Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness: A Critical Review for Future Research

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Abstract
Purpose: This paper explores published studies on the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship to determine potential concerns toward the literature, in hopes to propose suitable areas and/or approaches for future research for further development.
Design/methodology/approach: A critical review of existing and prominent literature from inception up until recent publications. This was reviewed over three (3) stages, noting the initial development of constructs and models, followed by concerns raised towards its conceptualized claims and culminating with more recent trends, studies and adopted models. Through a non-systematic narrated review of its literature, suitable areas of concern were identified as suggestions for future research to consolidate.
Findings: The review was able to identify that the literature still struggles with methodological shortcomings and applicability of study results. Criticisms noted that studies should be more inclusive of followers, based on the nature of both EI and leadership. Results would also have greater generalization and practical value by testing the relationship in cross-cultural contexts.
Practical implications: Emotional intelligence (EI) is essential in building organizational resilience when facing immense global and economic challenges. By establishing EI as the prominent leadership determinant, organizations can benefit by evolving from conventional leadership selection and development to improve firm performance and employee well-being.
Originality/value: This paper is the first to critically review the emotional intelligence-leadership effectiveness relationship beyond its constructs and models. It explores the challenges and shortcomings that needs to be overcome for theoretical acceptance and practical applicability.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; Leadership; Leadership effectiveness; Follower; Culture; Cross-cultural

Introduction

Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Leadership

Leadership styles and leadership effectiveness are areas of research which have been popularly explored. Relevant literature, particularly in organizational contexts, hold immense theoretical and practical value based on their propensity for economic and social impact. HR practices with regards to leader selection and development have traditionally favoured predictors such as intelligence and personality (Goleman, 1998; Kanwal et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence has since then been suggested to possess stronger and greater reliability in predicting leadership effectiveness.

Interest in studies relevant to this relationship were sparked when Daniel Goleman (1998) boldly claimed that leadership effectiveness had little to do with neither intelligence (IQ) nor personality. Instead, emotional intelligence (EI) was put forward as the ultimate determinant. This eventually led to a wave of interest in research and development of models toward establishing the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.

A few prominent models were initially established. These namely were the ability model by John Mayer and Peter Salovey, the trait model by Reuven Bar-On and the competency model by Daniel Goleman (Dhani & Sharma, 2016). Each purported different mechanism with respective justification as to how EI should be measured. Studies focused on testing the validity of this relationship have been reasonably liberal in adopting specific models according to their suitability, accessibility and convenience.

George (2000) noted that leadership, though extensively studied, remains somewhat of a mystery. Effective leaders, recognized by literature better as transformational rather than transactional leadership, are often attributed to be crucial to influencing the performance of an organization (Palmer et al., 2001).

EI's influence toward Leadership Effectiveness (LE)

Academic intelligence fails to sufficiently substantiate performance, especially at more advanced executive levels (McClelland, 1998). Training programs were generally noted by firms to be crucial in developing effect leaders. However, when focused on honing less-suited abilities, such as where technical skills being only essential for entry-level executives (Goleman, 1998), this could eventually lead to a waste of organizational resources. More recent studies (Cooper, 2018) have also re-enforced that emotional intelligence remains a better predictor over personality when it comes to predicting leadership effectiveness.

Training programs and recruitment currently prioritize qualities based on intelligence and personality (Mayer et al. 2008) and to a certain degree, prior employment performance (Yammarino et al., 1993). Should these measurements prove to be unreliable, determining a better suited predictor becomes all the more crucial. Practical value of identifying successful leaders are undeniably immense, pertaining to the recruitment, selection, development, appraisal and compensation of both leaders and the subordinates under their care (Cooper, 2018).

Leader-follower interactions and relationships are notably well-influenced by emotions (George, 2000). Leadership largely involves emotional expression and regulation, amongst

other traits (Rajah et al., 2011). Emotions as such, significantly influences job requirements like no other (Downey et al., 2011), but remain neglected.

As leaders are pressured more than ever to influence the emotions of those they manage, the stock of emotional intelligence has been increasing (Rajah et al., 2011). Many organizations are now operating in a global environment, which has prompted leaders to adapt to a change in work nature along with the need for employees to possess self-management abilities (Vann et al., 2017).

