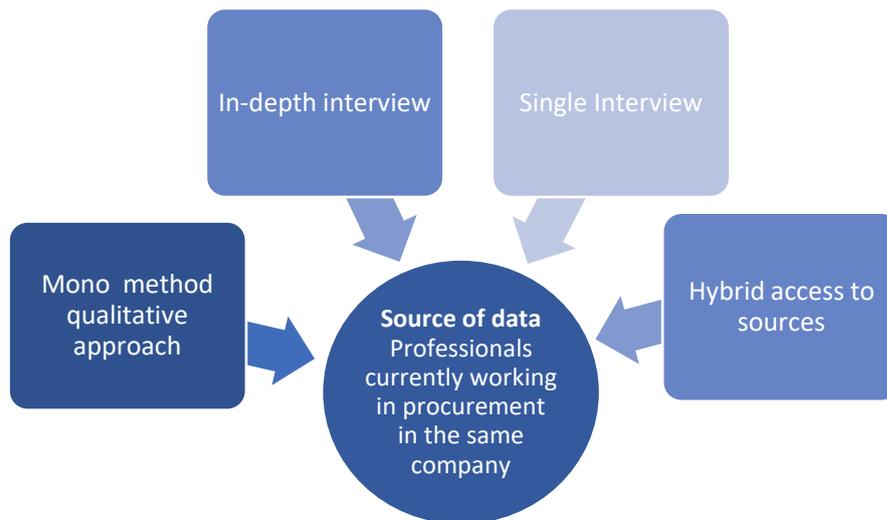
(cited in Farquhar 2012) a case study strategy can explain, describe, illustrate and enlighten, being particularly suitable for explanatory research, amongst others.

Depending on the purpose the case study is to be used, it is possible to adapt the design of the case study to meet different practical, ethical and theoretical considerations. This adaptability is a methodological strength (Walshe et al. 2004).

### 3.5 Collection of Primary Data

As mentioned in the overall approach, the data collection method for the case study responds to a mono approach, in which the participants will be asked to answer an in-depth interview (figure 10, on page 23). Given the time constraints of the research, it was deemed suitable to collect the data through a single interview that could provide the information needed to analyse and make interpretations regarding the topics assessed.

*Figure 10: Methods and sources for collecting data*



**SOURCE:** created by the author

This collection of data was conducted during an interview so as to assure the participant's commitment to responsibly answer the questions and obtain more precise detail and/or answer any additional questions they may have, but under extraordinary circumstances presented because of the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the impossibility to travel, of ensuring face-to-face interviews and many people adapting to working from home instead of an office; added to the physical distance between the interviewer and the participants, the interviews were conducted by video-call (Zoom). In other words, traditional access to sources such as face-to-face interactions to conduct interviews or deliver questionnaires were restricted, making internet

mediated access essential to contact participants and gather secondary data, therefore making necessary a hybrid type access to sources, combining traditional and internet-mediated approaches (Saunders, Thornhill & Lewis 2019).

### **3.6 Sample**

Sampling in qualitative research in most cases is not oriented on a formal (e.g. random) selection of a part of an existing or assumed population. The criteria to be met by the participants of the case study was to be professionals currently working in the procurement department of the same company; hence, which company or industry was not relevant. Considering it is qualitative research, the sample is a small selection of professionals working in the procurement department of their business, and because of the researcher's access to sources, the sample consists of 6 participants from Chile who work in the procurement department in the industry of construction.

To select the sample the criterion of convenience was used, which refers to the selection of those cases that are the easiest to access under given conditions; this criterion should only be chosen if it is the only way to do a study because of limited resources of time and people (Flick, 2008), which is the case in the context of a Master's dissertation. And since the researcher is a full-time student, it holds the role of an external researcher.

As stated in the conceptual framework, the interview guide was designed based on the two dimensions of performance: task and contextual, in the case of job performance; and in the case emotional intelligence it was based on the ability models presented by Mayer and Salovey (1997); the questions enquired the subjects both separately and combined. The interview was presented in the form of open questions and had a duration of between 45 minutes to 1 hour.

#### **3.6.1 Sources**

As regards to the nature of secondary data, the kind of documentary sources used in the research are journal, textbooks, and reviews. In relation to primary data, King, Horrocks and Brooks (2018) define interviews as flexible and open-ended style, with a focus on people's actual experiences rather than general beliefs and opinions, and the interviewer-interviewee relationship as crucial to the method, which is suitable for the type of study and the information needed to collect. Thus, flexibility is a key requirement and instead of fixed questions in a predetermined order, the use of an 'interview guide' that outlines the main topics and questions the researcher would like to cover is more appropriate.

King, Horrocks and Brooks (2018) details the advantages and disadvantages of the use of full questions interviews. The advantage of using full questions is that it forces the researcher to think carefully about question formulation to avoid the kind of leading question, endorsement of participant opinions and so on that can happen if the interview drifts into a style that is too conversational (Willig 2008 cited in King, Horrocks & Brooks 2018). The disadvantage is that with full questions stated on the guide, the interviewer may tend not to use it as flexibly as they should. In contrast, interview guides with topic heading format have the opposite problem, more flexibility but less control over leading questions, etc.

The questions developed to collect the data are designed by the researcher based on the models and literature previously established and the nature of the questions is in its totality open questions; the reason for this is that specific or closed questions allow specific answers concerning facts and open questions allow in-depth answers and interpretations, this is especially relevant regarding the topics under study and help define and describe the most important aspects identified by the participants without influencing their answer. Also, in the case of open questions, it is possible to use probing questions to further explore questions to a deeper level, they may be pre-planned or created on the fly (Tracy 2019), and in the case of this interview guide, probing questions were pre-planned in order to avoid leading questions.

The observations have been made based on the data analysis obtained from the interviews. This data allows to make observations recognising the emotional intelligence skills identified by the participants, identifying job performance, determining whether relationships exist, amongst others.

### **3.6.2 Access and Ethical Issues**

As mentioned in section 3.5 (see Collection of Primary Data, page 24), because of restrictions produced by the Covid-19 pandemic, traditional access to sources was now limited, therefore the access to data was done through a combined approach of traditional and internet mediated access.

The pandemic also affected the level of access gained, since organisations were less prone to engage in additional activities because of stress caused by changes made to adapt to the current situation. To adjust to this, the interviews for the data collection process were conducted using online resources.

In the context of research, ethics refers to the standards of behaviour that guide your conduct in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it

(Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). The ethical issues in the research were addressed by providing the participants with a consent form and a plain language statement that clearly stated the expected involvement in the case study, the anonymity of the participants personal information, the participants right to access the completed research, insurance that the data provided will only be used for the purpose of this case study, and disclosing any potential risks from involvement in the research study. The plain language statement also portrayed a direct benefit for participating in the research: participants are to access the analysis of the information gathered, allowing them to act on the information as they see fit.

Additionally, the participants were properly informed of their freedom to withdraw themselves from the research at any point.

### **3.7 Quality of the research design**

The quality of the research design was to be assessed by adapting the scientific canons of inquiry: reliability and validity, to a qualitative case study (Figure 11, page 27).

#### **Reliability**

Internal reliability refers to ensuring consistency during the research project (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). This criterion was hoped to be met by involving more than one researcher in the study to evaluate the extent to which they agree on the interpretations made and the role could be fulfilled by the research supervisor. External reliability refers to whether your data collection techniques and analytic procedures would produce consistent findings if they were repeated by you on another occasion or if they were replicated by a different researcher (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). The present case study provides in-depth context in which the research was carried on regarding sample criteria, paradigm, strategy and models in which to base the research, the research design methods used to collect data, as well as to analysis and interpretation, so if necessary, they can be accurately replicated in the future.

#### **Validity**

The adaptation of the concept of internal validity to qualitative research is generally not seen as a problem since the in-depth nature of qualitative methods means that the theoretical relationships that are proposed can be shown to be well grounded in a rich collection of data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2015). In addition, internal validity was expected to be achieved if a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance was established. Even though external validity has been questioned in small samples, qualitative studies can achieve

generalisability through transference to other settings, for example, findings from one study setting may lead to generalisations across other settings where learnings from the research can be applied (Buchanan 2012 cited in Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2015), which could be applied to the current case study.

