

# Role of Emotional Intelligence in Effective Leadership

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## Abstract

Leaders have got a significant role to play in all spheres of life. An organization can attain remarkable achievements under a strong leadership; whereas, the presence of unsuccessful leaders can prove to be quite detrimental. The notion that a vital part is played by emotional intelligence (EI) in the effectiveness of leaders has been introduced recently. An emotionally stable professional is able to cope up with imperfection and uncertainty, since he is not very critical and believes in win-win situation. He has the ability to handle every sort of situation whether it is a demanding job, an atrocious boss, or undisciplined subordinates. At present, the definition of leadership has become more people-focused. A person with good understanding of Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EIQ) is expected to be an excellent team person and thus an effective leader. This paper is aimed at unifying the literature that evaluates the possible connection between leadership effectiveness and EI. A survey in the college of Haryana is conducted based on Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue), which is psychometrically certified and provides self-awareness regarding EI. For the same, 50 teachers (leaders and non-leaders) were asked to fill the questionnaire. A SPSS analysis is carried out for evaluating the claims regarding significant relationship of EI with leadership, and to analyse the worth of EI in the success of professional and personal life of a leader. The impact of EI has been analysed on the perception, expression, and management of emotions, adaptability, relationships, stress management, self-motivation, happiness, empathy, and optimism. It is revealed through the results that a positive relationship exists between effective leadership and EI, which is beneficial for all the parties involved in the loop. Moreover, a noticeable difference has been observed in the EIQ rating of leaders and non-leaders in the way they utilize their EI in dealing with their personal matters or interacting with others.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Leadership, Social Awareness, Emotional Management

## Introduction

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has been evolving due to the growing research interest in the workplace emotions. It is defined as the capability of monitoring personal and others' emotions and feelings, to differentiate among them, and to use that information for guiding personal actions and thinking. EI has been emerging as a construct that has attracted both the practitioners and academics and has turned out to be a topical area in the domain of psychological research. Corresponding to the upsurge in research interest, the use of EI has become increasingly prevalent in the selection, training, and development processes of organizations.

The validity of this construct has been questioned by some researchers while others have believed that EI is a useful tool for the prediction of job performance and leadership. It can be said in simple words that leadership is an art of emotions management. In recent times, numerous empirical examinations have been done on the EI-leadership link. It is found that there exists a significant relation between a leader's level of EI with the work performance of subordinates. A range of different institutional outcomes are predicted by EI, e.g., productivity has a great association with leadership effectiveness. There exist established relationships between EI and other leadership theories including

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team-based leadership, member-leader exchange, transformational leadership, strategic-level leadership, etc.

The study is focused at qualitatively reviewing and cumulating the related literature evaluating the significance of EI under different metrics, and to highlight the worth of association between EI and effective leadership in an institutional setting. The main purpose was to assess whether EI serves as a good metric for predicting self-awareness regarding emotional management as well as the effectiveness of leadership. The major hypotheses set for this research study are as follows:

- EI is strongly related to adaptability, social awareness, self-motivation, impulse control, self-esteem, and stress management of a person.
- EI is related with the traits of empathy, happiness, and optimism.
- The EIQ rating of leaders is equal to the non-leaders.

## Literature Review

EI is quite an interesting topic which seems to have a significant part in the practice of leadership as well as in the increased effectiveness of organizations, groups, and individuals. The concept of EI has been established since 1990s as an empirical domain of research; however, the investigation of this concept has been carried out throughout the 20th century by those scholars who determined that non-cognitive metrics like problem solving, memory, etc., have equal importance in offering a comprehensive demonstration of human intelligence.

The idea of social intelligence was presented by Edward Thorndike in the 1930s. The term social intelligence was defined by him as the capability of understanding other people and acting wisely while dealing with others. In 1939, David Wechsler pointed out intellective as well as non-intellective elements for explaining the social and personal factors linked with human intelligence.

A number of efforts have been made for defining EI. EI is generally known as the list of characteristics or traits in a personality. Goleman (1995) believed that it is much more powerful compared to intelligence quotient (IQ) at times. Although the terminology “emotional intelligence” was first introduced by psychologists Jack Mayer and Peter

Salovey back in 1990, major popularity was gained by the concept of EI after the books by Goleman got published.

EI was defined by Goleman (1999) as a set of abilities including zeal, self-control, self-motivation, and persistence. These abilities were further categorized by him under five major domains each having numerous attributes, i.e., to understand self-emotions, manage emotions, keep himself/herself motivated, recognize emotional state of others, and handle relationships.

Dr. Reuven Bar-On (2002), a famous researcher in the domain of EI, has defined EI as a combination of non-cognitive capacities, skills, and competencies that have a deep influence on the ability of a person to get successful in handling environmental pressures and demands. His model is based on the primary components of effective social and emotional functioning, which results in the psychological well-being. These include Interpersonal EQ (consisting of interpersonal relations, social responsibility, and empathy), intrapersonal EQ (including assertiveness, self-awareness, self-respect, self-actualization, and independence), adaptability EQ (including problem solving, flexibility, and reality testing), stress management EQ (which involves impulse control and stress tolerance), and General Mood EQ (consisting of happiness and optimism).