EI and Leadership in practice

Though emotional intelligence has been prominently noted to be important, its relevance to effective leadership is still highly dependent upon HR practices of recruitment, training and development of the firm's leaders (Cooper, 2018; Palmer et al., 2001). Intelligence continues to prove to be an unreliable determinant for predicting performance of new hires, particularly in positions of leadership (McClelland, 1998). Training programs are not only immensely costly (Zammuner et al., 2013), but when focused on wrong leadership elements, are an incredible waste of resources.

Glodstein (2014) suggests that it is crucial for EI to be included in recruitment checks, with it additionally positively relating to job satisfaction. Cooper (2018) backs this up by further emphasizing EI has more to do with leadership than personality, and thus should be of immense value toward recruitment, selection, development, appraisal and compensation of leadership personnel. Zammuner et al.'s (2013) indicates that even a well-designed simple training on EI can improve a leader's EI ability. These and many others all hint of the immense practical value and implications that emotional intelligence has toward how leaders should be selected and developed.

Traditional human resource management approach toward recruitment and training, particularly that of leadership, has often predicated on conventional notions of intelligence and personality. Recruitment, development and retention costs of leaders in top management positions are also notably extensive. These may even be insignificant when measured up against the firm's financial and economic performance, which are notably dependent on leadership effectiveness.

Findings surfacing from leadership effectiveness pre-determination may be invaluable in ascertaining if current conventional HR approaches may be flawed. Should emotional intelligence be proven to be more reliable, it would possess the potential to save organizations considerable amounts of resources relevant to leadership appointments and training. There are instances whereby even leadership development loses out to emotional intelligence training when determining leadership performance (Crowne et al., 2017).

Workplaces are by large, stressful environments with inevitable financial and performance pressures placed upon the workforce. Well-being and relationships that are poorly managed would further deteriorate job satisfaction and sense of belonging, culminating in higher turnovers, or simply put, greater economic burden (Maamari & Majdalani, 2017). Impact of employee happiness and harmony are predicated by human resource management, and is undoubtedly significantly influenced by effective leadership or the lack thereof.

Effective leadership too has to give emphasis toward managing team cohesion within a workforce to minimize turnovers toward both followers and performance (Maamari & Majdalani, 2017). Emotional intelligence development possesses practical applicability in organizations, having been proven to be easily trainable amongst leaders and followers in a workforce.

Concerns on the EI-LE Relationship

Though popular, Cavazotte et al. (2012) noted that emotional intelligence remains a field that is still maturing. Its significance toward organizational outcomes has been validated for in various corporate firms and divisions (Goleman, 1998; Glodstein, 2014; Brooks & Nafukho, 2006) and even performance by college students (Schutte et al., 1998).

Though initially suggested as a substitute to intelligence and personality constructs, those keen on establishing EI as the major proponent failed to classify it with sufficient distinction from its predecessors (Palmer et al., 2001). As such, these studies for EI continue to fail to establish a strong case for leadership effectiveness (Fannon, 2018).

EI has also attracted plenty of studies making attention-getting claims as opposed to those backed by evidence (Mayer et al., 2008). Such work stemmed from convenient setups of EI evaluation that was unable to recognize EI exclusively, or measured it unreliably through self-assessments.

Though unable to adequately and clearly establish the relationship's causality, emotional management was deemed more prominent in certain lines of work (Glodstein, 2014). In a comparative study between emotional intelligence and personality toward leadership effectiveness, Cooper (2018) was able to determine that emotional intelligence is indeed a better predictor, albeit insufficient to suggest exclusivity.

The interest and excitement this field of study has managed to attract has led to questionable evidence management, with results proving to be invalid due to methodological concerns (Cavazotte et al., 2012). Most EI models and tests focus on measuring personal EI levels which serve more as a general assessment of emotional skills (Fannon, 2018) and may prove to have lower validity in study on a workplace or organizational setting (Dhani & Sharma, 2016).

Nevertheless, with insufficient literature on the relationship established in more diverse contexts, it may be crucial to be able to generalize if leaders can truly benefit from possessing greater social and emotional abilities. The ramifications of ignoring this can be damaging in both an economic and social level. Poor leader appointments and development can lead to poorer organizational outcomes, financial performance and workforce management.

Ignoring the importance of EI in leadership can lead to a deterioration of performance, communication and relationships within the workplace which would undoubtedly cause an increase in organizational turnover (Maamari & Majdalani, 2017). Developing EI within both leaders and followers have proven to improve both leadership and cohesion within the workforce, benefiting the organization through sustainable growth and performance (Crowne et al., 2017; Maamari & Majdalani, 2017; Salisu et al., 2019).

