

Does Emotional Intelligence Influences Leadership Style?

Sindu Bharath^{1*}, P. Nagesh², T S Nanjundeswaraswamy³

¹ Assistant Professor, JSS Centre for Management Studies, JSS Science & Technology University, Mysore, Karnataka, India

² Professor, JSS Centre for Management Studies, JSS Science & Technology University, Mysore, Karnataka, India

³ Associate Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, JSS Academy of Technical Education, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

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ABSTRACT

Leaders play pivotal role in managing all the resources in an efficient and effective manner particularly human resources. Predominantly in IT sector, where employees are considered to be the organization's invaluable asset. The present research aims to examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and leadership styles. To fulfil the stated objective, data were collected through structured questionnaire; the instrument is validated using statistical techniques such as Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and reliability of instrument is measured to verify the credibility of the designed instrument. Boyatzis and Goleman (2007) EI measuring scale and Kurt Lewin's Leadership scale is adopted. Structural equation modelling (SEM) is carried out using AMOS to explore the relationship between the variables considered in the present study. With due consideration of average value of individual employee's perception, it is noted that 53.8 percent of the surveyed employees have high level of emotional intelligence, while 46.2 percent of surveyed employees have low level of emotional intelligence. Type of the leadership style is classified as Autocratic Leadership, Democratic Leadership and Laissez-faire. Accordingly, out of 316 employees from IT Sector 43.4 % of the employees' perception exhibits Laissez-faire type of the leadership styles, 40.2% displays autocratic leadership styles, while 16.5% respondents exhibit democratic leadership styles. The results indicate that there is a relationship between the EI and leadership style of employees. Thus, the level of EI needs to be strengthened through persistence, practice and feedback mechanism from coaches and experts in an organisation.

1. Introduction

The leaders drive people to deliver optimal performance which can be achieved by tapping employees' emotions while controlling self-emotions. Among projects with hard deadlines, leading and performing is not easy. Leaders who develop their emotional intelligence will be

*Corresponding author E-mail address: sindubharath@gmail.com

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in harmony to all aspects of empathy and all the relationships they come across. (Goleman, 2020). Leaders play pivotal role in managing all the resources in an efficient and effective manner particularly human resources. Specifically in IT sector ,where employees are considered to be the organization's best assets and talents. As stated by Mosadeghrad (2003), exhibiting diverse leadership style depends on the situations prevailing in organization. Managing one self and teams' emotions connects to drive their behaviours, which is an important skill required to lead knowledge workers in IT sector. The Self-Awareness, Motivation, Social Skills, Self-Regulation and Empathy were noted as major components of Emotional Intelligence (EI) at workplace (Goleman,1998). There is mounting evidences supporting key role played by emotional intelligence in determining success both individually and in workplace too (Warrier et.al., 2011).

1.1 Emotions and Leadership

The emotions of individuals are due to various events that occur in our lives everywhere including workplace. The reactions to emotions at workplace proceedings mediate the relationships amid these events which results in several attitudinal and behavioural consequences as refereed in Affective Events Theory(AET), (Weiss and Cropanzano,1996). The negative emotions such as anger that may result in job dissatisfaction in turn arouse intention to quit (Fox and Stalworth, 2010). The emotions displayed by leaders tends to stimulate emotion in followers (George, 2000). Optimism and frustration and intermediate the association amid follower performance and leader. (McColl-Kennedy and Anderson, 2002).

The leaders processing high level of EI resolve behaviour problems that emerge as a consequence of decisions made in due course of work. As such leaders are considerate to uphold their own emotions and of others too (Salovey and Mayer, 1990) Leadership process establishes the social interactions, where the leader's ability to influence the behaviour of their followers impacts performance outcomes (Humphrey, 2002; Pirola-Merlo et al., 2002). Inherently emotional process of leading try to conjure emotions in followers. (Humphrey, 2002.) Group solidarity may be demonstrated by the leader with the help of shared emotional experience (Pescosolido ,2002).