**Figure 11: Criteria to assess the quality of the research design**

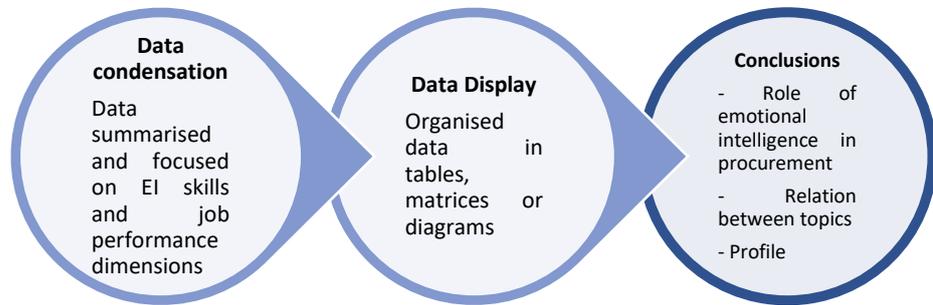


**SOURCE:** created by the author

### 3.8 Approach to Data Analysis

Since words and images may have multiple meaning as well as unclear meaning, it is necessary to explore and clarify these with great care. This indicates that the quality of qualitative research depends on the interaction between data collection and data analysis to allow meanings to be explored and clarified (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). For this case study, the analysis technique used was 'data display and analysis' (Figure 12, page 28). Data display and analysis is an approach based on the work of Miles et al. (2014) that involves three stages: data condensation, in which data is summarised or focused on certain elements such as each branch of emotional intelligence skills and job performance of each participant; data display, in which the summarised data is organised and assembled into visual displays such as tables, matrices or networks; and drawing and verifying conclusions relating the relationship between the topics under study.

*Figure 12: Data Display and Analysis applied to the case study*



**SOURCE:** created by the author

### 3.9 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology choices made to structure the study and conduct the process of data collection and analysis, as well as the method to measure and ensure the quality of the research, adapting the scientific canons of inquiry to a qualitative case study.

It was illustrated how the research paradigm is interpretivism, the methodological choice a mono qualitative method, the strategy a case study, and the techniques in-depth interviews and data display analysis. All this methodologic and design choices complement each other to facilitate the collection of data and analysis of experiences and interpretations of the participants of the study, in order to, ultimately, be able to answer the research questions.

## 4 Presentation and Discussion of the Findings

### 4.1 Overview

As mentioned in the conceptual framework, the study was driven by the research questions and research objectives, hence, the findings are presented as they reach each objective and answer each research question.

### 4.2 Findings

Regarding strategies for writing findings, one of the most common and intuitive organisation strategies is that of organising the essay around several primary themes/topics (Tracy 2019). Therefore, the main themes of this chapter are the participants profile and research objectives.

#### 4.2.1 Participants Profile

The participants (might be referred to as 'P' throughout the presentation of the findings) all work in a construction company in the south of Chile, and as they all agree in their description, the main purpose of the procurement department of the company is represented in the answer of participant 1:

*“Guarantee the supply of materials for the warehouse and the worksites in general,  
and control of the materials for the jobs to be executed”*

The position in the company and background of the participants is presented in figure 13 (page 30). It stands out that none of the participants received official training, academic or in the company, in the area of procurement. Regarding the position in the company, 5 of the 6 participants work as 'Procurement and warehouse manager' in charge of one or several worksites, and 1 participant's position is 'Procurement assistant manager in headquarters' and works directly in headquarters overseeing the supply of all the worksites and macro-purchases of the company. Additionally, the results did not show significant differences between the participants experiences and interpretations, and their years of experience in the area of procurement or in the company.

**Figure 13: Participants Profile**

<b>P</b>	<b>Experience in procurement</b>	<b>Experience in the company</b>	<b>Position in the company</b>	<b>Training in procurement</b>
<b>1</b>	8 years	4 years	Procurement and warehouse control manager	“no...they only gave you a manual attached to your contract for you to read”
<b>2</b>	3 years	3 years	Procurement and warehouse control manager	“No, I received training from a colleague who left the position”
<b>3</b>	10 years	10 years	Procurement and warehouse control manager	“No. The construction manager in charge of the worksite explained to me how the systems work, the rest I learned along the way”
<b>4</b>	9 years	9 years	Procurement and warehouse control manager	“No... If I had any queries, I could take them to the people in the head office”
<b>5</b>	15 years	13 or 14 years	Procurement assistant manager in headquarters	“No... in the company is practically non-existent”
<b>6</b>	8 or 9 years	2 years	Procurement and warehouse control manager	“A small induction regarding... the construction company’s work system”

**SOURCE:** created by the author

#### 4.2.2 Objective 1

Identify if there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals

In order to introduce the research topic to the interviewees and gain some perspective and background before moving forward to the body of the interview, one of the first questions was regarding the knowledge that each respondent had of emotional intelligence (the Interview Guide can be found in Appendix A). Two of the participants stated they did not know the meaning of the concept, participant two responded:

*“I do not know, to tell you the truth, I have never heard of that”*

Whereas the other participants gave answers somewhat related to the concept of emotional intelligence as presented in the literature review. Participants 4 and 5, respectively, described emotional intelligence as:

*“series of skills that one can manage based on emotional aspects, it’s not the most objective area, it comprises skills like empathy”*

*“to work on the feelings of the other person, I think that based on what the other person shows you, you can work with what the other person gives you”*

Moving forward to the body of the interview, in order to achieve this objective, participants were asked for the main factors that affected their job performance and the impact that each of the emotional intelligence branches had in their job performance.

#### **4.2.2.1 Factors that impact job performance**

When asked about the main factors that impacted their job performance, four of the six participants mentioned the 'relationship with suppliers', in this regard, P3 and 4 stated:

*"Compliance with providers will have a positive or a negative impact on job performance. The provider is ultimately the one who has to comply or else it affects the entire project"*

*"Good communication with suppliers definitely helps to have a good performance, good communication and honesty regarding the conditions that each supplier has"*

The second most commented factor was the 'work overload' and 'stress', this was the only factor identified directly related to the company's role in the professionals' job performance. In this regard, participants 2 and 3 said:

*"Stress, there is a lot of stress. For example, I leave work at 6 o'clock, I come home, and I have to keep working, the truth is this job is very stressful"*

*"Work overload... The company takes advantage of the fact that we are working in the same field and the worksites are right next to each other, so they use the same work team and they overload the team with work"*

Regarding this, they were also asked about the main causes of stress for procurement professionals in their company, to which although all of the respondents gave their ideas of what causes them stress, some of them clarified that while there are causes for stress, that does not mean the job is stressful. An example of this is in the following statement of participant 3:

*"I do not know if I would call it stressful, it is demanding, it requires constant attention"*

Their answers also show an overlap between the main causes of stress and the main factors that affect job performance, particularly in the factors that have a negative impact.

Continuing with other factors that affect job performance, the 'work environment' and 'communication' were also mentioned by several participants:

*"Work environment, when there is a good work environment one feels better working" P2*

*"Communications, because there is the issue of how you handle it, if you can take advantage of it and you know how to manage communication" P5*

Another factor found was financial issues of the company, regarding this subject the respondents specified that this issue is currently presenting itself with a negative impact because

of the pandemic and subsequent quarantine in several regions of the country, creating uncertainty concerning the ability of suppliers to make dispatches. Participant 3 explained:

*“The company is having credit problems, because they are [the procurement department] trying to secure material in the warehouses and the cash flow of the company is being affected by this and is taking a hit”*

Other factors identified by the respondents were ‘mood’ and the ‘recruitment process’, which is of especial interest to this research since the ultimate purpose of the research is helping improve the recruitment process for procurement professionals by providing a profile of EI skills.

*“I think the mood influences as well, the external problems that one has unfortunately they influence, you have to avoid them obviously” P6*

*“One aspect that greatly influences us is that if you oversee staff and you are not in charge of the selection of the staff, for this selection to be the correct one. When that recruitment is not the right one, it negatively impacts your performance, or if they work well and are committed it has a positive impact” P4*

P3 also stated that the ‘career and vocation’ (referred to as profession in the summary) are relevant, and that it has a great impact in job performance whether the professional has knowledge of construction. Figure 14 (page 32) summarises the main factors that influence job performance identified by the participants.

**Figure 14: Summary of the main factors that impact job performance**

**Factors that influence job performance**

- **Relationship with suppliers**
- **Work overload and stress**
- **Work environment**
- **Profession**
- **Communication**
- **Recruitment process**
- **Financial issues**
- **Mood**

**SOURCE:** created by the author

Moving on to the perception of the impact of emotional intelligence in job performance, the questions were presented using each of the four branches of the ‘ability model’ of Mayer and Salovey (1997) and the answers are presented in the same manner.

