The Measure of Emotional Intelligence in Leaders

Madison Clark[1], Robert Douglas Waldo[2], Robert B. Wharton[3]

(1. LeTourneau University, USA; 2. Liberty University, USA)

Abstract: A data group of 246 individuals was collected to explore the possible correlations between trait-based and competency-based Emotional Intelligence factors to determine how the development of characteristics can contribute to an individual's influence potential — their "ReAch". The study was also conducted to demonstrate how an increase in Emotional Intelligence can occur in aspiring and existing leaders to further the effectiveness and success of the individual and their work environment. The data pool was required to complete two surveys: the SSEIT, which measures trait-based Emotional Intelligence, and the LDP, which measures competency-based factors and the degree to which each trait existed in each individual. This paper explores the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and the traits that are naturally present and those that are a result of learning, development and environmental factors. We are seeking to address the objective of improving leadership abilities and to explore the needed tools to develop rising leaders. The correlations that we are exploring between these two sets of data points could help further present the possibilities of self-improvement in the workplace.

Key words: emotional intelligence; trait; competency; leadership; SSEIT; LDP; self-development; ReAch

JEL codes: L0

1. Introduction

The ability to be an effective leader is contributed to by a set of traits and skills that have long been sought after as the key to success. Capability, knowledge, skills and intelligence are common qualities in a leader, and while these are necessary, they may not be foundational. Much research has been done to gain a glimpse into what specifically makes a leader great, and many factors have taken precedence overtime such as confidence, inspiration, integrity, open-mindedness and many more traits. However, even when a leader possesses these traits, there still seems to be an aspect that is missing from the mix-an intangible trait that Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer first referred to as Emotional Intelligence in 1990. They considered emotional intelligence to be "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action" (Mayer & Salovey, 1990).

Emotional Intelligence has become a key factor in the success and effectiveness of corporate leaders over the past few decades. The importance of Emotional Intelligence was clarified when its practice led to a clear increase in team cooperation, team building, positivity in the corporate atmosphere and overall success in leading others toward a compelling vision over a substantial period of time. Great leaders are not simply one dimensional in

---

Madison Clark, BBA Business Administration, LeTourneau University; research areas/interests: emotional intelligence, leadership. E-mail: madisonnclark15@gmail.com.

quality and skill, but they also possess the added dimension of relational and Emotional Intelligence to their abilities, character and IQ that puts them at the top of their field.

Daniel Goleman, famed psychologist to whom the majority of recent research on emotional intelligence is contributed, put it this way:

> "The most effective leaders are all alike in one crucial way: they all have a high degree of what has come to be known as emotional intelligence. It's not that IQ and technical skills are irrelevant. They do matter, but…they are the entry-level requirements for executive positions. My research, along with other recent studies, clearly shows that emotional intelligence is the sine qua non of leadership. Without it, a person can have the best training in the world, an incisive, analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas, but he still won't make a great leader" (Goleman, 1998).

2. Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence (EI) was deemed the invisible ladder to dynamic leadership in a study done by Avicenna Medical College in 2014. The researchers ran statistics between EI and leadership among preclinical and clinical students to see if there were any correlations. They concluded that an increase in leadership scores was directly correlated with an increase in EI. There was high stress in the preclinical years that hindered the development of EI, but those whose leadership skills increased also saw an increase in EI (Malik, Malik, Shabkhez, Salat, & Latif, 2014).

EI is also seen as vital for patient safety when it comes to leadership responsibilities in a hospital environment. The observations of nurse executives at seven NHS organizations found that nurses who demonstrated EI were capable of communicating the patient experience to the board of directors in a way that captured the attention of executive and non-executive colleagues (Doherty, 2009).

Research was also done to investigate the relationship between EI, constructive conflict management and the role of leadership. It was concluded that higher EI resulted in an increase in conflict management that benefitted both the individual and the organization to a greater degree than those with lower EI. Trust, positive orientation and open and effective communication were deemed as key competencies to engaging conflict using positive, functional and constructive approaches (Schlaerth, Ensari, Christian, 2013).

360-degree feedback was used to assess EI and its effect on leader development. Trait and temperament based EI, in accordance with Goleman's theory, and transformational leadership were both explored as possible factors in the development of EI and its contribution to leader development. EI was defined by five factors which are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. These measures are then utilized to contribute to relationships, assignments, formal coaching, job enrichment and 360-degree feedback (Phipps, Prieto, Ndinguri, 2014).

