

The Impact of Leader's Emotional Intelligence on Organizational Commitment

Negar Mahmoodzadeh^{a*}, Ishak Bin Mad Shah^a, Sultan Ameen Fares Abdulah^a

^{a*} Department of Human Resource Development, Faculty of Management,
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81310 Skudai, Johor Bahru, Malaysia

Correspondence: Negar Mahmoodzadeh

E-mail: negarm88@gmail.com

Abstract: Emotional intelligence (EL) is an important skill in today's organizations. The literature on leadership suggests that EL has the potential to increase both employee commitment and organizational outcomes. The main purpose of this research is to study the impacts of EL level of Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) leaders on the Organizational commitment (OC) of their subordinate. 310 staff from 14 different faculties participates in this study by completing two questionnaires. This population was chosen through stratified sampling. We evaluated Leaders' EL with the BAR-ON emotional quotient-360 (EQ-360) and academicians OC with (OCS). Regression analysis resulted in recognition of UTM academicians' leaders as highly emotional intelligence ones. We found that there is a significant relationship between leaders' EL who operates with intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability and general mood with OC. Moreover, UTM leaders have been evaluated to have enhanced EL skills in all EL dimensions.

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1. Introduction

One of the critical issues that organizations conform regarding to their employees is their organizational commitment (OC). The definition for OC is: "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Sehlidon (1971) defines OC as an attitude or an orientation towards the organization, which links or attracts the identity of the person to the organization. However, many studies extensively covered the term of OC and related factors that affect OC and/ or factors that are influenced by it. One of the most important OC antecedents is the relationship between the employees and their leaders.

In particular, leader's emotional intelligence (EL) has been examined in many studies as one of the new leadership traits that immensely contribute in its effectiveness, specially, regarding to relations with their subordinates, and its impacts on subordinates, satisfaction, commitment, performance, etc. Golemon *et al.* (2004) noted "great leaders move us. They ignite our passion and inspire the best in us... but the reality is: great leadership works through the emotions ... no matter what leaders set out to do-their success depends on how they do it...if leaders fail in this primal task of driving emotions in the right direction nothing will work as well as it could or should" (p.3).

Bar-on (2000) reviewed the psychological literature of the personal characteristics, which explain why some individuals are more successful than others, and presented the model of intelligence known as "Mixed Model". It includes the mental abilities as self-emotional awareness, and personal characteristics as personal independence, in which he considered EL consists of (15) skills and competencies. These skills distribute into five components in the personal, social and emotional aspects about the individual's success, these components are:

- Interpersonal components (RA): it explains the relationship of the individual with him/herself, (i.e. assesses individual's understanding, expression, and development of him/her -self).
- Interpersonal components (ER): it explains relationship of the individuals with others, as it shows the individual's Interpersonal skills and functioning.
- Stress management (SM): it defines how well individuals are able to withstand stress and manage their impulses.
- Adaptability components (AD): It addresses insights of how successfully individual is able to cope with environmental and social demands by effectively "sizing up" and dealing with problematic situations.
- General mood (GM): it assesses the level to which individual is perceived to maintain a

positive outlook, be connected with, and enjoy life actively.

Many researchers in social psychology and management science have studied the phenomenon of leadership. This study has been applied in terms of leadership style, traits, abilities, competencies, and skills, and its relation with some variables, or in terms of developing theories or approaches. Leadership drives a great responsibility toward achieving the goals of organization and employees. While the human personality divers according to many different factors, (e.g. environments and cultures). Employees have diverse needs and desires, consequently this issue requires high levels of leaders' abilities for understanding and dealing with diversity of employees' needs and desires (Halawani, Al-Sabban, & Zaki, 1991; Rowden, 2000).

According to Humphrey (2002) the high incidence of the studies related to EL during a short period of time was due to its help to leaders to gain multiple sources of power, and influence behaviors and outcomes of subordinates. Emotional intelligence leaders, for example, can impact their employees' job satisfaction and performance quality, which lead to significant benefit in the organization output effectiveness. This is however, what today's organization are looking for, in the light if changing and variable environment and the global economic crisis.

2. Previous studies

Many researchers have been studied EL and OC concepts, theories models and so on this session discussed in details the previous studies that examine EL, OC and the relationship between them. It divided into three subsections; a) EL and leadership effectiveness, b) OC and leadership behaviors, and c) the relationship between EL and OC.