#### **4.2.2.2 Identifying emotions impact in job performance**

All six participants agreed that identifying emotions has a great impact in their job performance, helping them to avoid mistakes or miscommunications. P2 stated:

*“it helps me to have good communication... because I might be doing something wrong and the other person does not say it and expresses it with their attitude... It helps to solve situations”*

And P6 provides an example of when it is useful to identify emotions:

*“There are times when there are delicate or more thorough jobs and entrusting them to a person who is angry for example, I am one of the people who chooses to deflect, make a change and leave that person doing a different task because they can make mistakes”*

#### **4.2.2.3 Using emotions impact in job performance**

Once again, all the participants agreed that using emotions had a relevant and positive impact in their job performance, P4 gave the following response:

*“It's relevant, the idea is that one's moods can be taken advantage of and try to keep them at their best, seek for the moods that are most productive for you”*

#### **4.2.2.4 Understanding emotions impact in job performance**

As in the previous two branches of emotional intelligence, all the respondents thought understanding emotions helped them to have a better job performance. P3 stated:

*“Very much. Because we have to understand the emotions of either oneself or the second or third person who is in front us, it is really important in the context of our work”*

#### **4.2.2.5 Managing emotions impact in job performance**

Following the trend, participants concluded that managing emotions is necessary and has a great impact in their job performance. Participant 5 and 4, respectively, stated:

*“It is necessary, to manage emotions should be a requirement for the position, because our work is based on dealing with other people on a day-to-day basis”*

*“computational skills, networking and things like that, plus the management of emotions, they complement each other. It is essential, it helps us to have a fluent communication with other people”*

Figure 15 (page 34) summarises the answers of each participant regarding the impact of each of the four branches of emotional intelligence in their job performance.

**Figure 15: Summary of emotional intelligence impact in job performance**

<b>P</b>	<b>Identifying emotions</b>	<b>Using emotions</b>	<b>Understanding emotions</b>	<b>Managing emotions</b>
1	Absolutely, it has a good impact	If I am in a good mood I feel that the day yields more to me, that I deliver better, that I solve problems, that I help	I had never thought of it that way, but yes, of course	If I could not handle my emotions and I got constantly frustrated I would end up collapsing
2	It helps me to have good communication	I take advantage of those days to... solve problems that have been there for a while	Yes, because you already know the things that anger you, so you try not to pay attention	If I do things while feeling sad or angry, I think that nothing goes right
3	It impacts my job performance in a positive way... We identify quickly what the other needs to help them.	I think they have a lot of impact, with a positive mood I try to find the solution to the problem without straining myself	We have to understand the emotions of either oneself or the second or third person who is in front us, it is really important in the context of our work	Yes, being always serene, calm and with the best attitude is always going to be an advantage
4	It helps a lot with the people around you... you can get better performance	It's relevant... seek for the moods that are most productive for you	It helps to keep a good relationship with colleagues and at the same time to perform as we should perform at work	Computational skills... plus the management of emotions, they complement each other
5	It is as a tool that is never named... it is a tool that we use daily, it is really important	Extremely, because in the end a good mood motivates you	Yes, it has a big impact. That aspect is important in our work	It is necessary, to manage emotions should be a requirement for the position
6	There are times when there are delicate or more thorough jobs and entrusting them to a person who is angry... they can make mistakes	With a good mood one can be more productive, will want to do more things, make better use of time, resources	They can have positive and negative impacts	Obviously, first manage one's emotions and then learn to deal with the emotions of others, which will not always be the same as ours

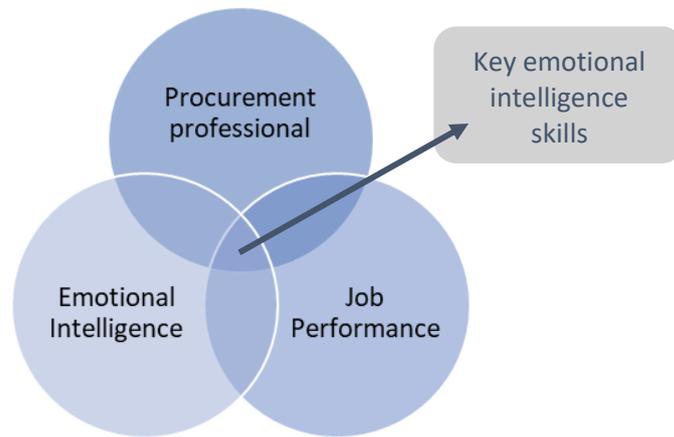
**SOURCE:** created by the author

#### **4.2.2.6 Is there a relationship between job performance and emotional intelligence in procurement professionals?**

The information collected and presented above showed that participants responses strongly linked each of the emotional intelligence branches with an improvement in their job performance, describing emotional intelligence abilities (each of the four branches) as relevant for them to conduct their day to day activities effectively. Likewise, the majority of the factors that impact job performance identified related to emotional intelligence abilities.

Therefore, all the participants of the study agreed in the fact that there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals.

*Figure 16: Model linking emotional intelligence to job performance in procurement professionals*



**SOURCE:** created by the author

#### 4.2.3 Objective 2

Identify and define if emotional intelligence has a role in the procurement sector

In order to achieve this objective, participants were first asked if they believed emotional intelligence played any role in their job performance, and if the answer was affirmative, they were requested to define the role that emotional intelligence had in their performance.

The majority of the participants stated they realised they were oblivious to the importance of emotional intelligence and the role it played in their daily activities, mainly because of little knowledge on the subject, and as this question was located towards the end of the interview, they realised it when exposed to the four-branch model of emotional intelligence as they recognised skills and behaviours they had at work that helped them perform efficiently.

All participants concluded that emotional intelligence plays a role in their job performance, providing different perspectives on where the importance lays.

The following Figure (17, page 36) presents a summary of the participants perspectives on the role of emotional intelligence in the day-to-day of a procurement professional.

**Figure 17: Summary of the role of emotional intelligence in the procurement sector**

P	Role of emotional intelligence
1	<i>“It plays a major role in the whole of my performance, in the way I face the problems I have, as I face my day-to-day emotionally. I would give it a percentage of 80% importance, because you can have a lot of knowledge, technical knowledge, but if you are not well emotionally, it does not work for you”</i>
2	<i>“It has a big influence because with good moods things are done better”</i>
3	<i>“They are actually like stages, having self-control, self-motivation, social skills and interpersonal relationships, always managing them and having a good relationship with other people, I think that with that, one can have a good job performance... If we see the importance of emotional intelligence in job performance in percentages, I would say 100%... In the procurement sector we have to communicate with a lot of people and we also have to be very attentive to the management of our emotions and to understand how or with what kind of emotions each person is interacting with us”</i>
4	<i>“especially in maintaining a mental balance, in the end if we can handle that aspect well we can handle or move away from problems or conflict situations at work and that definitely helps... keep the mental balance of the professional”</i>
5	<i>“It is a really important factor, it will never be enough, one has to be always open to learn... it is a fundamental pillar within the aptitudes that the procurement professional has to have... that is not often mentioned”</i>
6	<i>“It plays an important role, but because of the lack of knowledge one does not recognise it, it is immersed in the day to day... we do not have the training and perhaps the technical knowledge to be able to apply it in the best way at work, maybe it is a void that we have, we usually focus on the technical area but not to work the emotion with people”</i>

**SOURCE:** created by the author

#### **4.2.3.1 What is the role emotional intelligence has in the procurement sector?**

According to the interpretations of the participants, and using the participants words, emotional intelligence plays an important/fundamental/major role in the daily activities of procurement professionals and most of them are no aware of it. As participant 6 stated:

*“we do not have the training and perhaps the technical knowledge to be able to apply it in the best way at work, maybe it is a void that we have”*

The role of emotional intelligence in procurement is in the way the professionals face problems or conflicts, communicate with others and maintain their mental balance. It was also identified as one of the fundamental aptitudes that the procurement professional needs to have.

#### 4.2.4 Objective 3

Determine if there are aspects of emotional intelligence considered relevant for procurement professionals

The approach concerning this objective was to ask the participants to consider and present their thoughts regarding the following statement: 'emotional intelligence skills are an asset for procurement professionals', and enquire about the way procurement professionals handle their work relationships and the impact in their job performance.

