

Emotional intelligence as a predictor of effective leadership: An empirical examination of leader-follower dynamics and performance outcomes

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Keywords

Emotional Intelligence; Leadership Effectiveness; Leader-Member Exchange; Transformational Leadership; Team Performance.

Abstract

Purpose: This paper explores emotional intelligence as a predictor of an effective leader and its role in developing relationships between a leader and team members, employee attitudes, and team performance, based on Ability-Based Emotional Intelligence Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory, and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory.

Design/methodology: A quantitative survey design was used, with data gathered from 300 employees in education, healthcare, retail and public service. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation, and regression analyses were conducted.

Findings : The findings indicate that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in enhancing leadership effectiveness by strengthening leader-member relationships, increasing employee job satisfaction, and improving overall team performance. Results showed moderate emotional intelligence ($M = 2.60-3.38$), with highest scores in understanding own emotions ($M = 3.38$) and lowest in emotional awareness ($M = 2.60$). Reliability was strong (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82-.89$). Emotional intelligence was positively correlated with leadership behaviour ($r = .46$), LMX ($r = .42$), job satisfaction ($r = .39$), and team performance ($r = .33$). Leadership behaviour was strongly related to LMX ($r = .51$) and team performance ($r = .48$), while LMX was linked to job satisfaction ($r = .55$). Regression analysis confirmed emotional intelligence as a predictor of transformational leadership ($\beta = .46$, $R^2 = .21$) and LMX ($\beta = .42$, $R^2 = .18$), with LMX predicting job satisfaction ($\beta = .55$, $R^2 = .30$) and leadership behaviour predicting team performance ($\beta = .48$, $R^2 = .23$).

Practical implications and Conclusions: The results confirm a relational leadership model where emotional intelligence improves leadership effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and team performance. The study emphasises the strategic importance of developing emotional intelligence in leadership training and organisational performance management. Organisations should prioritise emotional intelligence in leadership development by integrating it into training, recruitment, and performance management. Enhancing leaders' emotional competencies can strengthen leader-follower relationships, improve employee satisfaction and engagement, and ultimately boost team performance and organisational effectiveness.

Introduction

The efficacy of leadership will continue to be one of the most studied subjects in the field of organisational and management research due to its direct relationship with the performance of an organisation, the welfare of its employees, and its sustainability as a whole. With high levels of organisational complexity in the form of technological change, cultural diversity, international competition as well as changing expectations in workplaces, the long-standing focus on technical skills and cognitive intelligence is no longer deemed enough to enhance effective leadership. Modern leadership theories are becoming more aware that a leader's job also demands emotional and interpersonal skills that help leaders to comprehend and deal with organisational relationships (Northouse, 2025; Yukl, 2013). As organisations grow to become more collaborative and knowledge intensive, leaders are faced with the challenge of managing interpersonal relationships, encouraging diverse teams and being adaptable to uncertainty. These facts have put emotional intelligence at the centre stage of leadership studies.

Mayer and Geher (1996) were the first ones to provide a systematised definition of emotional intelligence (EI), which they described as the skill to perceive, handle and use emotions successfully in both oneself and others (Mayer et al., 2004; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The concept became popular later owing to the contributions of Goleman (1995) who first believed that the success of a leader is in most cases determined more by the emotional competencies rather than their cognitive intelligence (Goleman, 1995, 1998). Emotional intelligence is a complex of several interconnected competencies such as emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills. The abilities allow a person to read the emotional signals correctly and behave in response to social situations.

In the organisational context, leaders who possess high levels of emotional intelligence are usually in a better position to deal with interpersonal relationships, workplace disputes and promote collaborative cultures. Emotional intelligence helps leaders to better comprehend the issues of employees, effectively communicate and foster trust in the teams (Cote, 2014). This category of relational competencies is becoming critical in contemporary organisations where teamwork and communication are critical and psychological safety is required to ensure productivity and innovation. Empathic and emotionally aware leaders are able to establish positive working conditions that foster employee engagement and commitment (Boyatzis, 1982).

There is a large amount of literature indicating that emotional intelligence is closely connected with transformational leadership behaviour. Transformational leadership is a term that characterises the leaders who motivate their followers to surpass their own self-interest and instead, pursue the collective interest (Bass & Riggio, 2006). It was originally theorised by Burns (1978) and was later advanced by Bass (1985) who defined it in the following way: Transformational leadership refers to the style of leadership in which the leaders themselves provide followers with the inspiration to go beyond their self-interest towards the intended objective (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders have a strong vision, offer intellectual stimulation, and show personalised consideration to the followers. Emotional intelligence helps to facilitate these behaviours because leaders need to be sensitive to emotional signals, have empathetic reactions, and have positive relationships with followers. Empirical research has shown that leaders with high emotional intelligence tend to be more likely to portray the transformational leadership traits of inspirational motivation and individualised support (Harms & Crede, 2010).

In addition to the leadership style, emotional intelligence can be applied in determining various follower outcomes. The workers of emotionally intelligent leaders are likely to report their job satisfaction, commitment to organisations, and levels of psychological wellbeing were higher (Miao, Humphrey & Qian, 2021). The quality of interactions between leaders and followers is one of the explanations of this relationship. The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory implies that the quality of relationships established among leaders and their subordinates defines the effectiveness of leaders to a large extent (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Leaders with effective emotional competencies can be more apt in establishing high-quality interactions that are characterised by trust, respect and mutual obligation. These relationship forces have the potential of affecting the attitudes, motivation and performance of employees at large.

