# Relationship of Transformational Leadership and Emotional Intelligence among Team Leaders in IT (Software) Companies in India

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## ABSTRACT

*Transformational leadership theory was developed by Burns (1978) and later enhanced by Bass and others. Transformational leadership theory evidence that the leader's ability to motivate the follower to accomplish more than what the follower planned to accomplish. Emotional Intelligence enables a person to deal with just about anything with a measure of balance and maturity. An emotionally intelligent person has a deeply rooted sense of self which helps them in understanding other people, keeping focus, and understanding what is most important. They are successful in whatever they choose to do and have high work performance and personal productivity levels which leads to enjoying greater job satisfaction. Emotional Intelligence enables teams to boost their performance. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence of team leaders and leadership behaviours (Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire) in IT (software) companies in India. A total of 216 team leaders were rated on Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Emotional Intelligence scale in IT (software) companies of India. The Statistical tools like frequency, percentage, and Pearson's Correlation have been used for analysis and interpretation of the data collected from IT companies in India. The results of the study showed that there exists a positive relationship between two factors (Self-Awareness and Self-Management) of emotional intelligence and Leadership styles namely transformational, transactional and Laissez-faire. The other two factors of emotional intelligence - Social Awareness and Social Skills have an insignificant relationship with Transactional and Laissez-faire leadership of Team Leaders in IT (Software) companies in India.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Laissez-faire leadership, Emotional intelligence.

## INTRODUCTION:

### Transformational Leadership:

Leadership can be defined as a social process of influencing other people's orientation towards the achievement of goals irrespective of whether it is in an organization or in a social set-up. The terms transforming, transformational and transactional (Burns 1978; Bass 1990) have become central to the study leadership and are often used to differentiate leadership and management.

Burns (1978) was probably the first to introduce the concept of transformational leadership in a future context of change and transformation that can shape up the organization to the desired condition and turn it around. Transformational leaders are expected to strongly influence positively on followers' motivation and their ability to achieve or even surpass goals and they encourage followers to become part of the overall organizational environment and its culture, and also empower followers by encouraging them to propose new and controversial ideas without fear of punishment. Transformational leadership has four components/factors such as Idealized

influence or charisma, Inspirational motivation. Intellectual stimulation and Intellectual consideration. Idealized influence or charisma – The leader provides vision and a sense of mission. The leaders are admir respected and trusted. Such leader excites and inspires subordinates. Inspirational motivation - The leaders beha in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' wo Team spirit is aroused. Enthusiasm and optimism are displayed. Intellectual stimulation-The leader stimula followers to rethink about old ways of doing things. Followers are provided with interesting and challenging tas and encouraged to solve problems in their own way. Creativity is encouraged. There is no public criticism individual members' mistake. Intellectual consideration- The leader pays special attention to each individ follower's needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach and mentor. Individual consideration practiced when new learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate. The leader's behaviou demonstrate acceptance of individual differences. The individually considerate leader listens effectively.

### Emotional Intelligence:

Salovey and Mayer (1990) first introduced the concept of Emotional intelligence. EI is the ability to monito one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and use the information to guide one's thinking and actions. Further, they (Salovey & Mayer, 1997) revised their model and defined Emotional Intelligence a the ability of an individual to perceive precisely, appraise, and express emotion: the ability to access and generate feelings when they facilitate thought: the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. Emotional Intelligence is considered important for business leaders because if they are insensitive to the mood of their subordinates, employees or team, it can create frustration and, therefore, not get the best out of people.

Barling, Slater, and Kelloway (2000) observed that Emotional Intelligence consists of characteristics such as understanding one's emotions, knowing how to manage them, emotional self-control, understanding others' emotions or empathy, and managing relationships.

Goleman (2002) divided EI into four main groups that incorporate our understanding of people: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Lubit (2004) divided EI into two major components: personal competence and social competence. Personal competence is the combination of self-awareness and self-management (i.e., the ability to manage effectively the identified feelings). Social competence is comprised of social awareness (the ability to understand what others feel) and relationship management (having the skills to work effectively in teams).