Participants concurred again to say that their work relationships have an impact in their job performance, and that there are several aspects of emotional intelligence such as 'communication' and 'commitment', that are relevant for procurement professionals. On this point, participants 6 and 4, respectively, replied:

*"not all of us decide and think the same way, so everybody is affected differently, and we have to reach a balance point in order to do our work in the best way"*

*"having a good and fluent relationship with people helps to have commitment and good performance from the staff... when I need to create new teams I have no problems recruiting team members or maintaining team members because they have a commitment not only to the company but a personal commitment to me"*

Further aspects of emotional intelligence that are relevant for procurement professionals are detailed under research objective 4, figure 19 (page 42).

##### 4.2.4.1 Are emotional intelligence skills an asset for procurement professionals?

Participants replies to this enquiry were firm and enthusiastic while sustaining that EI skills are an asset for procurement professionals. Participant 5 stated:

*"totally agree, emotional intelligence would be the second most important tool for performance, the first would be the technical knowledge of the position"*

P4 talked about the possibility of other areas of EI being used as a tool as well:

*"it could be different, I don't handle all aspects related to emotional intelligence, just the basics: empathy, communication, but maybe there are other areas or more things that can be used as a tool to improve processes at work"*

In a similar subject, participant 2 included a suggestion for future training of procurement professionals:

*"it is an important tool... it should be taken under consideration in the company... companies should implement some kind of strategy or training related to emotional intelligence, maybe it could help those of us who work in this area"*

While participant 1 went on to say that emotional intelligence skills aid in managing problems, frustrations, other people, and that ultimately helps improve performance.

*“it is an important skill because with emotional intelligence I am going to be more prepared to deal with and channel well problems, frustrations, personalities that you do not like”*

And finally, participants 3 and 6 commented:

*“I totally agree... think emotional intelligence skills are a very beneficial asset”*

*“Yes, of course. If we apply emotional intelligence in our functions is an improvement, it is one more asset”*

#### 4.2.5 **Objective 4**

Create a profile with key emotional intelligence skills that relate to job performance in procurement professionals

So as to reach this objective, participants were asked about obstacle and stress management, and about emotional intelligence skills they feel are relevant for procurement professionals.

Moreover, before identifying the EI skills that relate to job performance, the participants were asked to identify the main tasks they need to execute at work and the skills needed to perform those tasks in order to provide context into the general skills considered necessary to perform the tasks of procurement professionals in the construction sector. This information was gathered through the assessment of the two dimensions of job performance: task and contextual, enquiring about tasks detailed in job description and tasks that are not explicit in the job description, and the skills required to perform both in-role and extra-role tasks.

Among the most mentioned tasks were supply the worksites, manage the warehouse, organise the workload (maintain order) and keep a good relationship with suppliers. In the same regard, the most commonly mentioned skills were knowledge of construction, organisation, good communication, negotiation, social skills and communication with suppliers.

The information gathered is presented in figure 18 (page 39).

**Figure 18: Main tasks and skills required for procurement professionals**

Tasks			Skills		
Price Quoting	Supply the worksites	Manage staff	Persistence	Dedication and concentration	Organisation
Manage the warehouse	Maintain order	Warehouse inventories	Knowledge of systems	Flexibility	Work under pressure
Collection and safeguard of materials	Relationship with suppliers	Manage receipts and invoices of material	Knowledge of materials/ construction	Good communication with suppliers and others	Anticipate problems
Manage equipment and machinery	Planning and projection of the job	Oversee materials	Prioritise and plan	Negotiation	Interpersonal relationships
			Management of staff	Be proactive	Social skills

**SOURCE:** created by the author

Continuing with obstacle and stress management, the participants stated how they see procurement professionals face obstacles and stress. For the most part, the answers referred to very poor ability to handle stress that causes people to resign to their position or sometimes abandon their post in the middle of a job, indicating that the people that has remained in the company for a long time possessed certain abilities that help them manage obstacles at an optimal level, preventing the problems from becoming stress. In this regard, P4 response provides some insight.

*“I've seen a lot of people pass by... and they leave because the pressure consumes them. Sometimes they lack resources and are frustrated and can't stand the reprimands, the constant questioning, that creates a lot of problems in people in this area... People who have been around for several years are very few and they manage stress with organisation, full knowledge of our functions and adaptability”*

Regarding the question of emotional intelligence skills, even respondents that at the beginning of the interview stated they did not know what EI was, provided skills they thought were

beneficial for their job performance, some of them related to the 4-branches of emotional intelligence they had just heard of during the interview and realised they would use them constantly at work but did not know the name.

Among the most mentioned skills, all six respondents identified 'communication' as one of the EI skills related to job performance. Also, 4 of the 6 participants acknowledged 'empathy' and 'negotiation', regarding this last skill, P3 and 4 commented:

*"Negotiation, hand in hand with the management of emotions, the 'haggling'"*

*"Negotiation is momentous for us, more than other skills"*

'Social skills' was also mentioned by 3 participants, and P3 explained:

*"one is constantly communicating with several people at work, so having social skills and at the same time having the knowledge of what we are working on, it makes your work much easier"*

Likewise, 3 participants identified 'interpersonal relationships' as an important skill and P1 clarified:

*"the approach with the supplier, with the builders, with the head office, with my team, with everyone, I feel that my performance goes very hand in hand with how I am socially with others"*

#### **4.2.5.1 What are the key emotional intelligence skills required in a procurement professional?**

Building up on the already established main tasks of the procurement professional in the construction sector, and the most repeated EI skills among the participants. All the key emotional intelligence skills in procurement professionals that relate to job performance identified by respondents are presented in figure 19 (page 41) using their words.

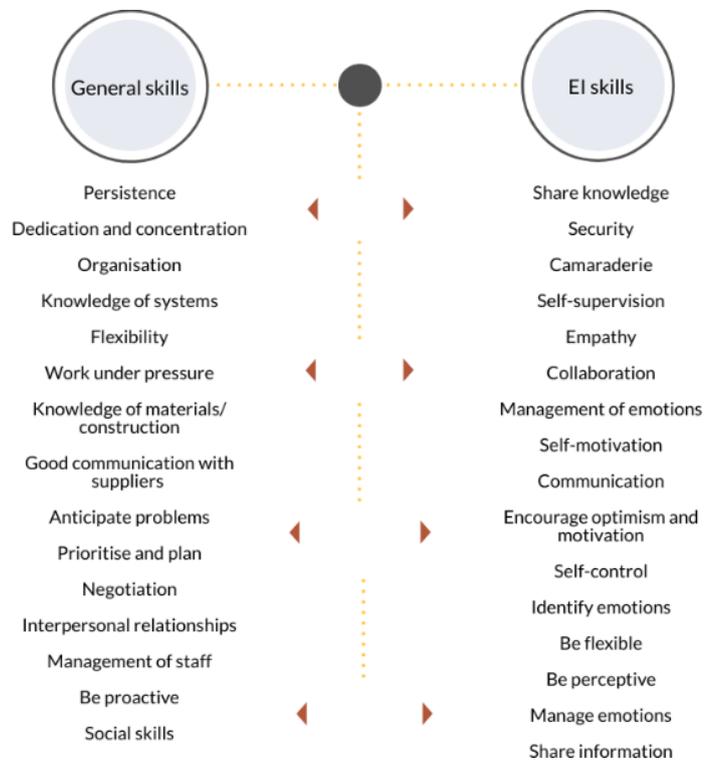
Although it is not in the research objectives, in order to further complete the profile of skills required in procurement professionals, Figure 20 (page 41) illustrates the general and emotional intelligence skills that participants identified as relevant for the successful exercise of their functions, EI skills already mentioned in the general skills are not repeated under the EI skills.