1.2 Theoretical Footing

Salovey and Mayor (1990) devised the term Emotional Intelligence (EI). Mounting research on emotional intelligence has different perspectives like whether it being an individual ability, trait or skill (Bar-on, 2000; Goleman, 1995; 1998; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Consequently, there emerged several theories relating to emotional intelligence. Primarily, theory proposed by Bar-On (1997) who devised the term EQ-emotional quotient refers to the ability of individual to deal with environmental demands effectively. Bar-On's measure of EI encompassed 5 realms i.e., interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills, stress management, adaptability and general mood. Alternatively, another theory was proposed by Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (1999) who developed Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS). Later Goleman popularised the conception of EI and EQ as a substitute to the traditional measures of IQ. Goleman (1998) redeveloped EI in terms of job performance – organisational theory. Goleman theorizes that leaders high in emotional intelligence are vital to organizational success, especially to intervene when problems arise to enhance trust of the employees. The current study adopts constructs proposed by Goleman (2001).

As stated by Northouse (2004) The leadership is a process by which an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals. The study of Cummings and Worley (2003) presents 5 activities such as, creating a vision, managing the transition, developing political

support, motivating change and sustaining momentum. The Kurt Lewin's leadership theory is widely accepted in psychology and behavioural science. This theory proposed that employees exhibits leadership styles such as Autocratic, Democratic and Laissez-faire. Kurt Lewin's theory emphasized on individual personalities, interpersonal conflict, and situational factors that are influenced by the emotional intelligence of an individual. Thus, there is need to reconnect the influence of emotional intelligence on leadership styles of an individual.

2. Literature Review

As stated by George (2000), The leaders with EI promote effectiveness at all levels in organisation. EI play key role in quality and effective social interactions among individuals (House and Aditya, 1996). Ruderman et al., (2001) has explored links amid elements of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness/ ineffectiveness. Humphrey (2002) opined that the ability of leader acts as a stimulus to emotional climate. Lussier (2013) mentioned about effective leadership to accomplish individual and organizational goals. Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2014) concluded that organizational culture is predisposed by leadership style and subsequently, leadership style affects overall organizational performance. Genna Preston et al., (2015) opined that advent of agile project management leading to self-managed work teams poses a new situational analysis of leadership styles. (Dulewicz, 2003) opined that emotional competence accounts for 36% of the leadership performance. Erkut (2015) stated that creating innovative institution culture with managers having high level of emotional intelligence is essential to survive in competitive market. Van and Revenio (2016) advocates participative leadership style are prevalent as it influences job satisfaction and effectiveness of leaders. Lee and Wong (2019) advocated that EI of team is directly related to team performance and effectiveness. The team EI is inversely related to team process and directly related to effectiveness of team. Lyndon & Pandey (2020) displays the association between team member's EI and shared leadership degree while task interdependence acts as a moderator.

Leadership is an emotion-inducing phenomenon (Goleman, 1995), specially because leadership is fundamentally an emotion-management process wherein leaders manage their own emotions and those of their followers (Yukl, 2002). Ineffective leadership style results to negative consequences in individual and organisational performance (Van and Revenio, 2016). All though the summary of the literature review substantiates the importance of EI and leadership style, yet there arises a key question: Does the EI levels of leaders influence the leadership style?

3. The Purpose of the Study

Present research work aims to answer the questions pertaining to individual characteristics of managers which would have an influence on leadership style exhibited by them in due process of managing teams. This gap is to be addressed to know the individual level of EI which will give insights regarding essential characteristics to look for while exhibiting leadership. Further, study proposes to measure Individual EI levels as well as classify leadership style to check influence of EI level on Leadership style more specifically in IT sectors. The present research also attempts to establish and test hypothesis to examine the relationship amid EI and leadership styles.

3.1. Methodology

To fulfil the stated objective, data were collected through an instrument; the instrument is validated using statistical techniques such as exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and reliability of the instrument is measured to verify the credibility of the designed instrument. The SEM is carried out to know the relationship between the considered variables.

