



Exploring Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership Style of Lecturers in Universities in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between emotional intelligence and transformative leadership of lecturers. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and collected data from 200 lecturers and 70 student leaders in ten randomly selected universities in Kenya via questionnaires. The correlation between transformative leadership and emotional intelligence was found to be highly significant indicating a strong relationship ($r = 0.76$, $p 0.0001$). However, students rated lecturers' emotional intelligence the lowest, indicating that lecturers do not pay sufficient attention to how their leadership impact on students. The study recommends that universities train lecturers in emotional intelligence and transformative leadership to inspire students positively.

Keywords: Lecturers, Emotional Intelligence, Transformative Leadership.

Introduction

Daniel Goleman proposed in his 1995 book "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ" that success in life is determined not only by intellectual ability but also by emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence, according to Goleman, is the ability to recognize, comprehend, and manage one's own emotions, as well as the ability to recognize and influence the emotions of others. He emphasizes the significance of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills in achieving success in personal and professional contexts (Goleman, 1995). Since its inception, the concept of emotional intelligence has gained widespread acceptance and has been the subject of extensive research and debate in both academic and popular circles.

According to the Emotional Intelligence Theory, people can understand and manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of others (Mayer & Salovey, 2004). In personal and professional success, the theory emphasizes the importance of emotional self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence, according to this theory, are more effective at managing relationships, solving problems, and adapting to changing circumstances. Emotional intelligence has been demonstrated to be a significant predictor of leadership effectiveness, particularly in interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, and team building (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013).

Throughout the years, numerous scholars, including James MacGregor Burns, Bernard Bass, and Robert Greenleaf, have developed and expanded the Transformative Leadership Theory. In his 1978 book "Leadership," Burns introduced the concept of transformative leadership and defined it as a style of leadership that seeks to transform both the leader and the followers (Burns, 1978). In the 1980s and 1990s, Bass expanded the theory, and his contributions have influenced the understanding of what transformative leadership entails (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Robert Greenleaf contributed to this theory with his concept of servant leadership, which focuses on the leader's role as a servant to the followers and the larger community (Greenleaf, 1977). Recent years have seen an increase in research on the subject of leadership in community colleges, focusing on the competencies, skills, knowledge, behaviors, and traits that community college leaders should have (Tarker, 2019).

In his book "Leadership: Theory and Practice," Peter G. Northouse discusses the Transformative Leadership Theory and its key principles. Northouse emphasizes that transformative leaders are capable of inspiring and motivating their followers to work toward a shared vision or objective and that this type of leadership can result in positive change within organizations and in society as a whole (Northouse, 2018). He also discusses the significance of emotional intelligence in transformative leadership, arguing that leaders with high emotional intelligence are better able to connect with their followers and comprehend their needs and concerns. Orientation Empirical research also confirms the positive impact of this leadership style on followers' attitudes and performance and the connection between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership (Görgens-Ekermans & Roux, 2021).

There are still gaps in knowledge of emotional intelligence and transformative leadership and how these ideas affect leadership effectiveness, even though these topics have been the focus of extensive research. Measurement, causation, diversity, and contextual elements are some of the major research gaps in emotional intelligence and transformative leadership.

The best ways to assess emotional intelligence and transformative leadership are still being debated, with some researchers contending that current measures may not be sufficient or appropriate in all situations (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2017). There is still a difference in opinion regarding the causality of these relationships, despite evidence linking emotional intelligence and transformative leadership to favorable outcomes like job performance and follower engagement (Joseph & Newman, 2010). It is unclear how situational aspects, like organizational culture and industry sector, may affect the connection between transformative leadership, emotional intelligence, and outcomes like employee well-being and organizational performance (Dhiman, 2018). There is little research on how to promote diversity and inclusion in organizations, especially for underrepresented groups, using transformative leadership and emotional intelligence (Klein, Lim, Saltz, & Mayer, 2018). These research gaps highlight the need for more investigation into and improvement of knowledge of transformative leadership and emotional intelligence, particularly concerning their measurement, causal relationships, contextual factors, and effects on diversity and inclusion.

Statement of Problem

There are gaps in knowledge of how emotional intelligence and transformative leadership are related, particularly in terms of measurement, causal relationships, contextual factors, and effects on diversity and inclusion. It is still necessary to investigate how emotional intelligence and transformative leadership relate to leadership effectiveness in the particular setting of Kenyan universities, even though these concepts have been the subject of extensive research. It is also unclear how context-specific elements like organizational culture and industry sector may affect the connections between emotional intelligence, transformative leadership, and outcomes like employee well-being and organizational performance among Kenyan university lecturers. This study seeks to fill these gaps by examining the relationship between lecturers' transformative leadership styles and emotional intelligence in Kenyan universities while also taking into account contextual variables and diversity issues that may have an impact on transformative leadership.

Methodology

Research Design

A correlational study is a type of analysis that seeks to gauge the magnitude and direction of the relationship between two or more variables. With this approach, data on the relevant variables are gathered, and their levels of relationship are assessed through data analysis. Many different research questions can be examined using correlational studies in a variety of disciplines, such as psychology, education, and healthcare (Polanin et al., 2021).