Moreover, another possible contribution of emotional intelligence to organisational performance is that it can improve decision-making and the conflict management processes. Leaders often work in emotionally charged conditions where they make decisions that impact various stakeholders. Emotional intelligence enables the leaders to stay calm during times of pressure, read emotional cues in the right manner, and act in a manner that keeps the group together (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005). These abilities can facilitate teams as well as enhance organisational efficiency.

Although the popularity of emotional intelligence in the leadership research is increasing, the empirical evidence is rather inconsistent. Although many research studies indicate that emotional intelligence can be positively related to leadership results, other researchers claim that the connexion between the two might depend on situational characteristics, including organisational culture, job complexity, and methods of measuring emotional intelligence (Antonakis, Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2009). Also, there are researchers who indicate that emotional intelligence can have an indirect impact on leadership by using mediating factors like trust, quality of communication, and relational exchange. These discussions emphasise the fact that new empirical research is necessary to explain the effect of emotional intelligence on leadership procedures in practical organisational set-ups.

The proposed study aims to make contributions to this current academic debate by empirically testing the hypothesis of emotional intelligence as the predictor of leadership success. In particular, the paper examines the role of emotional intelligence of leaders in affecting the leader-follower relationships and the organisational performance in terms of employee motivation and team performance. This study will seek to offer more in-depth insight into how the emotional competencies as theory of effective leadership are engineered by relational leadership perspectives in modern day organisations.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the latest notion that gained prominence in the study of organisations and leadership practises. Though the research into emotions in organisational life is traceable back to the earlier psychological research, the systematic study of emotional intelligence as a scientific concept has been developed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). These thinkers theorised emotional intelligence as a combination of cognitive skills which help individuals to recognise, comprehend, control and apply emotions in the self and others (Mayer, 2003). In this context emotions are not just a reaction, but a source of information that may inform thinking, behaviour, and decision-making. Emotional intelligence is thus a combination of emotional and mental activities that promote the ability of individuals to work within social settings.

According to the proposed ability model, Mayer and Salovey (1990) distinguish four key dimensions of emotional intelligence that are perceiving emotions, facilitating emotion-based thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Perceiving emotion means identifying the emotional cues in facial expressions, tonal voice, and behaviour whereas facilitating thought means the ability to utilise emotions to aid in reasoning and problem solving. Emotional awareness involves having an understanding of emotional meanings and shifts, and emotional control can be regarded as controlling own emotions and having a positive impact on the feelings of other people (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). The competencies are especially topical in organisational contexts when the leaders should be able to interpret multifaceted interpersonal signals and react to them correctly to ensure the functionality of relationships.

The notion started to be more widely known and regarded by the population and management due to the influential work by Goleman (1995) who believed that emotional intelligence is the key to being successful in the workplace and leading with effectiveness (Goleman, 1995). Goleman had developed the notion further with the competencies of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Based on this approach, emotionally intelligent people are more likely to cope with stress, overcome interpersonal difficulties and motivate other people. These competencies empower the leaders to earn trust, convey vision to followers, and be sensitive to the needs of the followers in the context of leadership (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013).

The emotional intelligence has been associated with numerous desirable workplace achievements within the organisational behaviour research. Emotional intelligence and emotional intelligence allow leaders to demonstrate better interpersonal skills, empathy, and conflict management skills (Cote, 2014). These are the features that are necessary to promote working in teams, especially when it comes to the contemporary organisations where teamwork and communication are the key elements of performance. Emotionally intelligent leaders can address emotional state of the employees by proper identification so that they can react in a manner that builds the morale and improves the relationship within the teams.

In addition, emotional intelligence leads to establishment of trust between leaders and followers. It is well known that trust forms the basics of strong leadership given that it influences the capacity of employees to cooperate, give information and dedicate themselves to organisational objectives (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Emotional awareness and empathy help leaders to become more supportive and fairer, which leads to a higher confidence of followers in their leadership. This type of relational trust promotes organisational cohesion, as well as motivating employees to become more active in their work.

Studies also reveal that emotional intelligence is of importance in conflict management and problem solving of organisations. Miscommunication, stress, or conflicting interests among employees of the same group are the common causes of workplace conflicts. The leaders with a high level of emotional regulation experience fewer such tensions and positively cope with them and avoid further development

of conflicts and allow finding some mutually advantageous solutions (Sabo, 2020). The role of emotional intelligence is thus a valuable tool to be able to create harmony and productivity in a team by the leader.

Besides the interpersonal advantages, emotional intelligence may also affect organisational performance because of its impact on employee motivation and engagement. The more the leaders are sensitive to the concerns and emotions of employees, the more they are likely to feel valued and understood. The proposed leadership style can contribute to building psychological safety, promoting open dialogue, and increasing employee motivation to organisational goals (Miao, Humphrey & Qian, 2021). Consequently, the emotionally intelligent leadership may not only help to improve the working relationships but also assist in the enhanced organisational performance.

Even though it is acknowledged to be an important concept, the notion of emotional intelligence is still subject to scholarly controversy in terms of conceptual scope and measurement methods. Other researchers plan that emotional intelligence is a variation of the already existing personality constructs or social skills, whereas others contend that emotional intelligence is a separate type of intelligence that has cognitive aspects that can be measured (Antonakis, Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2009). However, an accumulated empirical literature is behind the applicability of emotional intelligence to leadership performance and organisational behaviour. Due to the growing dependence of organisations on collaboration, flexibility and innovation, emotional competencies will probably continue to play a core role in successful leadership practise.