3.2. Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

The present study involved two variables that is emotional intelligence and leadership styles. To measure the emotional intelligence Boyatzis and Goleman, (2007) Emotional and Social competence Inventory (ESCI) scale is used, it consists of five factors viz., Self-awareness, Social skill, Motivation, Self-regulation and Empathy, twenty-five items were included in the scale from these five factors. To measure the leadership styles of the respondents, Kurt Lewin leadership theory (Billig, M. 2015). is adopted in the current study, which consists of leadership styles such as Autocratic, Democratic and Laissez-faire. The scale used in this study consists of fifteen items from three leadership styles.

A structured questionnaire is prepared and distributed to 350 employees, sampling unit being team leaders/project heads working in IT Sector organisation located in Bengaluru city, India of which 316 valid responses were considered for data analysis. Cronbach's Alpha (reliability) is noted as 0.893 which shows that the instrument is capable to measure the intended study.

3.3. Variables Considered for the Study

3.3.1. Understanding EI Components

Self- Awareness	Being aware of self: - strengths, weakness, drives, values.
Self-Regulation	Control of disruptive impulses/moods
Motivation	Enjoying accomplishment
Empathy	considerate of people's emotional-makeup
Social Skills	Building affinity with others

3.3.2. Leadership Styles: Kurt- Lewin's Leadership Styles

Authoritative	Leaders does not empower the group members to perform their job at workplace, also reluctant to receive inputs from followers in decision making.
Democratic	Leaders provide autonomy to perform their job at work place also encourages shared ideas, promote creativity and ensures that performers are suitable rewarded.
Laissez-faire	Leaders empowers the followers in decision making also provides adequate resources to perform the specific job role.

3.4. Validation of Emotional Intelligence Scale

The sample adequacy is checked by KMO test which yields 0.767, Since the KMO value is more than 0.7 the validation is acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). The designed EI measuring scale is validated using EFA and CFA Accordingly, the results of factor analysis are presented in below Table.

Table 1.
Total Variance (Explained) in EFA

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.332	38.592	38.592	7.332	38.592	38.592	3.970	20.893	20.893
2	2.218	11.676	50.267	2.218	11.676	50.267	3.597	18.931	39.824
3	1.885	9.920	60.187	1.885	9.920	60.187	2.414	12.703	52.527
4	1.507	7.930	68.117	1.507	7.930	68.117	2.173	11.435	63.961
5	1.314	6.914	75.031	1.314	6.914	75.031	2.103	11.070	75.031
6	.807	4.245	79.276						
7	.766	4.031	83.307						
8	.590	3.106	86.413						
9	.437	2.299	88.712						
10	.417	2.193	90.905						
11	.334	1.760	92.665						
12	.284	1.495	94.160						
13	.264	1.388	95.549						
14	.222	1.167	96.716						
15	.178	.939	97.655						
16	.159	.836	98.490						
17	.107	.563	99.053						
18	.095	.500	99.553						
19	.085	.447	100.000						

The exploratory factor analysis is carried out to reduce the factors using principal component analysis -Varimax rotation method. Based on the Eigenvalue (unity) five factors were extracted along with the nineteen items which were grouped under five headings and labelled based on the relevance of each group, they are: Self-awareness, Social skill, Motivation, Self-regulation and Empathy. These extracted five factors addresses the total variance of 75.031 percent and represented in the Table 1.

Table 2.
Item loading (extracted) in EFA

Factor	Items	Item loading	Eigen value	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Self-awareness	Loss of temper	.849	3.970	20.893	20.893
	annoyed by someone	.824			
	recognize the stress	.727			
	Emotional awareness	.717			
	I can let anger 'go' quickly so that it no longer affects me	.705			
Self-regulation	Identification of individuals moods	.625	3.597	18.931	39.824
	alter my frame of mind	.852			
	Hide emotions	.821			
	I rarely lose my temper at other people	.747			
	I do not let situational stress	.721			
Motivation	inspire myself to do challenging tasks	.777	2.414	12.703	52.527
	I believe in 'Action this Day'	.745			
	I always meet deadlines	.722			
	able to see things from the other viewpoint	.869			
	I can understand why my actions sometimes offend others	.797			
Empathy	Identification of unhappiness	.522	2.173	11.435	63.961
	excellent listener.	.791			
	adapting - mixing in group	.742			
	reconciling differences	.708			
Social skill			2.103	11.070	75.031