Tanaka and colleagues (2019) study used a correlational design to look at the correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among Japanese nurses. The study used standardized tests to gather data on emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, which were then used to analyze the data to see how closely the two variables were related. The results showed a significant and positive relationship between emotional quotient and job satisfaction, indicating that nurses with higher emotional quotients are more likely to report being satisfied with their jobs. In conclusion, a correlational study design can be a practical method for examining the relationship between variables and gaining an understanding of actual phenomena.

Instruments

Structured questionnaires were used to gather information from respondents for the study looking at the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformative leadership (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) were used in the study to assess transformative leadership and emotional intelligence, respectively. Character development was also assessed as a potential mediating factor between transformative leadership and emotional intelligence. Using a Likert scale, which is a common response format in structured questionnaires and gauges a respondent's level of agreement or disagreement with a statement or question, respondents were asked to rate the variables (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

Hypothesis

The study posed the hypothesis H_0 : There is no positive correlation between emotional intelligence and transformative leadership styles of lecturers. To test this hypothesis, the collection of quantitative data on emotional intelligence and transformative leadership was made possible through the use of structured questionnaires and Likert scales, which were then subjected to statistical analysis. The relationship between these variables was examined by use of the Spearman correlation test and analysis of ordinal data collected from the Likert scale.

The research used purposive and random sampling to obtain 200 lecturers and 70 student leaders from 10 universities in Kenya. A survey monkey tool was utilized to administer the questionnaires.

Results

Using feedback from lecturers and student leaders, the average emotional level of intelligence of lecturers was calculated. Self-management, Self-motivation, Change Resilience, Interpersonal Relations, Integration of Head and Heart, Emotional Literacy, and Self-Esteem were among the seven constructs included in the emotional intelligence questionnaire. Lecturers evaluated themselves, and student leaders evaluated the lecturers. 196

lecturers took part, and 4 of them answered the questionnaire incorrectly. 70 student leaders from 10 public universities participated in the study as well.

A 7-point Likert scale with 5 constructs—individual consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, and intellectual consideration—was used to assess transformational leadership. Both the lecturers and the student leaders evaluated the lecturers' leadership abilities.

The research hypothesis was examined using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The questionnaires of all the students were valid, while only four lecturers' questionnaires were invalid. Overall, the study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformative leadership among lecturers in Kenyan universities using valid and reliable measures and results are presented in tables 1 and 2.

Table 7: Mean rating of Lecturer's Emotional Intelligence and Transformational leadership

Mean rating			
Variable	Lecturers	Students	Average
	N=196	N=70	N=266
Emotional intelligence	3.7927	2.9719	3.5767
Transformational Leadership of the lecturers	3.6703	3.6386	3.6545

A descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to compare the mean ratings of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership between lecturers and students. The results showed that the mean rating of emotional intelligence for lecturers by lecturers was higher ($M = 3.7927$) than the rating by students ($M = 2.9719$), indicating that lecturers rated themselves as having higher emotional intelligence compared to how students rated them. Similarly, the mean rating of transformational leadership for lecturers by lecturers ($M = 3.6703$), was higher than the rating by students ($M = 3.6386$), suggesting that lecturers rated themselves slightly higher levels of transformational leadership compared to the rating by students. This agrees with a study by Koohang et al. (2017) which found that lecturers rated themselves higher even though the difference was significant. Low ratings from students may indicate a need for greater attention to emotional needs in the classroom, even though lecturers tend to rate themselves higher in emotional intelligence and transformative leadership compared to how students rate them.

Correlation Analysis

Spearman correlation analysis was done to determine the relationships among the variables. The results of the correlation test are tabulated in table 2.

Table 2: Spear correlation analysis Matrix (N=266) for the study variables

	Character transformation	Emotional intelligence	Transformational Leadership
Character Transformation	1		
Emotional intelligence	.468**	1	
Transformational Leadership	.587**	.768**	1

Source: Survey data (2022)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) with $p = 0.000$

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

The findings of the Spearman correlation analysis, which show a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and transformative leadership of lecturers in Kenya ($r=0.768$, $p=0.000$), provide evidence to support this claim. This result is in line with earlier studies that looked at the connection between leadership and emotional intelligence in a range of contexts, including education. For instance, a 2019 study by Durrani et al. among Pakistani school principals found a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. Similarly, a study by Garcia et al. (2021) discovered that among a sample of Spanish university professors, emotional intelligence was positively correlated with transformational leadership.

The fact that emotional intelligence abilities like self-awareness, empathy and social skills are necessary for successful leadership can be used to explain the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformative leadership (Garcia et al., 2021). Leaders can inspire and motivate others, foster positive change, and create a positive and engaging work environment by understanding their own emotions as well as those of others.

The correlation between emotional intelligence and transformative leadership is significant, but it does not necessarily imply causation, it is important to remember. Leadership effectiveness may also be influenced by other elements, such as personality traits and environmental factors (Durrani et al., 2019).

In conclusion, the findings of the Spearman correlation analysis lend backing to the notion that lecturers' transformative leadership and emotional intelligence are positively correlated. These results imply that fostering effective leadership in the educational setting may require the development of capacities for emotional intelligence.

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