2.1. Emotional intelligence, organizational commitment and leadership behavior context

In 2009, Howard illustrated that there is a relationship between EL and success. EL impacts all organization parts due to approximately all working environment including some types of dealing with people (Ruestow, 2008). Subsequent studies have supported that there is a strong relationship between EL and positive workplace behaviors. They have found that EL is one of the most important predictors of organization's success (Howard, 2009), for instance, EL have been found as a good contributor to improve job performance (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Wong & Law, 2002) organizational citizenship behaviors (Carmeli & Josman, 2006), employee's ability to adapt positively to organizational change (Vakola, Tsaousis, &

Nikolaou, 2004), academic staff's ability to cope with stress (Adeyemo & Ogunyemi, 2005), job satisfaction (Ruestow, 2008), occupational commitment (Carson & Carson, 1998), and organization commitment (Güleriüz, Güney, Aydın, & Aşan, 2008; Stewart, 2008; Howard, 2009; Anvari, Huzaid, Miri, & Chermahini, 2013).

2.2. Emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness

Based on Watkin (2000), leaders who have higher level of EL lead more effectively than those with lower level of EL (Tang, Yin, & Nelson, 2010). In addition Boyatzis & Ratti (2009) suggested that multiple forms of intelligence are need to achieve leaders effectiveness, which help them to dealing successfully with various situation. Besides, they are able to communicate, understand and manage multi-nationals and most companies that operate in the global economy. Particularly researchers have noted that EL skills are necessary for senior managers performance and become increasingly more important (comparing with technical skills and IQ) as individuals advance within their organizational hierarchies (Stein, Papadogiannis, Yip, & Sitarenios, 2009).

Carmeli (2003) has reported that senior managers' was related to both positive work attitudes and work effectiveness. Furthermore, Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, & Boyle (2006) indicated that an individual EL may indeed be a key determinant of effective leadership, in particular, employee noted that EL of supervisors are strongly needed to be effective in their position. Also, in study conducted at the Johnson & Johnson Consumer and Personal Care group, Cavallo & Brienza (2006) supported the idea that emotional competence differentiates successful leaders. In details, high performing managers in such organizations were seen to possess significantly high level of self-awareness, self-management, and social skills, that all of them are considered as parts of the EL domain.

Besides, in terms of the relationship between EL and OC among leaders and managers, previous studies demonstrated that there is a strong relationship between EL and OC. For instance, using ability-based model of Mayer and Salvoes (Salovey & Sluyter, 1997), Carmeli (2003), Carmeli & Josman (2006) and Anvari *et al.* (2014) noted that senior managers with high degree of EL developed high levels of job satisfaction and affective commitment.

In addition, using the Bar-on EQ-I instrument, Stewart (2008) illustrated a specific result as he noted that four out of five EL dimensions based on EQ-I (intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, and general mood) were not related to

job satisfaction and OC, only one dimension (adaptability) was closely related to OC and job satisfaction. Likewise, Stewart found that there was a significant relation between the age of leaders and EL and OC. In other words, older leader who is more adaptable showed a higher level of OC.

Emotionally intelligence leaders play a critical role to improve the employee's OC level (Ruestow, 2008). In particular, Carmeli & Josman (2006) expected that emotionally intelligence leaders can lead to high level of continuance commitment. This consequence can be achieved when emotionally intelligence leader demonstrate understanding and concern for their subordinate and recognizing and managing their emotional states (Ruestow, 2008). Although, emotionally intelligence leader can positively influence OC level, there are some other variables that can play a role in it such as, organizational context, organizational policies, and characteristics of subordinating their organization. So leaders should be aware of these factors, which assist them to deal with negative impacts effectively and efficiently in order to maintain committed employees. Therefore, type of organizations, job duties and subordinates' characteristic play an important role in relation with leader's EL and employees OC. This study is conducted in academic setting, which is quite different from a business environment. Petrov (2006) noted that university is a complex organization, due to multiple goals and traditional values which lead to the point that academic leadership may be essentially different from business leadership and requires particular experience and competencies (Spendlove, 2007). On the other hand academic staff is a key resource and plays a critical role in achieving the university goals (Toker, 2011). Therefore, they require an independent thought, creativity, academic freedom, autonomy, democratic participation, and the variety of interests. As a result, top-down leadership, is clearly at odds with these traditional values of academics (Middlehurst, 1993; Ahmadian *et al.*, 2011).

Moreover, Johnson (2010) noted that leadership with academic setting means gaining influence, loyalty and commitment through an interpersonal and collaborative approach rather than authoritarian competitive manner. Moreover in educational setting, charismatic or transformational leadership style is more effective (Muijs, 2010) than combination of transaction and transformation style (Pounder, 2001).

