



**The influence of Emotional Intelligence on the development of leaders in
KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector**

By

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Declaration

I, Anelisiwe Kheswa, declare that

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Abstract

The effectiveness and success of an organisation depend on the attraction and development of leaders with exceptional skills, knowledge and experience. However, in today's competitive environment, most organisations struggle with developing leaders who can handle major organisational challenges. Although scholars have proposed different techniques and approaches for developing future leaders, this study considers emotional intelligence (EI) as a catalyst for effective leadership development. Against this background, the study aims to investigate the influence of EI on the development of leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector. A cross-sectional study has been conducted to collect and analyse the data from different segments of the study population. Using a quantitative approach, a descriptive survey has been employed to describe how EI influences leadership development in organisations. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 73 respondents in the focal organisation. The reliability and validity of the data have been determined by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficient and exploratory factor analysis. The data was analysed using the Statistical Packages for Social Science, version 29.0. The regression results show a statistically significant relationship between EI and leadership performance ($\beta = 0.647$, $p < 0.01$). However, the relationship between EI and leadership development ($\beta = 0.099$, $p > 0.01$) is statistically insignificant. Moreover, the results indicate no relationship between EI and self-awareness ($\beta = 0.282$, $p > 0.01$) and social awareness ($\beta = -0.039$, $p > 0.01$). By contrast, the results show a statistical relationship between EI and self-management ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < 0.10$) and EI and motivation ($\beta = 0.323$, $p < 0.10$). In light of the findings, the study recommends encouraging self-awareness among the leaders of organisations. Further, the study emphasises the need for developing good leaders in the organisation under study. The study provides a better understanding of how EI could be leveraged to develop future leaders in South African organisations.

Keywords Emotional intelligence, leadership development, organisational performance, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness

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Chapter One: Introduction and Background of the Study

1.1 Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership are topics of interest and numerous researchers have touched on these subjects. EI plays a crucial role in achieving success and is among the key elements necessary for a company's endurance in the corporate environment (Kargeti, 2021). Therefore, companies have come to a realisation that for them to stay relevant, they require leaders, and not bosses; hence, they began investing in emotionally intelligent leaders. For flexibility, profitability and growth to take place, companies need to have effective leadership (Kargeti, 2021).

This study aims to investigate the influence of EI on the development of leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's (KZN) corporate sector. Moreover, the study aims to provide valuable insights into improving leadership in the corporate sector by promoting emotional awareness and relational competence. The study adopts Daniel Goleman's theory, which describes EI as the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others (Goleman, 2020). Emotionally intelligent managers attain objectiveness through self-awareness which cultivates a productive, motivated, and egalitarian workplace (Goleman, 2020). Goleman's emotional intelligence theory encompasses five components- self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, application of EI can be learned to reach outlined goals, fostering a positive and healthy workplace culture (Goleman, 2020).

The uniqueness of this study lies in its focus in KZN, a province that had been experiencing steady economic growth but suffered a significant setback due to social and political unrest, 19 and 2022 April floods. This chapter sets the foundation of the study by providing a detailed background of EI and leadership development. Moreover, the chapter highlights the research problem, research aim, research objectives and questions and the significance of the study. Lastly, it describes the structure of dissertation.

1.2 Background of the study

Kriel & Livingston (2019) highlight that EI is the capacity of managing and understanding one's own emotions, as well as influencing and identifying the emotions of individuals around one. In the corporate world, employees face challenges, if for instance, their manager/ leader lacks EI

(Kriel, 2019). There are instances where leaders speak in a harsh and unprofessional manner to their subordinates because of a misunderstanding or mistake. This may seem like a momentary issue; however, it creates deeper issues; it creates a gap between the leader and team. This affects the teams' productivity, motivation and causes the team to fear their manager.

Misconnection between a team and leader contributes to bigger matters such as ineffective leadership, goal confusion, transparency issues and poor conflict resolution (Segal, 2017). EI is significant in leadership. The ability to be in control of emotions and behaviour in challenging situations is an important skill for a leader, more especially a leader in the fast-paced corporate world, where critical and timeous decision-making is continuous (Segal, 2017).

Conversely, unemotionally intelligent leaders are dangerous because they may intentionally abuse their power and take away benefits from team members. For example, give a low annual increase percentage or bonus to hardworking teams. Through this behaviour, a company may lose its best employees (Segal, 2017). Many years ago, Goleman outlined the significance of EI in leadership (Channell, 2021). It has been argued that most effective leaders have a similar trait of valuing and understanding the importance of EI (Channell, 2021). This does not mean that Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and technical skills are immaterial. However, they are the entry-level necessity for leadership positions (Kriel, 2019).

According to Smith & Kamm (2024), EI consists of capabilities, non-cognitive skills and proficiencies which enable individuals to manage and regulate their emotional response when they are pressurised. Goleman (2022) propose that it is EI that differentiates between a truly effective leader and the rest. Intelligence (IQ) and technical skills are vital for leaders' development; however, they are entry-level requirements for management positions (Smith, 2024). Goleman (2022) states that there are five EI proficiencies: self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy and social skills. These proficiencies are critical for developing an effective leader.

It is argued that the characteristics of a good leader should include leading by example, not being afraid of challenging situations, inspiring, being focused and driven (motivation) and that leaders should be empathetic and influential (Smith, 2024). In addition, it is suggested that a leader

should lead with confidence, honesty and consistency (Channell, 2021). Inspired by the above, this study aims to investigate the influence of EI on the development of leaders in KZN's corporate sector.

Leadership issues in the KZN region, especially among local enterprises, involve inadequate dedication to ethical leadership, ineffective financial management, and conflicts between local businesses and traditional leadership frameworks (Vhumbunu, 2021). These challenges, combined with a lack of skilled professionals and poor information management, impede efficient service delivery and community involvement (Mchunu & Dlamini, 2020).

Moreover, the historical impact of apartheid and the shift to a democratic government still influence leadership interactions and the validity of traditional leaders (Mchunu & Dlamini, 2020). KZN is confronted with various corporate challenges, such as the energy crisis, inefficiencies at the Durban port, crime and corruption, along with a skills deficit, emotional intelligent leadership is crucial to thrive in such business environment (Vhumbunu, 2021).

EI is vital for the development of leaders as well as for the overall effectiveness of leadership-cultivating EI improves a leader's capacity to comprehend and regulate emotions, inspire, motivate, foster trust, and handle intricate interpersonal relationships, ultimately resulting in enhanced team performance and organizational results (Goleman & Cherniss, 2024).

1.3 Problem statement

Effective leadership is increasingly acknowledged as a critical factor for organisational success in the current changing corporate sector (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020). As businesses encounter obstacles like fast-paced technological advancements, varied employee demographics and changing consumer demands, the skill of leading with EI has become a crucial component in determining leadership success (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020). However, despite the increasing number of studies on EI, there remains a gap in knowledge of how EI influences the development of leaders in the corporate space (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020). Moreover, theoretically, there remains a limited understanding of how EI impacts leaders' development and performance in the South African corporate world.

There has been a shift in the corporate space within the last five years, more especially, post the COVID-19 pandemic (Stemmler, 2022). The sudden spread of COVID-19 had a major impact

on the economy, with lockdowns and restrictions causing supply chain disruptions, decreased consumer spending and extensive job cuts (Stemmler, 2022). Numerous businesses needed to adjust quickly by incorporating remote work, digital transformation and fresh business strategies in order to stay afloat, the economic repercussions on corporate sector and employees' livelihoods were severe (Stemmler, 2022).

The pandemic sped up developments such as e-commerce and automation, changing the structure of the corporate world. Although it initially presented difficulties, it also opened doors for creativity and adaptability in the corporate space (Ashkanasy, 2020). This study responds to the call by Stemmler (2022) to develop corporate leaders who can formulate and implement business strategies to help address the challenges occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shortly after the peak of the pandemic, the province of KZN was hit by riots, causing further distress to the economy, employees, leaders and the corporate sector as a whole. The civil unrest further stressed a labour market that was beginning to bounce back from the impact of the pandemic (Mundhree et al., 2022). Numerous challenges resulted from the riots, putting around 150,000 jobs at risk (Mundhree et al., 2022).

Corporate leaders encountered various new challenges such as employees working remotely, using technology to connect with them, meeting different time management requirements (for instance, parents home-schooling), adapting to rapidly changing communication methods and addressing mental health issues experienced by both employees and leaders (Ashkanasy, 2020).

This research centres on the KZN corporate sector because its socioeconomic landscape has recently experienced two significant disruptions in quick succession, leading to substantial challenges for its economic and business climate. A region that was experiencing stable economic growth suddenly encounters massive unforeseen waves that led to significant setbacks; making it an interesting opportunity to explore the connection between leadership development and emotional intelligence amidst this crisis that disrupts companies, employers, and employees heavily.

These challenges required emotional intelligent leaders are more effective at navigating the challenges of crisis management, emotional interactions, ensure stability, and lead their teams through difficulties with understanding and empathy; some employees may have experienced

the loss of loved ones, their loved ones may have lost employment, or they might be facing job loss due to the company's struggle to bounce back from the pandemic (Margheritti et al., 2023).

The pandemic required leaders to understand how their actions affected others and adjust their methods and manner of approach accordingly, as employees were in an emotional state, with some reacting out of fear and anxiety, which strained mental health due to the sudden changes (Margheritti et al., 2023).

According to Margheritti et al (2023) leaders had to stay resilient and adaptable and refrain from hasty decisions, particularly during times of uncertainty and swift changes, employees were facing transitions both in their personal lives and at work, so leaders who offered the necessary support to help others through tough periods were crucial.

Many studies have found the relationship between EI and effective leadership, however, there is minimal concrete evidence showing how EI specifically enhances the development of leadership abilities (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020). This gap does not just impede the development of strong leadership systems and succession plans in organisations, but it also jeopardizes overall organisational performance, employee contribution and retention (Nieto-Carracedo, Gómez-Iñiguez, Tamayo, & Igartua, 2024). Failure to carry out this study might result in organisations disregarding the key role of EI in leadership development, leading to exacerbated problems with ineffective leadership and high employee turnover (Mysirlaki & Paraskeva, 2020).

Some researchers argue that EI is not the crucial factor in leadership development and effective leadership. Thomas (2024) contends that although EI is generally viewed as an important advantage in both personal and professional settings, it comes with challenges such as manipulation risk—those with high EI possess a profound comprehension of others' emotions and their influence, if used unethically, this ability might manipulate individuals for selfish purposes, eroding trust and integrity.

Further challenges include misreading emotional signals, high EI entails understanding emotional signals from others, but these signs can occasionally be misconstrued, resulting in confusion-differences in culture can likewise hinder the precise interpretation of emotional cues (Thomas, 2024).

Schlegel (2020) states that possessing a strong sense of empathy can occasionally result in shouldering the emotional strains of others, this can be daunting and contribute to burnout, particularly in jobs that demand constant emotional support to others. Emotional intelligent leaders may experience increased expectations to consistently regulate their emotions flawlessly and to always comprehend and respond to the feelings of others adeptly, which may cause tension and anxiety (Schlegel, 2020).

Research focuses on the immediate impact of EI instead of exploring how it can shape leadership growth in the long run; the timing factor is essential for companies aiming for long-lasting leadership development (Deng, Isola, & Turner 2023). It has been found that current leadership training programmes lack practical frameworks that include EI; this barrier prevents organisations from effectively utilising EI to improve leadership skills (Deng et al., 2023). It is crucial to cultivate leaders with EI who can effectively handle difficult situations (Deng et al., 2023). The study aims to determine whether EI influences the development of leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector.

Although EI is becoming more acknowledged as essential for leadership, there remains a lack of understanding about its long-term effects and its role in leadership development. Research must identify which EI competencies (e.g. self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, social skills) directly affect leadership effectiveness, comprehending how these skills translate into leadership actions and influence team effectiveness is essential (Tan et al., 2022).

The influence of EI in various leadership styles, like transformational compared to transactional leadership, needs more investigation, it is essential to comprehend how EI complements or adjusts to different leadership styles and while EI training is becoming increasingly common, its lasting effects on leadership development require more thorough assessment, how EI training leads to lasting adjustments in leadership behaviour and performance (Tan et al., 2022).

1.4 Research aim

The primary aim of the study is to explore the influence of EI on the development of leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector.

1.5 Research objectives

To achieve the overall objective of the study, the following specific objectives are proposed:

- To determine whether EI skills enhance leadership performance in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector
- To evaluate how EI contributes to developing good leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector
- To analyse the factors that influence EI in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector

1.6 Research questions

This study intends to answer the following research questions:

- Does EI skill enhance leadership performance in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector?
- Does EI contribute to developing good leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector?
- What are the factors that influence EI in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector?

1.7 Rationale of the study

Investigating how EI influences leaders' development in corporate sector is important for various reasons. Effective leadership is vital for the success of an organisation, having a direct influence on employee involvement, efficiency and overall results (Tompkins, 2024). In navigating more complex environments, organisations benefit from leaders who possess high EI to facilitate collaboration, handle conflict and motivate teams effectively (Tompkins, 2024). Comprehending the role of EI in leadership development could offer organisations valuable insights to improve training programmes, ensuring that upcoming leaders are proficient in technical skills and proficient in handling interpersonal relationships (Tompkins, 2024).

The corporate environment is constantly changing, requiring a leadership style that is versatile enough to handle diverse/varied teams and international operations (Rojon & Saunders, 2012). This study addresses how EI can improve communication among diverse teams and bridge cultural differences (Rojon & Saunders, 2012). This is crucial in a world connected by trade and communication, where leaders need to interact with employees of diverse backgrounds and viewpoints (Rojon & Saunders, 2012).

This study focuses on the KZN corporate sector due to the recent occurrence of major disruptions to its socioeconomic landscape, resulting in considerable challenges for the economic and corporate sector, this province had promising economic progress abruptly faces enormous unexpected challenges resulting in major setbacks; presenting a compelling chance to investigate the relationship between leadership development and EI during this turmoil that severely affects companies, employers, and employees.

This study aims to support the theoretical framework on leadership development and establish a strong base for future research and practical applications in leadership training and development by addressing current gaps in understanding how EI influences leadership capabilities.

The KZN province encountered numerous challenges after the pandemic, riots, and the floods in April 2022, leading to significant upheaval that impacted both large and small local businesses. The province will take a substantial amount of time to recover due to the extent of the disruptions, with some businesses having to completely shut down, resulting in increased unemployment rates. Many local residents lost their homes and loved ones, significantly impacting their mental health, which in turn affected their work productivity and performance. Major supply chain routes, both at the ports and on the roads, were disrupted, costing companies millions of Rands and leading to substantial effects on corporate performance and profitability, which may have caused distress for company leaders, EI significantly influenced how they addressed all these simultaneous challenges.

Failure to carry out this study could result in various negative consequences. Companies might still fail to recognise the important contribution of EI in the development of leaders, resulting in

the perpetuation of old-fashioned training approaches that emphasise technical abilities rather than social skills (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020). Neglecting this issue could lead to leadership teams that lack the necessary skills to navigate current corporate obstacles, ultimately affecting both organisational efficiency and employee satisfaction (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020).

Not addressing the impact of EI on leadership development could have wider consequences for organisational culture and performance (Ashkanasy, 2020). Companies may face difficulties in creating diverse and adaptable workplaces that foster innovation if they do not know how to develop emotionally intelligent leaders (Ashkanasy, 2020).

Additionally, without empirical proof connecting EI to leadership improvement, the effectiveness of training programmes might be diminished, resulting in higher turnover rates and lower employee contentment (Ashkanasy, 2020). During a period where retaining talent is crucial, companies face the threat of losing important employees because of poor leadership (Ashkanasy, 2020).

1.8 Significance of the study

The importance of this research on how EI affects the development of leaders in the KwaZulu-Natal business industry has multiple aspects, affecting different parties like companies, workers and leadership research as a whole (Craig, 2021). This study could improve the understanding of how EI influences leadership growth and its importance in successful leadership. It highlights the role of EI in successful leadership, allowing organisations to create more focused leadership training programmes. Incorporating EI into training programmes could develop leaders who excel not only in technical skills but also in navigating interpersonal relationships, ultimately promoting healthier workplace environments.

This research highlights the significance of EI in the efficiency of leadership, by demonstrating how leaders who are emotionally intelligent can have a positive influence on team dynamics, employee engagement and overall productivity. It will help motivate companies to make EI a top focus in their leadership approaches.

The findings and recommendations of this study will offer practical insights for Human Resource departments and emphasise the significance of cultivating and mentoring upcoming leaders in EI. It will encourage training programmes that exceed traditional leadership measures and

concentrate on developing leaders who grasp that effective leadership goes beyond just having authority. This could help develop a new group of leaders who have the ability to motivate and lead their teams with compassion and emotional understanding.

1.9 Research design and method

The study adopts a quantitative approach. Quantitative research design refers to the procedure of gathering and analysing data (numeric) and is usually used to find patterns or predictions (Turale, 2020). This method of research allowed the researcher to generalise results to the target population. A cross-sectional study was conducted to collect data from the respondents at the same time. This method of research helped to reduce time and costs associated with the data collection process.

The target population for this particular research was 200 employees and leaders at the BP South Africa, KZN (Durban) corporate office. A simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. A representative sample size of 132 was selected and recruited via email for their participation in the study. The data were collected using the survey method. The survey consisted of 23 Likert scale questions. This data collection technique was the most suitable to answer the research problem, in a cost effective, voluntary, confidential and timeous manner.

The data quality in this study was measured through validity and reliability. Validity determines the degree to which the outcomes accurately evaluate the intended measurements, evaluated by comparing the results to existing theories and other measures of the same concept (Carroll, Mikhail & Burt, 2023). On the other hand, reliability evaluates the internal consistency and interrelatedness of items within a questionnaire to determine whether they consistently measure the same construct (Frost, McCrea, King, Gimenez, & Zipkin, 2023). The validity of the questionnaire was determined by computing exploratory factor analysis and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test. Cronbach's alpha is used in this research to assess the reliability of the measuring instrument. Cronbach's alpha measures reliability by comparing the common variance among variables (Frost et al., 2023). In theory, Cronbach's alpha is expected to yield a numerical value ranging from 0 to 1, although negative values can also be obtained (Frost et al.,

2023). A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or higher is seen as good, while 0.8 or higher is regarded as even better, and 0.9 or higher is considered the best standard guideline (Frost et al., 2023).

Data analysis helps in understanding the data by providing answers to a research question or aiding in decision-making processes. Data analysis includes utilising statistical and logical techniques to systematically summarise, visualise and evaluate data (Taherdoost, 2021). The data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 29.0).

1.10 Structure of the dissertation

This research comprises five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and background of the study

This chapter introduces the study and presents its background. It provides an overview of the research topic and outlines the research aims, objectives, and questions. The chapter further highlights the rationale, significance of the study. This chapter explored the profound significance of EI, its impact on leadership within the corporate sector, elaborates on the reasons KZN was chosen as a focal point for this research and how the prevailing challenges are impacting their economy and business landscape. It clarifies the importance of investigating EI and leadership development relationship amid the recent turmoil faced by the province following COVID-19, the April 2022 floods, and the social unrest.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter provides an overview of the latest information; assists to identify key theories, strategies and gaps in current research to be incorporated into the dissertation and literature. The literature review emphasises EI as an essential aspect of successful leadership, with Daniel Goleman's theory acting as a key framework. Goleman outlines five essential components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These factors allow leaders to regulate their emotions and foster robust interpersonal connections, crucial for motivating and directing teams.

The review also considers contrasting perspectives and the future of EI. Research consistently indicates that leaders with strong EI surpass those who depend only on cognitive skills or technical knowledge. Additionally, it mentions that leadership development initiatives are

increasingly incorporating EI training, highlighting that these capabilities can be cultivated over time through reflection, mentoring, and practice.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter outlines the methods and steps used to find answers to the research questions and objectives. It also covers all key elements of research, such as research design, data collection methods, data analysis methods and the overall framework in which the research is carried out. The study adopts a quantitative approach. This method of research allows the researcher to generalise results to the target population. Additionally, the study employs a descriptive design, which ensures the accurate description of the subject matter. respondents for the study. A representative sample size of 132 will be drawn from the participating organisations. The data will be collected using the survey method. The data will be analysed using the SPSS, version 29.0.

Chapter 4: Findings and discussion

This chapter presents the research findings and discussion, it evaluates the statistical relationship between EI and leadership performance using regression analysis.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter concludes the study and make recommendations. The conclusion and recommendations are based on the key findings stemming from the study. Furthermore, the chapter includes the limitations of the study and directions for future research. The practical, managerial and theoretical implications of the study are also highlighted in the study.

1.11 Chapter summary

This chapter provides a summary of the research project. The aim and objectives of this study are outlined; this includes the research questions, rationale, significance and impact of the research. It gives a brief review of the research by discussing previous and future studies on EI in leadership. Chapter 2 reviews literature pertaining to the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the literature and theoretical frameworks that relate to EI, leadership development and performance. The literature review aims to explore in depth the correlation between leadership development and EI. This chapter explores the five areas of EI: self-management, relationship management, self-awareness, social awareness and motivation.

2.2 Definition of Emotional Intelligence

Ott & Michailova (2023) defines EI as the capacity to recognise and manage one's emotions, as well as to understand and respond effectively to others. It includes abilities like understanding emotions, empathy, self-control and successful communication. EI is crucial in establishing relationships, making decisions and dealing with social intricacies, enhancing general happiness and achievements in both personal and work environments (Ott & Michailova, 2023). By understanding, one's own feelings and acknowledging how one's actions affect others, one can leverage this information to improve communication in one's personal and professional relationships (Issah, 2018).

2.3 EI Model - Daniel Goleman

There are many different models explaining EI; they share similarities but differ in their structure. This research is based on Daniel Goleman's model of five domains and twelve competences. The model was first presented in 1998 and updated in 2002. The competences are skills required to succeed in the application of the domains.

2.3.1 Self-management

Self-management, also known as self-regulation, is the capacity to successfully regulate emotions, actions and beliefs in various circumstances (Thompson, Kuah & Foong, 2020). It improves the ability to manage stress, motivation and working towards goals; it allows an individual to communicate without restrictions and to focus on tasks independently and it encourages a sense of openness, positivity, and flexibility (Jordan & Troth, 2021). According to Boyatzis (2017), leaders who struggle with self-control often respond impulsively and find it difficult to manage their desires.

Self-management is a crucial aspect of EI, particularly in difficult circumstances. Individuals who possess strong self-management skills are able to control their negative emotions, avoiding impulsive decisions (Neckel, 2009). The ability to manage assists in keeping a peaceful environment, resulting in improved decision-making and the ability to address issues more efficiently, leading to enhanced morale (Filice & Weese, 2024). During times of stress, individuals who have strong self-management skills can address conflict calmly and come up with productive solutions instead of making matters worse (Filice & Weese, 2024). Individuals who have strong self-management abilities are better equipped to handle challenges (Neckel, 2009).

There are three factors used to evaluate self-management in EI:

- Adaptivity, which means being able to make changes when situations shift or are unpredictable, and to manage various conflicting priorities simultaneously (Aamir, 2023). This involves time management, which evaluates how well one organises tasks, establishes deadlines and schedules time for tasks; this includes the skill of planning and preventing procrastination (Aamir, 2023).
- Achievement-orientation involves aiming to reach or surpass a high standard of quality and finding ways to improve performance (Aamir, 2023). This involves establishing practical, attainable goals and developing plans to achieve them, which involves tracking progress, adapting strategies when necessary and staying committed to long-term goals (Aamir, 2023).
- Positive outlook, which involves recognising the good in individuals, circumstances and occurrences and continuing to work towards objectives despite challenges and barriers (Goleman et al., 2017). This involves peoples' ability to handle their emotions in different circumstances, such as stress and frustration, by maintaining a positive attitude, dealing with obstacles, and staying inspired (Goleman et al., 2017).

2.3.2 Relationship management

Relationship management is the skill of managing relationships (Gómez-Leal, Holzer, Bradley, Fernández-Berrocal & Patti, 2022). Relationship management is the ability to inspire or encourage others effectively, motivate and influence co-workers, the proficiency to convey and build relationships, and the ability to assist change, grow, improve, and resolve disagreements

(Jordan & Troth, 2021). Managing relationships involves addressing conflicts between individuals. The ability to identify the beginning of a conflict and actively shift towards positive communication is a valuable skill.

