

# **Realizing the power of Emotional Intelligence by altering the leadership skill**

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## **Abstract**

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to utilize power, information and energy in our emotions by knowing, choosing, navigating and managing them to lead a more effective life. Each individual possess different leadership skills, but in order for individuals to become effective leaders, they'll need a high level of emotional intelligence. In today's workplace, it has become a highly important factor for success, influencing productivity, efficiency and team collaboration. R.Gopinath (2011) argues that work place emotions can play a major role in the leadership success. He opines that "Emotional Intelligence contributes to effective leadership in organization by focusing on five essential elements of leader effectiveness: development of collective goals and objectives; instilling in others an appreciation of the importance of work activities; generating and maintaining enthusiasm, confidence, optimism, cooperation and trust; encouraging flexibility in decision-making and change, and establishing and maintaining a meaningful identity for an organization. Hence the present paper discusses the relevance of emotional intelligence for leadership success by examining the findings of existing literature. Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Leadership*

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## 1. Introduction

Emotional Intelligence depicts “The capacity for recognising our own feelings and those in others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships”. (Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence– Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*). Emotions is the driving force behind all human behavior. During the last few decades, researchers have increasingly come to understand how important it is to understand our emotions and handle them in a healthy way. According to **John Gottman**, author of the book *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child*, “Researchers have found that even more than your IQ, your emotional awareness and your ability to handle feelings will determine your success and happiness in all walks of life, including family relationships” (1997:20). Famous psychologists, John Mayer of University of New Hampshire and Peter Salovey of Yale University offered the first formulation of the concept which they called “emotional intelligence”. In “Working with Emotional Intelligence”, author **Daniel Goleman** defines EI in the workplace as the ability of employees to recognize:

- Their own feelings
- The feelings of others
- What motivates them
- How to manage their emotions, both in themselves and in relationships with others.

The group member who exerts more positive influence over others, than they exert over him/her is said to have leadership skills. Emotionally intelligent leaders:

- Understand emotions of others.
- Manage emotions of self and others.
- Recognize emotions and express them in an appropriate manner.
- Use emotions as a guiding force in decision making.

Emotional Intelligence is a key determinant of employees’ effective performance and it is considered more important than Intelligence quotient at workplace. Mostly intelligent people who have a bright academic record are not good in social interaction and interpersonal dealings. This deficiency is due to the lack of emotional intelligence capability, though there

intelligence quotient is quite high. It does not indicate that IQ should be entirely ignored yet it indicates that EI is more important construct than IQ for enhancing organizational effectiveness. The emotional competency of a person has a vital contribution in the success of an employee. It may help the managers to develop employees in terms of positive and committed workforce by developing and enhancing their emotional capabilities. Emotions have a crucial role in organizations whereas intelligence alone is not sufficient to explain the individuals' success at work or life. If the employees of an organization don't demonstrate emotional intelligence, it can serve as an extensive overhead for the person and the organization **Uzma Hanif Gondal and Tajammal Husain (2013)**

Research shows that 85-95% of the difference between a "good leader" and an "excellent leader" is due to the difference in Emotional Intelligence.(Daniel Goleman, 1998). Hence the present paper discusses the relevance of emotional intelligence as a key to leadership success by examining the existing literature.

## **2. Conceptual Framework**

### **2.1. Emotional Intelligence**

"Emotional Intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth". (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

The four branch model given by Peter Salovey and John Mayer known as **ability emotional intelligence model** which includes:

1. Emotional perception and expression
  - Ability to identify emotion in one's physical and psychological states.
  - Ability to identify emotions in others.
  - Ability to express emotions accurately and to express needs related to them.
2. Emotional facilitation of thought
  - Ability to use emotional states to facilitate problem solving and creativity.
  - Ability to generate emotions to facilitate judgment and memory.
3. Emotional understanding
  - Ability to understand relationships among various emotions.

- Ability to perceive the causes and consequences of emotions.
4. Emotional management
- Ability to be open to feelings, both pleasant and unpleasant.
  - Ability to manage emotions in oneself and in others.
  - Ability to engage, prolong or detach from an emotional state.

## **2.2. Leadership**

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."-John Quincy Adams.

Leadership is the ability to inspire confidence in and support among the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals. Leading is a major part of a manager's job, but a manager also plans, organizes, and controls. Leadership is said to deal with change, inspiration, motivation and influence. Leadership researchers and experienced workers have long known that how well a person manages his or her emotions and those of others influences leadership effectiveness. For example, recognizing anger in yourself and others, and being able to empathize with people, can help you be more effective at exerting influence.