2.3. Emotional intelligence and organizational commitment

Despite limitations, some studies provide evidence supporting that there is a strong correlation

between EL and OC among employees and this EL has positive impact on employees' OC. For example, Nikolaou and Tsousis (2002) found that employee who has a high EL level faced less stress and showed a higher OC level than employee who has low level of EL. Also, Guleryuz *et al.* (2008) found that EL is significantly and positively related with job satisfaction and OC among 267 nurses in Turkey. In addition, Howard showed that dimensions of EL were a unique predictor for job satisfaction, OC and occupation commitment among 127 employees in nonprofit organizations in US. Besides, in terms of relationship between EL and OC among leaders and managers, previous studies demonstrated that there is a strong relationship between EL and OC. For instance, using ability-based model of Mayer and Salovey (Salovey & Sluyter, 1997), Carmeli & Josman (2006) noted that seniors with high degree of EL have developed high level of job satisfaction and effective commitment.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design:

To achieve the purpose of this study, we used a quantitative, non-experimental design. Quantitative approach usually emphasize on quantification of data collection and analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

3.2. Study setting:

There is total of 310 faculty members in University Technology Malaysia (UTM) that 14 of them were chosen to answer the survey questionnaire.

3.3. Participants

Respondents of this study include 310 from 1654 academic staff who are working full time in University Technology Malaysia (UTM).

3.4. Instruments

Two survey instruments were used in the current study to assess emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. Respondents were also requested to supply information about their qualifications, gender, working experience, age and occupation status. And also, rice and ranking of his/her job for head of department.

3.4.1. Emotional intelligence (EQ-360TM):

This questionnaire, Quotient-360 (EQ-360TM), has been created by Bar-On and Handy, (2003) to measure leader's EL which includes 88 items divided into 5 dimensions including 5 Likert scales and 15 sub-scales. Reliability of the inventory

was estimated 0.98 by the Cronbach’s alpha of EL coefficient.

3.4.2 Organizational commitment (OCS):

This questionnaire has been written by Mayer and Allen (Salovey & Sluyter, 1997) and included 18 items. OCS is divided into 3 categories: effective commitment, commitment, and normative commitment, in 7 Likert scales and 6 sub-scales. Reliability of the inventory was estimated 3.10 by the Cronbach’s alpha of EL coefficient.

4. Methods of data analysis:

The purpose of the current study was to determine the impact of leader's emotional intelligence level on academicians’s OC research and explore the relationship and impact of leader’s EL and academic employee’s OC. in the other word, the current study attempt to expand the existing Researcher entered data of survey into the SPSS statistics 17.0 application and created the descriptive statics to answer research question, which were about the perceived level of leader’s EL as reported by academic employees’ perspectives. In this current study only frequencies, means, and standard deviations have been used to discover and describe the demographic data, leaders EL level. Moreover ,in order to interpret the data analysis more effectively ,a range of leaders’ EL level were require that were calculate with the following formula:

$$\text{Range Value} = \frac{\text{highest mean score} - \text{lowest mean score}}{\text{number of level intended}}$$

When this formula was applied on the two survey instruments of the current study it produced below result:

$$\text{Rang value of EQ-360} = \frac{5-1}{3} = 1.3333$$

After the range value is obtained, the implementation level of each EL and its dimensions can be found by adding the range value to lowest mean score of each level. Then implementation level of leader’s EL and its dimensions can interpreted by referring to Table 1.

Table 1.Level of EL and it's dimension

| Level | Mean score |
|----------|----------------|
| Low | 1.00 to 2.2.33 |
| Moderate | 2.34 to 3.66 |
| High | 3.67 to 5 |

5. Finding

In this session describe and discusses the result of this study and explanation of the results. In fact, it presents in the order of the research question. Table is used to show the study findings.

To answer to research question descriptive statistic has been utilized. On the other hand correlation and multiple regression analysis were utilized to answer to question.

5.1. The levels of UTM leaders’ EL

According to research question, we were seeking to determine level of leader’s EL, operational zed by intrapersonal emotional quotient (RAeq), interpersonal emotional quotient (EReq), stress management emotional quotient (SMeq), adaptability emotional quotient (ADeq), and general mood emotional quotient (GMeq), as reported by subordinates (academic staff) (Table 2).These provide the results of academicians’ assessment of their leader’s EL. Scores generally fall between 55 and 145, which correspond to±3 standard deviation from the mean. Total EQ-360 scores above 100 indicate "emotionally intelligence" leaders, while lower scores indicate a need to improve" emotional skills" in specific areas (Bar-on, 1997). For leaders’ EReq, SMeq, ADeq, and GMeq, the mean rating of academicians’ assessment mean was 120.7, which means UTM academicians consider their leaders as high emotionally intelligent leaders.