Research Aims and Questions

The overarching aim of this study is to provide a critical review of existing literature on the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. Concerns and issues raised from past studies will be of particular interest for future research in this field to suitably address. Therefore, through this study, the following research questions will be answered:

1. What were the early conceptualizations, models and claims developed by the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship?
2. What were the challenges and concerns raised toward the initial developments of the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship?
3. How did further studies and research respond toward the concerns raised toward the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship?
4. What are the current challenges and literature gaps pertaining to the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship that needs to be addressed?

Methodology

Review Approach

This study reviews the existing literature pertaining to the conceptualization of the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship using the critical review approach. In essence, a critical review is a type of review that is conducted when the goal is to address known gaps, issues, and tensions in the field (Paul et al., 2021). Though less structured when compared to systematic reviews, critical reviews offer greater focus toward the resolution of issues within a topic (Lim, 2018; Paul et al., 2021). Critical reviews are also less stringent, when not bound by strict procedures (Lim et al., 2020), allowing for a narrative approach to cover a wider range of relevant information (Kazi et al., 2013).

Exploration of the theoretical development on the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship indicates the its study remains relatively young, with initial claims being made in the late-1990s, notably by Daniel Goleman (Goleman, 1996; Goleman, 1998). In the years to come, there were significant developments of a few prominent but broad EI models based on one's ability, trait or competency. Once these models and ensuing studies took pace, mostly in western contexts, a number of studies and reviews emerged that either contested the theory or the methodological approaches adopted. In recent years, more specific and fine-tuned models have emerged, adapting the earlier developed versions to better fit particular contexts in which the relationship was applicable to.

Based on this flow of events, the critical review with a narrative approach has been crucial to better determine the current knowledge and practice of the EI-LE relationship, and how it has developed since its inception. This adaptation has allowed for a reliable review of past and recent literature, providing valuable insights toward its initial motives and how they have since evolved. What initially highly debateable and contested theory has since grown with acceptance, though attracting refutations of theoretical applicability and practical validity.

Narrated Stages of Study

Earlier studies and papers that questioned the causality and validity of the relationship were in fact essential in identifying the flaws and drawbacks of the past. By carefully studying the array

of international evidence on these constructs without its theoretical popularization, important trends and gaps where thus able to be identified.

The first stage was based on an exploratory overview of the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness literature. Both constructs were explored in a non-structured manner to ascertain the perceptions that were held along with how they were being compared to other better-informed existing constructs, such as intelligence, personality and leadership. These eventually culminated in the development of three prominent EI models by Goleman, Bar-On and Mayer and Salovey (Boyatzis, 2019; Boyatzis et al., 2000; Mayer et al., 2008).

The review's second stage explored the various concerns that were then raised toward the theoretical claims and studies that surfaced from the first stage. Notable contestations pertained to the construct's coverage being too inclusive (Mayer et al., 2008), methodological shortcoming of the studies (Cavazotte et al., 2012; Antonakis et al., 2009) and suggestions for cross-cultural exploration (Rajah et al., 2011).

Stage three gave focus toward the trend of how both the theory, constructs and models had evolved to better respond to the issues encountered. This highlighted how earlier EI models were more based on EI constructs alone, and were insufficient in representing workplace or leadership-follower relationships (Fannon, 2018; Dhani & Sharma, 2016). Concerns regarding the cross-cultural factor also came to light with regards to the lack of generalization in other contexts, with earlier studies and constructs having been based on western contexts and cultures (Dabke, 2016). As a result, various other models and methods were then developed with inspiration from the initial ability, trait and competency models to better test leader-follow relationships, with cross-cultural factors still being proposed as further research (Dhani & Sharma, 2016; Osman-Gani et al., 2017).

Data Extraction and Analysis

Data for the relevant studies that were reviewed for each of the stages were extracted and analysed with respects to each of their intended objectives.

In the first stage, focus was primarily given to the prominent EI models that were founded. Details and insights from articles and studies carried out relevant to the ability (Mayer & Salovey), competency (Goleman) and trait (Bar-On) models were of great significance. Studies that comparatively reviewed these models were additionally of immense value.