There are five competencies to evaluate relationship management in EI:

- **Influence:** the ability to create a positive effect on others and to secure support and approval from important individuals (De Bruyn, 2022). This involves empathy, the ability to comprehend and relate to the emotions of others. This skill builds confidence and enhances connections by demonstrating one's appreciation for the viewpoints and feelings of others (Sharma & Tiwari, 2022).
- **Effective communication:** the capacity to relay information clearly and engage in active listening; this involves both oral and written communication, along with the ability to adjust communication approaches for various audiences (Sharma & Tiwari, 2022). Coaching and mentoring are included in effective communication -, supporting the growth of others by understanding their objectives and offering helpful feedback and assistance (De Bruyn, 2022).
- **Conflict management:** supporting others during emotional or tense situations, dealing with disagreements respectfully, recognising and respecting different viewpoints, finding mutual understanding and achieving resolutions that are agreed upon by all parties (De Bruyn, 2022). This involves dealing with and settling disagreements in a positive manner, including skills in negotiating, mediating, and discovering mutually advantageous resolutions (De Bruyn, 2022).
- **Teamwork:** is cooperating with others to achieve a common objective. As part of teamwork, collaboration means adding to the team's capacity and distributing both accountability and benefits (De Bruyn, 2022). Those who possess strong teamwork skills build good relationships and foster a culture of respect and collaboration (Kukah, Owusu-Manu, & Edwards, 2022). In addition, they have good interpersonal skills like the ability to create connections and sustain favourable relationships, being accessible, amiable and courteous, along with being skilled at networking (Kukah et al., 2022).

- Inspirational leadership: motivating others to see a greater purpose in their work than their daily responsibilities (Sharma & Tiwari, 2022). Inspirational leaders encourage and energise their team members to work together towards a common goal, assisting them in completing tasks and highlighting their strengths in the process (Kukah et al., 2022). They are individuals who instigate positive transformations by taking risks and occasionally going against traditional norms (Goleman, et al., 2017).

2.3.3 Self- awareness

Self-Awareness is being aware of one's emotions as they occur (Jordan & Troth, 2021). It involves recognising both one's strengths and weaknesses, as well as understanding one's emotions and how they impact on performance and teamwork. A study by Barsade (2002) shows that emotions can be involuntarily transmitted and experienced by others. It is a natural instinct for humans to impersonate the next person's expressions and body language. Human interactions have a social and emotional impact on each other (Barsade, 2002).

There are various methods to increase self-awareness, such as engaging in mindfulness practices like meditation to improve the ability to observe thoughts and feelings nonjudgmentally, reflecting on emotional experiences for clarity and deeper insights, and seeking feedback from others to identify blind spots in self-perception (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023).

There are two competences to evaluate self-awareness in EI:

- Emotional self-awareness: to have a clear understanding of oneself as individuals knowing exactly how and what they feel assist in goal setting and understanding their strengths and weaknesses; this helps clarify what to work on, on a journey of self-development (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022). Recognising one's emotions as they occur, understanding the impact of one's emotions on one's thoughts and actions, knowing triggers for specific emotions, and consistent reflection on one's feelings can enhance emotional regulation and awareness of emotional patterns (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023). Knowing your fundamental beliefs and their influence on your decision-making ensures that your behaviour is in accordance with what is important to you. Being introspective

enables individuals to grasp how their feelings and behaviours influence others, ultimately improving social connections and communication (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023).

- Self-discipline: the ability to control emotions with self-discipline is crucial for reacting appropriately in different circumstances and avoiding impulsive behaviours (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022). Individuals who have self-discipline often establish personal goals that are influenced by their values and emotions; self-control helps remain concentrated and driven to reach these goals, even in the presence of challenges (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022). EI encompasses managing and comprehending stress, while self-discipline allows individuals to use healthy coping strategies instead of turning to unhealthy actions (Nnate & Nashwan, 2023).

Practising self-discipline during interactions results in improved communication and conflict resolution, aiding individuals to stay calm and collected, ultimately promoting stronger relationships. Self-control enables the introspection needed to comprehend the emotions of others (Nnate & Nashwan, 2023). Self-regulating emotions allows individuals to show more empathy and to react sensitively to others' feelings; self-control aids in building resilience by helping individuals push through difficult situations and setbacks, enhancing their emotional resilience (Nnate & Nashwan, 2023).

2.3.4 Social awareness

Empathy, which has a strong connection with social awareness, is a key component of EI (Ott & Michailova, 2023). Paying attention to and taking into account the feelings of others when making decisions is important. Developing strong empathy skills helps build better relationships with people who have differing viewpoints. Practising attentive listening and empathy enhances effective teamwork by reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings (Ott & Michailova, 2023).

Social awareness involves grasping perceptions and connecting them to interactions with people, groups and communities (Barsade, 2002). It allows for comprehension of professionalism in the workplace. It facilitates communication, collaboration and information-sharing among colleagues. Lastly, it establishes connections - and building a network is a crucial aspect of relationship building (Thompson et al., 2020).

According to Boyatzis (2017), leaders who are exceptional in social awareness make an effort to comprehend their co-workers' emotions and viewpoints, allowing them to communicate and work more effectively with their colleagues. There are two competences to evaluate social awareness in EI:

- Empathy: comprehending and feeling the emotions of others, by acknowledging their feelings, actively listening, and minimising conflict, empathising with their perspectives and reacting with compassion (Goleman et al., 2017). Empathy builds connections, improves interaction and promotes a nurturing atmosphere. It is an essential skill in both social interactions and work environments (Goleman et al., 2017).
- Organisational awareness: understanding a group's emotional atmosphere, power dynamics, identifying key influencers, networks and important factors in decision-making (Goleman et al., 2017). Having strong interpersonal skills, like effective communication, conflict resolution and teamwork, as well as an awareness of social issues like inequality, discrimination and community dynamics, is crucial for making fair and ethical decisions and nurturing relationships that encourage support and collaboration (Goleman et al., 2017).

2.3.5 Motivation

People who are emotionally intelligent have a strong understanding of the internal drive that influences their choices; they are driven by internal gratification such as a feeling of purpose or achievement, and they recognise this attribute in both them and others (Franklin, 2024). They excel when challenging themselves to achieve something they previously believed they could not (Franklin, 2024).

Lack of internal motivation can hinder individuals from performing at their best, as motivation is a crucial aspect of EI (Franklin, 2024). A motivated individual is enthusiastic, committed and intensely concentrated on reaching objectives; eager individuals show a positive attitude and positivity is contagious, boosting motivation and determination (Augusto-Landa, García-Martínez, & León, 2022).

Ways to build motivation involve setting achievable goals, offering engaging challenges, acknowledging small accomplishments, transforming obstacles into challenges, recognising the

impact of leadership on the team, evaluating your own performance and embracing change (Augusto-Landa et al., 2022).

Motivation involves utilising emotions to actively work towards goals with determination and enthusiasm; internal aspects like personal development and satisfaction instead of external incentives typically motivate individuals with high EI (Nieto-Carracedo et al., 2024). They establish and work towards significant objectives, staying dedicated and focused despite obstacles; motivated individuals recover from challenges by utilising their EI and awareness to grow and adjust (Bechter, Whipp, Dimmock & Jackson, 2021). They typically sustain a positive mind-set that keeps them motivated and inspires those around them. Motivated individuals control their feelings and urges which helps them to focus and handle stress well. These motivational characteristics enhance EI, aiding individuals to overcome personal and professional challenges effectively (Nieto-Carracedo et al., 2024).

Figure 2.1: Goleman's (2001) EI competencies.

	SELF Personal Competence	OTHER Social Competence
RECOGNITION	<u>Self-Awareness</u> Emotional Self-Awareness Accurate Self-Assessment Self-Confidence	<u>Social Awareness</u> Empathy Service Orientation Organizational Awareness
REGULATION	<u>Self-Management</u> Self-Control Trustworthiness Conscientiousness Adaptability Achievement Drive Initiative	<u>Relationship Management</u> Developing Others Influence Communication Conflict Management Leadership Change Catalyst Building Bonds Teamwork and Collaboration

Source: <https://www.civilserviceindia.com/subject/General-Studies/notes/emotional-intelligence-concepts.html>

2.4 EI measures

The importance of EI is increasingly acknowledged as a crucial factor in determining job success and performance. Individuals who possess high levels of EI tend to be more productive, have greater chances of being promoted and experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Cherry, 2023). This is because employees with high EI are a strong positive influence throughout the entire company. Employees who possess high EI develop strong professional connections, alleviate team tension and encourage their colleagues (Cherry, 2023). Their excellent ability to connect with others assists them in building positive relationships with both clients and colleagues, leading to increased profits and team efficiency (Craig, 2021).

EI tests tend to measure the manner of an individual's obvious behaviour rather than what initiates or influences this behaviour (O'Connor, Hill, Kaya, & Martin, 2019). Several assessments measuring EI levels have been developed; these assessments fit into three categories: ability tests, self-report tests (trait), and mixed tests (Craig, 2021). Assessing EI can offer insight into how well someone interacts with others and their ability to lead. Strong EI is frequently associated with improved performance, better relationships and more effective ways of dealing with challenges (Goleman, 2021).

2.4.1 Ability measure

Ability measure asks questions that are similar to the ones asked in an IQ test (O'Connor et al., 2019). Ability measure requires respondents to solve or explain emotion-interrelated problems that may have correct or incorrect answers. Ability assessment provides a strong indication of an individual's capacity to understand emotions and their functioning (O'Connor et al., 2019). This measure is effective and valid, although a weak forecaster of a variety of results containing work-associated attitudes e.g. job gratification and job presentation (Boyatzis, 2017).

The most common ability-based measure assessment is the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso EI Test (MSCEIT), developed by psychologists Peter Salovey, John D. Mayer, and David R. Caruso. It tests that assesses EI by measuring perception, facilitation, understanding and regulation (Pandey & Sharma, 2022). The MSCEIT offers important insights that assist leaders in building the emotional skills required for successful leadership (Legg, 2023). This assessment assists leaders

in gaining a clearer grasp of their emotions and strengths and weaknesses, leading to improved self-control and better decision-making skills (Legg, 2023). Strong leaders have the ability to develop stronger connections and promote a positive work atmosphere (Pandey and Sharma, 2022). Enhanced EI can result in better and more successful communication, which is crucial for inspiring and directing teams (Legg, 2023). Leaders who can interpret emotional signals are better able to adapt their approaches and reactions to evolving circumstances, ultimately strengthening their resilience (Pandey and Sharma, 2022).

The MSCEIT is a widely used assessment of EI, however it has its constraints- these involve low discriminant validity, indicating it fails to effectively differentiate between various components of EI, uncertain construct and incremental validity, suggesting it may not assess what it intends to or provide additional value beyond current measures, and the likelihood that personality traits and general intelligence could significantly impact scores (Clement et al., 2023). Moreover, the MSCEIT's emphasis on "correct" responses may not truly capture EI in actual situations, since cultural or social variations can influence how individuals perceive and react to emotional contexts (Clement et al., 2023).

2.4.2 Self-report (trait)

Self-report (trait) measures use self-report items to measure overall EI and its components (Kellogg, 2022). People who score well in several measures of trait EI have high degrees of self-effectiveness in terms of emotion-associated behaviours and are knowledgeable when handling and controlling internal and external emotions (Craig, 2021).

Given that trait EI measures distinctive behaviour, it tends to forecast definite behaviours in a various condition (Costa & Faria, 2020). Recent research associated trait EI with different work attitudes, such as job fulfilment and job responsibility (Kellogg, 2022).

Self-report (trait) involves individuals reporting their own traits, behaviours or emotions (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2020). These findings are commonly utilised in the field of psychology to assess characteristics like personality, mood, or attitudes (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2020). Self-report tools commonly used are questionnaires and surveys like the Trait EI Questionnaire (TEIQue), intended to assess EI, encompassing skills in recognising, comprehending, and handling

emotions in self and others (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2020). The TEIQue evaluates different components of EI like emotional perception, expression and regulation (Furnham, Treglown & Topic et al., 2021).

Integrating TEIQue into programmes for developing leadership skills can improve the effectiveness of leaders, ultimately benefiting their teams and organisations; TEIQue assists leaders in gaining insight into their emotional strengths and limitations (Furnham et al., 2021). Leaders can improve self-awareness and enhance their leadership by identifying areas that need improvement, TEIQue assists leaders in creating plans for emotional control, enhancing decision-making and conflict resolution (Furnham et al., 2021). The survey highlights the significance of interpersonal abilities; leaders have the opportunity to evaluate their capacity to engage and inspire others by utilising TEIQue, which in turn promotes a cooperative and efficient workplace (Grobelny, et al., 2021).

TEIQue findings can guide customized growth strategies, allowing leaders to establish precise, measurable objectives according to their EI assessment, monitoring advancement as time goes on (Grobelny, et al., 2021). Companies can integrate TEIQue in leadership workshops, concentrating on enhancing EI capabilities crucial for leadership roles, like resilience, adaptability, and communication (Grobelny, Radke & Maczka, 2021).

TEIQue has certain limitations, mainly centred on its emphasis on self-assessments of EI instead of genuine emotional skills, it's crucial to note that TEIQue scores can vary, and the short version may yield somewhat less precise factor scores compared to the complete version (Orhan, 2024). The TEIQue evaluates EI as a collection of self-assessed emotions, which means it depends on a person's personal perception of their emotional skills; scores may vary over time, affected by life circumstances, job situations, and the person's present mood (Orhan, 2024).

Although the TEIQue has been applied in various cultural settings, it's crucial to recognise possible cultural variations in how individuals understand and convey emotions, for instance, a remark concerning "emotion expression" could be interpreted differently in individualistic compared to collectivistic cultures (Orhan, 2024).

2.4.3 Mixed Measure

Mixed measure. Most measures of EI can be classified, but certain measures fall into the category of mixed measures. Mixed measures of EI are mainly used to refer to questionnaires that measure a mixture of traits, social skills and capabilities that intersect with other personality measures (Costa & Faria, 2020).

Usually, the measures are self-report in conjunction with peer reports from administrators, co-workers and assistants. A mutual characteristic of many measures is the emphasis on emotional “proficiencies”, which can theoretically be established in people to improve their professional skills (Kellogg, 2022).

Although diverse measures of EI have developed, e.g. trait, ability and mixed, there are conceptual likenesses between the measures (Costa & Faria, 2020). The conceptual overlaps are ascribable to aspects concerning observing emotions, self-emotion control and strategically applying emotions (Cherry, 2023).

The Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) is an assessment that employs a combination of self-report and ability-based measures. EQ-i was created by Reuven Bar-On to evaluate EI, analysing elements such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, interpersonal skills and stress management (Bru-Luna et al., 2021). The EQ-i assesses leaders' perceptions of their emotional skills in various scenarios; the outcomes can offer valuable information on strengths and areas needing development in emotional function, beneficial for leadership growth, workplace interactions, and relationship building (Bru-Luna, Martí-Vilar, Merino-Soto & Cervera-Santiago, 2021).

EQ-i has various limitations, such as the likelihood of bias in self-report evaluations, the intricate and multi-faceted character of EI, and the chance of cultural biases in the employed scales (Tommasi et al., 2023). Moreover, certain studies indicate that EQ-i, together with other EI evaluations, might exhibit weak psychometric characteristics, affecting their reliability and validity (Tommasi et al., 2023). EQ-i may be shaped by individuals' self-perceptions, which could result in skewed responses, EI is a multifaceted concept, and no singular assessment can comprehensively encompass all its dimensions- EQ-i scales rely on cultural assumptions, which may restrict usefulness among varied populations (Tommasi et al., 2023).

2.5 Definition of leadership

Leadership has been understood and managed in various ways over time; this study explores historical, current and future dimensions of leadership. Leadership is motivating a group of individuals to accomplish a common goal (Stone & Patterson, 2023). Having the skill to lead, motivate and direct individuals or a business is a combination of research and practical knowledge (Stone & Patterson, 2023). In a business environment, a leader's role is to guide co-workers strategically to meet the company's objectives and requirements (Alblooshi, Shamsuzzaman & Haridy, 2021).

Being creative is crucial for a leader, especially when facing unexpected situations like the COVID-19 pandemic. A leader must be able to quickly adapt and take charge, think outside the box to come up with a safe solution, since team members rely on them for support and guidance (Alblooshi et al., 2021). When utilised effectively, this leadership talent boosts communication, boosts morale, and fosters a robust company culture, leading to overall improvement in the business (Alblooshi et al., 2021).

Confidence is a significant aspect of leadership. Leaders are the foundation of the business. They sustain and endure companies through comfortable and harsh times, while showing self-confidence and a positive attitude (Gardner & McCauley, 2022). Teams remain comfortable and secure, if leaders show confidence through difficult times, and the work environment stays motivated (Gardner & McCauley, 2022).

Effective communication is crucial in any setting that involves diverse individuals. A leader must have the ability to communicate effectively through different media, such as email, phone calls and in person. For missions to be successfully completed, it is essential that every team member is able to follow and comprehend the purpose, aim and ultimate objective when their leader is addressing the team (Gardner & McCauley, 2022). Lacking excellent communication skills makes it very challenging to establish and maintain a productive work setting (Pandey & Sharma, 2022).

The most effective leaders understand that they are only human and may need help as much as they would like to handle everything on their own. Task delegation plays a crucial role in leadership (Pandey & Sharma, 2022). Leaders typically have a clear vision of where they want

to lead the company, so they often prefer to handle the most important tasks themselves rather than assigning them to their team (Pandey & Sharma, 2022). Assigning responsibilities builds team morale when the right tasks are assigned to the right person and completed accurately and promptly (Stone & Patterson, 2023).

2.6 Types of leadership styles

Like personality types, leadership styles cannot be easily categorised into clear-cut boxes. Instead, they can be grouped according to a range of features, such as independence and adaptability (Wang, Hou, & Li, 2022). Over time, various leaders have emerged with distinct leadership approaches to provide direction, implement strategies and motivate team members. Wang et al. (2022) classifies leadership into five categories: authoritarian, participative, delegative, transactional and transformational.

2.6.1 Authoritarian leadership

In a dictatorial setting, the leader is the one who makes decisions without consulting the team (Wang et al., 2022). This leadership style, when applied incorrectly, can greatly discourage employees. On the other hand, authoritarian rulers are adept at making swift and assertive decisions, making them valuable assets during crises (Wang et al., 2022). An autocratic leader should aim to strike a balance between making final decisions alone and liaising with the team for input and feedback (Wang et al., 2022).

This leadership method has a well-defined hierarchy and a powerful central authority (Hanaysha, 2023). In this method, the leader decides on their own without much contribution from team members, the leader controls every aspect of the organisation or team, limiting team members' input in decision-making processes (Zheng et al., 2020). Guidelines and expectations for performance and behaviour are clearly defined by the leader, and information mainly flows from the leader to the team, instead of in a collaborative manner (Zheng et al., 2020). Authoritarian leadership can result in decreased engagement and innovation; when team members have limited opportunities to give input, they may become dissatisfied and unmotivated, hindering creativity due to often disregarded ideas (Zheng et al., 2020).

In authoritarian leadership, up-and-coming leaders have less chance to improve their decision-making and problem-solving abilities, as they are typically instructed instead of being motivated

to think on their own (Li et al., 2019). Training that focuses on following rules and procedures instead of promoting creativity or innovation may hinder the growth of adaptive leadership skills (Sudha & Shahnawaz, 2020). Although authoritarian leaders may possess robust organizational abilities and strategic thinking, the absence of participatory experiences could impede the development of EI and interpersonal skills (Sudha & Shahnawaz, 2020). In authoritarian settings, aspiring leaders may face difficulties in personal growth and reflective learning due to the lack of feedback from team members (Li, Chen, Zhang & Luo, 2019).

Authoritarian leadership in task-oriented environments can achieve rapid results by giving clear instructions and maintaining strong control, resulting in immediate performance improvements (Hanaysha, 2023). In time, authoritarian leadership may have a detrimental effect on employee morale and motivation, resulting in burnout and disengagement, ultimately affecting performance and innovation (Li et al., 2019). Authoritarian leaders may encounter resistance when attempting to enact changes, as team members might perceive themselves as underappreciated and less motivated to back initiatives towards which they had no contribution (Hanaysha, 2023).

Authoritarian leadership, characterized by a leader's dominance and control, frequently conflicts with the tenets of EI, although certain authoritarian leaders may demonstrate robust self-regulation, their capacity to stay calm in stressful situations allows for quick decision-making (Pellitteri, 2021). Their deficiency in empathy and interpersonal abilities can obstruct effective communication and relationship development, ultimately affecting team morale and productivity (Pellitteri, 2021).

Authoritarian leadership can shift towards balance through deliberate EI enhancement, fostering empathy starts with active listening—interacting with team members as partners rather than as subordinates (Pellitteri, 2021). Engaging in self-regulation moderates the urge to micromanage, promoting trust, cultivating personal connections enhances team unity, shifting hierarchical power into a more cooperative interaction (Pellitteri, 2021).

2.6.2 Participative leadership

Participative leaders have a democratic approach and regard the opinions of the team. Most decisions are open for discussion, making employees feel valued and respected (Roberson & Perry, 2022). At times, democratic or participative leaders may appear hesitant, showing a lack of confidence in their decision-making skills (Li, Liu & Luo, 2018). However, a participative leader can enhance their effectiveness by mastering the art of making prompt decisions during crucial situations (Li et al., 2018).

Participative leadership highlights the importance of teamwork and team members' involvement in decision-making, leading to a considerable improvement in leadership growth and overall performance (Khassawneh & Elrehail, 2022). By engaging team members in decision-making, employees are more likely to feel appreciated and empowered, leading to increased motivation and dedication to the organisation (Chang, Chang, Chen, Seih, & Chang, 2020). When employees actively participate in making decisions, they are more inclined to take accountability for their tasks and duties (Khassawneh & Elrehail, 2022).

Participative leadership promotes knowledge exchange and teamwork, enabling team members to gain insights and expertise from one another (Ishaque, Liaquat, Irshad, & Khakwani, 2022). This leadership style empowers team members to assume leadership responsibilities in discussions and projects, helping them enhance their skills and self-assurance (Chang et al., 2020). Including diverse voices results in more comprehensive discussions and decisions, as varied perspectives and inputs lead to unique solutions and better team performance (Ishaque et al., 2022).

Teams that engage in participative leadership tend to be more flexible when faced with change, as they are used to addressing and overcoming challenges as a team (Chang et al., 2020). Leaders continuously seeking feedback, which enables them and team members to improve processes and practices over time, and ensure ongoing development (Ishaque et al., 2022).

Participative leadership shows significant empathy, allowing them to comprehend and address the emotions and viewpoints of team members, they also demonstrate social abilities, promoting teamwork and enhancing communication (Hale, 2022). Moreover, participative leaders have self-awareness, enabling them to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses, along with self-regulation, which aids them in managing their emotions and actions constructively (Hale, 2022).

Participative leaders excel in grasping and expressing the emotions of others, aiding them in establishing a more inclusive and supportive workplace, they possess strong communication skills, listen attentively to their team, and promote open dialogues, which cultivates trust and teamwork -they can inspire and motivate their team members, cultivating a sense of ownership and promoting high performance (Hale, 2022).

2.6.3 Delegative leadership

This leadership style, referred to as non-interventionist leadership, focuses on assigning tasks to colleagues. This approach works best when employees are well informed, responsible and enjoy engaging in diverse tasks. (Wang et al., 2022). Delegative leaders excel when working with employees or team members who are capable of self-management and direction. Nonetheless, certain employees require additional guidance and may find it challenging to keep pace with the team when working under a delegative leader (Roberson & Perry, 2022).

Delegative leadership involves leaders giving little direction and granting team members the autonomy to make choices (Husainah & Ahmad, 2024). Delegative leadership improves leadership growth and effectiveness by empowering and encouraging innovation, but it must be accompanied by a careful balance and adequate communication to prevent issues arising from a lack of guidance (Husainah & Ahmad, 2024).

Delegative leaders empower their employees by giving them autonomy; this may foster confidence and encourage individuals to take the initiative, promote personal growth and leadership skills (Husainah & Ahmad, 2024). Employees are often encouraged to leverage their unique skills and expertise which may lead to a more engaged workforce that feels valued for their contributions (Li et al., 2018). Leaders step back and act as mentors, providing guidance when needed but allowing employees to learn through experience. With less oversight, team members may feel freer to experiment and innovate, which may lead to developing new solutions and strategies (Li et al., 2018).

Delegative leadership, which involves enabling team members to assume responsibility, necessitates a robust basis of EI, leaders have various EI abilities, such as self-awareness,

empathy, and social skills, which allow them to delegate tasks efficiently, cultivate trust, and create a supportive atmosphere (Singh, 2021).

Delegative leaders are highly conscious of their emotions and how these affect team dynamics, this involves recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, as well as how others might view their behaviour (Singh, 2021). Empathy enables delegative leaders to comprehend and relate to the emotions of their team members, essential for cultivating trust and promoting a cooperative atmosphere- this may include recognising the distinct motivations of every team member and aligning their objectives with the overarching project goals (Singh, 2021).