According to Salovey and Mayer (1997), EI domain has incorporated various particular emotional capabilities, which can be categorized in four branches or classes, i.e., the ability of appraising and perceiving emotions, the ability of assimilating primary emotional experiences into psychological life, the capability of understanding emotions, and the capability of managing and regulating emotions in personal and others life.

## Methodology

Around 50 teachers which include professors of five colleges of district Rewari. The teachers hold both leadership and non-leadership positions and were randomly selected for this research. For the purpose of this research, the respondents were asked to fill Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue).

The TEIQue assessment was cognitively validated and will help create awareness among the people with regard to their EI. The use of the tool is for those participants

for whom management of the relationship is a vital feature in the role they have assumed. In addition to this, the tools serve to be of importance when support training and development initiatives are to be taken with regard to empathy, persuasion, negotiation, and sales skills. The TEIQue is an EI test to inform people of how well people comprehend and manage their emotions and how they interpret and handle the emotions that others may be feeling. Also, it informs people of how they manage relationships with others once they have become consciously aware of the emotions being felt by

other people. TEIQue, developed by K. V. Petrides, has emerged as an integral component of research programs in the domain of psychology. It consists of 153 questions and measures four important factors, 15 different facets, and worldwide trait emotional intelligence (trait EI). The facets include relationships, assertiveness, trait happiness, adaptability, emotions perception, emotions regulation, self-motivation, emotions management, trait empathy, trait optimism, social awareness, impulsiveness, emotions expression, self-esteem and stress, management.

## Findings and Discussion

**Table 1: Correlation of EI with Adaptability, Social Awareness, Self-Esteem, Motivation, Impulse Control, and Stress Management**

Traits	p-value	Pearson Correlation	Results	Findings
Adaptability	0.007	0.379	Statistically Significant	Adaptability and EI have statistically significant positive correlation i.e. more the person is willing to adapt to new conditions higher will be his EI.
Social Awareness	0.176	0.220	Not Significant	Social Awareness and EI have no statistically significant correlation.
Self-Esteem	0.000	0.832	Statistically Significant	Self Esteem and EI have statistically significant positive correlation i.e. higher the self-confidence greater is EI.
Motivation	0.000	0.504	Statistically Significant	Motivation and EI have statistically significant positive correlation i.e. more the person is driven higher is his EI.
Impulse Control	0.126	0.219	Not Significant	Impulse Control and EI have no statistically significant correlation.
Stress Management	0.211	0.180	Not Significant	Stress Management and EI have no statistically significant correlation.

The EI has significant correlation with adaptability, self-esteem, and motivation but it does not show statically significant relation with social awareness, impulse control, and stress management of the individual; thus, the null

hypothesis: EI is strongly related to adaptability, social awareness, self-motivation, impulse control, self-esteem, and stress management of a person, is not rejected.

**Table 2: Correlation of EI with the Traits of Empathy, Happiness, and Optimism**

Traits	p-value	Pearson Correlation	Results	Findings
Happiness	0.000	0.607	Statistically Significant	Happiness and EI have statistically significant positive correlation. Cheerfulness and contentment contributes positively to person's EI.
Empathy	0.000	0.718	Statistically Significant	Empathy and EI have statistically significant positive correlation. When the person is capable of taking someone else's perspective he tends to have higher EI.
Optimism	0.000	0.519	Statistically Significant	Optimism and EI have statistically significant positive correlation. Looking at the brighter side of life contributes to the EI of the person.

**Table 3: Group Statistics**

	Leadership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total	Yes	35	4.4683	.31625
	No	15	4.0273	.08664
Self-Esteem	Yes	35	4.7273	.71616
	No	15	4.0727	.26880
Emotion Expression	Yes	35	4.2857	.74207
	No	15	3.4733	.89878
Motivation	Yes	35	4.4200	.43169
	No	15	4.0933	.36930
Emotion Regulation	Yes	35	4.1095	.43666
	No	15	3.6167	.51832
Happiness	Yes	35	4.8143	.83873
	No	15	4.5167	.94593
Empathy	Yes	35	4.7714	.82664
	No	15	4.0963	.44616
Social Awareness	Yes	35	4.5896	.58476
	No	15	4.3394	.51134
Impulse Control	Yes	35	3.8032	.64343
	No	15	3.8222	.56312

	Leadership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotion Perception	Yes	35	4.6457	.58929
	No	15	3.9867	.41381
Stress Management	Yes	35	4.1343	.58003
	No	15	4.0800	.54011
Emotion Management	Yes	35	4.1270	.55565
	No	15	4.1630	.71746
Optimism	Yes	35	4.9536	.84021
	No	15	4.2750	.42046
Relationships	Yes	35	4.7397	.67476
	No	15	4.2889	.46157
Adaptability	Yes	35	4.3778	.64967
	No	15	3.8370	.45979
Assertiveness	Yes	35	4.5333	.51329
	No	15	3.7704	.51514

Table 3 shows the mean of leaders and non-leaders on different traits. In order to check if the mean differences are statistically significant, independent sample t-test were implemented on the dataset. Table 4 highlights the results of the test:

