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Study on the Role of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership Effective in IT Sector, Begaluru, India

Arun R¹, A Bhuvan Chnadu², Dr. Veena Bhavikatti³

^{1,2}Department of MBA, AMC Engineering College, Bangalore- 560083

³Associate Professor, Department of MBA, AMC Engineering College, Bangalore- 560083

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how emotional intelligence (EI) helps HR leaders in Bengaluru's IT sector lead more effectively. As workplace challenges grow more complex, leaders who can manage emotions well are better at keeping teams united, reducing stress, and boosting productivity. Using surveys and interviews with HR and IT managers, the research shows that qualities like empathy, self-control, and strong relationship skills are essential. It also reveals that EI helps leaders handle pressure and adapt to change more smoothly. By focusing on Bengaluru's tech scene, the study offers practical insights for improving leadership, HR strategies, and organizational strength.

KEY WORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Effectiveness, HR Management, IT Sector - Bengaluru, Organizational Performance

INTRODUCTION:

In today's fast-paced and tech-driven world—especially in Bengaluru, a major IT hub successful leadership goes beyond just technical skills. Managing diverse teams under pressure, across cultures, and with high expectations requires emotional intelligence (EI). EI, which involves understanding and managing emotions, has become crucial in people-focused roles like Human Resource Management (HRM). HR managers often handle sensitive tasks like team dynamics, employee motivation, conflict resolution, and shaping workplace culture. Their emotional responses during tough situations can make or break team performance. In Bengaluru's competitive IT space, where fast growth, burnout, and employee retention are major challenges, emotionally intelligent leadership is more important than ever. Yet, many leaders still focus mainly on logic and overlook emotional awareness. This study explores how EI influences leadership effectiveness within HR departments of IT companies. It focuses on five key EI traits—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills based on Goleman's framework. By using surveys and interviews, the research bridges the gap between theory and real-world application in India's IT sector. By concentrating on Bengaluru's unique work environment, the study provides practical insights for improving HR policies, leadership training, and long-term talent development in India's growing technology industry.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- How does emotional intelligence impact leadership effectiveness in Bengaluru's IT sector?
- Which EI traits most influence successful leadership in IT organizations?
- What is the effect of EI on team performance and employee retention?
- How does EI training improve leadership behaviour in IT professionals?
- How do stress and burnout mediate the relationship between EI and leadership outcomes?
- What leadership styles are commonly linked with high emotional intelligence in IT firms?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

- **Jennifer M, et.al 2000 – “A Study on Emotions and Leadership: The Role of Emotional Intelligence”** Highlights how core EI skills—like understanding and managing emotions directly enhance leadership by fostering trust, setting goals, and creating team purpose.

- **Lane B. Mills 2009 “A Study on A Meta-Analysis of the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Effective Leadership”** A meta-analysis of 48 studies confirms a strong link between EI and leadership performance, supporting EI’s inclusion in leadership training programs.
- **Kamila Skrzypczyńska at 2020 “A Study on Emotional intelligence is of high significance in leadership”** Finds that emotionally intelligent leaders build trust, promote creativity, and cultivate a psychologically safe and collaborative work culture.
- **Renu Yadav et. al 2019 – “A Study on Role of Emotional Intelligence in Effective Leadership”** Using the TEIQue model, this study found leaders with high EI manage stress better, adapt more easily, and perform more effectively than others.
- **Muhammad Ade Kurnia Harahap et. al 2023 “A Study on The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Effective Leadership: A Review of Contemporary Research”** Shows that EI enables leaders to make balanced decisions, resolve conflicts, and keep teams motivated, especially under pressure.
- **Yvette Ramchunder et. al 2014 “A Study on The role of self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and leadership style as attributes of leadership effectiveness: original research In a police force study,** EI and self-efficacy were key to leadership success, prompting recommendations for their inclusion in training and hiring.
- **Benjamin Palmer et. al 2001 “A Study on Emotional intelligence and effective leadership”** Leaders with high EI demonstrated transformational leadership behaviours—supporting, motivating, and guiding teams effectively.
- **Gina Görgens Ekermans 2021 “A Study on Revisiting the emotional intelligence and transformational leadership debate: (How) does emotional intelligence matter to effective leadership”** Found that specific EI traits improve job satisfaction and supervisor support by enhancing transformational leadership behaviour.
- **Golnaz Sadri, PhD at 2012 “A Study on Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Development “** Recommends integrating EI into leadership development programs, linking it to better stress management and team interaction.
- **Victor Dulewicz et. al 2003 “A Study on leadership at the top: the need for emotional intelligence in organizations”** Shows that senior leaders rely on EI traits—like empathy and communication—for strategy, teamwork, and boardroom effectiveness.