2.6.4 Transactional leadership

Transactional leaders place importance on organisation and structures (Gardner & McCauley, 2022). They set objectives for employees and outline the repercussions, whether good or bad of reaching or not reaching those objectives (Li et al., 2018). This rigid style of leadership promotes a strong adherence within teams, limiting creativity and originality, yet the focus on protocols enables a high level of control over operations, resulting in consistent, dependable outcomes (Ugoani, 2015). As long as the give-and-take nature of this relationship is reasonable and well comprehended by teams, performance and productivity can flourish under a transactional leader (Roberson & Perry, 2022). However, transactional leaders find it difficult to show empathy or make exceptions to accommodate one specific employee's needs (Gardner & McCauley, 2022).

Transactional leadership revolves around the transactions between leaders and employees, highlighting the importance of clear frameworks, incentives and penalties (Clarke, 2012). Transactional leadership effectively improve leadership development and performance by setting clear expectations and holding employees accountable (Mahdinezhad, Suandi, Silong & Omar, 2013). However, it is not successful in promoting creativity and flexibility, which are essential in fast-changing corporate spaces (Clarke, 2012).

Transactional leaders establish clear goals and standards, guiding employees on what is needed to succeed, which in turn promotes the growth of skills as employees strive to achieve set goals (Mahdinezhad et al., 2013). Continuous evaluations and input are essential in this style of leadership; leaders offer helpful feedback, allowing employees to enhance their abilities and productivity as time goes on (Dong, 2023). Transactional leadership encourages growth of skills

that support company objectives by rewarding desired actions and results; this may inspire employees to improve their skills (Mahdinezhad et al., 2013).

Transactional leaders frequently implement training programmes to assist employees in acquiring the essential skills needed to meet the expectations of the organisation (Clarke, 2012). This technique promotes accountability in employees, leading to increased effectiveness through a culture of responsibility (Dong, 2023). This approach is useful for sustaining performance, but it inhibits creativity and innovation as employees feel restricted by strict frameworks and fear of penalties (Dong, 2023)

Transactional leadership mainly depends on external motivation, effective communication, and organised procedures, instead of robust EI abilities such as self-awareness or empathy, a transactional leader focuses on rewards, consequences, and the completion of tasks, usually depending on established protocols instead of flexibility or emotional insight (Norena-Chavez & Thalassinou, 2022).

2.6.5 Transformational leadership

Transformational leaders inspire teams and promote a company's vision (Gardner & McCauley, 2022). By incorporating empathy, excitement and commendation, they motivate individual employees to reach their goals, brainstorm new ideas and enhance their results. Employees under a transformational leader experience empowerment and loyalty (Gardner & McCauley, 2022).

Transformational leadership is vital for developing strong leaders and promoting top performance in organisations (Tefera, Yuanqiong & Luming, 2019). By prioritising vision, empowerment and continuous growth, transformational leaders improve their skills and motivate others, contributing to long-lasting success for organisations (Soomro and Shah, 2020).

Transformational leaders express an inspiring vision that encourages and motivates employees, prompting upcoming leaders to think strategically and cultivate their own vision (Mahdinezhad, Suandi, Silong, & Omar 2013). Transformational leaders frequently serve as mentors, supporting both personal and professional development this guidance aids in the cultivation of crucial leadership abilities and EI (Mahdinezhad et al., 2013).

Transformational leaders promote autonomy and initiative among team members, fostering self-assured future leaders (Mahdinezhad et al., 2013). Leaders foster a culture of learning,

motivating employees to seek out fresh knowledge and skills (Soomro and Shah, 2020). Transformational leadership highlights the significance of trust, collaboration and effective communication by focusing on building strong interpersonal relationships and teaching upcoming leaders (Jnaneswar & Ranjit, 2020).

Transformational leaders have high employee engagement, resulting in better productivity and job satisfaction, as engaged employees are more inclined to perform optimally (Jnaneswar & Ranjit, 2020). The leaders promote creativity and problem-solving skills by creating a supportive environment for new ideas to thrive, ultimately leading to innovative solutions (Soomro and Shah, 2020). Transformational leaders demonstrate resilience and flexibility, preparing their teams to handle challenges successfully, leading to improved performance overall (Jnaneswar & Ranjit, 2020).

Transformational leaders have a profound awareness of their feelings, strengths, and limitations, this enables them to guide with sincerity and honesty, fostering trust with their supporters (Alwali & Alwali, 2022). They can accurately comprehend and communicate the emotions of others, fostering a nurturing and welcoming atmosphere, this allows them to forge solid relationships and inspire their teams by grasping their unique needs and viewpoints (Alwali & Alwali, 2022).

Transformational leaders are skilled in communication and relationship-building, enhancing collaboration and teamwork, they can clearly convey their vision, inspire their employees, and encourage them to realise common objective- they are adaptable and can modify their leadership approach to fit the demands of the situation and their group (Alwali & Alwali, 2022).

2.7 Difference between a manager and a leader

The primary distinction between a manager and a leader lies in the fact that a leader aims to inspire team members to comprehend and embrace the vision and collaborates with them to reach goals, while a manager focuses on maintaining control and ensuring that work regulations and daily tasks are being carried out correctly (Kotterman, 2006).

A manager has full accountability for executing the four key functions of management: planning, organising, leading and controlling (Kotterman, 2006). Managers can transition into leaders by effectively fulfilling leadership duties, such as delivering both positive and negative

feedback, offering motivation and direction, and motivating employees to achieve higher levels of productivity (Kotterman, 2006).

Leaders are unafraid to break the status quo - innovation comes naturally to them. They embrace change and understand that just because something different is, it does not mean it cannot be enhanced (Stonehouse, 2013). Managers typically concentrate on operational strategies, enhancing systems, setups, and procedures for optimal performance and productivity (Stonehouse, 2013).

Leaders are self-aware; they put in a lot of effort to create a special, individual personal brand. They are eager to stand up for what they believe, are trustworthy and honest (Stonehouse, 2013). Managers often replicate the skills and behaviours learned from others and apply previous leadership abilities instead of developing their own (O'Connor et al., 2019).

Leaders are enthusiastic about trying out new ideas even though the results may be uncertain and there is the possibility of failure (Toor, 2011). They know that failure is a necessary step in the path to success. Managers aim to work in a safe manner and to minimise risks. They prevent failure before it happens instead of embracing it (Toor, 2011).

Leaders concentrate on all the stakeholders they need to inspire in order to realise their vision (O'Connor et al., 2019). Leaders are aware of who they are targeting and spend their time studying them (Toor, 2011). Leaders understand the importance of building loyalty and trust through consistent, continual delivery of exactly what they want (O'Connor et al., 2019). Managers' focus on ensuring that systems are working as intended to achieve set outcomes. They emphasise working with individuals, their goals are objective (Fleming, 2024).

2.8 Relationship between EI and team success

Recognising the significance of internal connections involves recognising the crucial role EI plays in making others comfortable, promoting openness, showing respect, and engaging with individuals who have various perspectives (Farh, Seo & Tesluk, 2012).

Having strong EI helps in forming connections, reducing team stress, tackling conflict and enhancing job satisfaction. Having a high level of EI has the capacity to enhance team productivity (Edward & Purba, 2020).

Farh et al. (2012) points out that interpersonal skills like effective listening and relationship management play a role in shaping individuals' perceptions and responses to various leaders. When individuals feel appreciated, esteemed and that their opinions are important, they are more inclined to participate and be motivated to achieve the objectives set by their leaders.

Empathy is crucial for a team to effectively collaborate and work collaboratively. EI is closely tied to empathy. Leaders who can effectively perceive and respond to the emotional needs of their team helps foster positive work environments and enhances the likelihood of success (Edward & Purba, 2020).

The skill of knowing how to use soft skills regulates our level of EI. The current work place, emotional practicality and intelligence assists to regulate diverse teams with unique viewpoints and fortes they can force (Rowland, 2023). Empathy is a key factor in embracing various points of view and successfully coming to joint conclusions. Furthermore, empathy is a significant ability when in discussion with internal and external stakeholders, as it allows one to foster all the other needs and responses (Rowland, 2023).

Farh et al. (2012) emphasises the importance of motivation as a component of EI in achieving success. Motivation is essentially, what drives people to take action. In moments of setbacks and obstacles, motivation is what encourages staying dedicated to the ultimate objective and finding a path ahead (Sharma, 2024). A lack of motivation quickly turns into a negative mind-set towards goals and responsibilities, affecting the confidence and success of the team.

In sum, achieving success is heavily influenced by how well relationships are managed. This incorporates the development of genuine trust, connections and respect within the team (Sharma, 2024).

2.9 Relationship between EI and leadership

Over time, it has been argued that competent leaders enhance organisational performance (Rowland, 2023). When reading about leadership in business, it is intriguing how it consistently links back to the emotional behaviour of a company (Yuan, 2024). To understand the connection between EI and leadership, it is necessary to acknowledge the presence of varied styles of

leadership, such as open styles and closed styles (Saha, Das, Lim, Kumar, Malik & Chillakuri, 2023).

Open leadership involves handling teamwork, conflict, collaborating and influencing management. Leaders categorised here exhibit qualities of genuine team players, creating a positive work environment and ensuring that team members feel appreciated (Saha et al., 2023). These leaders possess abilities in managing people and resolving conflicts among colleagues, they coordinate the workplace. Leaders assign employees challenging and interesting tasks to improve their overall capabilities (Saha et al., 2023).

Closed leadership is based on traditional leadership, where a leader anticipates immediate results without any room for questioning from the employee (Görgens-Ekermans & Roux, 2021). When workers do not meet expectations or perform inadequately, the leader resorts to using threats and derogatory language. Leaders who focus more on criticising rather than praising and encouraging employees. Closed leaders discourage and exhaust employees' morale, work spirit, the sense of accomplishment and satisfaction they derive from their job (Görgens-Ekermans & Roux, 2021).

Görgens-Ekermans & Roux (2021) states that EI improves leaders' capacity to adapt their leadership style appropriately to specific situations. Leaders who are emotionally intelligent are aware of their own emotions and their potential impact on others, particularly their employees. Leaders who have highly developed EI are adept at addressing daily challenges and issues by concentrating on significant cultural changes within the organisation (Yuan, 2024).

Leaders should be prepared for a fast-paced changing world and should focus on identified traits and behaviours. Leaders should focus on factors like company and management skills, common values and beliefs in the team, collaboration and team building- each of these aspects of EI is a shared refrain (Yuan, 2024).

2.10 Leaders with EI

Higgs and Dulewicz (2024) suggests that outstanding performance and success in business are connected to EI. EI functions beyond just empathy and focusing on others. What is needed is courage, self-assurance, motivation and the ability to communicate difficult messages to colleagues effectively (Higgs & Dulewicz, 2024).

According to Goleman (1998), EI has a significant impact on high-quality leadership. The key characteristic that sets the most effective leaders apart is their strong EI. High performance in all types of corporate environments is most strongly determined by EI (Goleman, 1998). A leader's EI grows as he/she progresses through higher managerial roles, by being receptive to learning from others, connecting with them and embracing new opportunities (Mysirlaki & Paraskeva, 2020). Leaders with EI lead high-performing teams (Mysirlaki & Paraskeva, 2020). Workers who are engaged and motivated by their leaders perform at a higher level, feeling respected, cared for and appreciated; this fosters team loyalty (Goleman, 1998).

Continuous innovation is crucial in the corporate world, and it can only be achieved if employees are in a secure work environment that fosters creativity (Higgs & Dulewicz, 2024). If a leader fails to establish a psychologically safe work environment, innovation will not happen (Rojon & Saunders, 2012). It is crucial for workers to acknowledge their mistakes, enhance their skills and develop their potential. Emotionally intelligent leaders inspire employees to be more creative and productive through both their actions and the way they treat others (Fouts, 2019).

Leaders who have EI acknowledge their customers; brand loyalty is the key connection between a company and a customer (Shelton, 2021). There are numerous competitors vying for customers' attention, so there is no justification for remaining faithful to a brand that does not meet expectations (Rojon & Saunders, 2012). Emotionally intelligent leaders carefully observe their customers and make sure they feel appreciated; they offer excellent customer service. Leaders with EI value their consumers and frontline workers by actively listening to them rather than seeing them as mere statistics (Rojon & Saunders, 2012). With technology advancing quickly in the workplace, the company's success or failure may hinge on its capacity to embrace creativity, empathy, innovation and awareness (Shelton, 2021).

The EI approach is a fundamental retreat from the 'traditional leadership' of single party rule (Shelton, 2021). Yes, leadership requires a fraction of authority over the initial vision; however, it must prioritise recognising employees' needs, through this, a leader creates a satisfactory environment to work in.

Emotionally intelligent leaders, as stated by Shelton (2021), have a tendency to reduce stress in the workplace, even though workplace stress cannot be avoided. Nevertheless, individuals in

leadership roles who have EI manage their emotions more effectively. They refrain from reacting impulsively and projecting their negative emotions onto colleagues. These leaders value a more positive work environment.

Emotionally intelligent leaders understand the significance of the team dynamic and give everybody a voice (Goleman, 1998). They improve company culture, leadership is always a relationship, and effective leadership succeeds in a group culture of transparency and trust. Leaders with EI inspire strong relationships and vulnerable communication, which motivates employees to create a healthy company culture (Goleman, 1998).

Leadership is rooted in EI, which brings undeniable benefits to stakeholders and companies. Leaders aim to provide security for their employees. Effective leaders with EI set aside their egos and self-importance to understand and connect with their teams, cultivate respect and motivate employees towards success (Goleman, 1998). Relationships thrive when leaders make a determined effort to truly understand their teams. Acknowledging the power of a team depends on EI which helps increase productivity and team morale (Fouts, 2019).

Figure 2.2: EI and leadership

Strengths of Leaders with High EQ	Weaknesses of Leaders with Low EQ
• Create a low-stress work environment • Able to find solutions quickly • Participative management style • Put people at ease • Easy communication flow • Able to inspire and motivate • Know their team's strengths and weaknesses • Assertive • Supportive	• Create a stressful work environment • Poor communication flow • Impulsive and unable to deal with stressful and/or unexpected events • No clear direction • Put people on edge • Uninspiring • Blame others for everything • Do not value different perspectives • Unsupportive

Source: <https://symondsresearch.com/emotional-intelligence-workplace/>

2.11 Developing emotionally intelligent leaders

Many researchers have shown that successful leaders consistently demonstrate higher EI skills than their counterparts (Goleman, 1998). Leaders' ability to overcome daily challenges greatly depends on their EI. EI helps leaders in increasingly challenging leadership roles and provides aspiring leaders with a competitive advantage (Fouts, 2019).

Developing high EI in leaders involves three key skills:

1. Self-awareness - Different types of tools for assessment and feedback can be employed to improve this skill.
2. Development of skills in mentoring, coaching and counselling.
3. Self-coaching - Motivated by reading leadership development journals and periodicals.

2.12 Are leaders born or made, and can leadership skills be developed?

According to Haraida & Blass (2019), leaders are created through a complex combination of skills acquired through experiences, self-improvement and ongoing training, rather than their being born with the natural ability to effectively lead, inspire and guide a team. It is naive to believe that a person is born as a fully developed, well-rounded leader who can inspire, motivate and guide a team.

Leadership skills are developed through experience, yet some exceptional leaders possess innate traits that give them an edge. If leadership were innate, introverted individuals, those with poor social skills, lacking in empathy would never become leaders. To become a leader, it is important to engage in a leadership self-improvement strategy and understand the significance of EI. To succeed, leaders need courage, self-knowledge, reliability and support for their team. These are elements that need to be practised (Haraida & Blass, 2019).

Research indicates that individuals who are extraverted are more likely to succeed as leaders and secure leadership roles, as their qualities like bravery; assertiveness and willingness to take risks are beneficial for leadership roles (Haraida & Blass, 2019). Leadership is often associated with intelligence, yet it does not necessarily require a high Intelligence Quotient. Emotional Intelligence is the key aspect of intelligence that is important in leadership. Understanding and managing one's team's emotions and setting a good example are essential skills for effective leadership (Haraida & Blass, 2019).

Successful leadership requires ongoing learning, highlighting the significance of honesty, transparency, and EI, indicating that leadership involves a consistent commitment to learning (Marques, 2010). Researcher Marques (2010) stresses the significance of true leaders continuously improving their leadership skills through participation in learning opportunities and developmental activities during their career. Self-motivated leaders and novices in leadership seek out leadership development programmes in order to build a solid base for their journey of personal growth (Marques, 2010).

EI training improves leadership abilities by developing self-awareness, self-regulation, and social skills, which are essential for successful leadership, training provides leaders with the

skills to recognise their emotions and those of others, control their responses, and foster robust relationships (Cherniss & Roche, 2020). Consequently, this enhances communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and decision-making, which are all crucial for effectively leading teams and organisations (Cherniss & Roche, 2020).

EI training helps leaders develop a better awareness of their own feelings, drives, and prejudices, enabling them to make more deliberate and informed choices, this self-awareness enables them to prevent impulsive decisions and react in a manner that aligns with their principles and objectives (Cherniss & Roche, 2020). EI training educates leaders on managing their emotions during stressful situations, avoiding rash responses and fostering composed, logical decision-making, this is essential for guiding through difficult periods and fostering a positive workplace atmosphere (Dhillon et al., 2021).

EI provides leaders with the capacity to recover from challenges and sustain an optimistic perspective, even when confronted with difficulties, this strength motivates their teams and aids them in overcoming obstacles (Dhillon et al., 2021). Leaders cultivate the skill to comprehend and empathise with individuals, establish connections, and convey messages clearly, this enables them to engage with their teams, inspire them, and cultivate a feeling of trust and teamwork (Dhillon et al., 2021). EI assists leaders in articulating their vision and expectations effectively, actively listening to others, and resolving conflicts in a constructive manner, this results in enhanced collaboration, spirit, and efficiency (Dhillon et al., 2021).

2.13 Influence of EI on leadership effectiveness

Conversely, Kour & Ansari (2024) declare that EI is not a necessity for leadership. A leader can manage effectively without innate abilities and skill to manage emotions. Although it is accepted knowledge that a leader's effectiveness is embedded in Emotional Intelligence, Kour & Ansari (2024) believes that this concept is incorrect and destructive, particularly because it blocks some individuals from demonstrating leadership, great and significant leaders, because they lack the skill of EI.

The primary focus of a leader is to challenge the norm, even though this is usually not associated with EI, it is often seen as 'rebelliousness'. Businesses require consistent innovation to stay

competitive, a process largely driven by bold visionaries who are unafraid to push boundaries, known for their direct approach and lack of EI (Kour & Ansari, 2024).

Leadership is not about the connection between a leader and their employees, but between a leader and their intended audience. Leaders can shift perceptions on a grand scale without needing to control or manage emotions; instead, they have the power to shape others' views through their leadership abilities (Kour & Ansari, 2024). Leadership does not consist of achieving objectives by having a team work for or alongside you. Hence, leadership essentially involves effectively implementing novel paths. According to (Akhtar & Khattak (2023), dedication and hard work are key indicators of leadership.

Miao, Humphrey & Qian (2021) argues that successful leaders do not rely on their authority but rather demonstrate leadership through their dedication to their work or a strong business rationale, without necessarily needing exceptional communication abilities for inspiration.

(Miao et al., 2021) believes that leaders are innate and embody the concept of 'actions speaking louder than words', rendering EI unnecessary. He further maintains that good leaders' demonstration styles are modest, simply realistic, sometimes blunt and harsh - however their compelling ideas tend to intrigue and persuaded co-workers to support them. A leader's main role is not to control the team, but rather to focus on growth and staying committed to the ultimate objective.

Concentrating solely on leadership illustrated by managers gives a one-sided picture of the initial meaning of leadership; recognised theories disregard irregularities because they become difficult to explain. The predicted notion of leadership disregards some forms of leadership because they do not fall inside the 'managerial context' of EI - examples are leadership or inspiration from deceased leaders whose theories and guidelines are present today or leaders who lead by example and are not necessarily in managerial positions (Akhtar & Khattak, 2023).

The deceased leaders and those who lead by example are not mindful of the influence they have. Leadership does not necessarily include an informal relationship between leader and the team (Akhtar & Khattak, 2023). There are benefits to knowing that leadership is larger than simply what managers do with employees. Leaders led people to new directions. This is essential for

understanding that EI is significant for management, not for leadership. Leaders are naturally creative and cannot be developed or made (Miao et al., 2021).

When researchers write about EI in leadership, they only take into consideration senior executives or chief executives. They believe that EI improves with age, which is an old-fashioned idea. The insinuation is that young born leaders are not usually fit to be chief executives because they are considered to have insufficient Emotional Intelligence to manage a variety of stakeholders (Tompkins, 2024). In reality, they are capable but, because of the stigma of being too young and inexperienced, they are not given the chance to demonstrate their leadership ability. However, the power to lead is knowledge-based, not personality-based (Tompkins, 2024).

2.14 Significance of EI in shaping company culture

According to Ugoani (2015), EI plays a key role in maintaining company culture by enabling co-workers to provide mutual support during times of conflict and stress. It fosters strong empathy and understanding amongst colleagues, leading to enhanced overall morale and unity.

Company culture is a set of mutual values, goals, approaches and practices or actions that describe a company (Ugoani, 2015). It is a certain way or the ability of employees to be able to work together, to achieve the same goal (Ugoani, 2015). Company culture has a great impact on the objective of the company and on the attitude of its employees. Company culture manages the company's point of view in respect of resource allocation, company structure, systems in place, individuals, results, setbacks and opportunities and knowing the way to overcome them effectively (Ugoani, 2015).

Agulanna & Madu (2023) mention that company culture gives employees an idea of acceptable behaviour, of what is wrong or right- this is where the importance of emotionally intelligent leaders comes in, because they lead by example and create a safe space for employees. The culture of a company consists of many elements, including, economic environment, drive, shareholders' interest, company maturity, laws, employees' personalities and integrity and philosophy.

The environment workers operate in largely affects their level of professionalism. Company culture must always align with the workers' beliefs and attitudes, to encourage them to work efficiently and effectively (Watanabe, Shafiq, Nawaz, Saleem & Nazeer, 2024).

Understanding company cultural diversity increases efficiency and effectiveness. Company culture is historical, its strategy for decision-making is aligned in a certain way as are the ways employees are treated, and relationships outside the workplace are handled (Watanabe et al., 2024). To sustain company culture, an emotionally intelligent leader is vital, an individual with the ability to encourage common values in teamwork and to empower employees to take decisions as opposed to waiting for instructions from authority figures (Watanabe et al., 2024). Employees are treated and valued as human beings, not just as numbers; company culture includes being open to new ideas from all stakeholders (Watanabe et al., 2024).

EI and company culture are closely connected; leaders with high EI have the power to influence the culture of a company (Jamshed & Majeed, 2023). They create an environment of respect and open communication by approaching interactions with understanding and empathy. They are skilled in handling their own feelings and reacting to the emotions of others, which decreases disagreements and boosts teamwork (Jamshed & Majeed, 2023).

Leaders who have strong EI identify team friction early on to prevent it from becoming a significant conflict and tackle the issues in a manner that considers each team member's emotions and viewpoints (Jamshed & Majeed, 2023). Effective leadership with high EI is crucial in influencing a positive organisational culture. Leaders who have exceptional EI motivate and inspire their teams, create a positive work environment and set a good example by displaying respectful and empathetic conduct (Lopes, 2016).

An emotionally intelligent leader is more set to manage change and deal with difficult circumstances, leading to a stronger company culture. A leader with EI could utilise their knowledge of their team's emotions to lead a significant change, making sure that all team members feel acknowledged and assisted during the transition (Lopes, 2016). A good company culture promotes EI in its the teams. A work environment that values and respects emotional

expression, results in employees feeling more at ease in cultivating and applying their EI. (Lopes, 2016).

The connection between EI and organisational culture is extremely powerful. Employees who have strong EI can positively influence the work environment, thus leading to an enhancement of EI among their colleagues (Lopes, 2016). Having EI in a work environment can improve teamwork and productivity.

2.15 The future of EI in leadership roles

The future of EI in organisations includes an increasing emphasis on its importance in employee engagement, leadership growth, and overall workplace effectiveness, with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation handling more repetitive duties, EI is vital for cultivating human relationships, encouraging creativity, and enhancing employee wellness (Markfort & Zamorski, 2020).

Businesses are progressively allocating resources to EI training to improve communication, conflict management, and empathy, resulting in more cohesive teams and improved business results (Markfort & Zamorski, 2020). This entails a strategic transition aimed at fostering EI among employees, merging it with training and development initiatives, and building inclusive, supportive workplace settings (Markfort & Zamorski, 2020).

There are various training courses and programs offered to enhance EI at work, many of which yield remarkable results. This workshop offered by the Careerstone Group aims to assist you and your organization in enhancing their ability to recognize emotions, manage emotions, and develop social skills -all Careerstone's training, facilitation, consulting, and coaching services can be delivered virtually.

Mentoring can greatly improve EI by providing modelling, feedback, and fostering a safe environment for reflection, mentors can exhibit EI by managing situations with emotional sensitivity and compassion, offering constructive criticism on a mentee's emotional responses, and assisting them in self-reflection to enhance their EI (Prummer, et al., 2024).