**Table 4: Leaders and Non-Leaders Difference in Traits**

Traits	p-value	Results	Findings
Self Esteem	0.001	Statistically Significant	Self Esteem was higher in leaders than the non-leaders. Successful and Self-confident individuals get chance to lead thus, higher the self-esteem.
Emotion Expression	0.002	Statistically Significant	Emotion expression capability was greater in leaders than the non-leaders i.e. leaders are capable of communicating their feelings to others better than non-leaders.
Motivation	0.014	Statistically Significant	Motivation was higher among leaders.
Emotion Regulation	0.001	Statistically Significant	Emotion regulation was higher among leaders i.e. leaders can control their emotions better.
Happiness	0.274	Not Significant	There is no difference in the happiness quotient of leaders and non-leaders
Empathy	0.005	Statistically Significant	Leaders were more empathetic than the non-leaders.
Social Awareness	0.157	Not Significant	Social Awareness among leaders and non-leaders was statistically insignificant.
Impulse Control	0.921	Not Significant	Impulse control in leaders and non-leaders was statistically insignificant.
Emotional Perception	0.000	Statistically Significant	Emotional perception in leaders was higher i.e. leaders are more clear of their own and others' feelings.
Stress Management	0.758	Not Significant	There was no difference in the stress management of leaders and non-leaders.
Emotional Management	0.849	Not Significant	There was no difference in the emotional management of leaders and non-leaders.

Traits	p-value	Results	Findings
Optimism	0.005	Statistically Significant	Optimism was higher in leaders than the non-leaders.
Relationships	0.023	Statistically Significant	Leaders are capable of having more fulfilling relationships than the non-leaders.
Adaptability	0.005	Statistically Significant	Adaptability was higher in leaders than non-leaders.
Assertiveness	0.000	Statistically Significant	Assertiveness was more in leaders than non-leaders i.e. leaders are more frank and willing to stand up for their rights than the non-leaders.
Total	0.000	Statistically Significant	EI was higher in leaders than the non-leaders.

Thus, the null hypothesis: The EIQ rating of leaders is equal to the non-leaders, is rejected.

The results are in line with the findings of Siegling, Nielsen, and Petrides (2014) conducted in a major multinational company of Europe, in which, the notion was supported that leadership and management positions require high trait EI. This was because leaders had higher EI scores than non-leaders. Furthermore, Coskun et al. (2018), in their study, explored the relationship between EI and leadership traits among family physicians. The results highlighted that higher EI was correlated with increased leadership traits.

A different research found that EI of the person serves to be a dominant factor in determining how their job performance is. Thus, it is of importance to the people who are making an attempt to become leaders and those leaders who are managing their work performance (O’Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2010). The meta-analysis conducted by Lane Mills’s (2009) found that the relationship between EI and effective leadership is inclined towards the positive edge and is strong. The author was of the view that “Skillful handling of situations and people, reflective of leaders aware of the importance of emotional intelligence should be given the same attention and importance as the more traditional leadership tasks of budget, finance, and operational skills”.

## Conclusion

The crux of an organization is leadership – the process which enables the followers to bequeath their faith in the leader and follow them. Leadership allows the organization to sail on the right path as well as induces

a plan which will allow the employees to become all the more efficient and prepare them to sacrifice their personal interest for the sake of the organization. In order that the outcome of the employees can be optimized and the organizational goals can be met, the leader must understand the needs of the employees and their own as well. Thus, with this the leader should become more careful when it comes to dealing in the emotions of the employees. By means of a better understanding with regard to their emotions and of their colleagues, EI will let the leader to inculcate positivity in the environment through increased empathy and trust. In addition to this, an open communication channel should be formulated for the same. With time, the organizations have come to terms with the fact that these skills are significant which will enable expanded communication within teams, with the suppliers, customers, as well as stakeholders. Thus, EI is a skill that has become increasingly important for the leaders to become a hold of. The educational institutions have been established because of the important place that they hold in the community. The youth are the determinants of the future of the country and they increase their value by spending a significant amount of time at the schools to complete their education. Given the amount of time they are spending at such institutes, the behaviour of the students is based upon the activities that are being conducted by teachers as well as the deans/principals.

It is noteworthy that education serves to be an important economic sector in India for a large number of humans resources have been employed in this area. The institutes have been set up with a vision and that is to maintain as well as work upon the social, physical, and mental wellbeing of the individuals of the society. Thus, it becomes extremely essential for this sector to operate efficiently and this is going to be dependent on the relationship among

principals, students, teachers, as well as the community. The leaders at educational institutions are obliged to maintain a good relationship with all the aforementioned parties and good relationship can be forged by means of being emotionally intelligent. However, the community is still to understand the negative impact of the emotions they exercise. If the leaders lack the skill of EI, he/she is bound to face several problems in the operations of the organization. Thus, in this respect, this study will help the parties who are responsible to formulate the educational policy in the region understand the role EI plays in creating a working environment that is healthy. Additionally, the study will be effective in deciding the way to leadership training as well as the creation of staff development programmes.

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