Figure 19: Profile of key emotional intelligence skills for procurement professionals



SOURCE: created by the author

Figure 20: Profile of overall skills required for a procurement professional



SOURCE: created by the author

### 4.3 Discussion

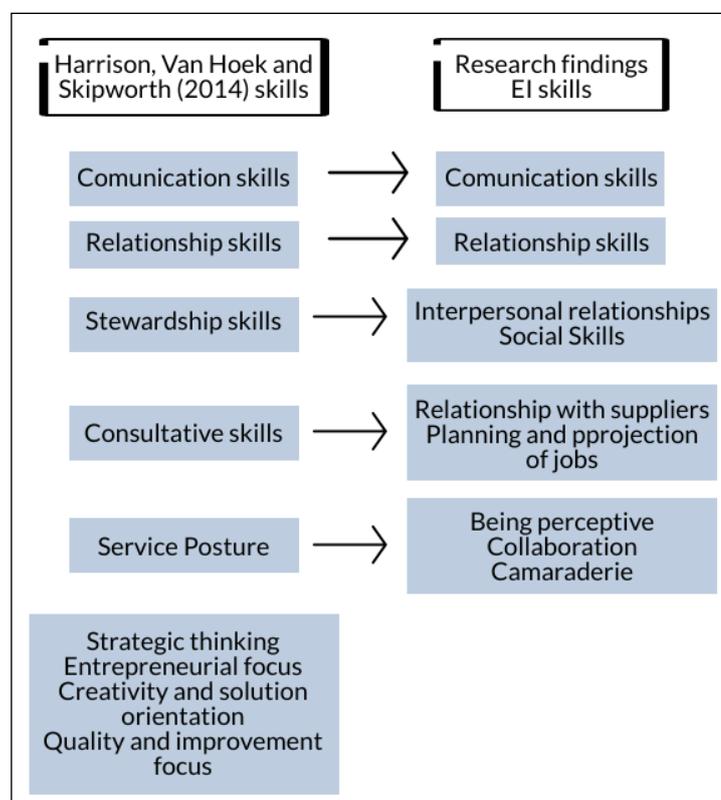
The conceptual framework in the literature review presented the 'ability model' of Mayer and Salovey (1997) to assess emotional intelligence, and the results show that the sample of procurement professionals interviewed do not have precise knowledge of the area and believe their colleagues do not either, but the model proved helpful in allowing the participants to achieve a better understanding of the concept and reach their own conclusions without any intervention of the interviewer. One of the most relevant aspects that can be extracted from the findings is the significance of training in emotional intelligence for procurement professionals, participants identify EI skills as the second most important skill after technical skills for their job performance, however, they manage little to no information on the subject and feel that by not taking full advantage of this asset their performance may be hindered. This is in line with the perspective of Chick and Handfield (2014) of the importance of an academic perspective on the role of procurement to improve the practice of procurement and ultimately the whole supply chain, because as stated by the sample, the procurement manager is the support so as to a project can be undertaken.

While very little was found in the literature on the question of EI and job performance in procurement professionals, this study can be compared to other research that studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in other areas. With this in mind, the findings of this research complement those of earlier studies, such as the ones of Chong, Falahat and Lee (2020), who identified intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability and general mood as related to job performance in academic workers in private higher educational institutions. Which shows that two very different sample profiles in drastically different fields (such as education and construction) require similar emotional intelligence skills for performance efficacy, and it may lead to think that this results could be generalised to other fields as well.

Also, regarding previous studies asserting sets of skills for procurement professionals, the study of Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth (2014) provided a list of skills requirements for procurement professionals. A comparison between the findings of both studies (Figure 21, page 43) show an overlap in communication skills and relationship skills. Concerning stewardship skills, consultative skills and service posture, the studies differ in name but basically describe the same skills: stewardship skills are mentioned in this study as interpersonal relationships and social skills, consultative skills are referred to as relationship with suppliers and the planning and projection of jobs, and finally, service posture is commented as being perceptive and able to

collaborate, and camaraderie with business partners and suppliers. The abilities strategic thinking, entrepreneurial focus, creativity and solution orientation, and quality and improvement focus, were not mentioned by any of the participants of the study as key to their performance. This may be explained by the field in which the sample works (construction) and that none of the main tasks mentioned by them related to the need of an approach to new supply markets; or by the specificity of the skills gathered in the research findings (EI skills). Therefore, the present study's findings show more similarities than differences with the list of skills requirements for procurement professionals mentioned in the literature review.

**Figure 21: Comparison of research findings with Harrison, Van Hoek and Skipworth (2014) skills for procurement professionals**



*SOURCE: created by the author*

### Assessment of quality of the research design

As presented previously, the quality of the research design was approached by adapting the scientific canons of inquiry to a qualitative case study. In general, the quality of the research design was achieved as described in the methodology chapter, the following points present the discussion regarding the application of each criteria.

Internal reliability was approached with the involvement of the research supervisor in certain key stages of the design of the study, where the use of external input provided certain consistency during the research project (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015), however, this criterion was in practice throughout the first three chapters of the study. For external reliability, data collection techniques such as the interview guide and probe questions are provided, as well as detailed methodology in order to ensure that if the study is replicated, the findings are consistent.

Internal validity was achieved by establishing a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance through the in-depth nature of the data collection process; as for external validity, the findings of the study compared to the ones of Chong, Falahat and Lee (2020) and Weinzimmer et al. (2017), all conducted in different scenarios and arrived to similar conclusions, open the possibility to generalise the EI skills identified in procurement professionals to other settings or fields such as manufacturing or retail, and be useful.

**Figure 22: Assessment of quality of the research design**



**SOURCE:** created by the author

It is considered that the research design proved robust to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions proposed in the study.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

The findings presented in this chapter showed how each of the objectives was approached and achieved, as well as the answer to each one of the research questions.

Overall, this study established that there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals, demonstrated by the participants positive answers regarding the extent of the impact of identifying emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions and managing emotions to job performance.

The role of emotional intelligence in the procurement sector was defined as fundamental to perform daily activities successfully and as one of the fundamental aptitudes procurement professionals need, inserted in the manner each individual face problems, communicate and maintain their mental balance.

It was also established that emotional intelligence skills are an asset for procurement professionals, describing it as the second most important tool for performance and highlighting the importance of training professionals in EI skills.

Moreover, emotional intelligence aspects were determined in order to create a profile with the key emotional intelligence skills that relate to job performance in procurement professionals, this profile is shown in figure 19 (page 41), and the main skills identified were communication, empathy, negotiation, social skills and interpersonal skills.

## **5 Concluding Thoughts on the Contribution of this Research, its Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

### **5.1 Implications of Findings for the Research Questions**

Answering to the increasing interest in emotional intelligence and its relationship with job performance, the findings of the research questions strengthens the idea of emotional intelligence being positively related to job performance, evidencing its implications in the procurement sector. Among these implications is the possibility of improving recruitment processes by targeting candidates with profiles not only excellent in technical skills, but also high in EI skills.

These findings have significant implications for the understanding of how identifying emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions impact job performance, as well as to the realisation of the importance of the role of emotional intelligence and the skills necessary to perform tasks successfully, not only to improve job performance, but also to assure a healthy and respectful work environment, since people who can identify and manage emotions are more likely to take other's feelings in consideration and act accordingly, remembering Salovey and Mayer (1990 cited in Jain 2018) definition of EI "emotional intelligence is the ability to watch one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this data to guide one's thinking and actions".

The results of this study also added to identifying EI as an essential ability for procurement professionals. These can be useful for individuals looking to improve their job performance; companies interested in training their employees in all aspects that impact job performance, not just technical skills; or educational entities looking to improve their curricula for procurement programs, highlighting the implications of this findings in the development of future procurement professionals.

### **5.2 Contributions and Limitations of the Research**

The empirical findings in this study provide a new understanding of the use of emotional intelligence in the practice of procurement activities, it establishes EI as the second most important skill after technical skills for procurement professionals. This new understanding should help to improve predictions of the impact of EI skills in job performance; improve job performance by using emotional intelligence skills properly; and encourage appropriate

recruitment by assessing emotional intelligence skills beforehand in search of the profile presented instead of assessing performance while already in the job, ensuring suitability for the position and by doing so reduce personnel rotation in the department; while also making a contribution to the current literature in the subject.

On the other hand, even though the findings of the study support previous research conducted on the subject, there are several aspects that can be seen as limitations to take under consideration when attempting to replicate or generalise these results.

First and foremost, the sample chosen for the study corresponds to one sector, construction, and the tasks and subsequent skills considered necessary are influenced by the specific objectives and purpose of the procurement department of that company in that area, for this reason and for the knowledge of readers attempting to transfer these results to different settings, the purpose of the procurement department in which the sample works is specified in the profile of the participants, for them to take under consideration.

Second, the participants demonstrated little knowledge on the subject of emotional intelligence at the beginning of the interview, which meant their answers to the questions were purely their insight at the moment of the interview and with the excitement of realising something new, not something they thoroughly thought about and knowingly did in their daily functions. This does not give the findings any less meaning, if anything, it makes the request from the participants to have training on the subject more relevant, but it creates curiosity on to whether their answers would be different after time considering the subject and knowingly putting the skills to use at work.