Mentors provide impartial insights and assist mentees in recognizing facets of EI enhancement, feedback is crucial in aiding mentees in cultivating self-awareness and identifying behavioural

patterns that obstruct EI- positive feedback can aid mentees in developing confidence and enhancing self-management skills (Prummer, et al., 2024). According to Jenkins (2020), five factors indicate that EI in leadership will play a crucial role in shaping the future of work.

2.15.1 It is a human need

There are three essential employee needs in a workplace: the need to survive, a sense of belonging and the opportunity to become a better version of themselves. As the world of work is constantly progressing, more everyday challenges are faced – more especially with the overwhelming digital inventions, fast-paced world and uncertainties and unforeseen developments. Workers need always to be motivated and optimistic to cope well under all circumstances. Emotionally intelligent leaders are sufficiently skilled to offer a sense of belonging to their teams (Jenkins, 2020).

2.15.2 Technology

The 4th industrial revolution needs strong, knowledgeable employees, as well as emotionally intelligent leaders. As the world shifts to more advanced technology, human skills like compassion and empathy will delineate the competitive advantage of employees and entire companies. As technology progresses, it may seem overwhelming for employees who are not good at and do not like technology. This will require leaders and colleagues who are emotionally intelligent to support each other in team situations (Jenkins, 2020).

2.15.3 Changing employer-worker relationships

Previously, the employer-worker relationship was very transactional: ‘do you are told’ setting. Today, work culture and relationships at work are expanding. Leaders are expecting workers to be comfortable with them and for them to brainstorm together. More leaders are open to emotional sides of their employees’ personal lives. They believe that employees need to be happy for them to function to their best abilities (Clark, 2020).

2.15.4 Achieving a balance between work and personal life

There are widespread misconceptions that emotions are inappropriate at work, causing employees to mistakenly link professionalism with appearing unemotional or distant (Clark, 2020). The lines separating work- and personal-life are becoming increasingly unclear. Workers

are taking on additional tasks home, while also allowing more of their personal lives to influence their work. No matter how hard individuals try to simply shut off their emotions and experiences when they walk through the company doors, emotions will always come along with them (Clark, 2020).

2.15.5 Generation Z requires it

Organisations are finding it difficult to adjust to the changing emotional requirements of their employees, particularly within the younger generation - 18- to 25-year-olds. The National Institute of Mental Health stated that Gen Z experiences a much higher rate of serious mental health difficulties than older generations, leading them to need empathetic leaders (Steele, Moake & Medina-Craven, 2023). If the youth is the future, then EI must be a key aspect of the future of work (Steele et al., 2023).

2.16 Leadership development

Steele et al. (2023) explains leadership development as improving an individual's skills to effectively lead within a company. Leadership positions involve ensuring that an organisation's strategy is implemented by promoting a healthy work environment, providing support and developing employee skills.

Developing leadership skills is crucial as the effectiveness of business leaders directly affects employee performance across all levels in the organisation. Absence of necessary resources and expertise may result in the entire organisation facing preventable obstacles while leaders try to lead effectively. A leader is expected to showcase innovative leadership techniques, to assume responsibilities and overcome challenges.

The aim of leadership development is to equip leaders for various challenges and any potential new obstacles they might face (Steele et al., 2023). Kolasani (2023) has mapped five guidelines to achieve an effective leadership development plan, namely: deep self-assessment, goal setting with agility, embracing leadership training, cultivating a robust professional network and strengthening soft skills.

2.16.1 Deep self-assessment

Self-reflection is the initial stage of every leadership voyage; accurately evaluating professional positions requires honestly analysing of one's strengths and weaknesses (Foster, 2024). Having self-awareness is important for recognising areas of improvement and potential risks. Engaging in such a reflective process involves not only introspection but also soliciting outside input, this procedure helps individuals grasp their leadership approach and it boosts EI, a critical aspect of successful leadership (Foster, 2024).

2.16.2 Goal setting with agility

Establishing objectives is essential for every leadership development strategy. Nevertheless, in today's professional environment, this procedure demands flexibility and agility (Foster, 2024). Leaders need to establish goals that are both motivating and attainable, finding a balance between long-term visions and short-term successes. This guarantees that objectives are not too far away or intimidating to go after (Steele et al., 2023). Practical goal setting requires consistent evaluation and adjustment to remain in sync with changing personal and professional situations.

2.16.3 Embracing leadership training

Training programmes for leaders provide a special mix of theoretical understanding and hands-on skill development. These programmes teach the required technical skills and offer exposure to a variety of perspectives and experiences (Kolasani, 2023). Participating in leadership training is putting resources into leaders' professional futures, providing them with the skills and self-assurance needed for successful leadership positions.

2.16.4 Nurture a robust professional network

Effective leadership relies heavily on strong connections and relationships with others; developing and maintaining professional connections is vital for tapping into fresh opportunities, acquiring various perspectives and obtaining assistance and input (Kolasani, 2023). Interacting with colleagues, guides and professionals boosts one's comprehension and improves one's leadership skills.

2.16.5 Strengthening soft skills

Leadership necessitates a distinct blend of technical and interpersonal abilities. It is crucial to prioritise soft skills like communication, sympathy, negotiation and disagreement resolution

(Kolasani, 2023). These abilities assist leaders in successfully manoeuvring through complicated organisational environments, fostering united teams and achieving beneficial results.

2.17 The influence of EI on leadership development

EI is essential in fostering leadership growth as it helps leaders comprehend and control both their own emotions and the emotions of their teams (Al-Zu'bi, 2015). Studies indicate that leaders who possess high EI are better at creating positive work environments, encouraging teamwork and enhancing team productivity (Al-Zu'bi, 2015).

EI enables a leader to connect with employees, promoting trust and transparent communication; this encourages team spirit and involvement, leading to increased efficiency (Nicmanis, 2024). Leaders with EI promote self-awareness and self-improvement by regularly requesting feedback from their team to improve their management abilities and leadership qualities (Nicmanis, 2024). They value the team's input, ultimately improving team synergy, leadership development and overall performance (Al-Zu'bi, 2015).

EI motivates leader always to strive to improve their skills by regularly participating in leadership training (Nicmanis, 2024). Regular training aids leaders in skills development, enabling them to learn new skills and strategies to enhance their effectiveness in their roles (Nicmanis, 2024). Continual learning helps leaders stay up to date on industry trends and best practices, enabling them to adjust their management styles as necessary (Issah, 2018).

When leaders prioritize their own growth, it inspires team members to also pursue opportunities for personal development (Al-Zu'bi, 2015). Training frequently equips leaders with structures and resources that enhance their capacity to make decisions, resulting in improved results for the team (Issah, 2018). Leadership training frequently focuses on EI and interpersonal abilities, which help improve team relationships and promote cooperative atmospheres (Kaplan, 2024). As leaders enhance their abilities, their self-assurance increases, which has a positive impact on their leadership approach and their teams, this does not just help the leader but also strengthens the team as a whole (Kolasani, 2023).

Having EI allows leaders to acknowledge mistakes, request help from their teams when needed and be willing to learn from the teams despite being in superior positions (Kaplan, 2024). These

characteristics demonstrate that a leader with EI can grow by acknowledging errors and displaying humility, creating an environment of transparency that empowers team members to openly discuss their struggles without feeling insecure about one's position in the team (Kaplan and Kaplan, 2024).

A leader's being able to request help from the team encourages teamwork and highlights the importance of everyone's contributions, no matter their position; a leader's openness to learn from the team demonstrates a growth mind-set, motivating the team also to adopt a mentality of continuous growth and improvement (Issah, 2018). This leadership technique develops trust among team members by making them feel secure in sharing their opinions and suggesting ideas, as they believe their leader respects their viewpoints (Issah, 2018). By considering the team's range of skills and experiences, the leader can make better decisions and solve problems more efficiently, which also increases team members' engagement and commitment to the team's success (Kaplan, 2024).

To sum up, EI has a significant impact on the development of leadership by giving leaders the abilities needed to build strong, adaptable and successful teams. By focusing on EI in leadership development programmes, companies can improve leaders' performance and nurture a healthy work environment (Issah, 2018).

2.18 The influence of EI on leadership performance

EI increases leadership effectiveness by enhancing relationships, decision-making and team dynamics; it enables leaders to establish a constructive work environment, ultimately resulting in improved organisational results and performance (Hourani, Litz & Parkman, 2020)

Leaders with high EI are more capable of handling conflict by using their emotional insight to resolve disputes efficiently and to promote teamwork; they can adjust to different situations and challenges, showing resilience and adaptability that motivates their teams through tough situations (Dulewicz, Young & Dulewicz, 2005). EI plays a crucial role in coaching and mentoring connections, as leaders with high EI can offer helpful feedback and aid in the development of their team members, both personally and professionally (Troth, 2024).

Leaders' strong EI is vital for their performance, as it allows them to understand their emotions and their impact on their actions, enabling them to make better decisions and handle situations more efficiently (Okirie, 2024).

Leaders can effectively control their emotions through EI, enabling them to remain composed and calm in stressful situations, which in turn helps build trust and confidence within their teams (Troth, 2024). Leaders can comprehend and share their team members' emotions and viewpoints; this skill promotes solid connections, increases teamwork and enhances morale (Troth, 2024).

Leaders who have high EI are effective in communicating and resolving conflicts, motivating their teams, encouraging open discussions and handling interpersonal issues skilfully (Warrier, Shankar & Belal, 2021). They can adapt their strategies according to their team's emotional state, enabling them to adjust strategies or communication methods to better address their team's requirements (Warrier et al., 2021).

Leaders who are emotionally intelligent take into account both emotional and rational aspects when making decisions, resulting in more comprehensive and well-rounded results (Okirie, 2024). Studies show that teams under the guidance of emotionally intelligent leaders show improved performance, as these leaders promote a welcoming and encouraging workplace environment (Okirie, 2024). Leaders who have strong EI are better at leading teams through change by acknowledging emotional reactions and uncertainties. This ultimately promotes a sense of security among team members (Warrier et al., 2021).

Having EI is essential for leaders to create a positive and collaborative workplace by being aware of and managing their own emotions, as well as understanding their teams' emotions (Goleman, 2021). Leaders with EI can recognise when team members are experiencing frustration, anxiety or a lack of motivation and can facilitate their dealing with these emotions in a proactive manner (Chen & Guo, 2018). Emotionally intelligent leaders can acknowledge the emotions of their teams, which can make team members feel appreciated and respected, ultimately promoting transparency and positivity in the team (Chen & Guo, 2018).

Leaders who have strong EI are able to manage conflicts more effectively creating an environment where problems are dealt with positively, resulting in a high-performance team

(Sanchez-Gomez & Bresó, 2020). They frequently set performance goals and conduct regular evaluations for their teams in order to ensure continuous improvement, they prioritise developing strong connections with their teams, ensuring clarity in goals and objectives and providing constructive feedback (Goleman, 2021).

EI assists leaders in evaluating their teams' skills and establishing goals that are both difficult and achievable, by matching team objectives with personal drives; they motivate their teams to boost engagement (Sanchez-Gomez & Bresó, 2020). Leaders with a high level of EI offer performance feedback that is encouraging and focused on development, rather than criticism (Goleman, 2021). This helps create a supportive environment that boosts teamwork and productivity. This comprehensive strategy results in enhanced overall effectiveness and a more positive work environment (Chen & Guo, 2018).

2.19 EI Model- Mayer and Salovey

Drs. Peter Salovey & John D. Mayer approached the concept of EI defining it as the capacity to observe personal and others' emotions, to differentiate between them, and to utilise this insight to influence one's thoughts and behaviours, creating a four-branch model to assess EIs essential emotion-related skills: perception/expression of emotion, use of emotion to facilitate thinking, understanding of emotion, and management of emotion in oneself and others.

2.19.1 Perception of emotion

The perception of emotion involves leaders' ability to recognise feelings in themselves and others through facial cues, vocal tone, and nonverbal communication, individuals adept in sensing emotions can also convey feelings appropriately and articulate emotional requirements -the ability to correctly recognise feelings in the expressions or tone of others serves as an essential foundation for deeper comprehension of emotions (Mayer, 2004).

2.19.2 Use of emotion to facilitate thinking

Utilising emotions to improve cognitive functions and adjust to different circumstances is the second aspect of EI, leaders skilled in this field recognise that certain emotional conditions are more conducive to achieving specific results than others (Mayer, 2004). This is the ability of emotions to engage with and direct the cognitive system, enhancing thought processes (Salovey, & Mayer, 2004).

Emotions take precedence over thought; in simpler terms, something that elicits an emotional reaction is something that catches our interest, thus, having an effective emotional input system should assist in guiding thoughts regarding issues that are genuinely significant- emotions play a crucial role in the emergence of specific types of creativity (Mayer, 2004).

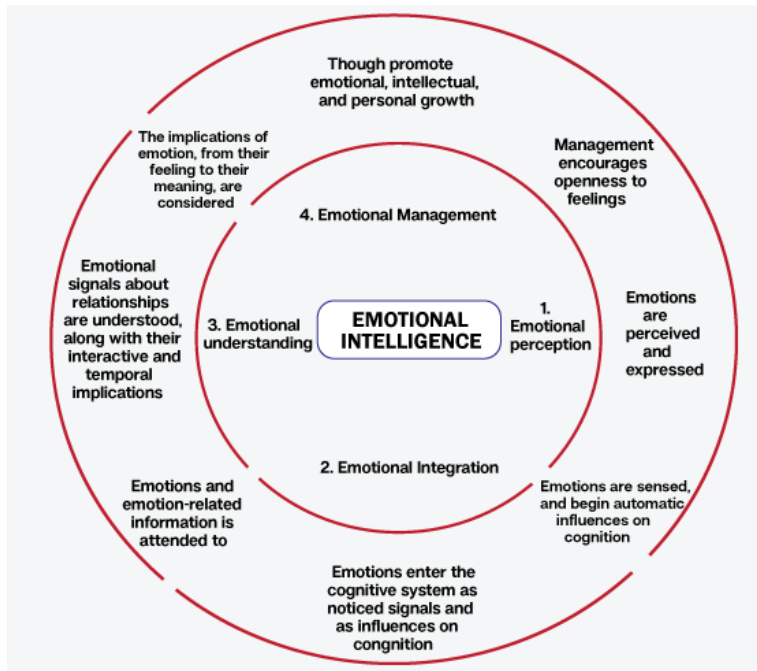
2.19.3 Understanding of emotion

Emotions communicate messages, joy signifies a wish to connect with others; rage reflects a wish to strike or hurt; fear suggests a wish to flee, and so on -every emotion communicates a unique set of potential messages and behaviours related to those messages (Salovey, & Mayer, 2004). Understanding emotional communications and the corresponding actions is a significant facet of this skill set, once a leader is able to recognise such messages and possible actions, the ability to think critically about those emotional communications and actions becomes significant too (Salovey, & Mayer, 2004).

2.19.4 Management of emotion in oneself and others

Emotion regulation encompasses the capacity to be receptive to various emotions, appreciate the significance of experiencing certain feelings in particular contexts, and comprehend which immediate and prolonged techniques are most effective for managing emotions (Salovey, & Mayer, 2004). Developing techniques, like taking a deep breath and pausing until one feels composed, can help manage anger and stop the situation from worsening, employing this approach might also enable to understand alternative perspectives (Mayer, 2004).

Figure 2.3: Mayer & Salovey's (1997) Four-branch model of EI



Source: <https://www.civilserviceindia.com/subject/General-Studies/notes/emotional-intelligence-concepts.html>

2.20 Contrast between two EI models discussed in this study

MAYER AND SALOVEY	GOLEMAN AND BOYATZIS
Perceiving and identifying emotions	Self-awareness
Able to identify own emotion	Awareness of self and awareness of feelings
Able to identify emotion in others	Accurate self-assessment and personal insight
Able to express emotions and needs accurately	Self-confidence and self-assurance
Able to discriminate between accurate and inaccurate expression of emotions	
Assimilating and using emotions	Social awareness
Emotions help to prioritise thinking	Empathy,
Emotions aid judgment and memory	Organisational or service orientation
Emotions help understanding of multiple perspectives	
Emotions differentially encourage problem solving approaches	
Understanding and analysing emotions	Self-management
Able to recognise and label emotions	Self-regulation, authenticity, accountability,
Able to interpret meanings that emotions convey	flexibility, and achievement orientation
Able to understand complex feelings	
Able to recognise changes in emotions	

Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/A-comparison-of-two-four-component-models-of-emotional-intelligence_

2.21 Differing perspectives on the significance of EI in leadership

Although EI has evident advantages in improving interpersonal relationships and regulating emotions, it also has its disadvantages, acknowledging the possible drawbacks can assist leaders and organisations to find a balance between EI and other essential skills, promoting a more comprehensive approach to personal and professional growth.

Yvanovich (2024) states that individuals who refine their emotional abilities improve their ability for influencing others, when a leader excels at managing their emotions, they can conceal genuine feelings and they understand the emotions of others, therefore can master the art of manipulation and inspire employees to act against what is best for themselves for personal gain.

EI prevents critical thinking skills, high level of EI may occasionally lead to an emphasis on comprehending and adjusting to the feelings of others, possibly concealing the necessity to question established norms or consider unconventional ideas (Yvanovich, 2024).

Leaders with high EI struggle to accept and handle constructive criticism since it can be seen as a danger to their emotional health (Resnik & Dewaele, 2020). Leaders with high EI may be reluctant to take unusual decisions, as EI can heighten one's awareness of others' views, resulting in an unwillingness to make decisions that could be seen as unpopular or spark disagreements (Yvanovich, 2024).

Leaders with high EI may be more inclined to sacrifice their personal values or principles for the sake of maintaining harmony, even when it proves harmful, additionally- a strong focus on EI in certain situations may obscure other essential skills and abilities, resulting in a misunderstanding of individuals' talents (Resnik & Dewaele, 2020).

Figure 2.4: Pros and Cons of EI

Pro'S	Con's
Enhanced Self-Reflection: Deeper understanding of personal thoughts, emotions, and motivations.	Negative Self-Talk: Tendency to engage in self-criticism, affecting mental health.
Improved Decision-Making: Better contemplation leads to more informed and thoughtful choices.	Social Withdrawal: Over-reliance on self-dialogue can limit social interactions and learning from others.
Effective Stress Management: Self-dialogue as a tool for emotional regulation and stress reduction.	Limited External Perspectives: Relying solely on internal dialogue can result in a narrow worldview.
Goal Setting and Personal Development: Aids in setting and achieving personal goals.	Misinterpretation and Bias: Risk of misunderstanding one's thoughts and emotions without external feedback.
Development of Intrapersonal Intelligence: Increases the ability to understand and manage internal processes.	Overthinking: Excessive introspection can lead to indecision and hinder progress.

Source: <https://images.examples.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Pros-and-Cons-of-Intrapersonal-Communication.png>

2.22 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the current literature regarding the influence of EI in the development of leadership within the corporate field. It has underscored the crucial impact that EI has on developing successful leaders, with several studies stressing the importance of self-awareness, empathy, emotional control, and interpersonal abilities in managing intricate organisational relationships.

This chapter delved deeper into the changing dynamics of leadership, proposing that EI will remain essential for future leadership as companies place greater importance on human-centred methods rather than solely on technical skills. The literature highlighted the significant impact leaders have on workplace culture, employee involvement, and overall performance - emphasising that EI leadership enhances organisational success.

Additionally, the chapter explored the significant relationship between EI and different leadership styles, including transformational, and authentic leadership. Leaders with strong EI tend to be more flexible, resilient, and successful in leading their teams through transitions and uncertainty.

Approaches to improve EI in the workplace were also examined, such as training initiatives, coaching, feedback systems, and organizational policies that foster emotional development and psychological safety. These initiatives are crucial for developing emotionally intelligent leaders capable of nurturing inclusive, innovative, and high-performing teams.

In conclusion, the literature emphasizes that cultivating EI is not just advantageous but crucial for modern leadership. As organizations confront quickly changing challenges, those that prioritize EI as an essential leadership skill are more likely to succeed. The results highlight the necessity for purposeful leadership development initiatives that incorporate EI as a core component, customized to align with different leadership styles and organizational requirements.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter the research methods adopted to find answers to the research questions and objectives. This chapter encompasses the research design, research method, research strategy, and study population, study location, sampling procedure and size, data collection method and data analysis. Furthermore, this chapter highlights processes undertaken to guarantee the reliability and validity of the research. Ethical considerations for the research are also presented and the chapter concludes by mentioning the limitations of the study.

3.2 Research design

The research design is the overall strategy and method of analysis chosen to combine different study components, ensuring a thorough investigation of the research problem. Dannels (2018) explains that choosing a research design involves understanding how various parts of the study are connected in a logical way to effectively solve the research problem and establish the method for collecting and analysing data, the choice of design to use is impacted by the research problem (Dannels, 2018).

There are multiple research designs; the research approach significantly influences the research design chosen for a study (Fonseca, 2023). There are three types of research approach: a quantitative approach, which involves gathering and examining numerical data. It is utilised for identifying patterns and averages, predicting outcomes, hypotheses and generalise about findings. It operates under the assumption of realism, which posits the existence of a singular reality that can be uncovered through study (Orluwene & Ajala, 2019).

Examples of research designs most appropriate for a quantitative approach include experimental and quasi-experimental designs. Experimental and quasi-experimental designs provide the opportunity to investigate cause-and-effect connections, whereas descriptive and correlational designs allow for the assessment of variables and the characterisation of the relationships among them (Dannels, 2018).

A qualitative approach is typically associated with phenomenologists or researchers focused on human experience- considering the fact that respondents are human, with thoughts, emotions

and experiences that must be considered (Orluwene & Ajala, 2019). Qualitative researchers lean towards a constructionist perspective, which suggests that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered and that there are multiple realities depending on an individual's perspective, as opposed to a realist viewpoint which sees reality as a single entity (Damyanov, 2024).

Examples of designs most appropriate for a qualitative approach are ethnographic studies, case studies, explanatory research and surveys –research designs allow for expression through words. They are used to comprehend ideas, notions or personal encounters. This kind of design allows researchers to collect thorough knowledge on subjects that are not fully comprehended (Damyanov, 2024).

A mixed method approach involves integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a thorough understanding of a research question by collecting and analysing both numerical and narrative data (Damyanov, 2024).

A descriptive research design has been selected for this research; this type of research offers a detailed and structured overview of a population, situation or phenomenon, allowing the researcher to measure variables without manipulating them (Turale, 2020).

Descriptive research is the most suitable design for this research as it identifies characteristics, occurrences, patterns and groupings (Ganesha & Aithal, 2022). It is beneficial when there is limited information available about the topic. In order to investigate the reasons behind an occurrence, the researcher must first comprehend how, when and where it takes place (Orluwene & Ajala, 2019).

Descriptive research enables a comprehensive study of the correlation between leadership development and EI, using data analysis to establish the correlation (Ganesha & Aithal, 2022). A descriptive research design employs various data sources to collect information for making accurate predictions about a research problem. This research design helps to pinpoint, observe and measure characteristics to inform the findings (Ganesha & Aithal, 2022) .

A key aspect of the descriptive research method is its reliance on uncontrolled random variables as the researcher aims to gain an understanding of the inherent behaviour of the subject being studied (Brown, 2021). Descriptive research is classified as quantitative research, but it can also

employ qualitative techniques for descriptive objectives. The development of the research design should be undertaken with care to guarantee the validity and reliability of the results (Stoecker & Avila, 2020).

This research aims to outline, observe and review characteristics of a particular group and phenomenon without any manipulation or intervention; a descriptive research design is most suitable for accomplishing these objectives; this design is ideal for presenting a precise and thorough overview of the subject (Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez, 2020). Descriptive research observes important data and understandings about the surroundings or conditions related to the subject, which assists to comprehend the interactions among different factors within a specific context (Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez, 2020).

This study seeks to discover patterns and relationships between two variables. Descriptive research offers numerical data that can be statistically analysed to uncover trends, averages and differences, facilitating the effective communication of findings (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). This research focuses on a large population, descriptive research simplifies the process of gathering and examining data from a large population, making it easier to handle and more budget-friendly (Stoecker & Avila, 2020). Descriptive research is less risky than experimental designs because it does not involve manipulating variables, making it a safer choice for studying specific populations and for this study (Stoecker & Avila, 2020).

3.3 Research paradigm

A research paradigm is a set of philosophical principles that shape the research process, encompassing concepts, beliefs and biases (Brown, 2021). The research paradigm clearly maps out the direction for exploring the research topic. This enhances the understanding of the research and enhances the effectiveness of the techniques and evaluation (Brown, 2021).