An emotionally intelligent person has a deeply rooted sense of self which helps them in understanding other people, keeping focus, and understanding what is most important. They are successful in whatever they choose to do and have high work performance and personal productivity levels which leads to enjoying greater job satisfaction. Emotional Intelligence enables teams to boost their performance. In the present-day, IT (Software) companies in India is undergoing considerable changes in response to the changing business environment. In an IT Industry, it is necessary that the leader should be effective and charismatic so that he is able to lead from the front and initiate the followers to adopt the same technique and take the risk.

### LITERATURE REVIEW:

The issue concerning leadership is a very complex one. Effective leadership always plays an important role in the growth and better performance of the organization. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is assumed to be an important characteristic of leadership, particularly in transformational leadership. Emotional Intelligence has become increasingly popular as a measure for identifying potentially effective leaders, and a stool for developing effective leadership skills in diverse business. Leaders are most likely to lead their subordinates if they have insights into the needs, values and hopes of their followers. This insight may be facilitated through a higher level of emotional awareness and sensitivity. Leaders can create emotional responses in the subordinates, communicate and instill commitment toward a common vision, enlarge audiences through their own energy, self-confidence and ambition It is found from several studies that have been conducted on transformational leadership and Emotional intelligence that emotional intelligence scores were related. Most of the studies reveal positive outcomes. Srivastava. B.L & Bharamanaikar, S. L. (2004) examined leadership effectiveness in the Indian army officers and reported that the significant connection between leaders' EI and all of the components of the transformational leadership style. EI scores were higher for the contingent reward component of transactional style. Emotional Intelligence was not related to job satisfaction but was related to perceived success. According to Singh, S. K. (2007), all the dimensions of EI are positively associated with leadership styles as well as the effectiveness of the male and female software professionals. EI of the male software professionals has a

significant positive relationship with their supportive and delegating styles of leadership, and overall leadership effectiveness also has a significant positive relationship with all the dimensions of EI and total EI.

In a study conducted by Mishra, P. S. & Mohapatra, A. K. D. (2010) relevance of Emotional Intelligence for Effective Job Performance in various Organizations in Delhi NCR, uncovered that role plays, simulations, games, and cognitive exercises are more appropriate than lectures when dealing with emotional learning. A study was also conducted by Raina, A. K. & Sharma, N. K. (2013) to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership with entrepreneurs in Rajasthan in India and the results showed that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership and effectiveness. Further, indicated a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and contingent reward leadership, while no significant relationship was evident between emotional intelligence and other leadership styles. Study derived that entrepreneurs and future entrepreneurs could better develop effective leadership skills by becoming more aware of their strengths and weakness in the area of emotional intelligence. along with improving their transformational leadership behaviours. Barling, J. et al. (2000) conducted an exploratory study on the relationship between EI and transformational leadership and reported that idealized influence. inspirational motivation. individualized consideration, as well as contingent reward have a significant relationship with Emotional Intelligence and Intellectual stimulation have no relationship with Emotional Intelligence. There was also no significant association between active and passive management–by- exception, laissez-faire and emotional intelligence.

In a study of Palmer, B. et al. (2001) discovered the relationship between EI and effective leadership. It found that relationship exists between some monitoring and inspirational motivation and between idealized influence and emotional monitoring. Also found a positive relationship between the contingent reward component of transactional leadership and the emotional monitoring subscale, and with contingent reward and the total transformational leadership score. Gardner, L.& Stough, C. (2002) examined the utility of emotional intelligence in predicting effective leaders and revealed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and all components of transformational leadership. The relationship was further supported for all five EI factors from the SUEIT, as well as with contingent rewards (part of the transactional leadership style). There was a strong negative relationship between laissez-faire leadership and total emotional intelligence score. The outcomes of leadership i.e. extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction were found significantly correlated with components of emotional intelligence as well as total emotional intelligence.