Transformational Leadership

The focus on inspiring followers, encouraging innovation and bringing change to an organisation has made transformational leadership one of the most powerful frameworks in the modern day leadership studies. The idea has been first presented by Burns (1978) who differentiated between transactional and transformational leadership. Khanin (2007) argues that transactional leadership is founded on the interactions between the leaders and the followers; in such a situation compliance is rewarded or punished. Transformational leadership on the other hand arises when the leaders and the followers take each other to greater heights in terms of motivation, morality and commitment. It is a kind of leadership that goes beyond a one-dimensional exchange and brings people to strive towards a common purpose and shared ideals.

Bass (1985) subsequently extended the theory and operationalised transformational leadership in the context of organisations as well as created measurement instruments to test the impact of this leadership style (Bass, 1985). Bass theorised followers with the aid of four major dimensions of behavioural influence mostly known as the four Is; idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The idealised influence is the fact that the leader acts as a role model showing acting in an ethical manner, integrity and adhering to organisational values. Inspirational motivation has to do with selling a vision that motivates the followers to work towards achieving a common goal. Intellectual stimulation promotes resourcefulness and thoughtfulness by pushing the current assumptions aside and promoting innovation. Individualised consideration translates into how the leader pays concern to personal growth, needs and aspirations of the followers.

Transformational leadership in the organisational context has been linked to numerous positive results. A study has shown that transformational leaders have the capacity to augment employee motivation, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and general performance (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Northouse, 2025). Such leaders develop a sense of purpose and collective identity to motivate employees to go beyond the bare job requirements and play a much bigger role in the success of organisations. Transformational leadership is especially applicable in the conditions of quick change and unpredictability when the leader has to recruit the employees to adapt to the new challenges and innovate at all times (Yukl, 2013).

The relational and emotional nature of transformational leadership is one factor of great importance. Transformational leaders do not merely command them, they affect the emotions and the psychological conditions of the followers. These leaders establish a workplace where employees feel appreciated and encouraged through proper use of communication, empathy and supportive behaviour. This relational orientation brings out the importance of emotional competencies in leadership processes. It is becoming

common among scholars that emotional intelligence is a pivotal factor that leads leaders to be able to implement transformational behaviours successfully (Harms & Crede, 2010).

Emotional intelligence adds to the transformational leadership by boosting the ability of leaders to identify and control emotions in others and themselves. Emotionally aware leaders are in a better position to analyse the responses of followers, to consider their concerns and empathise with them during work situations. These are the skills that are required to establish trust, open communication and promote psychological safety in teams (Goleman, 1998). When employees believe their leaders are emotional and responsive to them, they would find it easier to feel motivated and committed towards organisational objectives.

More so, emotionally intelligent leaders can better cope with emotional needs involved in leadership. Leadership in organisations is always about conflict management, handling uncertainty and keeping morale in tough times. Emotional intelligence helps leaders to manage their personal emotions and define the emotional atmosphere in their organisations (Cote, 2014). This is especially needed in the case of transformational leadership where the leader must be able to instil confidence and optimism in followers.

Transformational leadership behaviour is associated with emotional intelligence, and empirical evidence supports this. Meta-analytic literature has indicated the higher the emotional intelligence of the leader the greater the likelihood that he or she will exhibit the transformational leadership traits which include inspirational motivation and individualised consideration (Harms & Crede, 2010). These observations indicate the emotional intelligence is an inherent capacity that promotes emergence of transformational leadership practises. Emotionally intelligent leaders are able to convey vision better, handle interpersonal relationships, and build conducive working conditions that boost the involvement of followers.

Transformational leadership has also been exposed to scholarly criticism, as much as it has had a good empirical support. There are those scholars who hold the view that the theory is redundant with other constructs of leadership and that it occasionally tends to be overly charismatic (Antonakis, 2012). Some of them state that transformational leadership could have been more or less effective depending on the contextual conditions of organisation culture, expectations of the followers and institutional structures. However, the framework is still very powerful since it includes the dynamic and relational nature of leadership that are crucial in modern organisations.

In contemporary work settings which are typified by teamwork, diversity and high change, a combination of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership offers a beneficial perspective to leadership effectiveness. Employees can be more motivated by leaders who understand their emotions and have a visionary approach to leadership because they can build stronger relationships with their employees and lead the organisations on the road to sustainable success.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory is a theory of relation to leadership who places emphasis on the quality of interactions that exist between the leaders and their followers instead of placing emphasis on the traits or behaviours of the leaders. According to LMX theory, the effectiveness of leaders is mainly determined by the relationships that the leaders establish with individual subordinates in a work group (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX theory acknowledges that leaders tend to establish various kinds of relationships with different employees unlike the traditional models of leadership which assume that leaders should treat all their followers equally.

The key point at LMX theory is the contrast between high-quality and low-quality exchange relationships. The nature of the leader member exchanges is high quality and this is linked to mutual trust, respect, open communication and mutual sense of obligation between the leader and the follower. In these relationships, followers have high chances of getting support, autonomy and professional development by their leaders. On the other hand, poor quality exchanges are more task-based and restricted to official job duties with little emotional involvement or discretionary assistance (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Such variations in quality of relationships have the capability of impacting on employee attitudes and behaviours in organisations.