Moreover, a research paradigm examines the way in which knowledge is comprehended and studied, explicitly defining the research's goal, drive and anticipated results (Brown, 2021). Research paradigms are separated into three pillars: Ontology, which examines the essence of existence. It aims to address the questions: 'Does a singular reality exist, are there multiple realities, or does reality not exist?' (Pretorius, 2024). Epistemology, which focuses on examining how individuals can comprehend reality and gain knowledge of it, covers the scope and methods

of acquiring knowledge and how to verify its accuracy (Pretorius, 2024). Methodology examines how people explore their social surroundings and approves the knowledge obtained, aiming to address the question of, "How to approach uncovering the truth" (Pretorius, 2024).

Within the research pillars, there are multiple research paradigms; the positivist paradigm involves testing hypotheses or quantifying variables in order to determine relationships or correlations (Park, Konge & Artino, 2020). Constructivist, interpretivist and critical realist paradigms aim to understand the intricacies of human behaviour within specific contexts by examining the meanings, experiences and perceptions of respondents, resulting in research that examines societal transformation or a more profound exploration of personal experiences (Park et al., 2020). Pragmatism permits adaptability and the use of mixed-methods strategies (Park et al., 2020). Choosing the appropriate research paradigm is crucial as it provides a focused path for investigating the topic of interest. It provides a rational and intentional framework for implementation, while also improving the quality of the research (Brown, 2021).

Although there exist different paradigms, positivism was adopted in this study. Positivism asserts that reality is unified and can be measured and observed objectively, the researcher remains separate from the research subject and knowledge is acquired by observing and measuring empirical data (Fleetwood, 2024). Furthermore, positivists argue that knowledge should come from empirical evidence and logical reasoning, thus the research should be unbiased (Fleetwood, 2024). The use of a positivist perspective enhances the credibility of the research findings by prioritising concrete, quantifiable data and scientific techniques, thus making it suitable for this study (Grant, 2022). Positivism reduces researcher bias and subjective interpretation by emphasising quantifiable data, resulting in conclusions that are more objective (Grant, 2022).

Positivism supports the evaluation of theories through structured research, making it appropriate for this study, which aims to confirm established theories and explore connections (Omodan, 2022). Utilising standardised methods of positivist research enables easier generalisation of findings to bigger populations, ultimately improving the study's applicability (Omodan, 2022). Positivism offers a well-defined structure for designing research, collecting data and analysing it, which aids in maintaining logic and accuracy in the research (Grant, 2022). This study is

unbiased research, focusing on the use of statistical analysis to explore quantitative connections among variables (Omodan, 2022).

Positivism and the measurement of EI converge in their common focus on objective, quantifiable knowledge, positivism, in terms of philosophy, emphasises empirical observation and quantitative techniques to examine observable events (Walsh, 2024). This corresponds with the measurement of EI as it enables researchers to convert personal emotions and actions into quantifiable data, like results from standardised EI assessments (Garbade, 2020).

Positivism emphasises that knowledge should be derived from observable and quantifiable events. This approach aligns with the goal of measuring emotional intelligence (EI), as it seeks to convert personal emotional experiences into quantifiable data points suitable for statistical analysis (Walsh, 2024). EI is typically evaluated through standardised tests, surveys, or questionnaires that assess various aspects of emotional awareness, regulation, and application. These evaluations provide numerical ratings that can be analysed to understand individual differences and the relationships between EI and other factors, including leadership development and employee performance (Garbade, 2020).

Additionally, positivism is closely associated with quantitative research methods, such as experiments, surveys, and statistical analysis. These techniques are used to collect and assess data that can be represented numerically (Walsh, 2024). The aim of positivism is to achieve an objective understanding, meaning that the information should be free from personal biases or interpretations. This objective aligns with the purpose of measuring EI, as it strives to provide a uniform and impartial assessment of a person's emotional capabilities (Garbade, 2020). However, while positivism focuses on objective and measurable data, it faces challenges in capturing the complexities of emotional intelligence. This focus may oversimplify intricate human experiences and fail to fully reflect the subjective and diverse nature of emotions (Walsh, 2024). By emphasising measurable aspects, the significance of personal experiences, interpretations, and values—essential for understanding EI—may be overshadowed (Walsh, 2024).

3.4 Research method

Although there are different kinds of research methods, this study employs a quantitative research method. Quantitative research entails analysing and collecting numeric data to discover patterns, determine averages, assess connections and derive overall understandings (Fleetwood, 2024). Quantitative data analysis uses statistical methods to handle and interpret numerical data; it involves collecting measurable data, using statistics and computational methods to systematically study the phenomena (Fleetwood, 2024). Quantitative research statistically gathers relevant data through sampling techniques such as online surveys, experiments and questionnaires (Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri, 2021).

Quantitative research plays a vital role in reaching well-defined conclusions through analysing empirical data, it enables researchers to quantify relationships and differences objectively, which is crucial for testing and establishing patterns (Treglown & Furnham, 2023). Quantitative research enables the measurement of EI through recognised scales (such as EQ-i or MSCEIT) and offers a statistical foundation for assessing its influence on leadership development.

This allows the researcher to measure the connections thoroughly (Treglown & Furnham, 2023). A quantitative approach supports objective data analysis, reducing bias, which is important in studying how EI affects various aspects of leadership, like decision-making, team interactions and conflict resolution (Treglown & Furnham, 2023).

Analysing statistics can uncover connections and relationships between EI and effectiveness in leadership and recognising these patterns may assist organisations in pinpointing qualities that lead to effective leadership and shaping their training and development initiatives (Taherdoost, 2022). A study from a quantitative approach may address gaps in the existing literature by offering empirical evidence that either supports or questions current theories and frameworks (Taherdoost, 2022).

Quantitative research uses statistical techniques to evaluate data, producing strong and trustworthy conclusions that can be applied to broader groups, ultimately strengthening the validity of the results (Taherdoost, 2022). Predicting results using numerical data is a key benefit of quantitative research; it aids in anticipating patterns (Dawadi et al., 2021). This approach is

efficient at finding and establishing connections between variables, helping in theory building and practical application (Dawadi et al., 2021).

The study is primarily quantitative, offering precision, objectivity, and the ability to generalise the research findings to larger populations (Zyoud, Bsharat & Dweikat, 2024). By utilising a quantitative research method, this study provided a high level of accuracy and objectivity in assessing the impact of EI on leadership performance. This study did not adopt a qualitative approach because it fails to enhance the reliability and accuracy of research findings by reducing the subjectivity and bias associated with measuring instruments and research findings. Additionally, the study did not adopt a qualitative approach due to potential researcher subjectivity, the complexity of data analysis, difficulties in ensuring anonymity, and limited generalisability (Mwita, 2022).

3.5 Research location

This study is conducted at the BP South Africa (BPSA) offices in Durban, a coastal city in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province. BPSA is one of the leading oil and gas companies in South Africa (SA) - distributing top fuel products and operating more than five hundred branded service stations throughout; it has been active in SA for a century. Their main objective is to be NetZero by 2050 or sooner. The company provides employment to over one thousand South Africans. The study has been conducted in this company because of its convenience and access to large amount of data.

3.6 Target population

The target population refers to the entire group that a researcher is concentrating on examining and evaluating (Taherdoost, 2021). The target population consists of all individuals within specific geographical and time boundaries, from which a sample is selected (Taherdoost, 2021). A research population is a sizable group of individuals or items that a research or study focuses on, typically sharing similar characteristics (Taherdoost, 2021).

The target population for this research is 200 from employees and leaders in the BPSA, KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) corporate office. The rationale for choosing this quantity of employees

is to allow the researcher to work with a sample size suitable for generating enough and representative responses.

3.7 Sampling strategy

A sample is a subset of individuals, events or objects taken from a larger population and organised into smaller, representative groups for research, ensuring that findings from the sample can be applied to the whole population (Rahman, 2023).

A variety of methods can be used to choose a sample. Two of these methods are probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling involves randomly selecting individuals from a population to ensure each member has an equal opportunity of being chosen for inclusion in a sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Probability sampling techniques are appropriate for conducting quantitative research. Probability sampling is a method of research that guarantees that each member of a population has a specified probability of being chosen; this approach minimises bias and improves the sample's representation (Berndt, 2020). Probability sampling examples consist of simple random sampling, where each population member has an equal opportunity of being chosen. For example, employing a random number generator to choose 100 respondents from a population of 1000 (Berndt, 2020).

Systematic sampling involves selecting respondents from a list that has been randomly ordered at regular intervals, for instance, to select 100 respondents from a population of 1000, beginning at a random point and then pick every 10th respondent following that (Berndt, 2020). Stratified sampling (a version of random sampling) involves categorising the population into strata with similar characteristics, then sampling at random from each stratum- for instance, surveying students across various grades, you may choose a proportional number from every grade level (Cornesse, Blom, Dutwin, Krosnick, De Leeuw, Legleye, Pasek, Pennay, Phillips, Sakshaug, Struminskaya & Wenz., 2019).

Non-probability sampling, however, is based on intentional sampling, discretion and purposive sampling. In this method of sampling, the researcher takes into account certain interests or traits of the population and chooses samples that represent those interests or traits (Rahman, 2023).

There are several non-probability sampling techniques, such as convenience sampling where the researcher selects individuals easily accessible and at a convenient location (Cornesse et al., 2019). In judgmental sampling, researchers make decisions based on their own judgment to pick respondents (Cornesse et al., 2019). Snowball sampling, another technique, is useful for researching populations that are difficult to access by having one participant refer others who meet the criteria, leading to a "snowball" effect (Emerson, 2015). In addition, quota sampling entails grouping the population and choosing a set number of participants from each group, such as 60 males and 60 females, to ensure balanced representation (Yang & Banamah, 2014).

The current research applies a random sampling method to select the cases or respondents for the study. This method selects a random subset of a population: every individual in the population has an equal opportunity to be selected (Rahman, 2023). There is no possibility of bias since no human judgement is used to select the sample.

Utilising random sampling is beneficial in data collection as it guarantees an equal opportunity for every member of the population to be chosen (Rahman, Tabash, Salamzadeh, Abduli & Rahaman, (2022). By randomly choosing participants, bias is minimised, reducing the risk of selection bias, and leading to samples and results that are more representative and generalisable to the entire population (Rahman et al., 2022).

Random sampling enables the use of statistical methods for data analysis by incorporating probability theory to calculate margins of error and confidence intervals and it enhances statistical validity (Rahman et al., 2022). A randomly chosen sample is likely to include a variety of viewpoints and a broad range of perspectives and experiences, enhancing the results and leading to a more thorough grasp of the research subject (Gupta & Shabbir, 2008). Random sampling, with its simplicity and effectiveness, is easy to employ, especially when there is a comprehensive sampling frame, and it is cost effective (Gupta & Shabbir, 2008).

3.8 Sample size

A sample size refers to the number of individuals involved in carrying out a study. Researchers select a sample by considering demographic factors like age, gender and geographical location

(Rahman, 2023). In order to fully investigate the influence of EI on leadership development, the researcher has selected a diverse sample, comprising employees from KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector and including all levels within the organisation. However, due to the company's large size, carrying out research on the entire company would not have been feasible, being too costly and time-consuming (Gupta and Shabbir, 2008).

Raosoft's sample size calculator was employed to determine the sample size of 132 respondents, taking into account a target population of 200 employees. At a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, the suggested sample size was 132. According to Althubaiti (2023), when comparing the mean difference between two groups, a medium effect size of 0.5 requires a total sample size of 128 respondents to achieve a power of 80%. Based on Althubaiti's (2023) recommendations, this sample size is sufficient for drawing unbiased conclusions from the research findings. The sample size formula is presented as follows.

$$x = Z(c/100)^2 r (100 - r)$$

$$n = N x / ((N-1) E^2 + x)$$

$$E = \text{Sqrt} [(N - n) x / n (N-1)]$$

n = Sample size

r = Fraction of the expected response

E = Margin error
level c

$Z(c/100)$ = Critical value for the confidence

N = Population size

x = Recommended sample size

3.9 Data collection methods

Data collection refers to the procedure of collecting and evaluating information on variables of interest, in a conventional systematic manner that allows an individual to answer research questions (Mwita, 2022). Methods of collecting data include a range of approaches and instruments for obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data. The methods used to collect data

are extremely important in research as they affect the quality and accuracy of the collected data (Mwita, 2022).

The data collection method employed for this study is a survey in using a questionnaire. A survey is a tool used in research that includes a series of questions designed to gather information from respondents; usually a research survey includes a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions (Mwita, 2022).

In this study, data was collected from respondents using semi-structured questionnaires. The study adopted a validated research instrument created by Goleman (1998) to measure EI (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and motivation). This scale has been adopted by several researchers (Gkintoni, Boutsinas & Kourkoutas, 2022; Gkintoni & Dimakos, 2022; Gkintoni, Dimakos, Halkiopoulou & Antonopoulou, 2023) to measure EI. Furthermore, the study used the measurement scale developed by Dulewicz and Higgs (2003) to evaluate a leader's development and performance. The surveys consisted of 24 items: bio-data (3 items), leadership performance (3 items) EI (12 items) and leadership development (3 items). Even though pre-validated measuring instruments were used, they were tested statistically to determine their reliability and validity. This was done using Cronbach's alpha coefficient and exploratory factor analysis. The results for both the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and exploratory factor analysis will be presented in the following chapter.

The surveys were structured into four parts: section A covers demographic details, section B covers EI and leadership performance, section C covers emotion coping strategies and section D focuses on leadership development. This data collection technique has been the most suitable to answer the research question, in a cost-effective, voluntary, confidential and timeous manner (Mwita, 2022).

An email, containing the survey link was sent to 132 employees selected at random; with the email a letter detailing the purpose and objectives of the research and asking employees to participate was sent. All respondents involved in the survey were made aware that it was completely optional and that they could choose to withdraw at any point if they felt

uncomfortable, even if they had initially agreed to participate, and that their confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study.

3. 10 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are concepts utilised to assess the quality of research by indicating how effectively a method was applied to assess results. Validity pertains to how accurate the assessment is and helps in determining whether the correct concept is being evaluated (Carroll et al., 2023). Validity assesses the accuracy of the measuring instrument. Thus, validity evaluates whether the research instrument measures what it is designed to (Ranganathan, Caduff & Frampton, 2024). In other words, validity measures the extent to which the results represent accurate findings from among the research respondents. There are different ways of measuring the validity of the research, but the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to determine the validity of the current questionnaire. The EFA, using the principal axis factoring method and Promax with Kaiser Normalisation, has been used to determine the construct validity.

Reliability is the degree of consistency in measuring a particular variable, if a study reaches similar conclusions using identical methods in other identical situations, it is deemed reliable (Carroll et al., 2023). Reliability can be confirmed by correlation coefficients, which ensure that consistent results are produced. Cronbach's alpha has been used in this research to assess the study's reliability. Cronbach's alpha measures reliability by comparing the common variance among variables (Frost et al., 2023).

The reliability or precision of the measuring instrument represents the consistency of the questionnaire (Ranganathan et al., 2024). In other words, reliability determines the extent to which the research findings could be repeated under other stable conditions. Internal and test-retest reliability has been assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) and Pearson correlation coefficients, respectively. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient scores range between 0 and 1, with perfect reliability equalling 1, and no reliability equalling 0. It is recommended that the Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.70 and above are considered as reliable (Guetterman, 2019). Therefore, in this study, Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.70 and above were considered as reliable, hence acceptable.

3.11 Data analysis

Data analysis helps understand the data by providing answers to a research question or aiding in decision-making processes. Data analysis means employing statistical and logical techniques to systematically summarise, visualise and evaluate data (Taherdoost, 2021). The data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 29.0). SPSS is a software programme utilised by researchers across different fields to conduct quantitative analysis of intricate data sets.

This programme was chosen because of its user-friendly interface which simplifies the handling of intricate data. SPSS provides effective data visualisation tools to present data clearly and concisely. The study employs both descriptive and inferential statistics to interpret the data. Descriptive statistics is a statistical category that includes summarising, arranging and presenting data in a meaningful and concise way (Jansen, 2024). The focus is on detailing and examining the primary attributes and qualities of a dataset without drawing conclusions or assumptions about a broader group (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024).

Descriptive statistics aim to offer a succinct and straightforward overview of the data, allowing researchers to uncover insights and comprehend patterns and trends in the dataset (Jansen, 2024). The average and deviation scores are the most commonly used descriptive statistics (Taherdoost, 2021). Descriptive statistics also includes the use of visuals like charts, graphs and tables to assist in visualising and understanding data (Jansen, 2024).

Descriptive statistics includes four primary measures for analysing data: frequency, which represents the number of times a variable occurs, often expressed as a count or percentage of the total (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024); central tendency which involves measures such as mean, median, and mode. Dispersion, which refers to the range, variance and standard deviation within a set of data and, lastly position which involves rankings within percentile and quartiles (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024). In this study, frequencies were used because they provide the researcher an opportunity to have a glance at the entire data conveniently. Frequency distribution helped to describe how many times a score occurs in the data set. Additionally, the frequency distribution offered the possibility of viewing each score and its corresponding frequency in an organised manner within the full range of observed scores. On the other hand, Central tendency

helped to provide an accurate description of the entire data. It is the single value that is most typical/representative of the collected data.

Inferential statistics concentrates on drawing conclusions and predictions about a population using data from a sample, it entails employing a representative sample to approximate population characteristics, conduct hypothesis testing and reach conclusions (Nicmanis, 2024). Inferential statistics primarily serve two purposes: estimating a population's parameter, like the mean or average and formulating a hypothesis for additional evaluation (Nicmanis, 2024).

Inferential statistics enables researchers to extrapolate conclusions from the sample to the broader population, statistical tests help in making decisions and validating conclusions based on the data (Nicmanis, 2024). The correct application of inferential statistics improves the reliability and credibility of the research results (Nicmanis, 2024). Different types of tests, such as correlation, regression analysis t-tests, and ANOVA, are used, depending on the data type and research question. Selecting the appropriate test is essential as it influences the accuracy of the conclusions drawn (Nicmanis, 2024).

According to Janse, Hoekstra, Jager, Zoccali, Tripepi, Dekker & van Diepen (2021), correlation coefficient is a statistical technique used to determine the relationship between variables. In this study, Pearson's product-moment correlation was computed to determine the relationship between the dependent (EI) and independent variables (leadership performance and leadership development). On the other hand, regression analysis is a statistical tool for determining the value of a dependent variable from an independent variable. Regression analyses are used to quantify the relation between several variables and the outcome variable. Zapf, Wiessner & König (2024) state that regression analysis is used to measure the relationship between several variables and the outcome variable. The regression analysis was computed to assess the interplay between EI, leadership development and leadership performance. Using the regression analysis, the following hypotheses were proposed and tested:

H1. There was a significant positive relationship between EI and leadership performance

H2. There was a significant positive relationship between EI and leadership development

T- tests are often used to assess the statistical difference between two different groups. One sample t-test was computed to determine the significant difference between gender regarding their perceptions towards EI, leadership development and performance. ANOVA is one of the most commonly used statistical methods in social science research which assesses whether different groups of interest have the same mean value. The one-way ANOVA was used to compare the means of more than two groups in the study.

3. 12 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are a series of principles that direct research methods and procedures. Researchers must consistently follow a specific code of behaviour when gathering data from respondents (Turale, 2020). These guidelines ensure that research respondents participate voluntarily, with full information, and in a safe manner (Turale, 2020).

The UKZN Humanities and Social Science Research and Ethics Committee (HSSREC) approved the research protocol (00006723 2024). Ethical considerations addressed in this study include informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, anonymity and bias. The confidentiality of respondents is respected. Respondents were requested to fill out the survey only if they feel at ease to do it. Maintaining anonymity has been a top priority during the survey; respondents remained unidentified by the researcher. The researcher has complied with the ethical guidelines set by the University of KwaZulu-Natal for engagement with respondents. The data will be stored for a period of five years in a secure location.

3.13 Limitations of the study

Limitations experienced in this study were the low response rate because respondents may have not considered the questionnaire a priority, which ultimately slowed down the researcher's data collection process. Therefore, future research should focus on large sample size. The questionnaires were sent via email, which may have made it challenging for respondents who may have had inquiries or needed clarification because they had to complete the questionnaires without the researcher present. Some respondents did not take part in the survey as they thought it was a phishing email considering the recent high rise of cyber theft/security. Lastly, questionnaires limit engagement with respondents which might give a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being researched.

3.14 Delimitations of the study

This study was limited to Kwazulu-Natal's corporate sector. This research is limited to a specific corporate's employees and leaders. This study uses a specific data collection methodology, quantitative questionnaire. This research consists of a limited number of respondents, which could affect how applicable the results are to a larger population.

3.15 Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the methods used to collect and analyse data to address the research questions and objectives. The chapter covers the research design, sampling procedure, population, data collection techniques, data analysis, and ethical considerations of the study. This chapter discusses the rationale behind selecting these methods for this study. The chapter describes the methods employed to arrive at a coherent assumption regarding the effects of EI on leadership development. Furthermore, the section outlines the constraints of this research. The next chapter analyses the data and discusses the study's findings.

Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals presents the data and discusses the findings obtained from the data collected from the respondents. It is structured into two parts: Part one (presentation and interpretation of findings) and Part two (discussion of findings). The questionnaire was sent to 132 respondents, but only 73 completed it. The 73 completed questionnaires were coded in Excel and were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science, version 29.0. The findings and discussion are aligned with the research objectives, namely:

- To determine whether EI skills enhance leadership performance in in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector
- To evaluate how EI contributes to developing good leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector
- To analyse the factors that influence EI in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector

4.2 Response rate

Table 4.1 below shows the active and non-active response rates.

Table 4:1 Response rate

Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Responses	73	55.3
Non-responses	59	44.7
Total questionnaire	132	100

Information from Table 4.1 shows that the active response rate was 55%, while the non-active response rate was 44.7%. Online survey response rates have been an ongoing discussion among scholars because what constitutes an acceptable response rate for online surveys in research has remained unanswered. Shih & Fan (2008) maintain that a 34% average response rate of online surveys is sufficient. Daikeler, Silber & Bošnjak (2022) report that an average response rate as 36%. Archer (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of 99 web surveys administered by a centre at

Ohio State University for 33 months and found the average response rate of those surveys was 48.3%. Moreover, a more recent synthesis based on 207 online surveys reported in four counselling psychology journals discovered an average response rate of 34.2% (Poynton, DeFouw & Morizio, 2019). The latest synthesis by Burgard, Bošnjak & Wedderhoff (2020) focuses on the response rates of online surveys and found the average response rate is 42.8%, based on 20 reviewed studies. These response rates are nowhere near the 80% recommended by the United States (U.S) Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which considers most federal evaluations and research projects and sets the minimum methodology requirements for federally funded projects (Office of Management and Budget, 2016). OMB raises a serious concern about surveys with response rates lower than 80% because the responses might not represent the intended survey population. However, Hendra & Hill (2019) established no evidence suggesting that an 80% or higher response rate is optimum. Given the arguments presented by the above authors, a response rate of 55.3% was considered sufficient for this study.

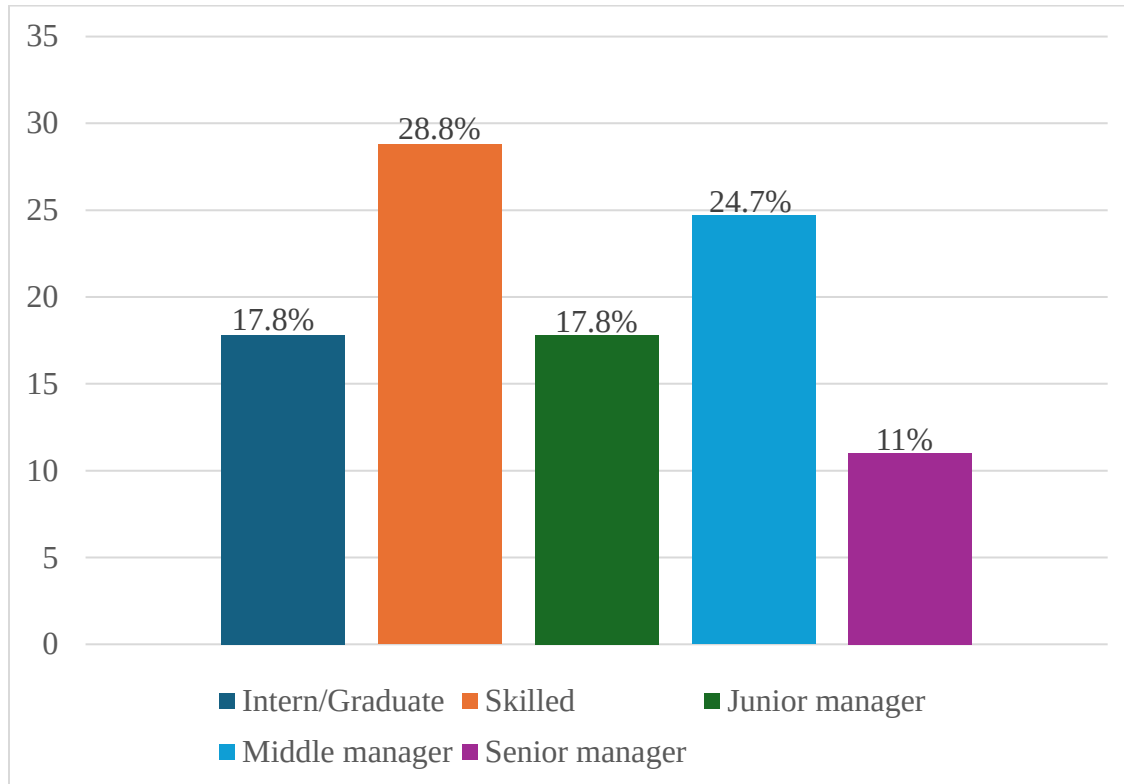
4.3 Demographic information

This section describes the demographics of the respondents including their positions, tenure and gender.