Stewart (1981) mentioned that, the data set is appropriate when the item loading is more than 0.5, for the factor analysis. Table 2 shows that the item loading varies from 0.522 to 0.869, which indicates that the data is suitable for further analysis.

3.5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for Emotional Intelligence Scale

To verify the extracted five factors along with nineteen items, confirmatory factor analysis was performed, using AMOS software. The model fit indices were noted as CMIN/DF ratio = 1.145, GFI = 0.902, AGFI = 0.900, PGFI=0.899, IFI=0.901, TLI=0.900 and RMSEA= 0.07. Bentler (1992) mentioned that fit indices should be nearer to the unity for the good measurement model. The study results are very close to the unity, which is an indication that proposed five factor measurement model is adequate and is capable to measure the intended items of emotional intelligence.

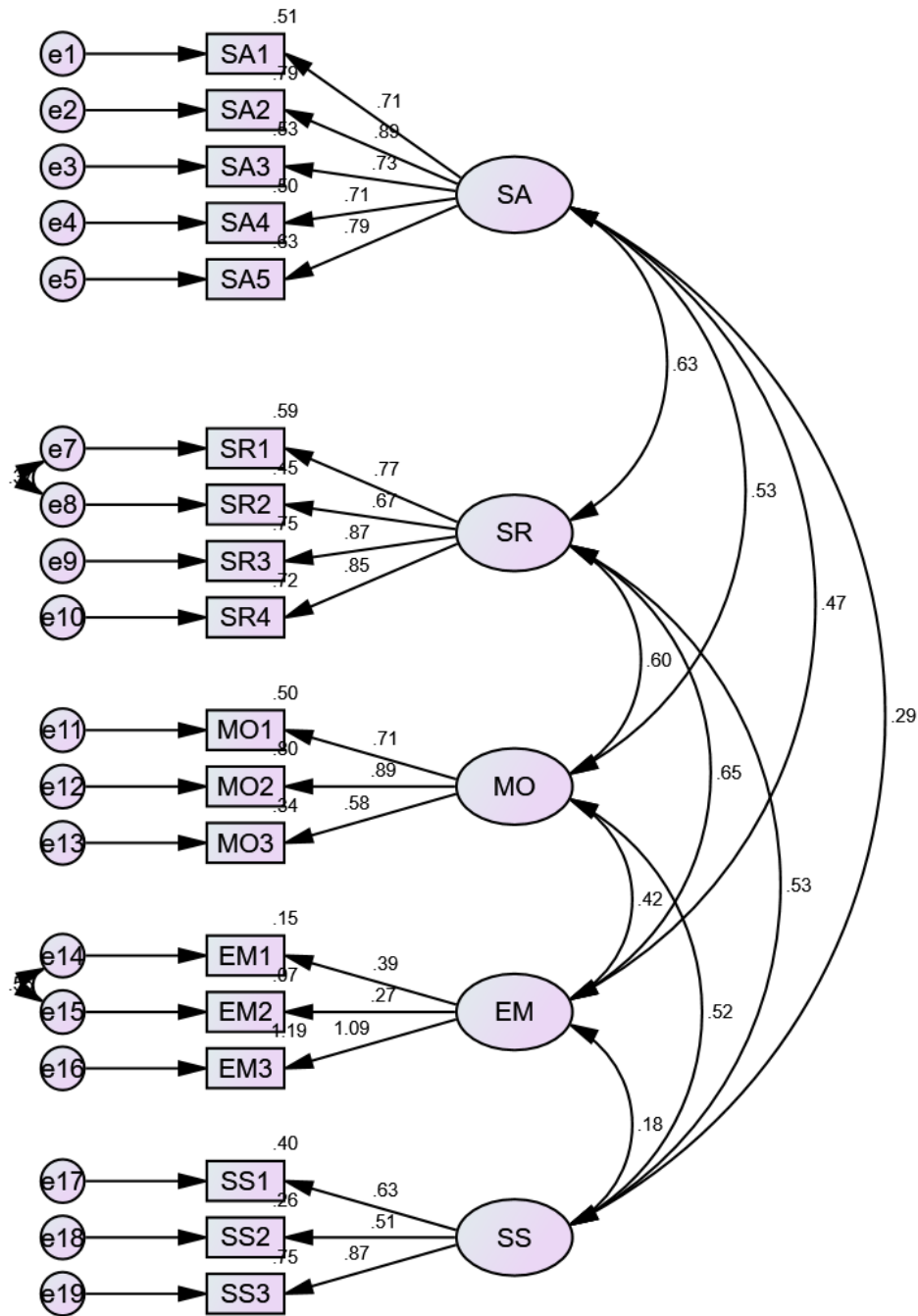


Figure 1: Emotional Intelligence measurement model

3.6. Validation of the Leadership Style Scale

The sample adequacy (KMO) test was conducted and noted as 0.761, according to Nunnally (1978), since KMO value is more than 0.7, data thus collected is adequate to proceed further for statistical analysis. The scale designed for the purpose of measuring leadership style is validated using EFA and CFA.

Table 3.

Total variance explained in EFA

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.832	27.374	27.374	3.832	27.374	27.374	3.103	22.161	22.161
2	2.400	17.142	44.516	2.400	17.142	44.516	2.595	18.536	40.697
3	2.116	15.112	59.628	2.116	15.112	59.628	2.164	15.460	56.157
4	1.168	8.339	67.968	1.168	8.339	67.968	1.654	11.811	67.968
5	.867	6.191	74.159						
6	.742	5.302	79.461						
7	.693	4.951	84.411						
8	.545	3.893	88.305						
9	.441	3.153	91.458						
10	.312	2.230	93.688						
11	.254	1.816	95.504						
12	.241	1.718	97.222						
13	.233	1.662	98.885						
14	.156	1.115	100.000						