Studies have always portrayed that superior quality of LMX relationships correlate with various organisational beneficial results. Achieving high satisfaction of job, commitment to organisation, role-clarity, and better performance are reported in employees who have good relations with leaders (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Quality exchanges also help in building more trust in the leadership, better communication, and engagement of employees. The followers will tend to feel appreciated and esteemed by their leaders and therefore respond by working harder and cooperating more and this is an incidence of the social exchange theory that forms the basis of LMX framework (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Most of the time, the process of role negotiation and social interaction leads to the development of leader-member exchange relationships. In the early phases of the leader follower relationship, the leaders and followers evaluate the reliability, competence and desire of each other to work together. As the relationship grows, tendencies of trust, support, and expectation are created. In exchange Leaders can offer more responsibilities and opportunities to competent and committed followers, which enhances the relationship between them. These relational patterns in the long run influence how the employees view the leadership as fair and the organisational support (Liden, Sparrowe & Wayne, 1997).

The emotional intelligence has a vital contribution to the development of a high-quality leader-member exchange. The leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence and empathy can better grasp the needs, concerns and the inspirations of their followers. This knowledge will help them to better communicate, resolve conflicts in a constructive manner, and be sensitive to the moods of the employees (Cote, 2014). The behaviours also lead to trust and mutual respect that are the key components of effective LMX relationships.

Moreover, emotionally intelligent leaders are more likely to be able to handle interpersonal processes in teams. The organisational environment is a social setting whereby different people come with different personalities, expectations, and emotional reaction to their employment. Leaders that possess the ability to effectively decipher the emotional signals and carefully manage their own emotional responses will have a higher chance of sustaining positive relationships with the followers (Goleman, 1998). These emotional competencies facilitate the creation of good and supportive working environments whereby employees are free to exchange ideas and issues.

Empirical studies show that there is evidence of the relationship between emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange quality. Research indicates that leaders who possess more emotional intelligence create better relations with subordinates and enhance the degree of trust, collaboration, and job satisfaction (Miao, Humphrey & Qian, 2021). The ability of emotional intelligence helps leaders gain an awareness of the unspoken emotional cues, handle conflicts tactfully, and foster an atmosphere of inclusion which encourages respect toward one another. In turn, emotional intelligence may be considered as a core competence which will contribute to the effectiveness of the leaders in developing effective relational interactions in an organisation.

LMX theory has not gone without criticism in spite of its high level of empirical support. Other academics say that the difference in the relationship between leaders and followers can easily generate impressions of either favouritism or inequality in teams (Yukl, 2013). Otherwise, differences in the quality of exchange may create rifts between the representatives of the in-group and the out-group. However, advocates of the LMX theory argue that it is possible to create high quality relationships with all employees by using fair leadership practises, open communication and through inclusive organisational cultures.

The relational knowledge of LMX theory is very applicable in the modern organisational contexts that are characterised by collaboration, sharing of knowledge, and empowering employees. The concept of leadership effectiveness is becoming more of how well a leader acts rather than how well the leader relates with his/her followers. Emotional intelligence augments this relational ability by providing leaders with interpersonal understanding and compassion to accomplish the development of trust-based interactions that lead to employee wellbeing and organisational achievement.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical background of this research is based on the Ability-Based Emotional Intelligence Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory to describe how the emotional competencies of leaders influence the process of leadership and organisational performance. By using these frameworks together, we have a holistic picture of how emotional capabilities shape the interaction of leaders with their followers, the motivational methods to employ employees and how to improve the performance of a team. The modern leadership literature is becoming more aware of the fact that cognitive performance and formal power alone do not indicate leadership effectiveness; rather, it is the ability of a leader to learn and cope with the emotional processes in the organisational context (Northouse, 2025; Yukl, 2013). Emotional intelligence thus presents a convenient explanatory process to the differences in leadership behaviour and results.

A theory of ability-based Emotional Intelligence was developed Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2008), and it views emotional intelligence as a collection of mental skills among emotional information processing (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). This school of thought presents that emotional intelligence entails four fundamental skills, which include the ability to perceive emotions, the ability to employ emotions to aid thought, the ability to be able to interpret emotional meanings, and the ability to be able to manage emotions (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). These skills allow an individual to handle complicated social experiences and react in a proper way to an emotional stimulus. In the organisational environment, leaders are often confronted with circumstances that involve sensitivity to the feelings of employees, interpersonal dynamics and transforming motivational orientations. Leaders with high emotional intelligence will thus be able to deal with such dynamics more effectively in a manner that fosters collaboration and productivity.

The ability-based model underlines the fact that emotional intelligence is just like any other intelligence in that it is an information processing and adaptive problem-solving process. Emotions give a good indication regarding relationship, environmental needs, and wellbeing of individuals. Leaders that are able to comprehend these cues are in a better position to make informed decisions and lead their teams through the uncertainty (Cote, 2014). Self-regulation also comes in through emotional intelligence as leaders are able to remain in cheque when faced with stressful circumstances and not to react as they do in response. This emotional control is especially valuable in leadership where the emotional tone of leaders may affect the morale and behaviour of employees.

Transformational Leadership Theory is another theory that supplements the emotional intelligence view by identifying how leaders can transfer their personal competencies to behaviours that motivate and encourage their followers. Transformational leadership is concerned with the capability of the leader to enhance the motivation of the followers, set personal objectives to organisational vision and create a sense of commitment to the organisational goals. Bass and Riggio (2006) developed four main elements of transformational leadership, namely idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. Such behaviours by transformational leaders convince followers to go beyond self-interest and work towards the greater organisational objectives.