4.3.1 Positions occupied by the respondents

Figure 4.1 below shows the various positions occupied in the organisation by the respondents.

Figure 4.1: Positions occupied by the respondents



Source: Field Data (2024)

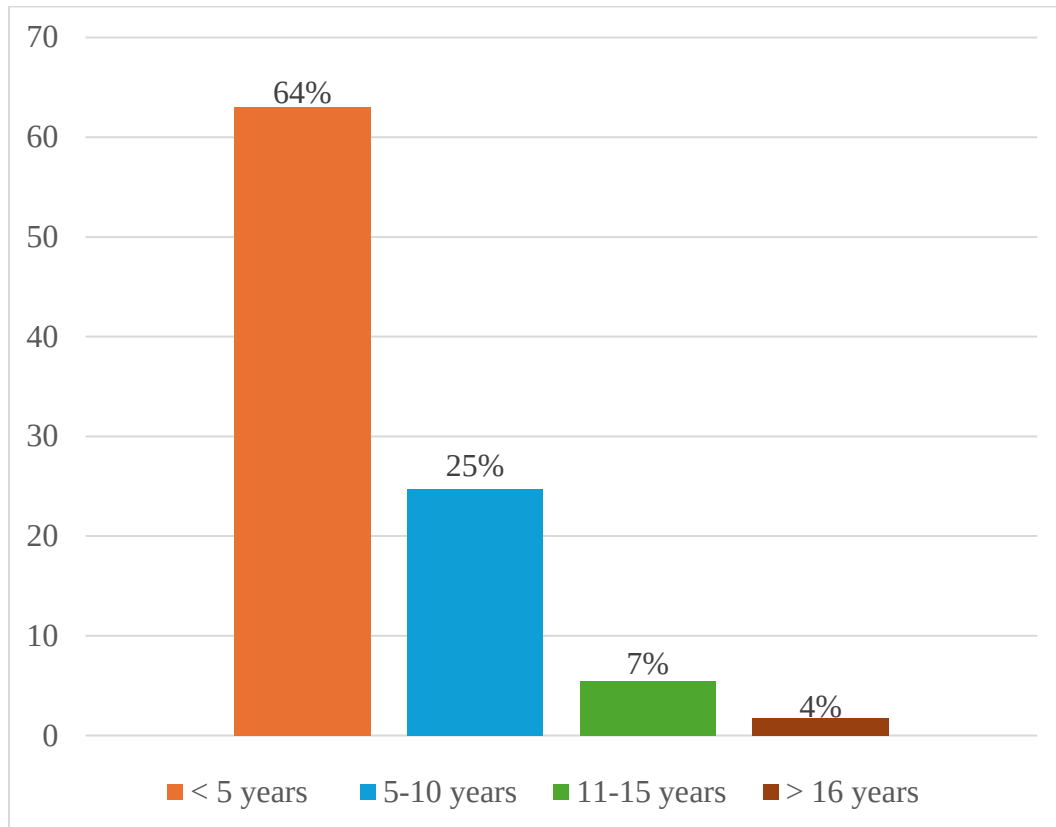
The results show that 17.8% of the respondents are interns/graduates, 28.8% are skilled employees, 17.8% junior managers, 24.7% middle managers and 11% are senior managers. Given the results, the study concludes that most respondents are skilled and middle managers. The results imply that most skilled and middle management employees have a high EI and want to improve organisational performance.

The next section describes the results of how long the respondents have been employed in the organisation.

4.3.2 Respondents work experience

Figure 4.2 illustrates the results of how long the respondents have been employed in the organisation.

Figure 4.2: Respondents work experience



Source: Field Data (2024)

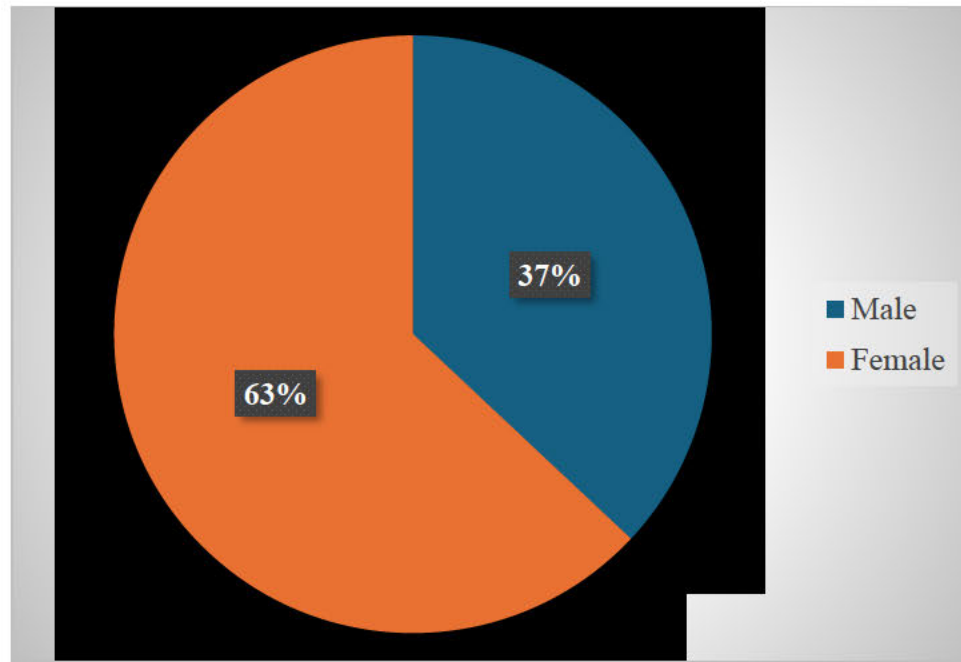
The results reveal that 64% of the respondents have been employed by the organisation for less than 5 years, 25% for between 5 and 10 years, 7% for between 11 and 15 years and 4% have been employed for 16 years and more. Therefore, the study concludes that most respondents have worked in the organisation for less than 5 years. The results imply that most respondents do not have the EI to want to improve the organisational performance.

The following section describes the respondents' gender.

4.3.3 Gender of respondents

The gender of the respondents in the participating organisation are illustrated in Figure 4.3:

Figure 4.3: Gender of respondents



Source: Field Data (2024)

Information from Figure 4.3 shows that males represent 37% of the respondents and females 63%. Therefore, it is evident that the majority of the respondents are female. The results could be interpreted that females have much stronger EI to want to improve organisational performance than males. The results of this study are inconsistent with the findings by Fischer, Kret & Broekens (2018), who argue that past meta-analyses and reviews regarding gender differences in emotion recognition show a small to moderate female advantage. According to Fischer et al. (2018), the lower scores of men in self-reported EI were not related to their actual perception of target emotions but the perception of non-target emotions.

4.4 Testing the statistical analysis of the measuring instrument

Before engaging in the data analysis and discussion of findings, the psychometric properties of the measuring instrument were determined statistically to ensure the validity and reliability of the results. The key constructs investigated in this study include EI, leadership performance, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, motivation and leadership development.

4.4.1 Validity of the measuring instrument

Validity assesses the accuracy of the measuring instrument. Thus, validity evaluates that the research instrument measures what it is designed to (Ranganathan et al., 2024). In other words, validity measures the extent to which the results represent the accurate findings from the research respondents. There are different ways of measuring the validity of the research, but the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to determine the validity of the questionnaire. The EFA, using the principal axis factoring method and promax with Kaiser Normalisation, was used to determine the construct validity. The EFA was used to explain the larger set of measured variables with a smaller set of latent constructs. In extracting the factors, only items with loadings >0.30 were considered significant. The results of the EFA are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Validity of the measuring instrument – Exploratory Factor Analysis

Items	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EI 1	.663						
EI 2	.643						
EI 3	.584						
LP 2		.735					
LP 1		.580					
LP 3		.557					
SA 1			.665				
SA 3			.627				
SA 2			.621				
SOA2				.687			
SOA1				.685			
SOA3				.524			
SM 1					.523		
SM 2					.401		
SM 3					.370		
M 3						.781	
M 2						.653	

M 1						.640	
LD 1							.610
LD 2							.532
LD 3							.437
Eigenvalue	13.80	1.26	1.12	0.89	0.70	0.58	0.44
% of Variance	65.71	6.01	5.32	4.26	3.33	2.78	2.10
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.							
Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalisation.							

After a careful analysis of the screen plot, seven factors were extracted. The results reveal that three items loaded significantly at Factor 1, accounting for 65.71% of the variance. These three items relate to EI. Hence, Factor 1 is called EI. In addition, three items loaded perfectly at Factor 2, accounting for 6.01% of the variance. The three items relate to Leadership Performance; therefore, Factor 2 was called Leadership Performance. Furthermore, another three items loaded significantly well at Factor 3, accounting for 5.32% of the variance. The three items relate to Self-Awareness. Therefore, Factor 3 was named Self-Awareness. Moreover, the results show that three items loaded significantly at Factor 4, accounting for 4.26% of the variance. The three items relate to Social Awareness. Given the results, Factor 4 was called Social Awareness. Furthermore, three items loaded perfectly at Factor 5, accounting for 3.33% of the variance. The three items relate to Self-Management. Therefore, Factor 5 was called Self-Management. The results further indicate that three items loaded significantly at Factor 6, accounting for 2.78% of the variance. The three items also relate to Motivation. Hence, Factor 6 was named Motivation. Lastly, three items loaded significantly at Factor 7. These three items relate to Leadership Development. In light of the results, Factor 7 was called Leadership Development. The seven Factors explain 89.51% of the variance of the questionnaire. Therefore, this study has no validity problem, as most loadings meet the threshold (0.30).

In addition to EFA, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling was adopted to determine the validity of the measuring instrument. KMO assesses sample adequacy for factor analysis, with values above 0.6 considered acceptable. High values, close to 1.0, generally

indicate that the factor analysis may be useful with the research data. Conversely, if the value is less than 0.50, the factor analysis results are considered insignificant (Li, Huang, & Feng, 2020).

The results of KMO are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.3: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			0.902
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		1767.924
	Df		210
	Sig.		<.001

The results indicate that the measure of sample adequacy is 0.902 (marvelous), which is significant at 1%. Therefore, from a statistical standpoint the sample size is adequate for the study. The results imply that there is no validity issue in this current study.

The following section describes the reliability of the measuring instrument.

4.4.2 Reliability of the measuring instrument

The reliability or precision of the measuring instrument represents the consistency of the questionnaire (Ranganathan et al., 2024). In other words, reliability determines the extent to which the research findings can be repeated under stable conditions. Internal and test-retest reliability has been assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) and Pearson correlation coefficients, respectively. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient scores range between 0 and 1, with perfect reliability equalling 1, and no reliability equalling 0. It is recommended that the Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.70 and above are considered as reliable (Guetterman, 2019). The results of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Reliability of the measuring instrument- Cronbach's alpha coefficient

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha (α)
Emotion Intelligence	3	0.92
Leadership performance	3	0.85
Self-awareness	3	0.92
Social awareness	3	0.94
Self-management	3	0.87
Motivation	3	0.92
Leadership development	3	0.91

The results of the Cronbach's alpha range from 0.84 (for leadership performance) to 0.94 (for social awareness). Thus, social awareness has the highest Cronbach's alpha value ($\alpha = 0.94$), followed by EI, self-awareness and motivation ($\alpha = 0.92$), then follows leadership development ($\alpha = 0.91$), self-management ($\alpha = 0.87$) and leadership performance ($\alpha = 0.85$). The results of the study implied that the measuring instrument adopted had Cronbach's alpha scores that exceeded the recommended value ($\alpha \geq 0.70$). Thus, the overall findings show that the variables measured in this study have met Cronbach's alpha criteria. However, the implications of lower scores imply that the measuring instrument should be rejected. Therefore, given the results of the Cronbach's alpha, there was no problem with reliability in this study.

The following section describes the descriptive statistics.

4.5 Descriptive statistics

According to Fulk (2023), descriptive statistics are an essential component of research but are largely ignored by readers and researchers. Fulk (2023) submits that adequate descriptive statistics are needed to provide a complete understanding of the characteristics of the research sample. There are different kinds of descriptive statistics. However, measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, median, mode) are the most common methods of summarising the characteristics of the research population (Fulk, 2023). Furthermore, measures of variability (i.e., range, minimal and maximum values, range and standard deviation) are reported with measures of central

tendency. When reported accurately, readers gain an in-depth insight into the distribution of the characteristics of the sample size. In this study, the respondents' perceptions regarding the variables measured were assessed using a 1 to 5-point Likert scale, where Strongly Disagree is equal to 1 and Strongly Agree is equal to 5. Given the scale, a mean score of 3.00 and above implies the significance level, while a mean value below 3.00 signifies insignificance. The results of the descriptive statistics are illustrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics - Measures of central tendency and variability

Variables	Mean	95 % Confidence Interval		Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Emotional intelligence	3.65	3.37	3.93	1.18604	1.00	5.00
Leadership performance	3.83	3.57	4.10	1.13832	1.00	5.00
Self-awareness	3.66	3.40	3.93	1.11820	1.00	5.00
Social awareness	3.88	3.62	4.13	1.09978	1.00	5.00
Self-management	3.84	3.59	4.10	1.09197	1.00	5.00
Motivation	3.61	4.14	3.97	1.12231	1.00	5.00
Leadership development	3.63	3.33	3.92	1.24463	1.00	5.00

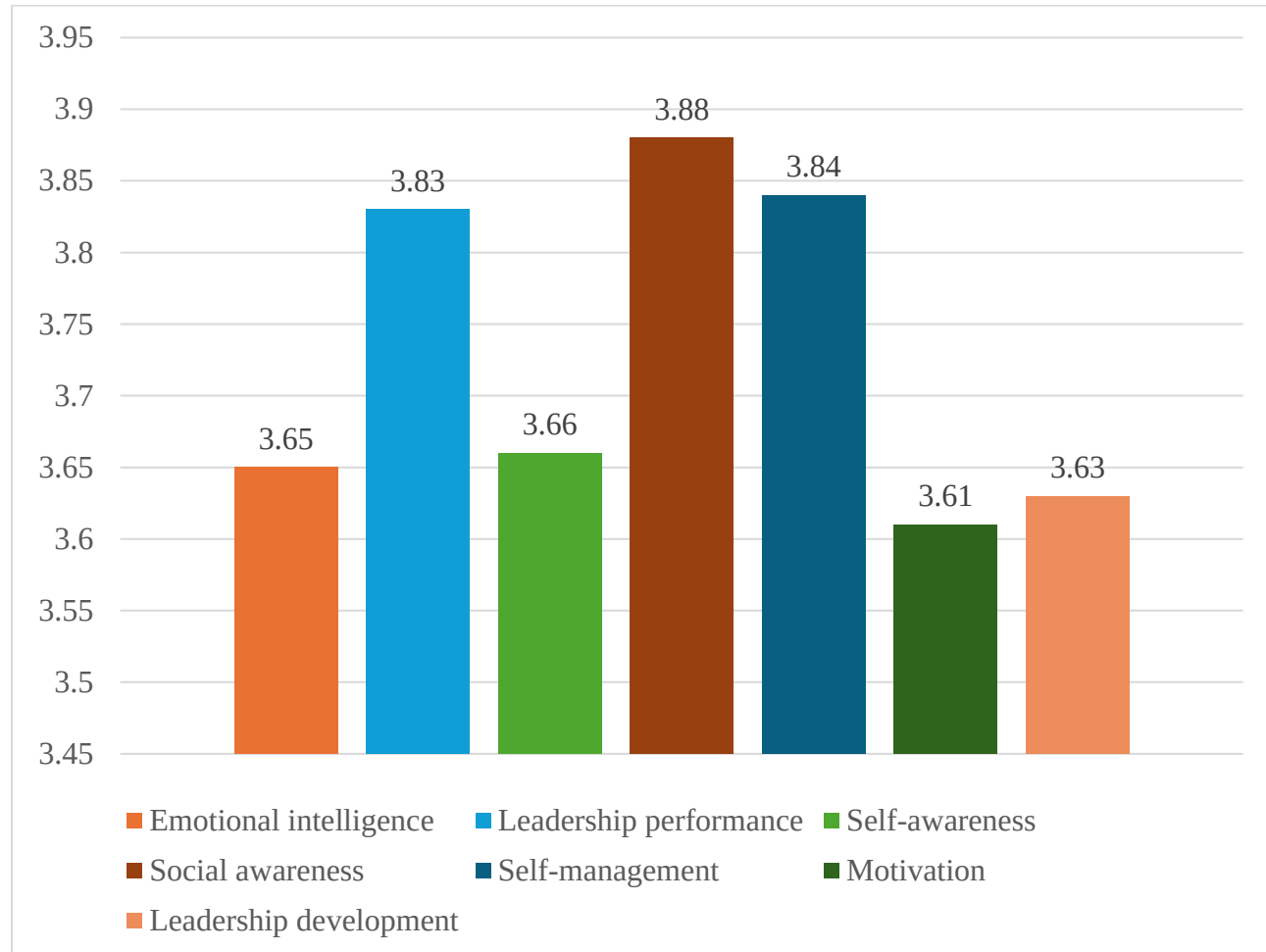
The results displayed in Table 4.5 indicate that the mean scores range from 3.61 (for motivation) to 3.88 (for social awareness). Thus, social awareness has the highest mean value (Mean = 3.88), followed by self-management (Mean = 3.84), leadership performance (Mean = 3.83), social awareness (Mean = 3.66), EI (Mean = 3.65), leadership development (Mean = 3.63) and motivation (Mean = 3.61). The overall results show that the respondents have a positive perception of their self-management, leadership performance, social awareness, EI, leadership development and motivation. In EI, it has been found that self-management improves abilities to manage stress, motivation and to work towards goals (Jordan & Troth, 2021). It has also been argued that self-management encourages openness, positivity and flexibility (Jordan & Troth, 2021). Kour & Ansari (2024) states that successful leaders do not rely on their authority but rather exercise leadership through their dedication to their work or through a strong business

rationale, without necessarily needing exceptional communication abilities for inspiration. Many years ago, Goleman emphasised the need for EI in leadership (Channell, 2021). According to Channell (2021), effective leaders share the traits of valuing and understanding the importance of EI.

Beside leadership effectiveness, a study by Barsade (2002) reveals that emotions can be involuntarily transmitted and experienced by others. Thus, EI is a natural vehicle for humans to impersonate the next person's expressions and body language. Human interactions have a social and emotional impact on each other (Barsade, 2002). Moreover, the extant literature suggests that social awareness as an aspect of EI allows for awareness of professionalism in the workplace. It facilitates communication, collaboration and information-sharing among colleagues (Barsade, 2002). Studies suggest two competences for evaluating social awareness: empathy, the capacity to experience the emotions of others, understand their point of view and perceive their needs, and organisational awareness which involves understanding a group's emotional atmosphere, power dynamics, identifying key influencers, networks and other important factors in decision-making (Goleman et al., 2017). According to Görgens-Ekermans & Roux (2021), EI improves leaders' capacity to adapt their leadership style appropriately to specific situations.

The results of the descriptive statistics presented in Table 4.5 are further illustrated in Figure 4.4:

Figure 4.4: Descriptive statistics - Measures of central tendency and variability



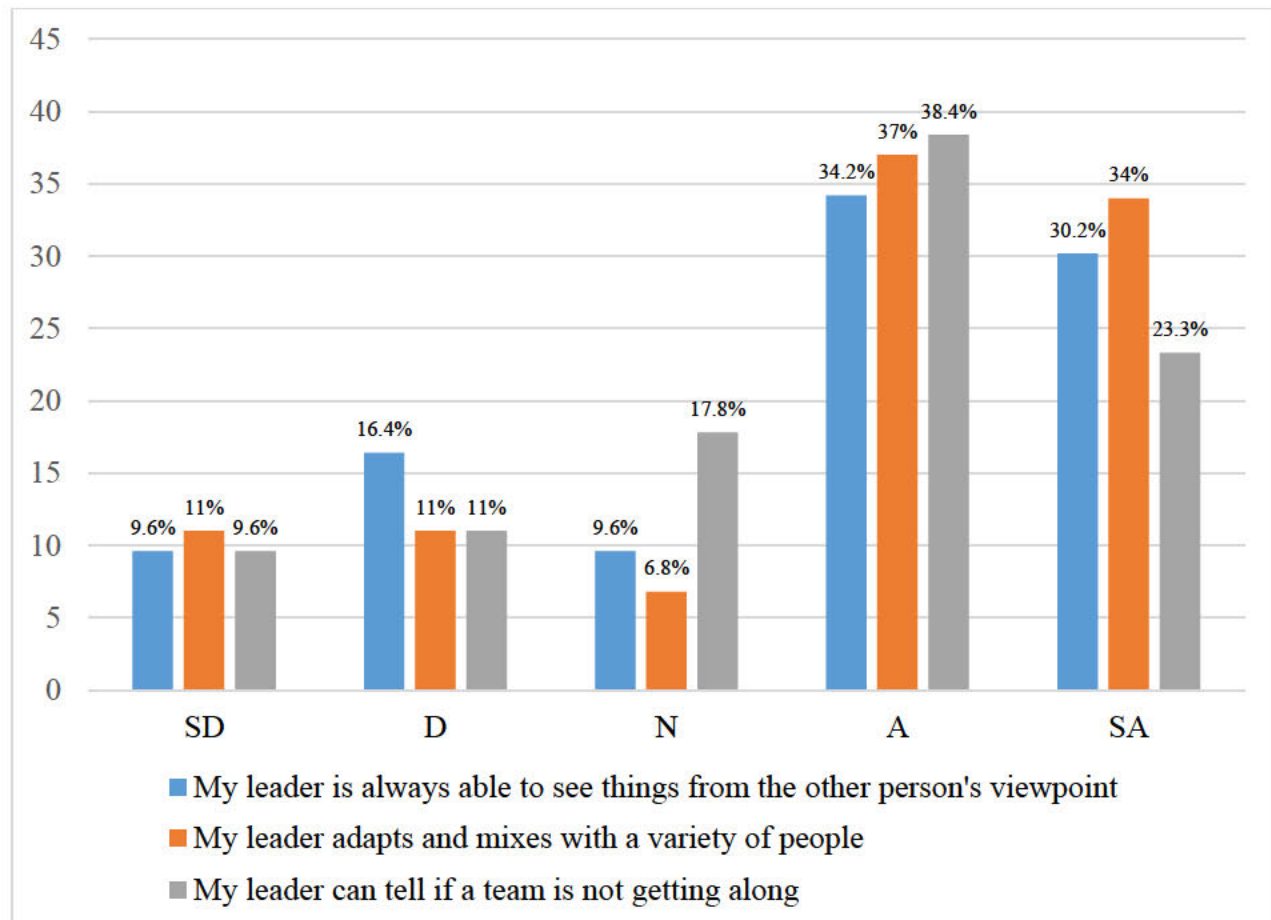
Source: Field Data (2024)

The results depicted in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.4 indicate that, while there is a strong leaning toward leadership performance, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, motivation and leadership development through EI, there is room for improvement in all of the constructs measured, though varying in degree. Therefore, a frequency analysis with the associated percentages has been used to detect exactly where the improvement lies. The results are presented as follows.

4.5.1 EI

The results of the respondents' perceptions of EI in the organisation are shown in Table 4.6.

Figure 4.5: Emotional intelligence



The results show that 9.6% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leader is always able to see things from another person's viewpoint, 16.4% disagree that their leader is always able to see things from the other person's viewpoint, 9.6% indicate that they neither agree nor disagree that their leader was always able to see things from the other person's viewpoint, 34.2% agreed that their leader is always able to see things from another person's viewpoint and the remaining 30.2% strongly agree that their leader can always see things from the other person's viewpoint. Given the results, the study concludes that most leaders in the organisation see things from the other person's viewpoint.