Sivanathan, N.& Fekken, G.C.(2002) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and moral reasoning to leadership styles and effectiveness and the results showed a positive correlation between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. It was also found that transactional leadership was positively correlated with superior rating effectiveness and leaders displaying greater moral reasoning were not found to display transformational leadership behaviour. Mandell, B. & Pherwani, S. (2003) conducted a small study to examine the gender differences in the relationship between EI and transformational leadership and through their study revealed that females were significantly higher in emotional intelligence than males, but there were no gender differences when comparing the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. There was an overall significant positive relationship between the total EI scores and transformational leadership scores of the managers.

Duckett, H. &Macfarlane, E. (2003) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership relationships in a UK based retailing organization. The results showed a strong connection between the theory of EQ and transformational leadership. But there was the difference between the idealized and actual EQ scores in transactional capabilities. Weinberger, L.A. (2003) investigated the relationship between EI, leadership styles and perceived leadership effectiveness in a single US-based manufacturing organization and discovered that no significant correlation were found between emotional intelligence and leadership styles. In addition, no significant relationships were found between emotional intelligence and leadership outcomes. Leban, W. & Zulauf, C. (2004) studied emotional intelligence and transformational leadership styles and the results of the study found that there are a number of linkages between emotional intelligence abilities and transformational leadership style. The ability to understand emotions and overall emotional intelligence were significantly related to the inspirational motivation component of transformational leadership. Emotional intelligence was found to relate significantly to the idealized influence and individual consideration components of transformational leadership. Management-by-exception component of transactional leadership and laissez-faire or non-leadership were found to have a significant negative relationship with the strategic emotional intelligence and understanding emotions component of emotional intelligence. The study recognizes that transformational project leader behaviour has a positive impact on actual

project performance, and emotional intelligence ability contributes to transformational project leader behaviour and also to subsequent actual project performance.

Butler, C.J. & Chinowsky, P.S. (2006) extended the research of Gardner and Stough by examining leaders in the construction industry. The research investigated emotional intelligence and leadership behaviour profiles of leaders in the construction industry and it was disclosed that five of the fifteen subscales of emotional intelligence were related to transformational leadership behaviour at a statistically significant level. Inspirational leadership was reported as the most commonly employed transformational behaviour and employing contingent reward behaviour was viewed as the most frequently used transactional leadership behaviour. Vrba, M. (2007) conducted research in a South African insurance company and revealed a positive correlation between all the EI skills and all the transformational styles. EI skills also had a positive correlation with contingent reward; a component of transactional style. All the EI skills also had a positive correlation with the outcomes of leadership (extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction). A negative correlation was found between EI skills and laissez-faire style.

Sunindigo, et al. (2007) studied the benefits of emotional intelligence to project management. In their study, which investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership style in Thailand found that emotional intelligence affected the leadership behaviour of project leaders. Project leaders with higher emotional intelligence tend to use open communication and proactive leadership styles. It was also found that EI generated delegating, open communication, and proactive behaviour, which could bring positive outcomes to the organization. Tang, H.W.V., et al. (2010) explored the relationship between the emotional intelligence and transformational leadership practices of academic leaders in Taiwan and the USA. The study indicated that the Taiwanese participants' overall EI was found to have a positive significant correlation with all five areas of leadership practices. The US participants were also found to have statistically significant positive relationships between overall emotional intelligence and all areas of leadership practices except challenging the process and inspiring a shared vision.

The above literature on emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness, and leadership styles namely transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant revealed mixed findings of the relationship between these variables. But major findings indicate a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, and between emotional intelligence and transactional leadership. The findings also revealed a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and passive-avoidant leadership style. There are very few studies in India which have used the variables of emotional intelligence and leadership styles and leadership effectiveness. Thus, there is enough scope to study a relationship between Emotional intelligence, OCB and Transformational leaders of IT (Software) Companies in India.