And finally, even though pre-testing was conducted, until the analysis stage it became apparent that some of the questions in the interview guide were unnecessary or better located in a different stage of the interview, for example, the question regarding performance improvement could be moved to the end of the interview to see if participants would be more relaxed and open to answer such a personal question. Although some of the questions proved not necessary for the analysis, they helped provide context for the participants and made them feel more comfortable speaking about the subject; it is something to consider if trying to replicate results with the interview guide. Also, since the study was conducted in a company in Chile, the interviews were conducted in another language (spanish) and the risk of losing some elements in translation is always present because of idiosyncrasies from the original language that do have exact translations.

Overall, this study did not present many limitations and if taking the correct approach towards them, the results can be relevant and reliable.

### **5.3 Recommendations for Practice**

The findings of this study have several implications for future practice, it is recommended for companies to consider emotional intelligence aspects in the recruitment process so as to ensure that the candidates are suitable for the position and the demands that the job implies.

The challenge now is for companies to devote time and resources into this area. There is, therefore, a definite need to raise awareness regarding the relevance of EI skills in the procurement sector, so that companies can give the subject appropriate attention and thus, training to their employees. In a similar topic, also raise awareness among educational entities that deliver programs in procurement, so that it can be included in the student's curricula and can provide rounded knowledge on the daily procurement activities. In this regard, this information can also be used to develop targeted interventions aimed at improving knowledge and management of the detailed EI skills.

Also, individuals who aim to improve their job performance can independently work to expand their knowledge of emotional intelligence using the present study and the profile of EI skills for procurement professionals as guidance.

### **5.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

These findings suggest several courses of action for future research, one of them is to collect data from different companies and different fields and do a cross-case study to compare and evaluate if the results can be replicated and extrapolated to other areas in procurement.

Also, a natural progression of this work would be to gather more data to create categories of EI skills and identifying which one of them is relevant for each task, so as to prioritise the required skills according to the needs of each company or each procurement department when recruiting or assigning tasks.

And finally, further explore EI skills along with the general skills required for the good exercise of the position to create a general profile of the required skills for procurement professionals.

## **5.5 Final Conclusions and Reflections**

The aim of the study was to identify if emotional intelligence had any role in the procurement sector and to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. The approach taken allowed to achieve this, the research objectives and answer the research questions by identifying the role of emotional intelligence and the key EI skills required for procurement professionals.

It is expected that this research can be of help and motivate further research in the area to benefit and improve efficiency of procurement professionals by exploring areas that are not usually explored.

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## Appendices

### *Appendix A – Interview Guide*

#### Interview Guide

- **Opening**

- A. My name is Maria Eugenia Moya and since you work in the procurement sector, I would like to interview you so that I can gather information for my research study. I really appreciate you taking the time for the interview.
- B. I would like to ask you some questions about your background in procurement, your work-related experiences as a procurement professional and your opinion regarding skills required for procurement professionals. With this purpose in mind, the interview will cover the topics of emotional intelligence and job performance concerning only experiences and impressions related to your work.
- C. I hope to use this information to create a profile of the key skills required for efficient job performance in procurement professionals.
- D. The interview should take between 45 minutes to 1 hour and in line with ethics guidelines I would like to remind you that you have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time. Are you available to respond to some questions at this time?

**Transition: Let me begin by asking you some questions about your background in procurement and the general setting of the procurement department in your company.**

- **General information**

How many years of experience do you have in procurement?

How many of those years of experience in procurement have you worked in your current company?

What is your position in the company?

Did you receive any training in procurement before working in the area?

If yes, what kind of training?

If the answer is no, did you have any mentors? How did this person influence your process of adjusting to the position?

What is the main purpose of the procurement department in your company?

**Transition: Let me continue by asking you a question about your general knowledge of emotional intelligence.**

What is your understanding of emotional intelligence?

**Transition: Now I will ask you some questions about your job performance, this topic has 2 dimensions. First, we will start with the questions regarding the task dimension.**

- **Job Performance**

### **1. Task Dimension**

What are the main tasks you need to perform in your job (as part of your job description)?

What skills do you think are required to perform those tasks?

Based on your current knowledge of emotional intelligence, do you think your understanding of emotional intelligence is sufficient to cope with the challenges of your job?

Is there any kind of training that you feel you would have benefit from before working in procurement?

**Transition: Now I will move on to the questions regarding the contextual dimension of job performance.**

### **2. Contextual Dimension**

What are the main factors that impact your job performance?

- Are there any factors that impact your job performance in a negative manner?
- Are there any factors that impact your job performance in a positive manner?

Does the way you handle work relationships has any impact in your job performance?

Are there any tasks you believe are required in your job but are not in your job description?

If yes, what skills do you think are required to perform those tasks?

If you had to improve something in your job performance, what would it be?

**Transition: Let me continue by asking you some questions about emotional intelligence. This topic involves 4 branches: identifying emotions, emotional facilitation of thought (or using emotions), understanding emotions and managing emotions. The first one we are going to address is identifying emotions.**

- **Emotional Intelligence**

### **1. Identifying Emotions:**

How well can you recognise your own emotions as you experience them?

How well can you identify how a person feels based upon their facial expression?

How well can you identify how a person feels based upon their tone of voice?

Are you aware of non-verbal messages other people send (non-verbal communication, body language, etc.?)

To what extent you feel expressing your emotions accurately at work has any kind of impact in your job performance?

To what extent you think being able to identify emotions in others has any kind of impact in your job performance?

**Transition: We will continue with the questions regarding the second branch of emotional intelligence: Using emotions.**

## **2. Using Emotions:**

How do you think your mood may or not affect your decision-making skills?

How do you think your mood may or not affect your problem-solving skills?

How do you feel good moods may or not impact your job performance?

To what extent you think being able to take advantage of moods/emotions has any kind of impact in your job performance?

**Transition: We will now move on to the questions regarding the third branch of emotional intelligence: understanding emotions.**

## **3. Understanding Emotions:**

Are you aware of why or what makes your emotions change at work?

To what extent are you aware of what causes you to feel specific emotions at work? For example, are you aware of what causes you to feel angry at work?

Do you think being able to understand emotions has any kind of impact in your job performance?

**Transition: We will now move on to the questions regarding the fourth and last branch of emotional intelligence: managing emotions.**

## **4. Managing Emotions:**

What do you do when faced with obstacles at work?

How do you solve problems that involve negative emotions at work?

If any, what are the main causes of stress at work?

How do think procurement professionals manage stress at work?

Do you think being able to manage emotions has any kind of impact in your job performance?

**Transition: And now we will move on to the last stage of the interview with some questions regarding your final thoughts concerning emotional intelligence and job performance.**

- **Closing**

Thinking of emotional intelligence as a 4-branch construct as presented in this interview, do you think emotional intelligence plays any role in your job performance?

If any, what would be the role of emotional intelligence in your job performance?

What are your thoughts regarding this statement: 'emotional intelligence skills are an asset for procurement professionals'?

Are there any emotional intelligence skills you feel are relevant to perform your job successfully?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

**Well, it has been a pleasure finding out about your job experience, thank you for your time!**

## *Appendix B – Transcription Example*

### **Interview Guide 4**

**Let me begin by asking you some questions about your background in procurement and the general setting of the procurement department in your company.**

- **General information**

**How many years of experience do you have in procurement?**

A: 9 years.

**How many of those years of experience in procurement have you worked in your current company?**

A: 9 years

**What is your position in the company?**

A: Procurement warehouse control manager.

**Did you receive any training in procurement before working in the area?**

A: No. Before I worked with my family and from that I went to work in the construction company. The company didn't have that kind of training. In fact, just recently it's being instructed, a manual based on the knowledge we have of the people who have been working longer was created with the most basic problems so that new people who arrive had the issue of recurring queries solved, but there is no formal training for the position.

**If the answer is no, did you have any mentors? How did this person influence your process of adjusting to the position?**

A: If I had any queries, I could take them to the people in the head office who were carrying the macro purchases. In the company we have a system that divides purchases among the macro, which are the largest, and those that are not that big. The negotiations that the company manages in headquarters, plans and negotiates the materials with the suppliers, so in macro terms, we usually receive the purchases already "digested". In terms of those larger purchases, our job is to coordinate the dispatch of that material, arrival at the worksite and then the delivery of the material to the people working in the worksite, contractors or staff of the same company. And regarding the minor purchases, we generate direct purchases, manage the price quotes, manage according to our budget, manage the purchase, we do the whole process.