Furthermore,, the results indicate that 11% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leader was good at adapting and mixing with a variety of people, another 11% disagreed that their leader is good at adapting to and mixing with a variety of people, 6.8% neither agree nor disagree that their leader is good at adapting to and mixing with a variety of people, 37% agree that their leader is good at adapting to and mixing with a variety of people and 34.2% strongly agree that their leader is good at adapting to and mixing with a variety of people. Therefore, it is evident that most leaders in the organisation are good at adapting to and mixing with various people.

Moreover, the results reveal that 9.6% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leader can tell if a team is not getting along together, 11% disagree that their leader can tell if a team is not getting along together, 17.8% indicate that they neither agree nor disagree that their leader can tell if a team is not getting along together, 38.4% agree and 23.2% strongly agree that their leader can tell if a team is not getting along together. The overall results show that most leaders in the organisation can tell if a team is not getting along together.

From the findings, it is clear that the leaders in the organisation show strong EI in performing their responsibilities. It is believed that emotionally intelligent leaders are aware of their own emotions and their potential impact on others, particularly their employees. Leaders with well-developed EI are adept at addressing daily challenges and issues by concentrating on significant cultural changes within the organisation (Yuan, 2024). According to Higgs and Dulewicz (2024), outstanding performance and success in business are connected to EI. This implies that leaders with strong EI perform better than those without.

The following section discusses the results of the respondents' perceptions of leadership performance.

4.5.2 The respondents' perceptions of leadership performance

Table 4.6 illustrates the respondents' perceptions of leadership performance.

Table 4.6 The respondents' perceptions of leadership performance

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
My leader does not allow the negative feelings of coworkers	5(6.9%)	6(8.2%)	7(9.6%)	27(37.0%)	28(38.4%)

to inhibit collaboration in teams and work					
My leader treats all coworkers in the team equally and values everyone's suggestion or opinion	8(11.0%)	8(11.0%)	8(11.0%)	21(28.8%)	28(38.4%)
My leader/manager sets performance goals and conducts regular performance evaluation meetings to monitor progress	8(11.0%)	8(11.0%)	4(5.5%)	25(34.2%)	28(38.4%)

The information presented in Table 4.6 shows that 6.9% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leader does not allow the negative feelings of coworkers to inhibit collaboration in teams and work, 8.2% disagree, 9.6% indicate that they neither agree nor disagree that their leader does not allow the negative feelings of coworkers to inhibit collaboration in teams and work, 37% agree and 38.3% strongly agree that their leader does not allow the negative feelings of coworkers to inhibit collaboration in teams and work. Given the results, the study concludes that most leaders in the organisation do not allow the negative feelings of coworkers to inhibit collaboration in teams and work.

Additionally, the results reveal that 11% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leader treats all coworkers in the team equally and values everyone's suggestions or opinions, another 11% disagree that their leader treats all coworkers in the team equally and values everyone suggestion or opinion, 11% neither agree nor disagree, 28.8% agree and 38.4% strongly agree that their leader treats all coworkers in the team equally and values everyone's suggestions or opinions. In light of the results, the study argues that most leaders in the organisation treat all coworkers in the team equally and value everyone's suggestions or opinions.

Finally, the results show that 11% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders/managers set performance goals and conduct regular performance evaluation meetings to monitor progress, another 11% disagree that their leaders/managers set performance goals and conduct regular performance evaluation meetings to monitor progress, 5.5% neither agree nor

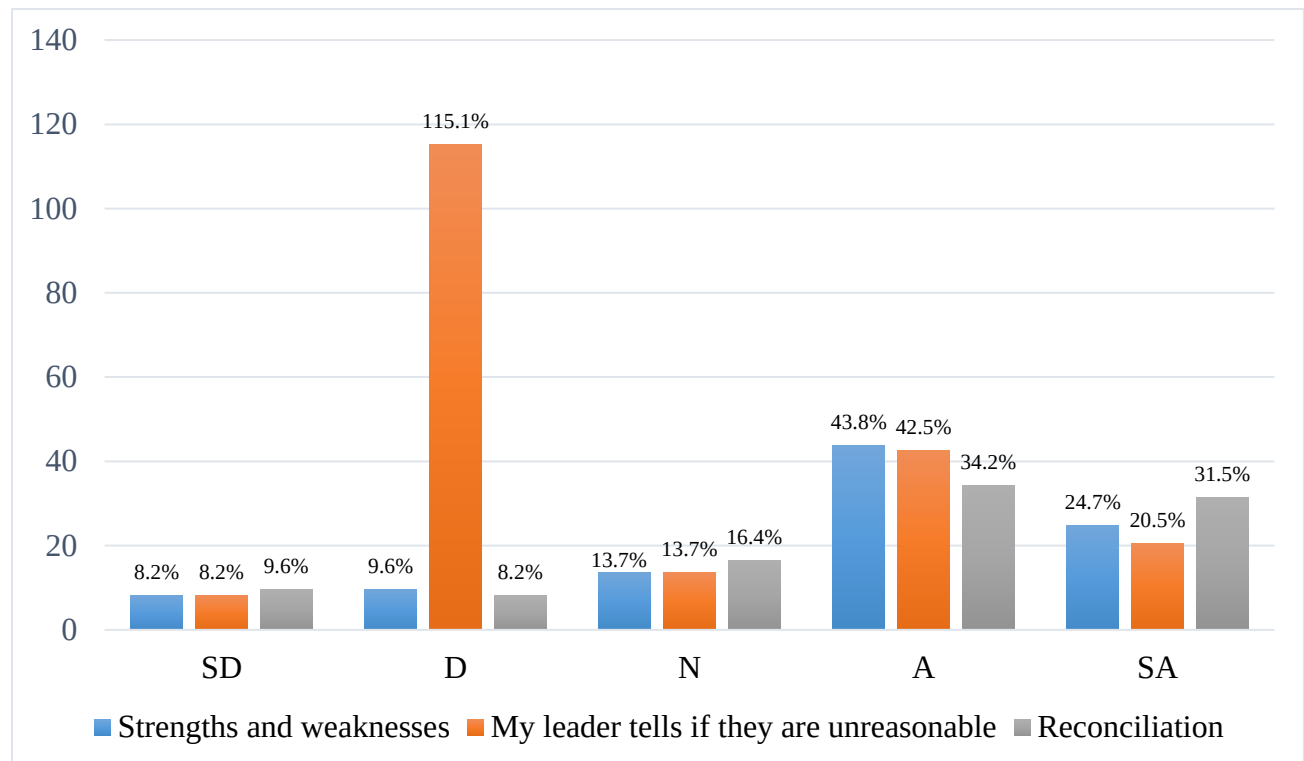
disagree, 34.2% agree and 38.4% strongly agreed that their leaders/managers set performance goals and conduct regular performance evaluation meetings to monitor progress. Hence, the study concludes that most leaders/managers in the organisation set performance goals and conducts regular performance evaluation meetings to monitor progress. The findings are consistent with previous studies, which state that leaders' having a high level of EI enhances team productivity (Edward & Purba, 2020).

The following section explains the respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-awareness.

4.5.3 The respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-awareness

Figure 4.6 below depicts the results of the respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-awareness.

Figure 4.6: The respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-awareness



The study discovered that 8.2% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders understand their strengths and weaknesses, 9.6% disagree that their leaders understand their strengths and

weaknesses, 13.7% neither agree nor disagree, 43.8% agree and 24.7% strongly agree that their leaders understand their strengths and weaknesses.

In addition, the results indicate that 8.2% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders are able to tell if they are being unreasonable, 15.1% disagree, 13.7% neither agree nor disagree that their leaders are able to tell if they are being unreasonable, 42.5% and 20.5% strongly agree that their leaders are able to tell if they are being unreasonable.

Further, 9.6% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders are good at reconciling differences with other people, 8.2% disagree, 16.4% said they neither agree nor disagree that their leaders are good at reconciling differences with other people, 34.2% agree that their leaders are good at reconciling differences with other people and 31.5% strongly agree.

The section below describes the respondents' perceptions of their leaders' social awareness.

4.5.4 The respondents' perceptions of their leaders' social awareness

Table 4.7 displays the results of the respondents' perceptions of their leaders' social awareness.

Table 4.7: The respondents' perceptions of their leaders' social awareness

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
My leader shows understanding and emotional support when I am facing a difficult situation	6(8.2%)	3(4.1%)	10(13.7%)	29(39.7%)	25(34.2%)
My leader is able to put him/herself into other people's shoes	6(8.2%)	5(6.9%)	8(11.0%)	35(47.9%)	19(26.0%)
My leader builds a safe & positive work atmosphere	5(6.8%)	5(6.9%)	11(15.1%)	23(31.5%)	29(39.7%)

It was found that 8.2% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders show understanding and emotional support when they face a difficult situation, 4.1% disagree that their leaders showed understanding and emotional support when they face a difficult situation, 13.7% neither

agree nor disagree that their leaders, 39.7% agree that their leaders show understanding and emotional support when they face a difficult situation, and 34.2% strongly agree.

Furthermore, the results reveal that 8.2% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders are able to put themselves in other people's shoes, 6.9% disagree, 11% neither agree nor disagree that their leaders were able to put themselves in other people's shoes, 47.9% agree and 26% strongly agree.

Finally, 6.8% strongly disagree that their leaders build a safe and positive work atmosphere, 6.9% disagree, 15.1% neither agree nor disagree that their leaders build a safe and positive work atmosphere, 31.5% agree and 39.7% strongly agree that their leaders build a safe and positive work atmosphere.

The overall findings suggest that social awareness plays a pivotal role in managing leaders' emotions. According to Barsade (2002), social awareness involves grasping perceptions and connecting them to interactions with people, groups and communities. As already discussed above, social awareness allows for an understanding of professionalism in the workplace. It facilitates communication, collaboration and information sharing among colleagues (Barsade, 2002). Boyatzis (2017) claims that leaders who are exceptional in social awareness make an effort to understand their co-workers' emotions and viewpoints, allowing them to communicate and work together more efficiently.

The section below discusses the results of the respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-management.

4.5.5 The respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-management

The results of respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-management are illustrated in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: The respondents' perceptions of their leaders' self-management

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
My leader is able to control his/her distressing emotions	9(12.3%)	9(12.3%)	5(6.9%)	29(39.7%)	21(28.8%)

when faced with a challenging situation					
My leader remains calm in volatile situations and has self-management	6(8.2%)	6(8.2%)	10(13.7%)	28(38.4%)	23(31.5%)
My leader is able to prioritise important activities at work and get on with them	3(4.1%)	5(6.9%)	5(6.9%)	27(37.0%)	33(45.2%)

The study discovered that 12.3% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders are able to control their distressing emotions when facing a challenging situation, another 12.3% disagree that their leaders were able to control their distressing emotions when facing a challenging situation, 6.9% neither agree nor disagree that their leaders are able to control their distressing emotions when facing a challenging situation, 39.7% and 28.8% strongly agree.

Furthermore, 8.2% strongly disagree that their leaders remain calm in volatile situations and demonstrate self-management, another 8.2% disagree, 13.7% neither agree nor disagree that their leaders remain calm in volatile situations and demonstrate self-management, 38.4% agree and 31.5% strongly agree that their leaders remain calm in volatile situations and demonstrate self-management.

Finally, 4.1% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders can prioritise important activities at work and get on with them, 6.9%, another 6.9% neither agree nor disagree, 37% agree that their leaders can prioritise important activities at work and get on with them and 42.2% strongly agree

It is evident from the results that self-management constitutes an important emotion coping strategy in the organisation. It has explicated that self-management is the capacity to successfully regulate one's emotions, actions and beliefs in various circumstances (Thompson et al., 2020). According to Jain (2020), self-management improves people's abilities to manage stress, be motivated and work towards goals; it, allows an individual to communicate without restriction and to focus on tasks independently; it encourages a sense of openness, positivity and flexibility.

In addition, Boyatzis (2017) argues that leaders who struggle with self-control often respond impulsively and find it difficult to manage their desires.

The next section presents the results of the respondents' perceptions of motivation.

4.5.6 The respondents' perceptions of motivation

Table 4.9 explains the results of the respondents' perceptions of motivation.

Table 4.9: The respondents' perceptions of motivation

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
My leader motivates me to be more positive and efficient even when I am distracted or feeling unproductive	7(9.6%)	3(4.1%)	13(17.8%)	22(30.1%)	28(38.4%)
My leader is approachable and is always willing to help when asked	5(6.8%)	5(6.8%)	7(9.6%)	27(37.0%)	29(39.7%)
My leader regularly provides compliments, positive feedback and constructive criticism	5(6.8%)	9(11.0%)	10(13.7%)	27(37.0%)	23(31.5%)

The results indicate that 9.6% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leader motivates them to be more positive and efficient even when they are distracted or feeling unproductive, 4.1% disagree, 17.8% neither agree nor disagree that their leaders motivate them to be more positive and efficient even when they are distracted or feeling unproductive, 30.1% agree and 38.4% strongly agree that their leaders motivate them to be more positive and efficient even when they are distracted or feeling unproductive.

In addition, the results demonstrate that 6.8% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders are approachable and are always willing to help when asked, another 6.8% disagree that their leaders are approachable and are always willing to help when asked, 9.6% neither agree nor disagree, 37% agree that disagreed that their leaders are approachable and are always willing to help when asked and 39.7% strongly agree.

Lastly, 6.8% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders regularly provide compliments, positive feedback and constructive criticism, 11% disagree that their leaders regularly provide compliments, positive feedback and constructive criticism, 13.7% neither agree nor disagree, 37% agree and 31.5% strongly agree.

People who are emotionally intelligent have a strong understanding of the internal drive that influences their choices, they are driven by internal gratifications such as a feeling of purpose or achievement, and they recognise this trait in both themselves and others (Franklin, 2024). They excel when challenging themselves to achieve something they previously believed they could not achieve (Franklin, 2024).

A lack of internal motivation may hinder individuals from performing at their best, as motivation is a crucial aspect of EI (Franklin, 2024). A motivated individual is enthusiastic, committed and concentrates intensely on reaching objectives; they have a positive attitude, and positivity is contagious, boosting others' motivation and determination (Augusto-Landa, García-Martínez and León, 2022).

Ways to build motivation involve setting achievable goals, offering engaging challenges, acknowledging small accomplishments, transforming obstacles into challenges, recognising the impact of leadership on the team, evaluating your performance, and embracing change (Augusto-Landa et al., 2022).

Motivation involves utilising emotions to actively work towards goals with determination and enthusiasm; internal factors like personal development and satisfaction, instead of external incentives typically motivate individuals with high EI (Nieto-Carracedo et al., 2024). They establish significant objectives and work towards, reaching them, staying dedicated and focused despite obstacles; motivated individuals can recover from challenges by using their EI and their awareness to grow and adjust (Bechter et al., 2021). They typically sustain a positive mind-set that keeps them motivated and inspires those around them. Motivated individuals control their feelings and urges, focusing on the job at hand and handling stress well. These motivational characteristics characterise EI, aiding individuals in overcoming personal and professional challenges effectively (Nieto-Carracedo et al., 2024).

It has been found that leading skilfully, motivating and directing individuals or a business requires a combination of research and practical knowledge (Stone & Patterson, 2023). Farh et al. (2012) emphasises the importance of motivation, as a component of EI, in achieving success. In moments of setbacks and obstacles, motivation is what encourages staying dedicated to the ultimate objective and finding a path ahead (Sharma, 2024). A lack of motivation quickly turns into a negative mind-set towards goals and responsibilities, affecting the confidence and success of the team.

4.5.7 The respondents' perceptions of leadership development

Table 4.10 shows the results of the respondents' perceptions of leadership development.

Table 4.10: The respondents' perceptions of leadership development

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
My leader consistently engages in leadership training to enhance his/her skills	9(12.3%)	6(8.2%)	13(17.8%)	21(28.8%)	24(32.9%)
My leader frequently seeks feedback from the team to enhance his/her management techniques and leadership skills (Self Improvement)	10(13.7%)	8(11.0%)	4(5.5%)	31(42.5%)	20(27.3%)
My Leader is ready to admit mistakes, seeks assistance from the team when unsure, and is open to learning from the team even though in a more senior role	9(12.3%)	9(12.3%)	8(11.0%)	24(32.9%)	23(31.5%)

It was found that 12.3% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders consistently engage in leadership training to enhance their skills, 8.2% disagree that their leaders consistently engage in leadership training to enhance their skills, 17.8% said they neither agree nor disagree,

28.8% agreed that their leaders consistently engage in leadership training to enhance their skills and 32.9% strongly agree.

Furthermore, 13.7% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leader frequently seek feedback from the team to enhance their management techniques and leadership skills, 11% disagree, 5.5% neither agree nor disagree, 42.5% agree that their leader frequently seeks feedback from the team to enhance their management techniques and leadership skills and 27.3% strongly agree that their leader frequently seeks feedback from the team to enhance their management techniques and leadership skills.

Additionally, 12.3% of the respondents strongly disagree that their leaders are ready to admit mistakes, seek assistance from the team when unsure, and are open to learning from the team even though in a more senior role, another 12.3% disagree 11% indicate that they neither agreed nor disagree, 32.9% agree that their leaders are ready to admit mistakes, seek assistance from the team when unsure and are open to learning from the team even though in a more senior and 31.5% strongly agree.

4.6 Inferential Statistics

Dannels (2018) state that inferential statistics are broad techniques that go beyond describing a data set. Inferential statistics are employed to make decisions about a population under study from samples of that population, commonly through hypothesis testing. According to Guetterman (2019), quantitative researchers often use inferential statistics to draw conclusions from a sample to a population. Also, inferential statistics can be used to analyse the differences among groups and the relationships among variables. There are different kind of inferential statistics such as correlation, regression, analysis of variance – ANOVA, sample t-test and Chi-Square, to mention a few. However, the inferential statistics used in this study include correlation, regression, ANOVA and sample t-test.

4.6.1 Pearson's product moment correlation

According to Janse et al., (2021), correlation coefficient is a statistical technique used to determine the relationship between variables. The coefficient score ranges from -1 to 1 and is dimensionless. The values of -1 and 1 indicate that all observations can be described perfectly

using a straight line. Janse et al. (2021) observe that a correlation coefficient can be used to test the hypothesis and determine whether X and Y are correlated, which yields a P-value indicating the chance of finding the correlation coefficient's observed value or any value indicating a higher degree of correlation, given that the two variables are not correlated. Pearson's product-moment correlation was computed to determine the relationship between the dependent (EI) and independent variables (leadership performance, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, motivation and leadership development), and the results are presented below.

Table 4.11: Pearson's product-moment correlation-the relationship between EI, leadership performance and development

Variables	r/p	1	2	3
EI	r	1.000	-	-
Leadership performance	r	.716**	1.000	-
	p	0.000		
Leadership development	r	.545**	.688**	1.000
	p	0.000	0.000	

* $p < 0.01$

The results showed a strong positive relationship between EI and leadership performance ($r = 0.716$, $p < 0.01$). The findings are supported by a similar study by Higgs and Dulewicz (2024), who suggests that outstanding performance and success in business are connected to EI. As discussed previously, leaders who are emotionally intelligent are aware of their own emotions and their potential impact on others, particularly their employees. Yuan (2024) opines that leaders who have EI are adept at addressing daily challenges and issues by concentrating on significant cultural changes within the organisation.

Also, there existed a moderate positive relationship between EI and leadership development ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.01$). It is argued that a leader's EI grows as they progress through higher managerial roles, by being receptive to learning from others, connecting with them, and embracing new opportunities. Haraida and Blass (2019) argues that leaders are created through a complex

combination of skills acquired through experiences, self-improvement, and ongoing training, rather than being naturally born with the ability to effectively lead, inspire, and guide a team. Therefore, to become a leader, it is important to engage in a leadership self-improvement strategy and understand the significance of EI. Successful leadership requires ongoing learning, highlighting the significance of honesty, transparency, and EI, indicating that leadership involves a consistent commitment to learning (Marques, 2010). Marques (2010) stresses the significance of true leaders continuously improving their leadership skills through participation in learning opportunities and developmental activities during their career. Self-motivated leaders and novices in leadership seek out leadership development programs in order to build a solid base for their journey of personal growth (Marques, 2010).

Table 4.12 below describes the results of the relationship between EI and emotion coping strategies.

Table 4.12: Pearson’s product-moment correlation- the relationship between EI and emotion coping strategies

Variables	r/ p	1	2	3	4	5
EI	<i>r</i>	1.000				
Self-awareness	<i>r</i> <i>p</i>	0.716** 0.000	1.000			
Social awareness	<i>r</i> <i>p</i>	0.683** 0.000	0.857** 0.000	1.000		
Self-management	<i>r</i> <i>p</i>	0.670** 0.000	0.779** 0.000	.789** 0.000	1.000	
Motivation	<i>r</i> <i>p</i>	0.709** 0.000	0.854** 0.000	0.884** 0.000	0.728** 0.000	1.000

The results indicated a strong positive relationship between EI and self-awareness ($r = 0.716$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that leaders in the organisation cope with EI through self-awareness.

Barsade (2002) argues that emotions can be involuntarily transmitted and experienced by others. It is a natural instinct for humans to impersonate the next person's expressions and body language. Human interactions have a social and emotional impact on each other (Barsade, 2002). Competences to evaluate self-awareness namely emotional self-awareness, to have a clear understanding of oneself, an individual knowing exactly how and what they feel assists in goal setting and to understand their strengths and weaknesses which helps make clear on what to work on, on a journey of self-develop (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022).

Also, the results showed a strong positive relationship between EI and social awareness ($r = 0.857, p < 0.01$). Given the results, it is evident that the leaders in the participating organisation coped with EI through social awareness. Boyatzis (2017) states that leaders who are exceptional in social awareness make an effort to comprehend their co-workers' emotions and viewpoints, allowing them to communicate and work together more efficiently with their colleagues.

Further, a strong positive relationship was found between EI and self-management ($r = 0.779, p < 0.01$). In light of the results, the study concluded that leaders in the organisation coped with EI through self-management. It is believed that it improves abilities in managing stress, motivation, and working towards goals, allows an individual to communicate without restrictions and focus on tasks independently encourages a sense of openness, positivity, and flexibility (Jordan & Troth, 2021). In his study, Boyatzis (2017) points out that leaders who struggle with self-control often respond impulsively and find it difficult to manage their desires.

It has been found that the ability of leaders to manage themselves assists in keeping a peaceful environment, resulting in improved decision-making and the ability to address issues more efficiently, leading to enhanced morale (Filice & Weese, 2024). Thus, EI and self-management are essential competencies for success in today's multifaceted world. This implies that without EI leaders cannot manage their interpersonal relationships.

Lastly, the results revealed a strong positive relationship between EI and motivation ($r = 0.728, p < 0.01$). Based on the results, it is concluded that the leaders in the organisation managed their emotions through motivation. As already discussed, Farh et al. (2012) suggests the importance of motivation in achieving success as a component of EI. During challenging times, motivation is what encourages staying dedicated to the ultimate objective and finding a path ahead (Sharma,

2024). Therefore, a lack of motivation quickly turns into a negative mind-set towards goals and responsibilities, affecting the confidence and success of the team.

The following section describes the results of the regression analysis.

4.6.2 Regression analysis

Regression is a statistical tool for determining the value of a dependent variable from an independent variable. Thus, regression measures the interplay between two or more variables (Kumari & Yadav, 2018). In other words, regression is a modelling technique where a dependent variable is predicted based on one or more independent variables. There are various forms of regression, but the linear regression analysis was used because it is the most widely used of all statistical techniques.

The linear regression model represents the relationship between a dependent variable and an independent variable using a straight line defined by the equation $Y = a + b \times X$. In this equation, "a" is the y-intercept of the line, and "b" is its slope. In statistics, the parameters "a" and "b" of the regression line are estimated based on the values of the dependent variable Y and the independent variable X, using various statistical methods.

The result of the regression analysis is shown below.

Table 4.13 shows the results of the relationship between EI, leadership performance and development.

Table 4.13 Linear regression – The relationship between EI, leadership performance and development

Independent variables	R	R-squared value	Adjusted R-squared value	F	Beta	T	P
	.719 ^a	.518	.504				<.001 ^b
Leadership performance					.647	5.622	<.001

Leadership development					.099	.862	.392
Constant					-	2.024	.047

The linear regression indicated an R-squared value of 0.518 and the adjusted R-squared value of 0.508. The model (i.e., leadership performance and development) predicts 51.8% of the differences in EI. Thus, there was a positive relationship between EI, leadership performance, and development at a 1% level of significance. The standardised Beta and p-values for EI and leadership performance were statistically significant ($\beta = 0.647, p < 0.01$).

The findings imply that a significant positive relationship existed between EI and leadership performance. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was accepted. The importance of EI is increasingly acknowledged as a crucial factor in determining job success and performance. Individuals who possess high levels of EI tend to be more productive, have greater chances of being promoted and experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Cherry, 2023).