The combination of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership theory has a theoretical importance since emotional competencies are essential in most transformational leadership behaviours (Bass, 1985; Khanin, 2007). An example is inspirational motivation which relies on the capability of the leader to explain the vision in a manner that the followers can connect with. Individualised consideration means that one must be empathetic and sensitive to the needs of employees whereas intellectual stimulation may entail dealing with uncertainty and promoting open communication (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). High emotional intelligence leaders are hence better placed to implement transformational leadership behaviours.

There exist empirical studies that affirm the theoretical relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. Research has demonstrated that emotionally intelligent leaders tend to gain more trust, good relationship in the workplace, and develop favourable working environments that can boost employee involvement (Harms & Crede, 2010). Emotional intelligence helps leaders to know the emotional condition of followers, reactions to challenges in a positive manner and positive organisational climate. These competencies help in increasing employee satisfaction, employee commitment, and performance.

Moreover, the combination of these theories accentuates the process of relationships in which a leader becomes effective. Leadership is not a solitary process but a process that takes place between the leaders and the followers (Khanin, 2007). Emotional intelligence will add value to these interactions by ensuring that they are better in communication, conflict management and understanding each other. Transformational leadership, in its turn, offers the behavioural channel whereby these emotional competencies get converted into motivational and organisational results (Bass, 1985). Employees have a higher chance to feel valued, motivated and committed to organisational goals when the leaders adequately manage emotions and clearly formulate an appealing vision (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

In this research, emotional intelligence is thus theorised as a lead up to being a good leader. Highly emotionally intelligent leaders are supposed to interact better with the followers, build stronger leader-member relationships, and promote employee engagement cases. These interrelations are likely to affect team working and organisational performance. Combining the Ability-Based Emotional Intelligence Theory with the Transformational Leadership Theory, the given study can offer the structure of analysing the role of emotional competencies in influencing the leadership procedures and consequences in the modern organisational setting.

Methodology

The research design used in the study was a quantitative survey design that was used to test the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness under different settings of organisations. The total number of respondents, who took part in the collection of the data, was 300 people who work in education, healthcare, retail, and public service. The participants were a sample of various positions that included junior workers, supervisory employees and top-level management to have a holistic view of the leadership dynamics and experiences in the workplace.

The emotional intelligence was also measured with self-reported items that included the awareness of emotions, regulation of emotions, the awareness of other people emotions, and the decision making based on emotion. Outcomes of leadership and followers were measured by survey items that concentrated on motivation of employees, perceived organisational value, strong team performance and stress at work environment. All the answers were noted with a five-point Likert scale that used a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) where the participants were allowed to indicate the degree of agreement with the statements given.

The analysis of the collected data was carried out through descriptive statistics analysis, correlation analysis, as well as composite variable analysis. These analytical methods have promoted an in-depth study of the correlation between emotional intelligence and leadership outcomes and gave us an understanding of how the emotional competencies of the leaders transform into the team performance, job satisfaction, and workplace relationship. On the whole, this research method allowed this study to provide empirical results regarding the significance of emotional intelligence in effective leadership in various organisational environments.

Data Analysis

Sample Size

Valid Responses	Missing	Total
300	0	300

All returned questionnaires were usable for analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Emotional awareness	2.60	1.53	300
Understanding own emotions	3.38	1.43	300
Recognising emotions in others	3.03	1.36	300
Managing emotions under pressure	3.26	1.42	300
Emotional decision making	3.12	1.36	300

The descriptive statistics summarise the emotional intelligence competence of respondents in five major dimensions, which include emotional awareness, knowledge of individual emotions,

understanding another person's emotions, emotional managing under pressure as well as making emotional decisions. A review of 300 answers was done to provide a significant framework in which to consider the trends present in the data.

The findings denote that the respondents have reported an average level of emotional intelligence in general with a mean score of 2.60 to 3.38. One of the variables was the best understanding of own emotions with the highest mean score ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.43$). It implies that respondents tend to view themselves as reasonably competent in the process of recognising and explaining their internal emotional conditions. According to the scholars, emotional intelligence is based on self-awareness since a person needs to be self-aware of how they feel before they can successfully manage their behaviour or relate with others (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008; Goleman, 1998). The mean is relatively large hence, suggesting that there is a significant number of respondents who have a reasonable degree of intrapersonal emotional insight.

The second mean score was the highest in dealing with pressures ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.42$). This observation means that the respondents feel that they are reasonably able to control their emotional responses in challenging or stressful events. The emotional control is especially significant when it comes to leadership, whereby being able to stay calm in the face of uncertainty is part of making superior decisions and organisational stability (Gross, 2015). Managers who manage their emotions better also have higher chances of having a pleasant working environment and minimising interpersonal conflict.

Likewise, the emotional decision-making was moderate ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 1.36$) in terms of the mean score, which indicates that the respondents occasionally take into account the emotional information in their decision-making. In the most recent research on leadership, the importance of rational decision making is not absolute but most of the time it entails the incorporation of emotional and social cues (George, 2000). Leaders that recognise signs of emotion are in a better position to predict team response and organisational implications.

The skill to identify the emotions of other people also had a moderate mean score ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.36$). This skill is an indication of social awareness and empathy, which are the main elements of emotional intelligence. Previous studies indicate that leaders who are capable of correctly interpreting the feeling of team members have better chances of establishing trust and enhancing communication (Ashkanasy and Daus, 2005). The findings consequently show that the interpersonal emotional sensitivity in the respondents is moderate.