## NEED FOR THE STUDY:

In today's global economy where outsourcing, downsizing and acquisitions are common companies must compete to find, attract, develop, and retain the best talent. Strong leadership is essential for any organisation. Leaders are required to rethink traditional ways and play a greater and innovative role to face them with foresight and vision. There is also an urgent need to focus on the personality of leaders so that their skills and talents are robust enough to keep pace with modern times. Leaders in an organization create the vision; support the strategies and the catalyst for developing and retaining the workforce to move the organisation forward. Effective leaders can anticipate problems and quickly respond to new realities. According to Goleman et al., leaders use emotional intelligence to develop a relationship that is in sync with their organization by forming "emotional bonds that help them stay focused even amid profound change and uncertainty." Boyatzis concluded that emotional, social and cognitive intelligence competencies predict effectiveness in professional, skilled, management and leadership roles in different sectors of society. (Boyatzis, 2009)

Research has also shown a positive correlation between EI and transformational leadership behaviours, which indicate that developing a leader's emotional intelligence competencies, could be a predictor of that leader's ability to engage in transformational leadership. In the past decade, many studies of emotional intelligence and leadership have been conducted using different constructs of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. The review of the literature gives a mix of findings of the relationship between EI and leadership effectiveness and between EI and leadership styles. In India, a few studies have been conducted using the variables of emotional intelligence, leadership styles particularly in IT (software) companies. The present study has made an attempt to examine the relationship between EI and leadership styles namely transformational leadership, transactional leadership and liassez-Faire leadership in the IT (software) companies in the India.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

a) To study the demographic profile of team leaders' in IT (Software) companies in India.
b) To examine the relationship between emotional Intelligence of team leaders' and leadership behaviours in IT companies in India.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

Based on the purpose of the current study and comprehensive review of the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: There is a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style.
H2: There is a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and transactional leadership style.
H3: There is a negative significant relationship between emotional intelligence and laissez-faire leadership style.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between EI and transformational leadership behaviour in IT (Software) companies in India. Team Leaders' of IT (Software companies) companies all over India constituted the population of study. The sample size for the study was 216 respondents i.e. team leaders. The primary data was collected from the respondent by two research instruments i.e. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) for measuring Team Leader's leadership styles and the Emotional and Social Competency Inventory (ESCI) was used for measuring the team leader's emotional intelligence. The survey has been conducted at the IT companies located in Goa, Mumbai, Bangalore, Pune and Hyderabad on the basis of the concentration of IT companies based on judgement sampling. The Statistical tools used for analysis of primary data include frequencies and Correlations for analysis and interpretation of the data collected from IT (software) companies in India.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### Table 1: Demographic Profile of Team Leaders

| Demographic profile | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 72 | 33 |
| | Female | 144 | 67 |
| Age | 21-25 Years | 4 | 2 |
| | 26-30 Years | 60 | 28 |
| | 31-35 Years | 92 | 43 |
| | 36-40 Years | 40 | 19 |
| | Above 40 years | 20 | 9 |
| Marital Status | Married | 104 | 48 |
| | Separated | 8 | 4 |
| | Single | 104 | 48 |
| Qualification | M.E | 124 | 57 |
| | MCA | 72 | 33 |
| | B.E | 16 | 7 |
| | M.Sc | 4 | 2 |
| | B.Sc | 0 | |
| | Others | 0 | |
| Designation | Programme Developer | 44 | 20 |
| | Software Engineer | 160 | 74 |
| | DBA | 8 | 4 |
| | Consultant | 4 | 2 |
| | Others | 0 | |
| Experience | 1-5 Years | 104 | 48 |
| | 6-10 Years | 80 | 37 |
| | Above 10 Years | 32 | 15 |

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the Team Leaders in the IT (Software) companies in India. gender composition of the sample was strongly biased towards females. It showed that 67% of team lea were females and 33% were male respondents. Out of total respondents. 30% were below 30 years of age the remaining 70% belonged to higher age groups. It shows that the majority of employees at soft organizations are middle aged. It is observed that 4% of team leaders are separated whereas equal percen (48%) is single and married.