RESEARCH GAP:

Although many studies confirm the positive impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on leadership effectiveness across sectors like education, healthcare, and public services, there is a notable lack of research focusing specifically on the IT sector in Bengaluru, India. Most available studies emphasize general contexts or are international in scope, leaving a gap in localized understanding. Furthermore, while EI training has shown potential in leadership development, its measurable effect within high-pressure IT environments remains underexplored. There is also a need for consistent research designs and tools to clearly establish EI’s long-term impact on team performance, employee retention, and HR strategy outcomes in the tech industry.

SUMMARY OF KEY LITERATURE:

Citation	Design of Research	Objective of Research	Key Findings
Jennifer M. et al., 2000	Theoretical framework	To link EI with core leadership functions	EI helps build trust, set goals, and motivate teams.
Lane B. Mills, 2009	Meta-analysis (48 studies)	To examine empirical evidence on EI and leadership	EI shows a moderately strong link to leadership effectiveness.
Kamila Skrzypczyńska, 2020	Qualitative case study	To evaluate EI's role in team collaboration	High EI promotes trust, creativity, and healthy team culture.
Renu Yadav et al., 2019	Quantitative (TEIQue survey)	To study EI among college teachers as leaders	Leaders with higher EI manage stress better and show better adaptability.
Muhammad A.K. Harahap et al., 2023	Qualitative literature review	To explore how EI supports effective leadership	EI enables balanced decisions, conflict resolution, and motivation.
Yvette Ramchunder et al., 2014	Correlational study (107 police)	To assess EI and self-efficacy in leadership	EI and self-efficacy both predict strong leadership performance.
Benjamin Palmer et al., 2001	Questionnaire-based study	To link EI with transformational leadership traits	High EI aligns with motivation, inspiration, and team support.

Citation	Design of Research	Objective of Research	Key Findings
Gina Görgens-Ekermans, 2021	Structural equation modeling	To study EI's effect on job satisfaction and leadership behaviors	Certain EI traits increase satisfaction and perceived supervisor support.
Golnaz Sadri, 2012	Literature review	To integrate EI into leadership development programs	EI enhances emotional control and interpersonal leadership skills.
Victor Dulewicz et al., 2003	Corporate leadership survey	To analyze EI's role at board-level leadership	EI is crucial for strategy, decision-making, and board-level teamwork.

Table 01: summary of key literature:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

- Most research doesn't really zoom in on specific industries like Bengaluru's IT field.
- People use different research styles, so it's tough to match or compare their results.
- Getting fresh and reliable data from companies isn't always easy.
- It's challenging to explain well-known ideas without sounding copied.
- A lack of time and strong writing skills often brings down the quality of the work.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study uses a mixed-method approach to explore how emotional intelligence (EI) impacts leadership effectiveness in Bengaluru's IT sector. Both primary and secondary data sources were used to gain practical and research-based insights.

Primary Data Collection:

- Primary data was gathered through a Google Form survey shared with HR professionals and team leads in various IT firms.
- The form included Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions, designed to measure emotional traits, leadership behaviour, and team outcomes.
- A stratified sampling method ensured balanced participation across roles, experience levels, and organizations.