Nonetheless, emotional awareness had the lowest mean score ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.53$) which implies that some respondents might not find it easy to remain conscious of emotional cues in real-time. The standard deviation is also relatively large and this is a further indication that there is a lot of variation between the participants. This means that although there are people who show high levels of emotional awareness, others show much lower levels. This variability that occurs in organisational samples is apparent due to the fact that, emotional competencies are determined by personality traits, leadership experience, and organisational culture (Joseph and Newman, 2010).

Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Emotional Intelligence	5	0.87
Leadership Behaviour	6	0.89
Leader-Member Exchange	5	0.86
Job Satisfaction	4	0.88
Team Performance	4	0.85
Workplace Stress	4	0.82

All constructs exceed the recommended 0.70 threshold.

To establish the internal consistency of the constructs, Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the measurement instruments used in this study. The findings suggest that the all constructs have a high level of reliability, with Cronbachs alpha values very much higher than the generally recognised standard of 0.70. In particular, the Emotional Intelligence scale, which was rated using five items, had a high reliability coefficient of 0.87, meaning that the items are always able to reflect the

construct of emotional intelligence. The Leadership Behaviour with a 6-item assessment had an even greater reliability of 0.89 with an implication of excellent internal consistency. On the same note, the Leader Member Exchange construct, which was measured using five items, gave a Cronbachs alpha of 0.86, which proved the reliability of the scale in measuring the quality of leader-member relationships. Job Satisfaction had 4 items and a Cronbachs alpha of 0.88 which indicates high level of consistency among the items. Team Performance construct, which has four items as well, had a reliability coefficient of 0.85, which is good internal consistency. Lastly, the Workplace Stress which was measured using four items reported a Cronbachs alpha of 82 and it was concluded that the scale measures the perceived stress levels at the workplace. On the whole, these findings indicate that the survey tools used in this research are sound and can be used in further statistical calculations.

Correlation Matrix

Variables	EI	Leadership	LMX	Satisfaction	Performance
Emotional Intelligence	1				
Leadership Behaviour	.46**	1			
LMX	.42**	.51**	1		
Job Satisfaction	.39**	.44**	.55**	1	
Team Performance	.33**	.48**	.41**	.46**	1

$p < 0.05$

Correlation analysis was done to test the association of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Leader Behaviour, Leader Member Exchange (LMX), Job Satisfaction and Team Performance. The findings, as shown in Table 4.4, indicate that there are significant positive associations of all the variables at $p < 0.05$.

In particular, Leadership Behaviour was related to Emotional Intelligence in a moderate positive manner ($r = 0.46$), and it implies that the more emotionally intelligent the leader, the more effective was the leadership behaviour. EI had also a good relationship with LMX ($r = 0.42$), indicating that EI leaders tend to build good relationships with their subordinates. Moreover, EI showed positive relationships with Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.39$) and Team Performance ($r = 0.33$), which presupposes that the higher the emotional intelligence, the higher the satisfaction of the employees and the better the team results.

There was strong correlation between Leadership Behaviour and LMX ($r=0.51$) indicating that good leadership behaviours are closely related to better relationships between leaders and their members. It was also positively associated with Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.44$) and Team Performance ($r = 0.48$) which means that effective leaders not only make their employees satisfied but also make their organisation effective as well.

The positive correlation between LMX and Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.55$) and moderate correlation with Team Performance ($r = 0.41$) indicated that positive leader-member relations are significant in employee morale and performance outcomes. Lastly, Team Performance was positively associated with Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.46$), implying that job satisfaction correlates with team performance and so the more employees are satisfied the higher the chances of them performing well in a team.

All in all, the findings suggest that emotional intelligence, leadership behaviour, and good relations between the leader and members are all positively related with employee satisfaction and team performance, which justify the interrelation of these organisational constructs.

Regression Analysis

Model 1

Dependent Variable: Transformational Leadership

Predictor	Beta	t	Sig
Emotional Intelligence	0.46	8.12	0.000

$R^2 = 0.21$

An analysis was performed with a simple linear regression in order to analyse the predictive value of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Transformational Leadership. These findings suggest that EI is a strong positive foreteller of transformational leadership ($= 0.46, = 8.12, p = 0.000$). This observation implies that the more the emotional intelligence of leaders, the more they are involved in transformational leadership behaviours, i.e., to inspire, motivate, and intellectually stimulate their followers. Transformational

leadership was explained by the model ($R^2 = 0.21$) as 21 percent of the variance, which means that although emotional intelligence is an important factor to explain transformational leadership, there were other factors other than EI that have some influence in explaining leadership behaviour. On the whole, these findings demonstrate the significant importance of emotional intelligence in the increase of transformational leadership effectiveness in the organisational context.

Model 2

Dependent Variable: Leader-Member Exchange

Predictor	Beta	t	Sig
Emotional Intelligence	0.42	7.41	0.000

 $R^2 = 0.18$

Simple linear regression was performed to determine the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Leader Member Exchange (LMX). It was analysed that EI is a major positive predictor of LMX (0.42, $t = 7.41$, $p = 0.001$). This implies that leaders who have a greater emotional intelligence tend to establish better quality relationships with their subordinates and such a relationship is one that is built on trust, respect, and communication. The model explained 18% of the variance in LMX ($R^2 = 0.18$) and this indicates that even though the role of emotional intelligence is significant in defining the nature of leader-member relationship, there are other factors that determine the nature of such relationships. These results indicate that emotional intelligence is a significant tool in establishing good, effective, and training interactions between leaders and team members.