Table 2. Level of EL and it's dimension

| | No.of respondents | Low Frequency percent | Moderate Frequency percent | High Frequency percent | Mean | Std. deviat |
|----------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-------|-------------|
| RAeq | 191 | 1 0.5 | 64 33.5 | 126 66.0 | 119.6 | 11.223 |
| EReq | 191 | 3 1.6 | 57 29.8 | 131 68.6 | 120.5 | 14.453 |
| SMeq | 191 | 1 0.5 | 53 27.7 | 137 71.7 | 121.2 | 13.573 |
| ADeq | 191 | 1 0.5 | 64 33.5 | 126 66.0 | 119.8 | 13.302 |
| GMeq | 191 | 1 0.5 | 42 22.0 | 148 77.5 | 123 | 13.262 |
| Total EL | 191 | 1 0.5 | 51 26.7 | 139 72.8 | 120.7 | 12.528 |

5.2 Correlation Analysis

First of all, correlation analysis is needed to begin with. Table 3.1 displays the bivariate person product-moment correlation analysis, which examine all dependent and independent variable in this study .according to this table, the majority of these dependent and independent variable strongly exists with less than 0.01 level. Although all independent variable with CC, SMeq with AC and EReq with NC, had moderate correlation ($p < .05$), they still have significant relationship between each other. Interestingly, this analysis shows that there is no relationship between AC and CC in this current study.

Table 3. Pearson correlation between el (total EL, RAeq, EReq, SMeq, and GMeq) and OC (Total OC, AC, CC, and NC)

| | EL | RAeq | EReq | SMeq | ADeq | GMeq | OC | AC | CC | NC |
|--|----|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| EL Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) | 1 | .936** .000 | .945** .000 | .959** .000 | .963** .000 | .954** .000 | .284** .000 | .225** .002 | .165* .022 | .236** .001 |
| RAeq Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) | | 1 | .836** .000 | .857** .000 | .908** .000 | .877** .000 | .315** .000 | .2588* .000 | .165* .000 | .271** .000 |
| EReq Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) | | | 1 | .890** .000 | .878** .000 | .876** .000 | .227** .002 | .193** .007 | .142* .049 | .165* .022 |
| SMeq Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) | | | | 1 | .0913** .000 | .896** .000 | .247** .001 | .179* .013 | .151* .037 | .216** .003 |
| ADeq Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) | | | | | 1 | .888** .000 | .292** .000 | .219** .002 | .175* .016 | .250** .000 |
| GMeq Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) | | | | | | 1 | .282** .000 | .203** .001 | .156* .031 | .235** .001 |
| **correlation is signif the 1.01 level (2-tailed). | | | | | | | | | | |
| *correlation is signif the 1.05 level (2-tailed). | | | | | | | | | | |

6. Discussion and Conclusion

First of all, this study aimed to determine the EL level of UTM leaders. EL in this study is consists of five dimensions, which are Intrapersonal (RAeq), interpersonal (EReq), stress management (SMeq), adaptability (ADeq), and general mode (GMeq). EL level of UTM leaders were evaluated by their subordinates (academic staff). Approximately three fourth if UTM academicians believe that the level of their leaders' EL is high, whereas, around one quarter of them believe that it is moderate. At the same time, it illustrates that 40 of department leaders were assessed by their subordinates (academicians in their departments) as high emotionally intelligent leaders, while, only nine of department' leaders were assessed as having a moderate EL level. In other words, academicians thought that 40 department's level enhance EL skills, whereas, nine of them have effective EL skills. Furthermore, UTM leaders were evaluated as having enhanced EL skills in all EL dimensions. Specially, the highest mean of EL dimensions was general mood emotional quotient with 123. Although, the lowest mean of EL dimensions was intrapersonal emotional quotient with 119.6, but still considered as enhanced skills. In addition, the mean of all EL sub-dimensions proved that UTM leaders have enhanced EL skills, starting from the highest sub-dimension level of leaders' happiness with 123.4, and ending at the lowest sub-dimension level of leaders' independence with 117.1, which still considered as enhanced EL skills.

In conclusion, regarding to these findings, it is obvious that UTM leaders have a very good chance to gain EL benefits, which recent studies have supported them. For example many previous studies pointed that there is a strong relationship between EL and positive workplace behaviors, specifically, they have found that EL is one of the most important predictors of organizations success (Howard, 2009). This study found that the mean EL of 38 aerospace company leaders in US was 102.24. It indicates that their leaders had effective EL skills. While this current study found that the mean EL of 49academic leaders in Malaysia was 120.7, which indicates that they had enhanced EL skills. Indeed there are some differences between these two studies, which might lead to a different result, for instance, Hall (2010) utilized self-report instrument, whereas, this study used multi-rate instrument to evaluate the leaders' skills.

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