In the Four-Branch model, EI is explained as managing, understanding, using and perceiving emotions. Each branch describes a set of skills that make up the overall EI. The Big Five was correlated with several EI measures, including Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test, Overall EI, Emotional Competence Inventory, Self-Awareness Cluster, Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, Overall EQ, Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) and Overall EI. The overuse of the term EI was discussed, and it was concluded that the lack of perspective on EI is the cause of the flippant usage of the term to describe things such as need for achievement or self-control. The overuse and misuse of the phrase is an attempt to overthrow or subvert the standard scientific language in psychology (Mayer J. D., Salovey P., & Caruso D. R., 2008)

3. Objectives

The relationship between leadership and trait and competency based EI are explored, and two separate tools were used to find the reliability of the LDP ReAch measure against the SSEIT results. We then measured ReAch against job satisfaction, workplace performance data and data on supervisor workplace safety perceptions in order to understand the effects that EI has on the individual and their perception of themselves and their workplace. This is all measured through ReAch, which is the interaction of a leader's Relational Drive and Achievement Drive. ReAch is expressed as a single score, with four facets, including competencies in Coaching, Advising, Counseling and Driving.

4. Methods and Materials

After understanding the importance of EI, the natural response would be to look for leaders that possess the traits and competencies that make up high EI. However, in order to know these things, there has to be a standard and a tool against which to measure and categorize the traits and competencies in an individual. There are two ways that EI can be measured: trait-based and competency-based. To measure trait-based EI, we used the Schutte's Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) which was developed by the contribution and research of Dr. Nicola Schutte of New England University. This test measures the aspects of EI that are a result of innate traits with which a leader is born. The second tool we used, the Leading Dimensions Profile (LDP), was developed by Douglas Waldo and associates at Leading Dimensions Consulting, LLC. The LDP measures a competency-based model which explores the manner in which traits can be built upon and improved through training and practice. Competencies are learned and dynamic, while traits are preexisting and stable over time.

The LDP is a competency-based measure of EI that yields 16 scores for each of the four sub scores that make up the ReAch measure. The first quadrant is the Counseling quadrant made up of Assimilating Team Members, Cultivating Team Spirit, Identifying Personal Needs and Recognizing Others' Efforts. The second quadrant is the Coaching quadrant made up of Building Rapport, Easing Tension, Finding Opportune Synergy and Rallying Others. The third quadrant is the Driving quadrant in which Setting Expectations, Evaluating Performance, Controlling Processes and Approaching Complex Issues are measured. The fourth and final quadrant is the Advising quadrant in which Addressing Quality Concerns, Aligning Resources, Designing Team Structure and Integrating Perspectives are measured. These are all self-rated on a scale from one to five, and the averages for each of the 16 factors create the average ReAch for each participant.

The SSEIT, Schutte's Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test, uses a 33-item self-report measure to relate the three aspects of trait-based EI which are appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion and utilization of emotion. The four sub-scales of this assessment measure the individual's emotion perception, utilization of emotions, management of self-relevant emotions and the management of others' emotions.

5. Statistics

This chart illustrates the reliability and descriptive statistics. We are measuring the application of EI in each individual on a 5-point scale.

Descriptive and Reliability Statistics: LDP – ReAch						
n = 246			x̄	S.D.	C. Alpha Reliability	
Reliability (16 items)		Counseling	3.83	0.88	0.86	
Cronbach's Alpha .938		Coaching	3.63	0.88	0.83	
x̄ = 3.65		Driving	3.63	0.89	0.86	
S.D.= 0.762		Advising	3.53	0.81	0.78	
Guttman						
Lambda 1	0.88					
2	0.94	Split-Half Coefficient = .95				
3	0.94	Spearman-Brown Coefficient = .95				
4	0.95	Cronbach's Alpha- Part 1 Value =.87				
5	0.91		Part 2 Value = .89			
6	0.95		correlations b/t Forms = .91			

To further uncover the factors that play into ReAch, these statistics investigate each of the four quadrants of the EI measure. There are four dimensions for each quadrant that bring us to the overall 16 dimensions that make up an individual's ReAch.