Ensuing studies that focused on reviewing and critiquing past studies that made prominent claims toward the EI-LE relationship were then relevant to stage two. Reviews that carried out similar studies based on the conceptualized relationship but derived contrasting results were able to better validate the issues raised. Future research suggested as a result of the concerns raised were additionally considered to maintain a constructive and unbiased assessment.

Analysis of literature reviewed under stage three gave emphasis toward the study design, with their constructs, models and context of particular interest. As results focused on better validating the earlier conceptualized claims, the evolution and adaptability of recent studies were particularly highlighted.

These data would then be analysed holistically to ascertain if previous concerns of the EI-LE relationship have been sufficiently addressed.

Findings

Emotional Intelligence

As a concept, emotional intelligence can be easily classified as one's mental ability in managing the emotions of self and others, whilst processing all the relevant information that comes with it (Palmer et al., 2001). This involves the awareness of feelings or emotions (George, 2000) along with the cognitive ability to process and comprehend what they may entail (Cavazotte et al., 2012). Simply put as the rationalisation of emotions, this has been aptly described as the coming together of both emotions and intelligence (Mayer et al., 2008).

In short, it pertains to the awareness and management of our own emotions, and that of others (Dhani & Sharma, 2016). Though many models of this construct have been developed over the years, their respective dimensions all lead to these core fundamentals.

EI Models and Tests

There are three prominent and well-established models of emotional intelligence as a construct that are prominently found through its literature; the ability model, trait model and competency model (Palmer, 2007; Dhani & Sharma, 2016).

Palmer et al. (2001) notes that Mayer, Salovey and Caruso's ability model is better clarified and distinctive, measuring one's ability to recognize and manage emotions of self and others. Known as the Mayer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), the model adopts a competency assessment that includes cognitive abilities, through a series of performance tests to counter self-rated biases (Kerr et al., 2006; Fannon, 2018).

The trait model, developed by Reuven Bar-On, models the emotional quotient (EQ) based on the competencies, non-cognitive capabilities and pressure-coping skills of an individual (Mayer et al., 2001). Due to its convenience in being administered, Bar-On's model has been widely adopted in prior studies (Downey et al., 2011). It is derived from a self-report on 133 items that are linked to 5 components of the Bar-On model (Dhani & Sharma, 2016).

Goleman's competency model creates a distinction from the other two based on its flexibility for a self and other assessment of EI competencies (Palmer, 2007; Dhani & Sharma, 2016). Designed to assess competencies based on behavioural indicators, it is suggestively better in accommodating the dynamic behaviours in a workplace.

Trends indicated that various other tests have since been designed, based on the inspired work of these three models, to fit particularly use and contexts. Downey et al. (2011) noted that one such development has been the Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT), later commercialized as Genos, which was modelled to better measure workplace EI. In the footsteps of the Goleman's model, the Genos EI model was designed to have better workplace validity whilst countering the extensive and complex nature of the other models for research purposes (Palmer et al., 2009; Fannon, 2018).

The ability model is distinctive in that it applies intellectual cognition to emotional prompts (Cavazotte et al., 2012) but remains a personal assessment of EI, not necessarily representing a person's emotional behaviour in the workplace environment (Fannon, 2018). This approach

does however possess incremental validity by acknowledging EI as a combination of both emotions and intelligence (Mayer et al., 2008).

Though simpler to assess than the ability model, the trait model is reliant on a self-assessment, leading to potential rater-bias (Dhani & Sharma, 2016). Goleman's competency model comes closest to the Genos model in terms of suitability and applicability, but possesses a complex analysis model, making it difficult for user-friendly assessment (Palmer et al., 2009; Dhani & Sharma, 2016).

Leadership

Leadership in its traditional notion is one of a process between a leader and subordinate, attempting to influence the latter for a desired outcome within the organization, consisting of various approaches (Yammarino et al., 1993). Though many forms of leadership have been developed, it still predicates itself upon the ability to influence followers to align with the interests of the organization in hopes of achieving its goals (George 2000).

Leadership assessment has evolved toward one that moves away from an ability assessment but rather, toward a behavioural approach, with Fannon (2018) suggesting the construct is one largely based on behavioural theories. The practice is one that also involves the identification and expression of emotions (Vann et al., 2017) to consider its impact on leadership behaviours, leading mainly to a consideration as to how they are to be configured (Li et al., 2016).

