

# Improving Young People's Leadership Skills through Emotional Intelligence

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**Abstract:** *This study examines the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Leadership in Young Adults. A sample of 86 Young Adults residing in Surat city, 48 females and 39 males was collected using convenience sampling. Data was collected using Standardized Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form (TEIQue – SF) and Leadership Practice Inventory. It has been hypothesized that a statistically significant relationship between level of Emotional Intelligence and leadership in Young Adults. The statistical tool used to analyse the data was Correlation and Descriptive Statistics. Data analysis through correlation indicated relationship between level of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, leadership, Young Adults, Standardized Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, Leadership Practice Inventory

## 1. Introduction

Early studies on emotions and social intelligence serve as the foundation for the theory of Emotional Intelligence (EI). There has been a long inquiry on social intelligence that has been the foundation of EI research (Schumache, 2009). The development of social intelligence was first studied by (Thorndike, 1920), (Moss and Hunt, 1927), (Guilford, 1956), (Vernon, 1933), and (Gardner, 1983) (Cited in Carmeli, et al., 2009). Thorndike (1920) described social intelligence as "the ability to understand and relate to people". In addition, Hilgard (1980) stated that the origin of emotional intelligence functions in three ways: cognition, effect, and motivation. Human memory, reasoning, judgment, and mental thought are all functions of cognition. Emotions, moods, evaluations, and other emotional states are part of the effect. Finally, there is a personality component to motivation, which includes biological need or learned goal - seeking behavior. Emotional Intelligence is made up of the first two components, cognition and affect (Hilgard, 1980).

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and others (Goleman, 2001). Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) who originally used the term "emotional intelligence" in published writing, initially defined emotional intelligence as: "A form of 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" but later the authors rectified the definition and now the current definition is "The ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand emotions, and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth". This makes us believe that personal growth and emotional stability is a major contributing factor to one's well being and indirectly the well being of the organization for which an individual is an asset. Daniel Goleman - who worked on the concept of EI stated that there are five main elements of emotional intelligence:

- 1) Self - awareness
- 2) Self - regulation
- 3) Motivation
- 4) Empathy
- 5) Social skills

Individuals having high degree of Emotional intelligence tend to be happier, satisfied and assume to create a better work environment by envisioning the use of emotions in major decisions for betterment of the organization and keep a positive impact by instilling a sense of enthusiasm, co - operation, and trust among the peers through interpersonal relationships.

Emotional Intelligence brings social interest and interpersonal skills along as emotional intelligence has originated from social intelligence. It has been seen that individuals with EI tend to be better at communication and binding people together in a social or organizational set up. It has been observed through studies that social skills are one of the pre - requisites in a Leader. A leader with Emotional Intelligence can deliver output in organizations favor, keeping in mind team members' interest.

Leadership, and the study of it, dates to the dawn of civilization. Egyptian emperors, Greek legends, and bible patriarchs all share one trait: leadership. There are multiple definitions and theories of leadership, enough parallels can be drawn to conclude that leadership is an effort of influence and the power to evoke compliance (Wren, 1995). Leadership has been defined as "the relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow" (Posner, 2015). Leadership has also been defined as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2010).

Early theories state that born leaders possessed physical and personality characteristics that differentiated them from non - leaders. It has been seen that certain individuals in every situation emerge out unique and they are found naturally moving forward. There's something in them that enables

them to move above the pack in a given group and they are called natural born leaders. Trait theories neglected the assumptions about whether leadership traits were inherited or learned. Jenkins distinguished between two types of traits: emergent traits (traits that are heavily influenced by heredity), such as height, intelligence, attractiveness, and self-confidence, and effectiveness traits (based on previous experiences or learning), such as charisma, as a major element of leadership (Ekvall & Arvonen, 1991). Transformational leadership differs from previous and contemporary theories in that it involves followers in processes or activities related to personal factors towards the organization and a course that will yield certain superior social dividends. Transformational leaders enhance the motivation and morale of both followers and leaders (House & Shamir, 1993). Instances, social context, society, work culture, new legislation and rules, excessive workload, organization complexities, and psycho-socio developments all have a significant impact on the leadership concept, making it more responsive to modifying group dynamics (Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta & Kramer, 2004).

Numerous studies conducted on Emotional intelligence and leadership have stated that there is a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and leadership.

A paper by (Olutayo K. Osunsan, 2017), on postgraduate students pursuing a business qualification at Kampala International University in Uganda stated that Emotional Intelligence (EI) was the predictor variable and leadership skills were the response variable. Research designed used for this study was descriptive correlational. Sample was selected by purposive sampling. 93 working students were part of this study. The study's findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills ( $r^2=0.33$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). The study conducted by (Van Solinge, 2014) stated evidence supporting the role of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and how leadership skills are influenced by age.

Study by (Junias, 2015) stated that Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been defined as the ability of how one thinks, priorities, acts, feels and comprehends knowledge. It has been concluded in the study that Higher levels of EI have been linked to better performance, while low levels of EI have been linked to career derailment. Study also states how Emotional Intelligence affects leaders and team members' interaction with one another.