**What is the main objective of the procurement department in your company?**

A: In my case, that I work in worksites, the objective is to maintain the correct supply of the worksite in progress, according to the execution items and on the other hand, preserve the correct maintenance of material for the worksite, in this case the control of the warehouse, the correct delivery of materials, avoid loss of material, loss or theft in the different types of worksites.

**Let me continue by asking you a question about your general knowledge of emotional intelligence.**

### **What is your understanding of emotional intelligence?**

A: I would say the basics, only that it is a series of skills that one can manage based on emotional aspects, it's not the most objective area, it comprises skills like empathy. Actually, my knowledge of emotional intelligence it's pretty restricted.

**Now I will ask you some questions about your job performance, this topic has 2 dimensions. First, we will start with the questions regarding the task dimension.**

- **Job Performance**

#### **1. Task Dimension**

##### **What are the main tasks you need to perform in your job (as part of your job description)?**

A: The first part, is that when we settle into a new project (because usually we are rotating, or in my case, I rotate in different types of projects, from housing to building) so we start by planning the projection of the job, the installation of the first materials that we need to supply to the worksite, so that it is installed on site and then from that, start supplying the different resources that each task requires, for example: containers and machinery in the first stage and then when we can start with the thick work, have the warehouses and all the logistics that involves the purchase of materials and the maintenance of them.

- The main thing is to supply – machinery, maintenance, etc.
- It is also about the control of material, the control of resources. Because we still have constant appraisal procedures, in this case monthly inventories, audits, so we have a lot of emphasis on maintenance, correct delivery, outputs of the material. Monthly inventories and random audits are made and they can be 1 or 2 times a year, and external audits which are made by companies outside the construction company.

##### **What skills do you think are required to perform those tasks?**

- Organisation: maintain a structured order of the work to be executed.
- Maintain good communication with the rest of the professionals who work in the construction company, that is a very important aspect, good communication with all areas, especially those that are most linked to us. When we talk about good communication we mean with suppliers, with the people who provide us with a service and with the staff of the company, it is very broad.
- And the projection of the jobs, to plan the activities in the future, so that it allows us to always be acting with a certain advantage in the processes and avoid delays. For example, we work on the basis of a Gantt chart with all the processes from the beginning of the job, the installation of worksites, which means to install all the basic facilities so that the rest of the people can work, from all the administrative staff to the physical warehouse where we will store materials, external corrals, perimeter pens, accesses to the worksite, have all the basic means to work (water, electricity, internet), everything so that we can keep the supply chain right, and to have a good relationship with suppliers and with all the rest of the people who are working around us. So on the basis of that planning, if we are clear that by Wednesday we have to have the corral installed, we have to be clear on what we are going to do during the first few weeks of the

projection, the amount of material that we must buy and have it in 2 or 3 weeks available so that people can start working on that. And so on, when the gross work begins, we have to have the masonry in construction, as per the amount of material that we use for each house is established, we know how much cement we need to have, bricks, several other things, that we must have at least 2 or 3 weeks before.

**Based on your current knowledge of emotional intelligence, do you think your understanding of emotional intelligence is sufficient to cope with the challenges of your job?**

A: I face them, the knowledge that I have so far has helped me a lot, I have good relationships with suppliers and with people, so, many times part of the goals that I have achieved has not been only because of my work, but because many times there is a much closer relationship with people, who responds to me or gives me priority because they are dealing with someone they know or someone who responds in an equal manner or has greater empathy with them. But it could be different, I don't handle all aspects related to emotional intelligence, just the basics: empathy, communication, but maybe there are other areas or more things that can be used as a tool to improve processes at work.

**Is there any kind of training that you feel you would have benefit from before working in procurement?**

A: Of course, if we all had been trained as they do now with a manual, with greater exploration regarding all the limits that the work that one performs has, explain well the responsibilities helps a lot and other things we simply learn with time, with experience, one understands what is his share of responsibility, how far should we go so that we can have everything that we need.

- Manual
- Information
- Explaining well what the job description is and the responsibilities.
- Delivering necessary technical tools (many times the training that one brings from outside can help, but the fact that you are put to work in a position in which you have to work in procurement is quite simple in relation to how complex it can become at some point), for example, some kind of program that helps you have more control of the programming, some kind of program that helps you maybe have reminders of important things, there are things that can give you more management support.

**Now I will move on to the questions regarding the contextual dimension of job performance.**

## **2. Contextual Dimension**

**What are the main factors that impact your job performance? Are there any factors that impact your job performance in a negative manner? Are there any factors that impact your job performance in a positive manner?**

- Good communication with suppliers definitely helps to have a good performance, good communication and honesty regarding the conditions that each supplier has. Many times there are suppliers that to make a sell or trying to fit within the project tell you they will comply, they will deliver to you at certain date and many times that does not

happen, and your performance is attached to their compliance and it begins to have a negative impact on your work. It happens to us often that suppliers trying to get a specific business commit, but when it comes the time to start delivering materials they start to have problems, because they did not have the economic capacity, they did not have the specific means. And that is often risk implied in the company as in every area of business.

- Good communication with the rest of the staff so that when there is an urgent request it really is urgent. Because there are professionals who ask you some materials urgently and you leave other things aside (because resources are always limited, however large the company is, it does not have unlimited resources), you have to prioritise certain jobs or certain products, such as trucks, vans, to give priority to a job or a worksite and if that worksite did not really required priority you have left aside another that it was important.
- One aspect that greatly influences us is that if you oversee staff and you are not in charge of the selection of the staff, for this selection to be the correct one. When I am in charge, in this case I need many people for the warehouses, helpers, I need people who are in charge of digitizing, in charge of documents, drivers, etc. When that recruitment is not the right one, it negatively impacts your performance, or if they work well and are committed it has a positive impact.

**Does the way you handle work relationships has any impact in your job performance?**

A: Obviously yes, having a good and fluent relationship with people helps to have commitment and good performance from the staff. By having good relationships, usually when I need to create new teams I have no problems recruiting team members or maintaining team members because they have a commitment not only to the company but a personal commitment to me because I have hired them or suggested them for the position. Work relationship would have an 8 in a scale of 1 to 10.

**Are there any tasks you believe are required in your job but are not in your job description?**

A: At this point I would say no, because the job description is quite wide, it would include everything necessary to meet the supply of materials for the worksite. If at some point I am out of a digitiser or a driver and I have to fill those positions I wouldn't be outside of my job description because it's going towards the same goal.

**Let me continue by asking you some questions about emotional intelligence. This topic involves 4 branches: identifying emotions, emotional facilitation of thought (or using emotions), understanding emotions and managing emotions. The first one we are going to address is identifying emotions.**

- **Emotional Intelligence**

**1. Identifying Emotions:**

**How well can you recognise your own emotions as you experience them?**

A: I would say pretty well, I try to be objective but well. I can recognise when I am upset, and that situation could influence my judgment of some situations. I try to seek serenity to avoid confrontations or unnecessary problems.

**How well can you identify how a person feels based upon their facial expression?**

A: Yes, I can identify when someone has a problem, especially when you already know them or have close relationships with staff you can quickly identify when something happens, unless it's something very personal. In general, you know when they are angry or happy and it helps quite a lot on how to deal with them when you need something. With strangers I don't think so, it is more difficult, without having prior knowledge of the person is difficult to know because there are people who have a strong character and one may think that they are upset but they are not, or there are people who are more easy-going, so without knowing them I try to avoid prejudice.

**How well can you identify how a person feels based upon their tone of voice?**

A: Same as the previous one.

**Are you aware of non-verbal messages other people send (non-verbal communication, body language, etc.?)**

A: Not completely, but when someone is looking down at the ground or not looking directly into the eyes one can infer that that person is not being honest. And other times you're just not really paying attention.

**To what extent you feel expressing your emotions accurately at work has any kind of impact in your job performance?**

A: Yes, it has relevance to have it clear, when you are very concerned, and you are very stressed a lot of times people realise it and you can prevent yourself. So, it helps a lot with the people around you.

**To what extent you think being able to identify emotions in others has any kind of impact in your job performance?**

A: Yes, you can get better performance, in some cases avoiding interruptions in the job/worksites only because we didn't know how to communicate or ask for things the right way, you often run into people who are upset and treating them with the appropriate care can prevent that person from getting more upset, leaving, leaving their position unattended and then having to use other resources to cover for that person (other people to do that work) simply for something that could have been avoided.