However, the standardised Beta and p-values for EI and leadership development were statistically insignificant ($\beta = 0.099, p > 0.01$). The overall results indicated that while there was no relationship between EI and leadership development. Hence, hypothesis 2 was not supported. These findings are inconsistent with findings which showed that EI assists leaders to be more effective by improving their ability to adapt to diverse situations (Veshne & Munshi, 2020). Research by Rajendra (2024) highlights the relationship between E and effective decision-making, stressing the significance of EI in leadership development and training programmes. Altogether, EI plays a pivotal role in effective leadership development.

Table 4.13 Linear regression – The relationship between EI and emotion coping strategies

Independent variables	R	R-squared value	Adjusted R-squared value	F	Beta	T	P
	.755 ^a	.569	.544				<.001 ^b
Self-awareness					.282	1.582	.118

Social awareness					-.039	-.193	.848
Self-management					.245	1.780	.080
Motivation					.323	1.730	.088
Constant						.997	.322

Further, the linear regression results indicated an R-squared value of 0.569 and the adjusted R-squared value of 0.544. The model (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and motivation) predicts 56.9% of the differences in EI. Thus, a positive relationship existed between EI, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and motivation at a 1% significance level. The standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = 0.282$, $p > 0.01$) indicated no relationship between EI and self-awareness. Self-Awareness is being aware of one's emotions as they occur (Jordan & Troth, 2021). A study by Barsade (2002) reveals that emotions can be involuntarily transmitted and experienced by others. It is a natural instinct for humans to impersonate the next person's expressions and body language. Human interactions have a social and emotional impact on each other (Barsade, 2002). There are various methods to increase self-awareness, such as engaging in mindfulness practices like meditation to improve the ability to observe thoughts and feelings nonjudgmentally, reflecting on emotional experiences for clarity and deeper insights, and seeking feedback from others to identify blind spots in self-perception (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023). There are two competences to evaluate self-awareness in EI: emotional self-awareness and self-discipline.

Emotional self-awareness involves having a clear understanding of oneself, an individual knowing exactly how and what they feel assists in goal setting and to understand their strengths and weaknesses which helps make clear on what to work on, on a journey of self-develop (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022). Recognising ones emotions as they occur, understanding the impact of ones emotions on ones thoughts and actions, knowing triggers for specific emotions, and consist of reflection on ones feelings can enhance emotional regulation and awareness of emotional patterns (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023b). Knowing your fundamental beliefs and their influence on one's decision-making ensures that one's behaviour is in accordance with what is important to them. Being introspective enables individuals to grasp how their feelings and

behaviours influences others, ultimately improving social connections and communication (D'Amico & Geraci, 2023b).

Self-discipline is the ability to control emotions with self-discipline is crucial for reacting appropriately in different circumstances and avoiding impulsive behaviours (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022). Individuals who have high self-discipline often establish personal goals that are influenced by their values and emotions; self-control helps remain concentrated and driven to reach these goals, even in the presence of challenges (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022). EI encompasses managing and comprehending stress, while self-discipline allows individuals to use healthy coping strategies instead of turning to unhealthy actions (Nnate & Nashwan, 2023). Practicing self-discipline during interactions can result in improved communication and conflict resolution, aiding individuals in staying calm and collected, ultimately promoting stronger relationships. Self-control enables the introspection needed to comprehend the emotions of others (Nnate & Nashwan, 2023). Self-regulating emotions allows individuals to show more empathy and react sensitively to others' feelings; self-control aids in building resilience by helping individuals push through difficult situations and setbacks, enhancing their emotional resilience (Nnate & Nashwan, 2023).

Further, the standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = -0.039$, $p > 0.01$) showed a negative relationship between EI and social awareness. The findings imply that there was no statistical relationship between EI and social awareness. Social awareness involves grasping perceptions and connecting them to interactions with people, groups, and communities (Barsade, 2002). It allows for comprehension of professionalism in the workplace. It facilitates communication, collaboration, and information sharing among colleagues. Lastly, it establishes connections and building a network is a crucial aspect of relationship building (Thompson et al., 2020). According to Boyatzis (2017), leaders who are exceptional in social awareness make an effort to comprehend their co-workers' emotions and viewpoints, allowing them to communicate and work together more efficiently with their colleagues. There are two competences to evaluate social awareness in EI: empathy and organisational awareness.

Empathy entails comprehending and feeling the emotions of others, by acknowledging their feelings, actively listening, minimize conflict, empathizing with their perspective, and reacting with compassion (Goleman et al., 2017). Empathy builds connections, improves interaction, and

promotes a nurturing atmosphere. It is an essential skill in both social interactions and work environments (Goleman et al., 2017).

Organisational awareness involves understanding a group's emotional atmosphere, power dynamics, identifying key influencers, networks, and important factors in decision-making (Goleman et al., 2017). Having strong interpersonal skills like effective communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork, as well as awareness of social issues like inequality, discrimination, and community dynamics, are crucial for making fair and ethical decisions and nurturing relationships that encourage support and collaboration (Goleman et al., 2017).

However, the standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < 0.10$) showed a statistical relationship between EI and self-management. Self-management, also known as self-regulation, is the capacity to successfully regulate emotions, actions, and beliefs in various circumstances (Thompson et al., 2020). It improves abilities in managing stress, motivation, and working towards goals, allows an individual to communicate without restrictions and focus on tasks independently encourages a sense of openness, positivity, and flexibility (Jordan & Troth, 2021). According to Boyatzis (2017), leaders who struggle with self-control often respond impulsively and find it difficult to manage their desires. Self-management is a crucial aspect of EI, particularly in difficult circumstances. Someone who possesses strong self-management skills is able to control their negative emotions, avoiding impulsive decisions (Neckel, 2009). Self-management ability assists in keeping a peaceful environment, resulting in improved decision-making and the ability to address issues more efficiently, leading to enhanced morale (Filice and Weese, 2024). During times of stress, individuals who have strong self-management abilities are able to address conflicts calmly and come up with productive solutions instead of making matters worse (Filice & Weese, 2024). Individuals who have strong self-management abilities are more equipped to handle challenges (Neckel, 2009).

Also, the standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = 0.323$, $p < 0.10$) suggested a significant positive relationship between EI and motivation. As discussed previously, Farh et al. (2012) suggests the importance of motivation in achieving success as a component of EI. During challenging times, motivation is what encourages staying dedicated to the ultimate objective and finding a path ahead (Sharma, 2024). Therefore, a lack of motivation quickly turns into a negative mind-set towards goals and responsibilities, affecting the confidence and success of the team.

The following chapter describes the results of the ANOVA.

4.6.3 Analysis of variance

ANOVA is a common parametric statistical technique used by quantitative researchers to identify differences in the averages of two distinct or multiple groups (Singh & Sunaina, 2023). Therefore, in this study, ANOVA was computed to determine the statistical differences among the respondents regarding the variables measured in the study. The results are described below.

4.6.3.1 Analysis of variance – EI and demographics

The respondents' perceptions of EI are shown in Table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15: Analysis of variance – EI and demographics

Bio-data	F	P
Positions	0.681	0.608
Tenure	0.851	0.471

* $p > 0.01$

The results showed no statistical difference between the respondents, varying by positions ($F = 0.681, p > 0.01$) and tenure ($F = 0.851, p > 0.01$) concerning EI.

The following section describes the statistical difference among the respondents concerning leadership performance.

4.6.3.2 Analysis of variance – Leadership performance and demographics

Table 4.16 illustrates the results of the statistical differences among the respondents regarding leadership performance.

Table 4.16: Analysis of variance – Leadership performance and demographics

Bio-data	F	P
Positions	0.519	0.722
Tenure	0.456	0.714

* $p > 0.01$

The results indicated no statistical difference among the respondents varying by positions ($F = 0.519, p > 0.01$) and tenure ($F = 0.456, p > 0.01$) regarding leadership performance.

The next section discusses the results of the respondents' perception of self-awareness.

4.6.3.3 Analysis of variance – Self-awareness and demographics

Table 4.17 displays the results of the statistical differences among the respondents regarding leadership performance.

Table 4.17: Analysis of variance – self-awareness and demographics

Bio-data	F	P
Positions	0.403	0.806
Tenure	1.409	0.248

* $p > 0.01$

The study found no statistical difference among the respondents varying by positions ($F = 0.403, p > 0.01$) and tenure ($F = 1.409, p > 0.01$) concerning self-awareness.

The section below describes the results of the respondents' perceptions of social awareness.

4.6.3.4 Analysis of variance – Social awareness and demographics

Table 4.18 illustrates the results of the statistical differences among the respondents regarding social awareness.

Table 4.18: Analysis of variance – social awareness and demographics

Bio-data	F	P
Positions	0.195	0.940
Tenure	1.619	0.193

* $p > 0.01$

Information from Table 4.18 revealed no statistical difference among the respondents varying by position ($F = 0.195, p > 0.01$) and tenure ($F = 1.619, p > 0.01$) regarding social awareness.

The section below describes the results of the respondents' perceptions of self-management.

4.3.6.5 Analysis of variance – self-management and demographics

Table 4.19 shows the results of the statistical differences among the respondents regarding self-management.

Table 4.18: Analysis of variance – self-management and demographics

Bio-data	F	P
Positions	1.152	0.340
Tenure	1.067	0.369

* $p > 0.01$

The study found no statistical difference among the respondents varying by position ($F = 1.152, p > 0.01$) and tenure ($F = 1.067, p > 0.01$) regarding self-management.

The results of the respondents' perception of motivation are discussed below.

4.3.6.6 Analysis of variance – motivation and demographics

Table 4.20 displays the results of the respondents' perceptions of motivation.

Table 4.20: Analysis of variance – motivation and demographics

Bio-data	F	P
Positions	.453	0.770
Tenure	1.207	0.314

* $p > 0.01$

There was no statistical difference among the respondents varying by position ($F = 0.453, p > 0.01$) and tenure ($F = 1.207, p > 0.01$) regarding motivation.

The results of the respondents' perceptions of leadership development are discussed below.

4.3.6.7 Analysis of variance – leadership development and demographics

Table 4.20 displays the results of the respondents' perceptions of leadership development.

Table 4.20: Analysis of variance – leadership development and demographics

Bio-data	F	P
Positions	1.548	0.198
Tenure	1.256	.297

* $p > 0.01$

There was no statistical difference among the respondents varying by position ($F = 1.548, p > 0.01$) and tenure ($F = 1.256, p > 0.01$) regarding leadership development.

4.6.4 Sample *t*-test

Paired sample *t*-test was computed to determine the statistical difference between male and female respondents concerning the variables measured in the study. The paired *t*-test is a statistical technique frequently employed to determine whether there exists a statistical difference between two different groups associated sample populations. The results of the paired sample *t*-test are shown in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21: Paired sample *t*-test: Gender and all variables

Variables	T	Df	P
EI	15.818	71	0.000***
Leadership performance	17.082	71	0.000***
Self-awareness	15.778	71	0.000***
Social awareness	17.253	71	0.000***
Self-management	16.948	71	0.000***
Motivation	17.235	71	0.000***
Leadership development	13.935	71	0.000***

* $p < 0.01$

The results revealed a statistical difference between males and females regarding EI, leadership performance, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, motivation and leadership development. Post-Hoc Test was computed to examine where the differences lie.

Table 4.22 Post Hoc Test: Gender and all variables

Variables	Categories of Gender	N	Mean
EI	Male	46	3.53
	Female	27	3.85
Leadership performance	Male	46	3.80
	Female	27	3.89
Self-awareness	Male	46	3.68
	Female	27	3.63
Social awareness	Male	46	3.93
	Female	27	3.79
Self-management	Male	46	3.92
	Female	27	3.72
Motivation	Male	46	3.89
	Female	27	3.85
Leadership development	Male	46	3.70
	Female	27	3.51

The results showed that while females had strong EI, males had weak EI. Also, the results showed that while the performance of female leaders was improved through EI, the performance of male leaders was not influenced by EI. Furthermore, while males managed their emotions through self-awareness, females could not manage their emotions through self-awareness. Further, while males managed their emotions through social awareness, females could not manage their emotions through social awareness. Again, while males managed their emotions through self-management, females failed to manage their emotions through self-management. Besides, the results showed that while males better managed their emotions through motivation,

females could not do so. Lastly, the results revealed that while EI contributed to the leadership development of males, it could not influence the leadership development of females.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented the research findings and discussed the findings by integrating literature. The valid conclusions are drawn by employing both descriptive and inferential statistics. Pearson's productive moment correction was adopted to determine the relationship between the dependent (EI) and independent variables (leadership performance, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, motivation and leadership development). The results showed a strong positive relationship between EI, leadership performance, and leadership performance.

Moreover, the results indicated a strong positive relationship between EI and emotional coping strategies (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and motivation). In addition, linear regression was used to determine the relations between the dependent and independent variables. The result showed that among the emotional coping strategies, only self-management and motivation contributed to improving EI. However, self-awareness and social awareness did not contribute to managing EI. Also, the ANOVA results showed no significant difference among the respondents varying by positions and tenure regarding EI, leadership performance, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, motivation and leadership development.

By contrast, the paired sample t-test revealed a statistical difference between males and females regarding EI, leadership performance, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, motivation and leadership development.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. The conclusion and recommendations are based on the findings that stemmed from the study. Further, the chapters contain the limitation of the study and directions for future research. The conclusion and recommendations are aligned with the research objectives outlined in Chapter 1, namely:

- i. To determine if EI skills enhance leadership performance.
- ii. To evaluate how EI being the key aspect in contribute to developing good leaders.
- iii. To analyse the factors that influence EI.

5.2 Conclusion of the study

The conclusion that stems from the study are as follows:

5.2.1 The relationship between EI and leadership performance

The study determined whether EI enhance leadership performance in the case study organisation. This objective was tested using the Pearson's correlation and regression analysis. The Pearson's correlation results showed a strong positive relationship between EI skills and leadership performance ($r = 0.716, p < 0.01$). Also, based on the regression analysis results, the standardised Beta and p-values for EI and leadership performance were statistically significant ($\beta = 0.647, p < 0.01$). Therefore, the concluded that a significant relationship existed between EI skills and leadership performance. Thus, EI skills enhanced leadership performance in the organisation.

5.2.2 The relationship between and leadership development

Besides, the study investigated the relationship between EI and leadership development in the organisation. Pearson's correlation results suggested a moderate positive relationship existed between EI and leadership development ($r = 0.688, p < 0.01$). However, the regression analysis indicated that the standardised Beta and p-values for EI and leadership development were statistically insignificant ($\beta = 0.099, p > 0.01$). In statistics, conclusions are more valid based on regression analysis. Therefore, this study concluded that EI had no statistical relationship with leadership. Thus, EI plays no role in developing good leaders in the organization.

5.2.3 The factors that influence EI

Further, the study determined factors that influence EI. In this study, the factors measured were self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and motivation. Pearson's correlation results indicated a strong positive relationship between EI and self-awareness ($r = 0.716, p < 0.01$). However, the regression analysis results suggested that the standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = 0.282, p > 0.01$) indicated no relationship between EI and self-awareness. Given the results, this study concludes that self-awareness had an insignificant effect on EI.

Also, Pearson's correlation results showed a strong positive relationship between EI and social awareness ($r = 0.857, p < 0.01$). However, the regression analysis results indicated the standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = -0.039, p > 0.01$) showed a negative relationship between EI and social awareness. In light of the results, the study suggested that social awareness had a negative effect on EI in the organisation. Thus, social awareness was not considered a tool for managing emotions and coping with pressure in the work environment.

Further, Pearson's correlation results demonstrated a strong positive relationship between EI and self-management ($r = 0.779, p < 0.01$). Similarly, the regression analysis results suggested the standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = 0.245, p < 0.10$) showed a statistical relationship between EI and self-management. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a positive relationship between EI and self-management. Thus, self-management was considered an important tool for managing emotion and coping with pressure in the work environment.

Lastly, Pearson's correlation results revealed a strong positive relationship between EI and motivation ($r = 0.728, p < 0.01$). Also, the standardised Beta and p-values ($\beta = 0.323, p < 0.10$) suggested a significant positive relationship between EI and motivation. Given the results, it is evident that motivation played an important role in managing emotion and coping with pressure in the work environment.

5.3 Recommendations of the study

Based on the aforementioned results, the following recommendations are proposed.

5.3.1 Encourage self-awareness in leaders

Self-awareness, which is the ability to recognise and understand one's thoughts, feelings, and emotions plays an important role in managing emotion. However, the results of the study revealed that self-awareness had an insignificant effect on managing emotion in the organisation. For this reason, the study recommends the need to encourage self-awareness among the leaders in the organisation. To achieve this, leaders should have the ability to understand how their subordinates react to their actions, get feedback from their trusted colleagues and subordinates, pay attention to the emotional needs of people, and leverage their strengths to achieve positive results.

5.3.2 Emphasis the need for leadership development

It has been argued that EI plays a pivotal role in leadership development. However, the study found that EI played no significant role in developing good leaders in the organisation. Thus, EI has no significant effect on leadership development in the focal organisation. Hence, the study recommends the need for developing good leaders in the organisation. The organisation may introduce coaching, succession planning and other developmental programmes to help leaders acquire the necessary leadership skills to function optimally. These programmes must target, especially leaders who lack the leadership skills.

5.3.3 The need to improve social awareness among leaders.

In management literature, leaders who are exceptional in social awareness make an effort to comprehend their co-workers' emotions and viewpoints, allowing them to communicate and work together more efficiently with their colleagues. Therefore, developing strong empathy skills can help leaders in building better relationships with people who have differing viewpoints. Contrary to this, the study found that social awareness had a negative effect on EI in the organisation. That is, social awareness was not considered a tool for managing emotions and coping with pressure in the work environment. Given the findings, the study suggests the need to improve social awareness among leaders in the organisation. One of the ways to improve social awareness among leaders is to encourage them to listen to others, look for facts about the situation and analyse the emotions surrounding it. Other strategies to improve social awareness

include watching the facial expressions and body language of others, observing people and the environment, and paying attention to the tone of voice.

5.3.5 Investment in leadership development

The research findings showed that EI had no statistical leadership with leadership development in the organization. Against this background, the study recommends that BP and other entities in the KZN's corporate sector invest in leadership development. An investment in leadership development programs such as training and development will help increase leaders' competence in core socio-emotional skills related to self-management, social awareness, self-awareness, and motivation.

5.3.6 Develop leader's self-awareness

As previously discussed, the findings indicated that EI had no significant impact on leaders' self-awareness within the organization. Consequently, this study suggests that the organisation should focus more on enhancing leaders' self-awareness. By improving self-awareness, leaders can better inspire and guide the organisation towards success by understanding their intentions, developing a clear vision for the future, and adhering to core values.

5.4 The limitations of the study and directions for future research

The limitations of the study are threefold. First, the study relied on quantitative research methods to investigate the influence of EI on the development of leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector. A fundamental limitation of using a quantitative research approach is that it fails to capture the context and subjective experiences of the respondents. The findings imply that the study could not provide a true picture of how EI influence leadership development and performance at BP. Therefore, future studies should adopt either qualitative or mixed methods research to adequately capture the context and subjective experiences of the respondents regarding the same subject matter under investigation.

Second, the study was limited to individuals in a company within KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector. The limitation is that the research findings cannot be generalised to cover other companies within KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector. Hence, future research should focus on more than one companies in the KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector.

Third, the choice of the problem itself was a limitation, which involves examining the influence of EI on the development of leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector. This delimitation of the study arises primarily from the extant literature review. The study scope was limited to a few constructs because of the absence of research on the influence of EI in developing good leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector.

5.5 Chapter summary

The chapters provided a summary of the research findings, recommendations and limitations of the study. The overall findings revealed that self-awareness had an insignificant effect on managing emotion in the organisation. Also, it was found that EI has no significant effect on leadership development in the focal organisation. Additionally, the findings indicated that social awareness had a negative effect on EI in the organisation. Based on the findings, some specific recommendations were made. For instance, the study recommended the need to encourage self-awareness among the leaders in the organisation. Also, the study recommended the need for developing good leaders in the organisation. Moreover, it was recommended that social awareness among leaders in the organisation be improved. The limitation of the study included the research method adopted, limited geographical coverage and scarcity of research and literature on EI and leadership development.

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Appendix A: Ethical Clearance



04 July 2025

Anelisiwe Sithembile Kheswa (220067561)
School of Man Info Tech & Gov
Westville Campus

Dear AS Kheswa,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00006723/2024

Project title: The analysis of emotional intelligence being the key aspect in the development of effective leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector.

Amended title: The influence of Emotional Intelligence on the development of leaders in KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 03 July 2025 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully



Doctor Shamila Naidoo (Interim Chair)

/nng

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix B: Gatekeeper's letter



November 9, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AS PART OF THE MCOM QUALIFICATION

It is a requirement of our MCom qualification that all students undertake a practical research project. In this way students are given the opportunity to creatively link and discuss the theoretical aspects of the programme to the practical issues facing organisations in real life settings. Typically, this project necessitate data gathering by questionnaires or interviews.

Student name: has chosen to do a research project entitled:

Your assistance in permitting access to your organization for purposes of this research is most appreciated. Please be assured that all information gained from the research will be treated with the utmost circumspection. The student will strictly adhere to confidentiality and anonymity.

I am available at any stage to answer any queries and/or to discuss any aspect of this research project.

If permission is granted, please sign the attached form.

Thank you for your assistance in this regard.

Yours sincerely

The School of Management, IT and Governance College of Law and Management Studies

Postal Address: Private Bag X01, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg 3209, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)33 260 6487

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E-mail: Govenderkn@ukzn.ac.za

Gatekeeper's Consent

I Welmie Schoeman in my capacity as CFO hereby give permission to conduct research in my organization.

The student MAY/MAY NOT (delete whichever is not applicable) use the name of the organisation in the research report.

Signature of Manager/Owner/Gatekeeper: 

Date: 9/11/2022

**The School of Management, IT and Governance
College of Law and Management Studies**

Postal Address: Private Bag X01, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg 3209, South Africa

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Appendix C: Questionnaire

Dear Participants,

My name is **Anelisiwe Kheswa**, a Masters student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in the School of Management, IT and Governance. My email address is 220067561@stu.ukzn.co.za and cellphone number is [REDACTED] I would like to invite you to participate in the study that entails "The influence of emotional intelligence on the development of leaders in corporate sector".

This study is consist of a questionnaire with a set of 10 close-ended questions. Your participation would be highly appreciated. The entire procedure will be highly confidential. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be **10-15 minutes**.

Kind Regards
Anelisiwe Kheswa

* Required

Section A: Demographic questions

1. What position do you hold within the organisation? *

- ☐ Intern/Graduate
- ☐ Skilled
- ☐ Junior manager
- ☐ Middle manager
- ☐ Senior manager

2. How long have you been employed within the organisation? *

- ☐ <5 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ +16 years

3. What is your gender? *

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ Other

Section B: Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Performance

4. Emotional Intelligence *

	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neither agree nor disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
My leader is always able to see things from the other person's viewpoint	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader is good at adapting and mixing with a variety of people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader can tell if a team is not getting along with each other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Leadership Performance *

	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neither agree nor disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
My leader does not allow negative feelings of coworkers to inhibit collaboration in teams and work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader treats all coworkers in the team equally and values everyone suggestion or opinion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader/manager sets performance goals and conducts regular performance evaluation meetings to monitor progress	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section C: Emotion Copying Strategies

6. Self Awareness *

	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neither agree nor disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
My leader understands their strengths and weaknesses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader is able to tell if they are being unreasonable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader is good at reconciling differences with other people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Social Awareness (Empathy) *

	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neither agree nor disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
My leader shows understanding and emotional support when I am facing a difficult situation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader is able to put themselves in other peoples shoes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader builds a safe & positive work atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Self-Management *

	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neither agree nor disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
My leader is able to control their distressing emotions when faced with a challenging situation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader remains calm in volatile situations and has self-management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader is able to prioritise important activities at work and get on with them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Motivation *

	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neither agree nor disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
My leader motivates me to be more positive and efficient even if I am distracted or feeling unproductive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader is approachable and is always willing to help when asked	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader regularly provides compliments, positive feedback and constructive criticism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D: Leadership development

10. Development *

	(1) Strongly disagree	(2) Disagree	(3) Neither agree nor disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
My leader consistently engages in leadership training to enhance their skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My leader frequently seeks feedback from the team to enhance their management techniques and leadership skills (Self Improve)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Leader is ready to admit mistakes, seeks assistance from the team when unsure, and is open to learning from the team even though in a higher role	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix D: Letter from editor

S E Matthis (B A Hons)

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Email: s[REDACTED]m

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14 November 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to confirm that I have proofread and language edited the following dissertation:

The influence of emotional intelligence on the development of leaders in
KwaZulu-Natal's corporate sector

by

Anelisiwe Kheswa

[REDACTED]

S E Matthis

14 November 2024