Based on the review of literature presented earlier, it is concluded that a statistically significant relationship exists between Emotional intelligence and Leadership but there has not been enough research on the Indian population and this study aimed at identifying the relation between Emotional Intelligence and Leadership in the Indian context. Particularly on young adults residing in Surat city. Surat as a city has seen exponential growth over the last decade, and has major business set ups like diamond and textile. Young adults are taking over business and reaching new heights with their Emotional intelligence, management and Leadership skills. Thus, the present research aims at identifying the relationship between Emotional intelligence and leadership among young adults residing in Surat city.

## 2. Methodology

### *Sample*

The present study includes a sample of 86 young adults from Surat city, India. Age range of 18 - 24 years. Convenience sampling technique was used to collect the sample. Statistical tools used was correlation. Two scales were used: Trait Emotional Intelligence Scale for Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Practice Inventory for Leadership. Correlation has been applied to analyse the data.

### *Inclusion Criteria*

- Individuals residing in Surat City
- Individuals between the age range of 18 - 24 years

### *Exclusion Criteria*

- Individuals below 18 years of age or above 24 years.
- Individuals residing outside Surat City

### *Hypothesis*

There will be a statistically significant relationship between level of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership in Young Adults.

### *Procedure*

In order to collect the data, a Google form was created and shared with 86 young adults in the month of April, 2022. The form consisted of 5 parts: The first section was regarding the details of the researcher, research and confidentiality. The second section was demographic details. The third section was on Emotional Intelligence. The fourth section was on Leadership and the fifth section was about debriefing.

Email address of the researcher was provided in case the participants had questions regarding the study before they decided to make an informed choice or if they wanted to withdraw from the study due to any reason. Demographic details such as name, age, gender, education qualification and email address were collected. It was made sure that the participants' information was kept confidential. The aim of the study and information about the psychological scales used were provided under the column of debriefing at the end of the questionnaire. It was made sure that all the ethics like debriefing, withdrawal from the study etc. were followed. After the data was collected, The statistical tool of correlation was used and analysis was done using the SPSS software.

### *Tools Used*

There were in total two standardized tests used i. e. Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire with internal consistency score 0.81 and test-retest reliability of the total score was 0.86. Leadership Practice Inventory score 0.85 on consistent reliability. Both the test has strong reported validity and has been used widely. The data was collected by sending a Questionnaire using a Google form. An informed consent was taken from all the participants. All the questions used are standardized questionnaires based on Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form (TEIQue - SF) for Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Practice Inventory for Leadership.

## Ethics

### 1) Confidentiality

All the participants were assured about the confidentiality of demographics and results obtained. This study was done for research purposes.

### 2) Informed consent

All the participants were informed about the nature of study. Consent was taken from all participants regarding their voluntary participation.

### 3) Debriefing

All the participants were given details about the questionnaire filled and the purpose of the study.

## 3. Result and Interpretation

To fulfill the aim of the present study descriptive statistics were used. In this statistical tool of correlation were used. In addition to these descriptive statistics were also used to understand the nature of the data.

**Table 1.1:** Descriptive Analysis for Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotional	86	98.00	198.00	137.4651	18.94990
Leadership	86	138.00	300.00	232.1395	36.96490
Valid N (listwise)	86				

**Table 1.2:** Correlation Analysis for Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

		Emotional Intelligence	Leadership
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.626**
	Sig. (1 - tailed)		<.001
	N	86	86
Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.626**	1
	Sig. (1 - tailed)	<.001	
	N	86	86

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1 - tailed).

**H1.1:** Hypothesis of the research states that there will be a statistically significant relationship between level of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership in Young Adults.

For this purpose, Pearson correlation coefficient was used. After analysis statistically significant correlation was found between both the variables. The result shows that there is a positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Leadership in Young Adults. Descriptive analysis of Emotional Intelligence (N= 86) showed mean at 137.4651 and standard deviation at 18.94990. Descriptive analysis of Leadership (N=86) showed mean at 232.1395 and standard deviation at 36.96490. There has been a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Leadership, the correlation coefficient came out to be 6.26 (p= 0.01) for Emotional Intelligence and Leadership. This shows that both are moving in the same direction. There could be multiple reasons explaining the relationship. Vyas, (2015) conducted research on the level of Emotional Intelligence and its influence on Leadership abilities. Research stated that leadership effectiveness is related to emotional and social

skills. Trust and openness is built through Emotional Leadership. Emotional Intelligence and Leadership variables are often taken together to understand workplace and team dynamics. According to a study conducted by Sivanjali, 2021, high Emotional Intelligent employees are able to lead companies better. It stated that employees with higher Emotional Intelligence could successfully lead the company and have higher job satisfaction, better work - life balance.

## 4. Implications

In the present study Emotional Intelligence and Leadership has been taken to understand Young Adults. Young Adults have a desire to build a bright career and be appointed to a top position at any given task/ organization. On the basis of the finding of this study the recommendation can be made that when considering the role of Leader, Emotional Intelligence should be considered as a vital part. It is also advised to inculcate Emotional Intelligence in students at young age which can make them competent for aspects of leadership role in any set up.

This study has contributed by providing additional information on Emotional Intelligence playing a key role in the area of leadership. Thus, proving the hypothesis that there will be a statistically significant relationship between level of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership in Young Adults.

## 5. Limitation

The sample was very limited. Convenience sampling technique was used.

## 6. Conclusion

Present collected data and review of literature concludes that there is a relationship between level of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership. Leaders have the ability to create a balance between tasks assigned and the emotional aspect of an individual.

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