Types of Leadership and Leadership Effectiveness

Transformational leaders get the nod over transactional leaders when determining effective leadership (Palmer et al., 2001). With this suggestion, studies have grown toward identifying what are better predictors of transformational leadership, and whether they may be closely related to certain constructs (Kanwal et al., 2017; Crowne et al., 2017).

Goleman's (1998) claims against IQ for leadership positions (Goleman, 2003) was not too far off of Yammarino et al.'s (1993) suggestion that academic performance being minimally related to transformational leadership. Cooper (2018) further suggested that personality was also less successful in identifying effective leadership.

Determined by several factors, leadership ability clearly involves influencing followers, particularly their feelings at the workplace (George, 2000; Palmer et al., 2001). Even leadership development approaches seemed to be less effective in developing transformational leadership, when compared to EI programs for leadership development (Crowne et al., 2017). Kanwal et al. (2017) further emphasizes this by implying leadership effectiveness would be enhanced if leaders are able to exhibit more transformational leadership.

EI and LE: Concerns and Future Research

As a representation of effective leadership, transformational leadership has acknowledged that the monitoring, regulation and expression of emotions as underlying factors (Palmer et al., 2001; Rajah et al., 2011; Mathew & Gupta, 2015).

Transformational leadership has also been regarded as highly effective leadership due to both emotional and cultural intelligence (Mathew & Gupta, 2015; Kanwal et al., 2017). It was

further suggested for organizations to include further emotional-related training for leadership, in order to exhibit greater transformational leadership and thus, effective leadership.

Although there exist doubts over how EI should be measured (Downey et al., 2011; Antonakis et al., 2009), EI has shown to possess both reliability toward identifying perceived and actual leadership effectiveness (Koh & O'Higgins, 2018). Variables pertaining to values and identities of the leader were more prominent from the perspective of followers (Koh & O'Higgins, 2018) whilst dimensions of emotional competency and sensitivity prevalent in non-western contexts (Lone & Lone, 2018).

Though a number of initial studies explored leadership effectiveness by measuring organizational outcomes (Cavazotte et al., 2012), recent literature indicates that such a methodological approach is more prone to other factors (Dabke, 2016). Suggestions are then for the leadership effectiveness to be measured based on significant stakeholders (Dabke, 2016; Kim & Kim, 2017) with leadership behaviours mediated by transformational leadership to be better suited (Kanwal et al., 2017).

It is additionally crucial to note that assessing an organization and its emotionally-reliant performance realistically cannot depend solely on its leader's capacity. A holistic assessment of the organization's emotional capacity should then include assessing both its leaders and subordinates to establish greater validity to this relationship (Dabke, 2016).

The theoretical development of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship in non-western contexts (Lone & Lone, 2018; Nabih et al., 2016) have so far been under-explored and under-established, with its literature being heavily dominated by Western studies.

Numerous suggestions have been put forward by past studies based on the deficiencies discovered. They suggested that the EI-LE relationship would benefit from studying follower relationships with multi and cross-level designs (George, 2000; Dabke, 2016; Fannon, 2018) with larger, diverse samples (Palmer et al., 2001; Cavazotte et al., 2012; Cooper, 2018) and in cross-cultural contexts (Rajah et al., 2011; Cavazotte et al., 2012; Dabke, 2016; Fannon, 2018).

Sample enlargement toward broader industries and occupations would allow for improved comprehension of the relationship (Cooper, 2018). Prior studies, having adopted EI and leadership models that were self-rated, also should consider involving followers EI levels (Fannon, 2018) and perceptions of leadership (Dabke, 2016) to shed more light on actual leadership behaviours.

Culture was notably put forward for inclusion so as to improve generalization of results (Dabke, 2016), particularly when global workforces are now more diversity inclusive (Vann et al., 2017). This would also allow for an improved determination of what may be classified as an effective or excellent leader with respects to the different cultures and societies the theory may be applied to (McCleskey, 2014; Selvarajah et al., 2017; Fannon, 2018).

Mayer et al. (2008) noted the theoretical impact of culture remains as a potential gap, with echoes after for more diverse studies (Palmer et al., 2001) in cross-cultural contexts (Rajah et al., 2011). Cavazotte et al. (2012), which the prominent contested to the EI-LE relationship, does at least concede that analysing the relationship in different cultural setting may be able to extend the knowledge in this field.