**We will continue with the questions regarding the second branch of emotional intelligence: Using emotions.**

**2. Using Emotions:**

**How do you think your mood may or not affect your decision-making skills?**

A: A 100%, the mood can be decisive for a correct judgment of all circumstances that must be taken into account when making decisions. For example, if you're too upset you can exacerbate things, or if I am too relaxed or too happy I may not take into account certain aspects that can create problems because I am not feeling all the pressure of work.

**How do you think your mood may or not affect your problem-solving skills?**

A: Correct, the calmer I am the better the decision is going to be.

**To what extent you think being able to take advantage of moods/emotions has any kind of impact in your job performance?**

R: A: It's relevant, the idea is that one's moods can be taken advantage of them and try to keep them at their best, seek for the moods that are most productive for you. As being calmer or more relaxed helps us execute our job in the neater way. Many times, when there is a lot of pressure or one accumulates a lot of work starts to execute work more quickly and many details are passed that can be transcendent for some work.

**We will now move on to the questions regarding the third branch of emotional intelligence: understanding emotions.**

**3. Understanding Emotions:**

**Are you aware of why or what makes your emotions change at work?**

A: If I think so, quite. Personal things, for example, issues with family are obviously going to affect me directly, maybe a bad encounter with a supplier is something that I would get over much faster than with a person who works me directly. If I am with quiet music or I am alone it is a little nicer.

**To what extent are you aware of what causes you to feel specific emotions at work? For example: are you aware of what causes you to feel angry at work?**

A: Yes, yes, definitely, when a supplier fails, I know that their non-compliance it's going to cause me problems, because they lied, they weren't honest with the information, usually that bothers me a lot. If I had been given the right information, if they would have told me "look I will not be able to comply or I do not have the capacity to do so", I prefer to know so that I can make decisions to solve it, so I am aware that this breach creates problems for me. On the contrary, when someone fulfils their order, that causes satisfaction, commitments fulfilled, because there is a group of people waiting and that means better performance.

**Do you think being able to understand emotions has any kind of impact in your job performance?**

A: Yes, it has a big impact. That aspect is important in our work.

**We will now move on to the questions regarding the fourth and last branch of emotional intelligence: managing emotions.**

**4. Managing Emotions:**

**What do you do when faced with obstacles at work?**

A: Look for alternatives to solve it, usually part of our job is to face a variety of problems on a daily basis, it is an intrinsic part of the job.

**How do you solve problems that involve negative emotions at work?**

A: Trying to be as objective as possible, provide objectivity to the subject, try to analyse objectively so that that negative emotion does not create more problems than it has already has.

**If any, what are the main causes of stress at work?**

- Lack of planning
- Resolution of unexpected difficulties, that creates many complications, many times we encounter internal problems like breaks, accidents, equipment failures, matrix failures. Many unexpected situations and that raises a lot of concern because there is a chain of processes that are delayed by that aspect and forces you to focus many of the resources to solve those problems.
- Delays in the processes (resulting from the above).

**How do think procurement professionals manage stress at work?**

A: In the time I've been working at the construction company I've seen a lot of people pass by, people that last 2 months, 1 month sometimes, and they leave because the pressure consumes them. Sometimes they lack resources and are frustrated and can't stand the reprimands, the constant questioning, that creates a lot of problems in people in this area. I do not know if I would call it stressful, it is demanding, it requires constant attention, to be on top of the suppliers to see if they will comply or not, whether the warehouse has problems or not, but when you have been here for a while and you have certain guidelines to work, keeping a certain order, or work with the right people, it leaves more time to execute other jobs. People who have been around for several years are very few and they manage stress with organisation, full knowledge of our functions and adaptability, adapting to the changing situations we have at work.

**Do you think being able to manage emotions has any kind of impact in your job performance?**

A: Yes, definitely. Information or basic tools in terms of computational skills, networking and things like that, plus the management of emotions, they complement each other. It is essential, it helps us to have a fluent communication with other people, if you have good relationship with them in the end everything becomes easier.

**And now we will move on to the last stage of the interview with some questions regarding your final thoughts concerning emotional intelligence and job performance.**

- Closing

**Thinking of emotional intelligence as a 4-branch construct as presented in this interview, do you think emotional intelligence plays any role in your job performance?**

A: Yes, especially in maintaining a mental balance, in the end if we can handle that aspect well we can handle or move away from problems or conflict situations at work and that definitely helps. Manage emotions helps directly to avoid conflicts.

**If any, what would be the role of emotional intelligence in your job performance?**

A: Keep the mental balance of the professional.

**What are your thoughts regarding this statement: 'emotional intelligence skills are an asset for procurement professionals'?**

A: It's correct.

**Are there any emotional intelligence skills you feel are relevant to perform your job successfully?**

- Negotiation is momentous for us, more than other skills, it generates greater credits.
- Communication
- Empathy, being able to put yourself in another shoes it helps us understand others and some of their reactions.

**Is there anything else that you would like to add?**

A: No, that's all.

**Well, it has been a pleasure finding out more about your job experience, thank you for your time!**

**Appendix C – Informed Consent Form**



**GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN  
Informed Consent Form**

The research study is titled “Study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals” and is being conducted by MSc student in Procurement and Supply Chain Management, María Eugenia Moya Carreño, e-mail [mariaeugenia.moyacarreno@student.griffith.ie](mailto:mariaeugenia.moyacarreno@student.griffith.ie), from the Graduate Business School in Griffith College Dublin.

The purpose of the research study is to facilitate the creation of a more accurate screening process for selection (recruitment process) and training new professionals in the area of procurement by having a profile of the key emotional intelligence skills needed for efficient job performance.

<b>Please circle Yes or No for each statement</b>		
I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study	Yes	No
I have read and understood the Plain Language Statement	Yes	No
I am aware that participation in the research study involves participating in an interview	Yes	No
I am aware that my interview will be recorded	Yes	No
I understand that my personal information will remain anonymous and confidential	Yes	No
I understand that the data obtained from the interview will be treated confidentially and only be used with the purpose of this research	Yes	No
I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I have received satisfactory answers to all of them	Yes	No
I am aware that the data extracted and the consequent analysis will be used for a dissertation	Yes	No
I am aware that I may withdraw from the research study at any point	Yes	No
I am aware that once the research study is concluded I may request the results	Yes	No

I have read and understood the information in this form and in the Plain Language Statement, my questions and concerns have been answered satisfactorily and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project.

<b>Participants name in block capitals:</b>	
<b>Participants Signature:</b>	
<b>Witness:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## *Appendix D – Plain Language Statement*



GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN

### **Plain Language Statement**

The research study is titled “Study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals” and its purpose is to establish whether there is an impact of emotional intelligence skills in job performance within the procurement sector or not, in order to create a profile with the key emotional intelligence skills that may have a relationship with efficient job performance.

The study is being conducted by MSc student in Procurement and Supply Chain Management, María Eugenia Moya Carreño, e-mail [mariaeugenia.moyacarreno@student.griffith.ie](mailto:mariaeugenia.moyacarreno@student.griffith.ie), from the Graduate Business School in Griffith College Dublin.

The involvement in the research study requires the participation in an interview of approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. The name and workplace of the participants will remain anonymous as the relevant information for the study is the position they occupy within the company and that they work in the same company.

Regarding the sample size for the research, although it is small, information on the participants will remain anonymous in order to protect their privacy and since the information hoped to obtain through the interview mostly reflects participants' personal expertise and experiences and will not affect their day to day operations, there is no expected risks from involvement in the research study.

Data obtained from the research prior to analysis, such as the transcriptions from each interview will be made available to the participants as well as the complete analysis to use as they see appropriate. Regarding the use of the data in the research study, the information will only be used with the purpose established in this statement and managed only by the researcher and the researcher's supervisor. This data will only be part of the research analysis and posterior dissertation and will remain anonymous at all times.

As part of the benefits of participating in this research study, a direct benefit is to access the analysis on the relationship between job performance and emotional intelligence skills, allowing them to act where they see fit; and an indirect benefit is the overall result of the analysis, which

hopefully will allow a better understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in procurement professionals, facilitating the creation of more accurate screening processes for selection (recruitment process) and training of new procurement professionals.

It is important to stipulate that as the involvement in the research study is voluntary, participants may withdraw from it at any point.

If participants have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact:

Dr Garrett Ryan,

Griffith College Research Ethics Committee  
South Circular Road, Dublin 8, Ireland

E-mail: [garrett.ryan@griffith.ie](mailto:garrett.ryan@griffith.ie)