The factor analysis is conducted using principal component-varimax rotation method to reduce the factors and items. Based on the Eigenvalue, four factors were extracted along with the fourteen items, grouped under four heads and titled based on the relevance of each group viz., Autocratic Leadership; Democratic Leadership, Participative and Laissez-faire. These extracted five factors addresses the total variance of 67.98 %, it is represented in the Table 3.

Table 4.

Item loading extracted in EFA

Factor	Items	Item loading	Eigen value	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Autocratic Leadership	I need to be closely supervised to do my work.	.783			
	Effective supervisors give orders and clarify procedures.	.763			
	The supervisor is the chief judge of the achievements of the members of the group.	.732	3.103	22.161	22.161
	I feel insecure about the work.	.723			
	Supervisor is given rewards/ punishments in order to motivate.	.610			
	As a supervisor I consider the opinion of all the employees in decision making.	.820			
Democratic Leadership	I believe that it is your job to help employees find their "passion"	.764			
	I believe that "people are competent and if given a task will do a good job".	.672	2.595	18.536	40.697
	I believe that "providing guidance without pressure is the key to being a good supervisor".	.631			
	As a supervisor I extend frequent supportive communication to my employees. (Keep them informed of the true situation)	.564			

Factor	Items	Item loading	Eigen value	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Laissez-faire	Supervisors should leave certain decisions to be made to employees. (Not interfering)	.915	2.164	15.460	56.157
	In most situations, employees prefer little input from their supervisor.	.728			
Participative	I would like to include employees in the decision-making process.	.882	1.654	11.811	67.968
	Communication between the supervisor and the employees need to be encouraged.	.748			

The item loading of more than 0.5 Stewart (1981), indicates appropriate data set for factor analysis. Table 2 shows that the item loading ranges from 0.564 to 0.915, which is an indication that data is suitable for further analysis.