Model 3

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Predictor	Beta	t	Sig
LMX	0.55	9.67	0.000

 $R^2 = 0.30$

Simple linear regression was done to investigate the predicting value of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) on Job Satisfaction. The findings show that LMX is a noteworthy positive foreboding of job satisfaction (0.55, $t = 9.67$, $p < 0.001$). This result implies that employees who have had positive interactions with their leaders, where the interaction is characterised by trust, support, and effective communication are likely to record an increased rate of job satisfaction. The model contributed 30 percent of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.30$), which implies that LMX plays a significant role in the job satisfaction of the employees but there are other factors, which contribute to the overall job satisfaction beyond LMX. These findings underscore the need to focus on positive leader-member relationships in boosting employee morale and workplace job satisfaction.

Model 4

Dependent Variable: Team Performance

Predictor	Beta	t	Sig
Leadership Behaviour	0.48	8.90	0.000

 $R^2 = 0.23$

Simple linear regression was done to investigate how Leadership Behaviour influences Team Performance. These findings indicate that leadership behaviour is an important positive predictor of team performance (8.90, 0.001). This shows that the performance of teams that are headed by leaders with exhibited good leadership behaviours like offering guidance, support and motivation were more likely to perform better and also reach greater heights of productivity and goal achievement. The model explained 23 percent of the variation in the team performance ($R^2 = 0.23$), which implies that leadership behaviour is a significant factor that can influence the team performance but there are other factors, which affect the team performance. The findings provide relevance to the need to ensure that leadership practises are effective in ensuring team success and organisational effectiveness.

Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	EI positively predicts leadership behaviour	Supported
H2	EI positively predicts LMX	Supported
H3	LMX positively predicts job satisfaction	Supported
H4	Leadership behaviour predicts team performance	Supported

Discussion of Findings

The main objective of the study was to test the interrelationships between emotional intelligence, leadership behaviour, leader-member exchange (LMX), job satisfaction, and team performance and to determine the predictive power of key constructs on key organisational outcome. The results of the study can be useful in understanding the contribution of both personal competencies and relationship dynamics to workplace attitudes and behaviour.

On the one hand, the reliability analysis showed that all measurement scales were characterised by high internal consistency, whereas the value of Cronbach alpha ranged between 0.82 and 0.89. These scores are more than the generally set standard of 0.70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994), which means that emotional intelligence constructs, constructs of leadership behaviour, LMX, job satisfaction, team performance, and workplace stresses were highly measured. This gives a good empirical background to the interpretation of further correlation and regression.

The correlation table demonstrated that all the variables of the study had significant positive correlations. There were moderate and positive correlations between emotional intelligence and leadership behaviour ($r = .46$), LMX ($r = .42$), job satisfaction ($r = .39$), and team performance ($r = .33$). Such results are consistent with the previous studies that proposed that emotionally intelligent people have a greater capacity to identify and regulate their emotions and those of other people in a manner that improves interpersonal relationships and work performance (Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, 2008; Goleman, 1998). Particularly, leaders who have stronger emotional intelligence are more inclined towards making behaviours that lead to the development of trust and cooperation that is subsequently helpful in promoting increased levels of job satisfaction and performance among group members.

There were also strong correlations between leadership behaviour and LMX ($r = .51$), job satisfaction ($r = .44$), and team performance ($r = .48$), which reflect the argument that good leadership practises are highly linked with positive relational exchanges and employee outcomes. This agrees with transformational and relational leadership theories, which highlight that leaders who are supportive, thought provoking and consideration involve tend to develop greater levels of employee satisfaction and team productivity (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). The positive relationship between LMX and job satisfaction ($r = .55$) also supports the idea that leaders-member relations of high quality based on mutual trust and respect are at the heart of positive attitude of employees in the workplace (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

The regression analysis helped more in understanding the dynamics of predictability of the variables. Model 1 revealed that transformational leadership was highly determined by emotional intelligence (0.46, $p < .001$), which explained 21% of the change in leadership behaviour. This is congruent with the available literature which points to the fact that emotionally intelligent leaders are better placed to inspire and motivate subordinates (Cote et al., 2010). Emotional intelligence helps leaders to cope with their feelings successfully, to interpret social signs correctly, and to work out in a complicated interpersonal context, all these things are very crucial in transformational leadership (Barbuto & Burbach, 2006).

In the same way, Model 2 revealed the emotional intelligence to be an important predictor of LMX ($= 0.42$, $p < .001$), with the ability to explain 18 percent of the variance. This implies that leaders with greater emotional intelligence levels have greater ability to develop trustful and supportive relationships with their followers. These leaders are more competent to address the needs and concerns of the followers in a sensitive manner which is one of the main principles of the LMX theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). This observation highlights the role of emotional intelligence as one of the core competencies in the development of high-quality leader-member interactions.

LMX became a predictive variable in Model 3 with a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction ($= 0.55$, $p = .001$) and it explained 30 percent of the variation. This is in line with the studies which have pointed out the role of relational quality in work attitude of employees (Harris, Wheeler & Kacmar, 2009).

The employees are more likely to feel valued and satisfied with their jobs when they have a respectful, supportive and high trust relationship with its leaders. This would be applicable on retention, engagement, and the general climate in organisations (Erdogan & Bauer, 2010).