Team leaders' qualification includes M.E (IT), MCA, B.E (IT), M. Sc, B. Sc. Majority of Team leaders qualified M. E. followed by MCA, B.E and M. Sc. Team Leaders worked in IT (Software) companies havi different designation which includes Programme Developer (junior/senior), Software Engineers, DBA, consultants etc. Most of the Team Leaders were software Engineers (74%), followed by Program Developers, DBA, Consultants and others etc. Almost 85% per cent of the respondent's i.e. team leaders a having less than 10 years of Managerial level experience. This also indicates the young population of Manage in the software companies.

## Analysis of Relationship between Emotional Intelligence of Team Leaders' and Transformation Leadership styles.

### Reliability analysis for the scale of EI / TL

| Sr. No | Scale | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Emotional Intelligence | .835 |
| 2 | Transformational Leadership | .818 |

**Testing of Hypotheses:**

H1: There is a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style

### Table No: 1

| MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire | | Emotional Intelligence (EI) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Self-Awareness | Self-Management | Social Awareness | Social Skills |
| Transformational Leadership | Pearson Correlation | .284** | .534** | 0.048 | .160* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | 0 | 0.479 | 0.018 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Analysis of the data in table no.1 indicated that Team leaders' Emotional intelligence and Transformational leadership style are positively correlated. This Positive correlation is indicated in the above table suggests that there is a relationship between the factors of emotional intelligence (Self-Awareness, Self-Management, and Social Skills) and transformational leadership of the team leaders' in IT companies in India. Social Awareness a factor of emotional intelligence shows an insignificant correlation with transformational leadership.
H1: partially accepted.

Therefore, we conclude that there is positive significant relationship between three factors of emotional intelligence i.e. Self-Awareness, Self-Management, and Social Skills and transformational leadership style.
H2: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and transactional leadership style.

### Table No: 2

| MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire | | Emotional Intelligence (EI) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Self-Awareness | Self-Management | Social Awareness | Social Skills |
| Transactional Leadership | Pearson Correlation | .258** | .474** | 0.036 | 0.096 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | 0 | 0.603 | 0.158 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Analysis of the data indicated in the above table shows that Team leaders' Emotional intelligence and Transactional leadership style showed a positive correlation between the two factors of emotional intelligence i.e. Self-awareness and Self-management whereas social awareness and social skills are negatively correlated with transactional leadership behaviours of Team Leaders' of IT (software) companies in India.

H2: Partially Accepted.
Therefore, we conclude that there is positive significant relationship between two factors of emotional intelligence i.e. Self – Awareness, Self – Management, and transactional leadership style.
H3: There is a negative significant relationship between emotional intelligence and laissez-faire leadership style.

#### Table No: 3

| MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire | | Emotional Intelligence (EI) | | | Social Skills |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Self-Awareness | Self-Management | Social Awareness | |
| Laissez-Faire Leadership | Pearson Correlation | .285** | .272** | 0.049 | 0.119 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | 0 | 0.472 | 0.08 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Analysis of the data indicated in the above table shows that Team leaders' Emotional intelligence i.e. Social Awareness and Social Skills and Laissez-faire leadership style are negatively correlated between factors of Emotional Intelligence i.e. Social Awareness and Social Skills and Laissez-faire leadership style. But there is a positive correlation with the Self-Awareness, Self-Management, factors of emotional intelligence and Laissez-faire leadership.

H3: partially accepted.
Therefore, we conclude that there is negative significant relationship between two factors of emotional intelligence i.e. Social Awareness and Social Skills and Laissez-faire leadership style.

### CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this study is to better understand the relationship between the emotional intelligence and Transformational, Transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles of team leaders in IT (Software) companies in India. The correlation was used to examine the relationship between the constructs of emotional intelligence and leadership styles.
MLQ measures a full range of leadership behaviours with Transformational leadership being at one end and Transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership on the opposite end.
This study found that Transformational leadership behaviours correlated significantly with the emotional intelligence factors except for Social Awareness. Also found that the Transactional leadership behaviours and Laissez-faire leadership, correlations were insignificant with social Awareness and Social Skills, factors of emotional intelligence.
In short, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between the factors of emotional intelligence (Self Awareness and Self-Management) and Leadership Behaviours i.e. Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire.

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