Understanding the concept leadership style is an extension of understanding leadership attitudes and behavior.

Basically there are five types of leadership styles:

1. Autocratic leadership style.
2. Democratic leadership style.
3. Laissez faire leadership style.
4. Transactional leadership style.
5. Transformational leadership style.

### **Autocratic leadership style**

An autocratic leadership style is a centralized authority style which involves leader has all the powers like decision making and does lots of interference in team work. Whole of the command vests in the hands of leader .The disadvantage of autocratic leadership style is that workers feel that they are too closely supervised and hence become more hostile towards the leader who appears not to trust them.

### **Democratic leadership style**

Democratic style of leadership ensures the participation of followers. Also the followers take part in the decision making process, and decisions result from a group consensus. The advantage of this style is that workers feel comfortable while doing their job. It also called as Participative Leadership Style.

### **Laissez Faire leadership style**

The style is largely a "hands off" view that tends to minimize the amount of direction and face time required. Works well if you have highly trained and highly motivated direct reports. The laissez-faire leader avoids decision-making, the provision of rewards and the provision of positive or negative feedback to subordinates (Bass& Avolio, 1997; Hartog &Van Muijen, 1997)

### **Transactional leadership style**

This leadership style emphasizes on getting things done within the umbrella of the status quo. In this style, person works within the framework of rules and it is commonly seen in bureaucratic organizations. Research on transactional leadership indicates that there are three dimensions underlying the transactional leadership construct (Bass &Avolio, 1997; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1998; Hartog &Van Muijen, 1997):

- ❖ Contingent rewards or reinforcement: The leader uses rewards, promises and praise to motivate followers to achieve performance levels contracted by both parties.

- ❖ Active management-by-exception: The leader monitors followers' performance, taking corrective action in anticipation of problems or when irregularities occur.
- ❖ Passive management-by-exception: The leader waits passively for mistakes to occur, or for things not to go as planned, before taking corrective action with negative feedback.

## **Transformational Leadership style**

This is a modified and advanced form of leadership style. In this style, the primary focus is to make change happen in:

- ❖ Our Self
- ❖ Others
- ❖ Groups, and
- ❖ Organizations

Transformational leaders are said to be responsible for motivating employees to go beyond ordinary expectations (Bass & Hater, 1988). Literature states that four dimensions underlie the transformational leadership construct:

- ❖ Idealized influence: the leader instills pride and faith in followers, provides a vision and a sense of mission, gains respect and trust.
- ❖ Inspirational leadership: the leader inspires followers to accept challenging goals provides meaning for engaging in shared goals and arouses team spirit through enthusiasm and optimism.
- ❖ Individualized consideration: the leader recognizes individual uniqueness, links the individuals' current needs to the organization's needs and provides coaching, mentoring and growth opportunities.
- ❖ Intellectual stimulation: the leader encourages followers to approach problems in new ways and to creatively think of new ways to carry out their daily responsibilities.

### **2.3. The characteristics of emotionally intelligent leader**

- The leader commits to co-creating an organization in which individuals can be and do their best to achieve shared goals.
- The leader encourages people to create and articulate a shared vision and mission that are inspiring.
- The leader shares authority and accountability with others.
- The leader encourages people to work interdependently to achieve a shared goal.
- The leader co-creates a climate in which people respect each other, believe in their own self-worth, and value authenticity.
- The leader co-creates mechanisms so that meaningful and whole-hearted participation can happen.
- The leader exercises his/her personal power (rather than positional power) ensuring that the best decisions are made yet refusing to be treated as or to regard him/herself as a heroic leader. As the organization matures, members view themselves as leaders.

(Source: “*Consortium for research on emotional intelligence in organizations*”)

### **Why Emotional Intelligence Is Needed in Leadership success?**

- ✓ Leaders with emotional intelligence have an awareness of their own emotions and are able to recognize their strengths and weaknesses. It helps them to solve the work related problems smoothly.
- ✓ Emotional management enables the leader to regulate their feelings and stay in control.
- ✓ Effective communication is essential for business success. Leaders with emotional intelligence are able to communicate with their followers effectively and thereby inspire them.
- ✓ Leaders with emotional intelligence are well tuned to the emotions of others and are able to pick up on what is going on around them. If the leader is unable to empathize with their employees, he or she will surely find it difficult to obtain respect or loyalty.

- ✓ Leaders with emotional intelligence are equipped to handle conflicts and provide resolution. Hence a leader with high emotional intelligence can develop more effective workplace.