Secondary Data Collection:

Emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly seen as essential in leadership and teamwork. Research from journals like *Human Relations* and *Applied Psychology* shows its positive impact on workplace dynamics. Meta-analyses by Mills (2009) and Gorgens Ekermans (2021) confirm EI's strong link to leadership success. Models like Goleman's and the TEIQue help assess emotional traits in professionals. Recent studies, including those by Harahap (2023) and Sadri (2012), highlight EI's real-world use in fast-paced industries. Case examples from India and abroad also show how EI improves decision-making, team trust, and overall performance.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

For this study, a stratified convenience sampling approach was adopted to ensure both diversity and feasibility. Given the constraints of time and accessibility, participants were selected from different IT companies in Bengaluru who were readily available and willing to respond. The sample included HR professionals and team leads across various experience levels, ensuring a balanced mix of roles and perspectives. While this is a non-probability method, it was effective in gathering timely and relevant insights into how emotional intelligence influences leadership effectiveness in real organizational settings.

SAMPLE SIZE AND LOCATION

A total of 103 respondents participated in the study, providing diverse perspectives on the impact of mental health support in the workplace.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Response Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
Strongly Disagree	3	2.9%	Very few reject the idea that EI is essential for leadership.
Disagree	10	9.7%	A small minority remain unconvinced of EI's role in leadership.

Response Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
Agree	54	52.4%	Majority agree that EI plays a key role in effective leadership.
Strongly Agree	35	34.0%	A significant number strongly support EI as critical for leadership.
Total	103	100%	Confirms strong overall support for EI in leadership roles.

Table 02: Responses

- Emotional intelligence is important for effective leadership.**

Most respondents (86.4%) see emotional intelligence as vital for good leadership. This shows people value leaders who can understand and manage emotions well. Only a small group disagrees, suggesting strong overall support. Organizations should focus on building EI skills in their leaders.

Insight:

- Most people believe emotionally intelligent leaders are more effective.
- Very few disagree, showing strong overall support for EI in leadership.
- Teams want leaders who understand emotions, not just give orders.

- I am aware of my emotions and how they affect my decisions at work.**

Around 70% of respondents are aware of how their emotions influence work decisions, while over a quarter (26.2%) lack this awareness, indicating room for personal development.

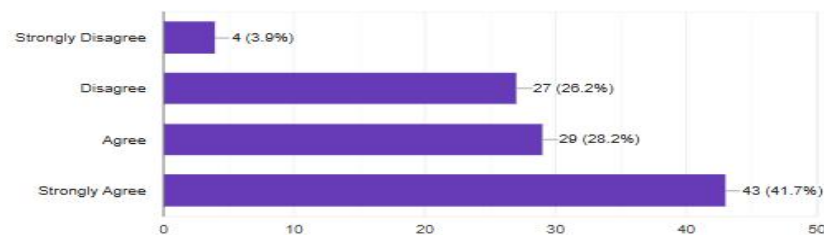


Fig.01 Self-Awareness at Work

- I can accurately understand how others feel, even without them telling me.**

Opinions are split — 32% strongly agree that EI helps manage conflict, but an equal 32% disagree. This suggests the need for more real-life application or training in this area.

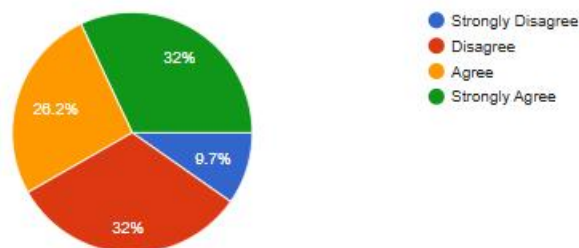


Fig.02 EI in Conflict Management

- Leaders should use emotional intelligence to manage workplace conflict. 103 responses**

Over half (50.5%) agree that emotionally intelligent leaders manage teams more successfully. Only a small portion disagrees, confirming the growing importance of EI in people

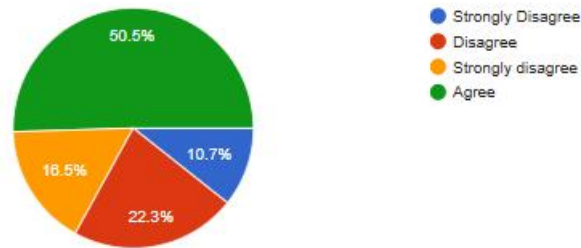


Fig.03 EI & Team Management Success

• **Emotionally intelligent leaders are more successful in team management.**

Workplace support is mixed — 55.4% agree that their organizations promote EI training, but 44.7% do not. This shows an opportunity for organizations to strengthen their leadership programs.