3.7. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Leadership Style Scale

To verify the extracted four factors along with fourteen items, confirmatory factor analysis is performed using AMOS software. In the CFA two items related to participative leadership were deleted because of the poor loading and to get finer model fit indices. Final three factors along with twelve items were confirmed through CFA. All the model fit indices are noted as CMIN/DF = 2.145, GFI = 0.964, AGFI = 0.950, PGFI=0.916, IFI=0.928, TLI=0.919 and RMSEA= 0.06. Bentler (1992) mentioned that fit indices should be nearer to unity for the good measurement model. The study result is very close to unity, which is an indication that proposed three factor measurement model is capable to measure the intended items of different leadership styles.

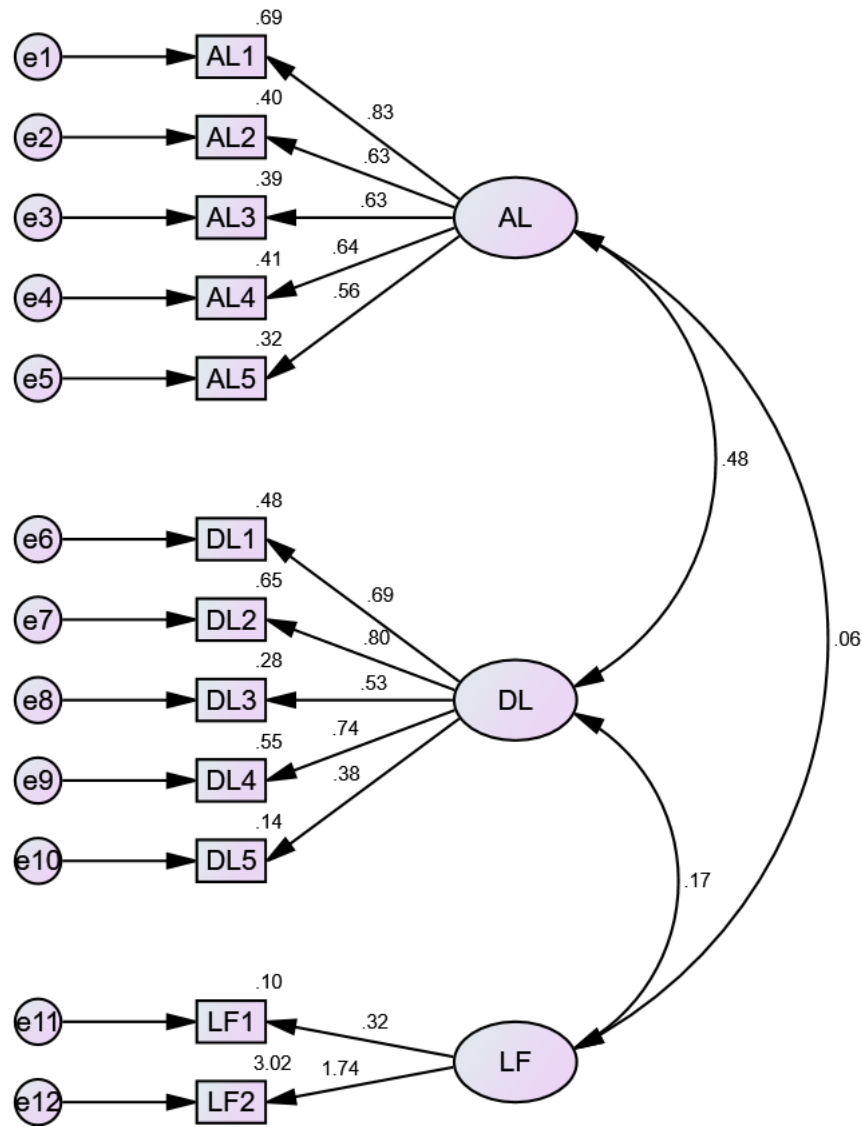


Figure 2: Leadership styles measurement model

3.8. Emotional Intelligence Levels

The level of EI of surveyed employees working in the IT sector is quantified based on the summative scores of the respondent. The level of emotional intelligence of individual respondents is measured by considering the grand mean as cut-off. According to Jerome (2013); Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., (2015) grand mean can be considered as a threshold value for the Likert scale. In the present research the grand mean is 3.73 which may be considered as threshold value. If the average score of the individual respondents is more than threshold value it may be denoted as high-level emotional intelligence, else it may be termed as low-level emotional intelligence. The Table 5 represent the level of emotional Intelligence among the respondents.