### **3. Emotional Intelligence: Key to Leadership Success**

The ability to identify and understand the emotions of others in the workplace is important for leaders, so that they can influence the feelings of subordinates to maintain enthusiasm and productivity and suggests that those leaders who are identified as having high level of emotional intelligence are more likely to desire success, lead an effective team and be more satisfied working with others **Gardner and Stough (2002)**. Managers having high self awareness can act as transformational leaders successfully and instill their subordinates a feeling of self-confidence in order to face the new challenges of work environment, which in turn lead to increasing managerial performance **Sosik and Megerian, (1999)**. **Rosete and Ciarrochi(2005)** identified the effect of emotional intelligence on workplace measures of leadership effectiveness in organizations. **Bharwaney et.al (2011)** reviewed the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace and claims that EI can increase the occupational performance, leadership effectiveness and organizational productivity. Hence HR professionals should influence key stakeholders in the implementation of EI programmes, processes and interventions. A new study conducted by **Six Seconds**, The Emotional Intelligence Network, showed that there is a high correlation between having leaders with strong emotional capabilities and high performance

**Van Kleef et.al. (2004)** Leaders must match their emotional expressions to their followers' personality to maximize performance. Also they suggests that when dealing with agreeable subordinates, managers should refrain from expressing anger for such expressions would be unlikely to result in desired outcomes. In such situations, leaders are better advised to show no emotion or to display positive emotions to generate a constructive and harmonious atmosphere. **Prati et.al (2003)** suggests that emotional intelligence has emerged as one of the most notable social effectiveness constructs; EI is the foundational element of leadership effectiveness. Also it can improve team interaction and organization productivity. **Punia(2005)** conducted a study among the Indian Corporate Executives and found that the

leaders with higher emotional intelligence can see changes as opportunities for something better and they cherish not stability but ongoing development of individual workers and of the organization itself. **Nordstrom (2010)** argue that by incorporating EI competencies, a leader is better set for handling the emotions, values and goals of the people they lead, which generates a healthy and effective communication throughout the organization. **Jim Welch (2003)** argues that those teams which develop their EI are likely to have far more initiative in dealing with organizational challenges, will be far better at addressing ongoing concerns such as stress, change and conflict and will genuinely get more out of work. They found that best teams are emotionally literate.

Higgs and Rowland (2001) developed a set of leadership competencies required for successful organizational change and found that there exists a strong relationship between these leadership competencies and EQ, which includes:

- Creating the case for change
- Creating structural change
- Engaging others with the change
- Implementing and sustaining change
- Facilitating and developing capability

According to Higgs, to be an emotionally intelligent leader, we need to develop capacity to

- 'let go' and allow others to take initiative;
- Trust our subordinates to make decisions;
- Understand and involve subordinates at an emotional and rational level;
- Be visionary, passionate and motivating in order to inspire subordinates;
- Manage our own stress levels effectively;
- Manage and accept our own emotions as well as others' emotions and the cause of those emotions;
- Be more flexible in the approaches we take.

Research conducted with over 500 organizations (and across all levels-that is, from entry –level jobs to top executive positions) indicates that the elements that distinguish outstanding performers in every field are not IQ (Intelligent quotient), academic degrees or technical

expertise. In fact, the single most important factor is EQ(Emotional Quotient). More specifically, research indicates the following:

- 80% of the competencies that distinguish outstanding from average leaders are linked to Emotional Quotient.
- EQ is twice as important in leadership as IQ and technical expertise combined.
- EQ is four times as important as other factors in terms of overall success.

Hence, intellectual capacity, knowledge and technical expertise are needed for entry in a field, but they do not make you an outstanding performer, its your emotional intelligence acts as a differentiating factor for leadership success.

## 4. Conclusion

In today's competitive environment, the ability to manage one's thoughts and feelings is essential to business success. It is found that people who have the ability to manage their feelings, handle stress are more successful and have effective performance in the organizations than the people who have not this ability. The individuals with high emotional intelligence, who have the qualities to be good leaders, are successful at work. Also effective leaders don't buy into or try to suppress their inner experiences. Instead they approach them in a mindful, values-driven and productive way. Hence "Emotional Intelligence contributes to effective leadership in organization by focusing on five essential elements of leader effectiveness: development of collective goals and objectives; instilling in others an appreciation of the importance of work activities; generating and maintaining enthusiasm, confidence, optimism, cooperation and trust; encouraging flexibility in decision-making and change, and establishing and maintaining a meaningful identity for an organization"R.Gopinath (2011).

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