Lastly, the Model 4 revealed that team performance was strongly predicted by leadership behaviour (0.48, $p < .001$) with 23 percent of the variance explained. Leadership behaviour that entails communication transparency, goal-setting, and feedback on performance is required when leading a team and being able to coordinate team activities and support group achievement (Yukl, 2013). This observation supports the evidence showing that leadership behaviour is one of the most important factors that dictate team performance especially when working in a complex and dynamic setting (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

Combining these results would indicate a coherent theoretically based model where emotional intelligence is a precursor of successful leadership behaviour and good quality of leader-member relationships, which in turn are correlated with increased job satisfaction and better team performance. The positive correlations and forecasting relations that have been found in this research point at the pivotal role that is played by individual competencies as well as relational processes in attaining admirable organisational results. The practical implications of these findings include the idea that organisations must invest in development programmes that facilitate the development of leaders on the basis of emotional intelligence and relationship skill to create positive work environments that facilitate employee satisfaction and high performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The first purpose of this paper was to discuss the interrelationships between emotional intelligence, leadership behaviour, leader-member exchange (LMX), job satisfaction, and team performance and determine the predictive power of key constructs on critical organisational results. The results provide useful information about the functions of personal competencies and relations in workplace attitudes and behaviours.

On the one hand, the reliability analysis indicated that the measurement scales of all scales showed high internal consistency, where Cronbach alpha ranged between 0.82 and 0.89. Such scores surpass the widely agreed mark of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) which implies that the variables of emotional intelligence, leadership behaviour, LMX, job satisfaction, team performance, and stress at the workplace were measured with high reliability. This offers a good empirical basis to explain a later correlation and regression analysis.

The correlation table presented a significant positive correlation between all variables in the study. Leadership behaviour had moderate and positive relationships with emotional intelligence ($r = .46$), LMX ($r = .42$), job satisfaction ($r = .39$) and team performance ($r = .33$). These results are consistent with some of the other studies that propose that more emotionally intelligent individuals can learn to better identify and regulate their emotions and feelings and those of other people, thus leading to improved interpersonal relationship and work performance (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008; Goleman, 1998). In particular, employees of higher emotional intelligence tend to use behaviour that facilitates the creation of trust and teamwork that consequently promote elevated job satisfaction and performance rates among team members.

There were also high correlations of leadership behaviour with LMX ($r = .51$), job satisfaction ($r = .44$), and team performance ($r = .48$), which pointed out that good relational exchanges and employee performance were closely related to leadership practises. This goes in line with transformational and relational leadership theories which underscore the role that leaders who are supportive, intellectually stimulating and individual considerate play in fostering greater levels of employee satisfaction and team performance (Bass & Riggio 2006; Graen & Uhl-Bien 1995). The close positive relationship between LMX and job satisfaction ($r = .55$) is another evidence that high-quality leader-member relationships, mutual trust, and respect are the main focus of the positive attitude of employees in the workplace (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

The regression analyses better explained about the predictive dynamics between the variables. Model 1 revealed that emotional intelligence was a significant predictor of transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.46$, p

=.001) to the extent that it explained 21 percent of the leadership behaviour variance. This conforms to the established literature that emotional intelligent leaders are able to inspire and motivate subordinates more (Coute et al., 2011). The emotional intelligence helps a leader to control his/her emotions appropriately, interpret social messages correctly, and negotiate intricate human relationships- all that are paramount in transformational leadership (Barbuto and Burbach, 2006).

In the same vein, Model 2 indicated that emotional intelligence was a predictor of LMX with a significant coefficient (18) (0.42, $p = .001$). This implies that leaders with a greater degree of emotional intelligence will have an enhanced ability to form trustful and supportive relationships with the followers. These kinds of leaders are in a better position to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of the followers and that is one of the key principles of the LMX theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The results of this finding highlight the relevance of emotional intelligence as a core competency on the promotion of high-quality leader and member interactions.

In the Model 3, LMX showed a significant predictor of job satisfaction ($= 0.55$, $p = .001$), explaining 30 percent of the variance. This is in line with the study that has indicated the role played by relational quality in the work attitudes of the employees (Harris, Wheeler, and Kacmar, 2009). The more respectful, supportive and high trustful relations employees have with their leaders, the more likely they will feel valued and satisfied with their work. This has some repercussions on retention, engagement, and climate of the organisation (Erdogan and Bauer, 2010).

Lastly, the Model 4 suggested that the leadership behaviour was a strong predictor of team performance ($= 0.48$, $p < .001$) and the variance was found to be 23%. Strong leadership behaviour that involves effectiveness in communication, goal setting, and performance feedback is the key to organising the team activity and enabling people to achieve success collectively (Yukl, 2013). This result supports studies illustrating that leadership behaviour is a major factor towards team performance especially in active and challenging working environments (Kozlowski and Ilgen, 2006).

Collectively, these results imply that there exists a consistent set of theoretically based assumptions where emotional intelligence is a pre-cursor to effective leadership behaviour and high-quality leader-member relationships, which are then linked to higher job satisfaction and better team performance. The correlational and anticipatory relationships in the current study bring out the focus of individual and relationship competences in the attainment of desirable organisational results. The implications of these findings in practise imply that organisations ought to invest in development programmes that will help them develop leaders with high emotional intelligence and with strong relationships to create a positive work environment that will stimulate employee satisfaction and high performance.

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