Table 5.
Level of Emotional Intelligence

Level of Emotional Intelligence	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
High level	170	53.8
Low level	146	46.2
Total	316	100.0

Table 5 explored that 170 (53.8 percent) of the surveyed employees have high levels of emotional intelligence and 46. 2 percent of surveyed employees have low level of emotional intelligence.

3.9. Types of leadership styles

Based on the average value of the individual employee's perception of the particular leadership style, the leadership type is classified as Autocratic Leadership, Democratic Leadership and Laissez-faire.

Table 6.

Leadership styles of employees

Types of Leadership styles	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Autocratic Leadership	127	40.2
Democratic Leadership	52	16.5
Laissez-faire	137	43.4
Total	316	100.0

Among surveyed 316 IT Sector employees, 43.4 percent of the employees' exhibits Laissez-faire type of the leadership style, 40.2 percent display autocratic leadership style while 16.5 respondents exhibit democratic leadership style.

3.10. Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and leadership style

To explore the relationship amid emotional intelligence and leadership styles, hypothesis is formulated and tested using Chi square analysis with the help of SPSS software. Table 7 show the results and test statistics of Chi square analysis.

H₀: There is no relationship between Emotional intelligence and leadership styles of employees.

Table 7.

Chi square analysis statistics

Types of Leadership styles	High EI	Low EI	Chi Square value	Significance
Autocratic Leadership	88	39	Chi-Sq = 20.528, P-Value = 0.000	5%
Democratic Leadership	23	29		
Laissez-faire	59	78		

Test statistic show that p value is less than 0.05, therefore, sufficient evidence exists not to accept the null hypothesis. i.e., There is a relationship between EI and leadership styles of the employees.

3.11. Structural Equation Modelling

The CFA is carried out to ensure the factors that affects the EI and LS also validated for the model fitness. The relationship between EI and LS is examined using SEM. To examine the relationship among factors of independent variables, SEM is conducted using AMOS software, the model is represented in the Figure 3.