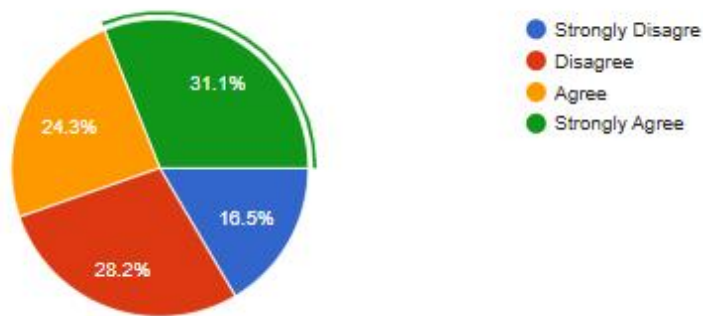


Fig.04 Workplace Support for EI Training

Analysis:

In the IT field, leaders who stay calm under pressure are often viewed as more reliable and effective by their teams. Showing empathy also plays a big role—when leaders genuinely care and understand their team members, it builds stronger trust and improves collaboration. The way feedback is given matters too; respectful and constructive feedback helps boost both morale and overall performance. Leaders who take the time to really listen make others feel valued and included, which strengthens team bonds. Lastly, those who are open to personal growth and willing to accept feedback are often seen as more adaptable and trustworthy, making them better leaders overall.

Discussion:

In today's tech world, emotional intelligence is just as important as technical skills when it comes to leading IT teams. Leaders who show empathy can handle conflicts better and build stronger, more connected teams. Speaking with respect—even during difficult conversations—keeps people motivated and open. When leaders truly listen, team members feel heard and are more confident in sharing their ideas. Also, those who take time to reflect and learn from feedback tend to lead with greater clarity, purpose, and impact.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS & FUTURE RECOMMENDATION :

Conclusion

This study confirms that emotional intelligence (EI) plays a crucial role in leadership effectiveness within Bengaluru's IT sector. Leaders who are self-aware, empathetic, and emotionally balanced are better equipped to manage teams, handle stress, and drive performance. Most respondents recognized the value of EI in improving communication, team morale, and adaptability in dynamic tech environments. While traditional skills still matter, the ability to manage emotions clearly enhances leadership outcomes.

Limitations

- **Location-Specific Focus:** The findings are limited to Bengaluru's IT sector and may not reflect other regions or industries.
- **Sample Size:** With 103 respondents, the data provides insights but may not represent the entire IT workforce.
- **Self-Reported Data:** Survey responses are subjective and may be affected by personal biases or social desirability.
- **Limited EI Dimensions:** The study focuses on five core EI traits; other psychological or contextual factors were not explored.
- **Time Constraints:** Due to limited research duration, long-term leadership outcomes were not assessed.

Implications

- Leadership Development: Organizations should integrate EI training into leadership programs to enhance team management and adaptability.
- HR Strategy: EI can be used as a criterion for leadership recruitment, performance reviews, and promotions.
- Workplace Culture: Encouraging emotional awareness fosters a more inclusive, supportive, and productive work environment.
- Talent Retention: Emotionally intelligent leadership helps reduce burnout and improve employee satisfaction, leading to better retention.
- Conflict Resolution: EI enhances a leader's ability to manage interpersonal disputes more calmly and effectively.

Future Recommendations

- Expand to Other Regions & Sectors: Replicate the study in different cities and industries to validate findings across broader contexts.
- Include Longitudinal Data: Conduct follow-up studies to assess how EI impacts leadership outcomes over time.
- Use Multi-Source Feedback: Combine self-assessments with peer or subordinate feedback for a more balanced evaluation.
- Explore EI in Remote Leadership: As remote and hybrid models grow, studying how EI functions in virtual teams is critical.
- Link EI with Organizational Metrics: Future research can connect EI traits with concrete KPIs like project success rates, attrition, and engagement scores.

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