Descriptive Statistics: ReAch Facet Competencies					
Counseling	x̄	S.D.	**Driving**	x̄	S.D.
Assimilating Team Members	3.83	1.02	Setting Expectations	3.79	1.06
Cultivating Team Spirit	3.87	1.08	Evaluating Performance	3.7	1.09
Identifying Personal Needs	3.67	1.07	Controlling Processes	3.51	1.01
Recognizing Others' Efforts	3.95	0.99	Approaching Complex Issues	3.5	1.01
Coaching			**Advising**		
Building Rapport	3.72	1.13	Addressing Quality Concerns	3.48	1.06
Easing Tension	3.7	1.11	Aligning Resources	3.46	1.06
Finding Opportune Synergy	3.51	1.01	Designing Team Structure	3.53	1.05
Rallying Others	3.5	1.12	Integrating Perspectives	3.65	1.02

The correlation between SSEIT and ReAch, which is the relationship between trait and competency based EI, is depicted here:

Correlation Statistics: LDP ReAch and SSEIT		
		SSEIT
ReAch	Pearson Correlation	.431**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0
	N	72
ReAch Counseling	Pearson Correlation	.535**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0
	N	72
ReAch Coaching	Pearson Correlation	.435**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0
	N	72
ReAch Driving	Pearson Correlation	.281*
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.017
	N	72
ReAch Advising	Pearson Correlation	.256*
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.03
	N	72

6. Results

The results of this study give a better understanding of the makeup of EI and the competencies that can be improved in order to increase EI in leaders. ReAch proves to be a reliable measure, with the Cronbach's Alpha measuring in at 0.938. SSEIT measure indicates that there may be some correlation between trait and competency based EI. Further studies into job performance and safety perceptions based on these results confirm that EI has a strong influence over workplace performance as well as the manner in which supervisors are perceived by their subordinates.

37 mining supervisors in South Africa gave feedback in a 57-item survey to relay their thoughts on the workplace safety, engagement with staff of all backgrounds, articulating vision for health and safety and perception of workplace safety activities. These results were measured against their ReAch scores to investigate how their EI scores impacted their workplace perspectives. Those in the top half of ReAch were significantly more likely to report that they "feel comfortable to engage with all staff, regardless of their diverse backgrounds or orientation."

Of the four mining locations represented, the location with the highest ReAch scores was the one that held the highest score for "articulating vision for health and safety with passion." This location also held the highest scores in trusting their employees "to do the right thing when supervisors are not around". Additionally, the location with the highest sub scores under the Counseling quadrant dedicated twice the average amount of time to safety-related activities as compared to the other locations.

7. Discussion

EI is important in determining the culture of a work environment — the perceptions and interactions of employees and supervisors. The leaders with higher EI scores from the ReAch assessment reported higher comfortability with diversity, a greater increase in acknowledging, showing care and respecting team members. Those with higher ReAch scores were also more likely to believe that their work environment did not demonstrate a balance between people's needs and getting the bottom line results. Those with higher EI scores not only show higher scores in consideration, openness, adaptability, affiliation, decision making and assertiveness, but they also exceed in emotion perception, utilizing emotions, managing self-relevant emotions and managing others' emotions.

Further research will be done to look at the relationship between employee self-perception, and the way that the employer perceives their employee. These results may speak to emotional intelligence and self-awareness and the way that these play into work performance.

References

Doherty L. (2009). "Emotional intelligence vital for patient safety, nurse leaders told", *Nursing Standard*, Vol. 23, No. 46, p. 5.

Goleman D. (1998). "What makes a great leader", *Harv Bus Rev.*, Vol. 76, No. 6, pp. 93-102.

Malik S., Malik A., Kha S. K., Shabkhez J., Salar M. and Latif W. (2014). "Emotional development: The invisible ladder to dynamic leadership", *Biomedica*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 272-275.

Mayer J. D., Salovey P. and Caruso D. R. (2008). "Emotional intelligence new ability or eclectic traits?", *American Psychologist*, Vol. 63, No. 6, pp. 503-517, doi:10.1037/0003-066X.63.6.503.

Phipps S. A., Prieto L. C. and Ndinguri E. N. (2014). "Emotional intelligence: Is it necessary for leader development?", *Journal of Leadership, Accountability & Ethics*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 73-89.

Salovey P. and Mayer J. D. (1990). "Emotional intelligence", *Imagination, Cognition & Personality*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 185-211.

Schlaerth A., Ensari N. and Christian J. (2013). "A meta-analytical review of the relationship between emotional intelligence and leaders' constructive conflict management", *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 126-136, doi: 10.1177/1368430212439907.