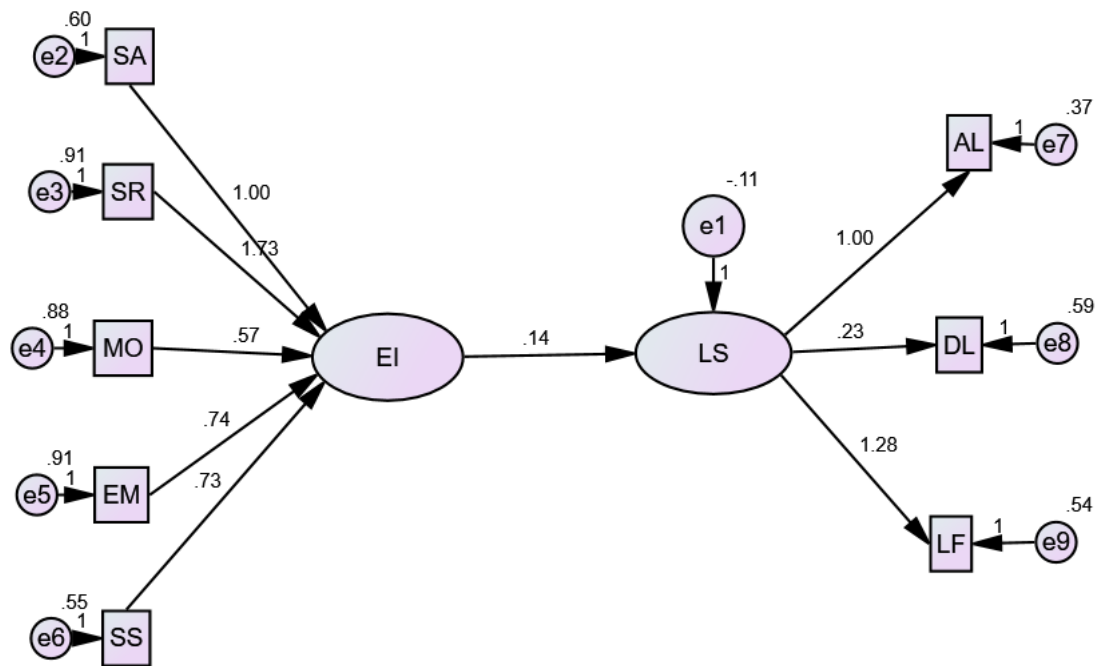


Figure 3: Structural Equation Modelling

The proposed model indicate good model fit indices. The model fit indices like CMIN/DF ratio is 2.984 which is less than 5, GFI = 0.904, AGFI = 0.900, IFI = 908, and TLI = 0.901 are very close to unity and RMSEA = 0.07 is less than 0.08 and hence all the model fit indices are within acceptable range according to Bentler (1992). The above diagram explains the relationship among the dimension of EI to Components of LS. The diagram shows the R square of endogenous constructs 0.86 or 86% of impact of EI on LS is prevailing among the sample considered for the study. This indicates higher the role of EI leads to effective LS.

4. Discussions and Conclusion

Every individual is born with certain level of EI skills. The level of EI can be strengthened through persistence, practice and feedback mechanism from coaches and experts. The findings of the study shows that leaders should realise the role of EI and hence to design and implement appropriate EI and leadership development programs to improve the relevant components. The leaders can demonstrate better interactions constructively in given circumstances with the help of such training programs. Individual coaching will positively effect organisation functioning. (Goleman ,2020) clarifies that people persistently go wrong about the concept by equating it to being “nice.” But it doesn’t, and misunderstanding this can get people into trouble.

The objective of present research is to identify the relationship between the EI and leadership styles, to achieve the stated objective, Goleman (2007) scale of emotional intelligence and Kurt Lewin’s leadership scale was adopted. Reliability of instrument (Cronbach alpha) yields 0.893. The measurement model of EI and leadership style indicates good model fitness.

In the present research the grand mean (EI level) is 3.73 which may be considered as threshold value. If the average score of the individual respondents is more than threshold value it may be noted that as high-level emotional intelligence, else it may be termed as low-level emotional intelligence. It is noted that 53.8 % of the surveyed employees have high levels of emotional intelligence and 46.2 % of surveyed employees have low level of emotional intelligence. Based on the average value of the individual employee’s perception of the particular leadership style, the type of the leadership style is classified as Autocratic Leadership, Democratic Leadership

and Laissez-faire. Among surveyed 316 employees from the IT Sector 43.4 percent of the employees exhibit Laissez-faire type of the leadership style, 40.2 percent opined that they exhibit autocratic leadership style, while 16.5 respondents exhibit democratic leadership styles. To explore the relationship between EI and leadership styles, hypothesis is established and tested, using Chi square analysis with the help of SPSS software. Test statistic show that p value is less than the 0.05, therefore, sufficient evidence exists not to accept the null hypothesis. i.e., There exist relationship between the emotional intelligence and leadership style of the employees. Further, using SEM model the interrelationship among the factors of emotional intelligence and type of leadership is verified. The model fit indices were notes as CMIN/DF ratio is 2.984 which is less than 5, GFI = 0.904, AGFI = 0.900, IFI = 908, and TLI = 0.901 are very close to unity and RMSEA = 0.07 which is less than 0.08. Therefore, model fitness is achieved (Bentler,1992). SEM demonstrates that there exists relationship between EI and Leadership styles.

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