The consideration of how culture may influence this relationship has also been prevalent in more recent literature. Dabke (2016) and McCleskey (2014) suggests that EI has to be more inclusive of cultural influences and fairness, or it may have limitations in generalizing results of the relationship. From the opposite end of the spectrum, leadership studies have also raised that demographic differences can affect work behaviours in organizational settings, which should no longer be ignored (Selvarajah et al., 2017).

Leadership exploration are being pushed to focus on leadership behaviours, with links to emotional influences alone being insufficient, identifying a need to determine how such behaviours may be configured (Li et al., 2016). Though there is little doubt that EI can influence both leaders and followers alike, a potential and suitable moderator should be included to establish more meaningful understanding of such relationships within an organization (Krishnan et al., 2018). There is also a growing acceptance that workforces today are more diverse than before, especially in multinational organizations, leading to a growing call for cultural inclusion in EI-LE studies (Nabih et al., 2016; Kanwal et al., 2017).

Miao, Humphrey and Qian (2018) echoes such notions, believing the recognition and training of EI in the context of different cultures being essential, and to acknowledge influences of national cultures. Similar studies in the non-western (Lone & Lone, 2018) and developing countries (Nabih et al., 2016) emphasizes the need to understand how other respective cultures impacts the relationship in question.

Potential studies on this relationship that highlights the inclusion the context of a national culture(s) however needs to pay careful attention on its proposed methodology and scope (Osman-Gani et al., 2017).

Discussion

The findings of the review are focused toward two key areas that future studies would need to take note of, relevant to the methodological setup and contextual focus.

Various methodological issues of past studies seemed to stem from how traditional leadership and emotional intelligence studies were implemented, often focusing only on the leaders as the key subject, with limited emphasis given to include their followers in the assessment of their EI and manager's leadership approach.

Studies will also need to take note of the context of which the relationship will be tested on, so that the results derived are able to be generalized for greater practical value. As the majority of EI models are western-originated, there is potential to show that they are just as applicable, particularly in workplaces with growing global diversity.

Follower-Inclusive Methodologies

Follower-inclusive EI assessments at the workplace has been highly encouraged, to better validate leadership effectiveness, rather than having it only tied to organizational outcomes (Dabke, 2016; Nabih et al., 2016; Salisu et al., 2019). Its application remains sophisticated, hence why it has not been sufficiently adopted, with tests that are convenient often preferred (George, 2000; Downey et al., 2011). Drawbacks due to leader self-assessment of EI and leader can be overcome by follower-centric evaluations (Cavazotte et al., 2012; Fannon, 2018).

What is crucial is to include the assessment of follower EI (see Figure 1 below), and have them assess their leader's EI as well, to further consolidate any issues of self-bias in having leaders assess their own EI. Newly developed EI models such as Genos offers both self and peer assessments for workplace contexts, that would suit this both consistently and reliably (Palmer et al., 2009).

The deployed assessment tool needs to be well-suited for a workplace within an organization. The Genos assessment is one such model that adopts the competency model of EI (Downey et al., 2011).
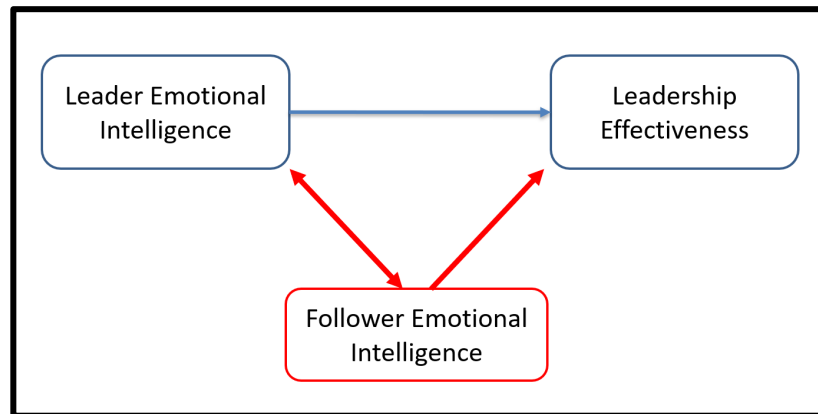

Figure 1: Follower Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator

Culture and Cross-Cultural Contexts

Literature notes that plenty of resources are invested into leadership training and development, thus not being able to afford any doubts as to whether emotional intelligence materializes into leadership effectiveness. Though prominently explored and validated in Western contexts, it is possible for future research to contribute to understanding the relationship more generally.

Research has often lacked focus and motivation toward diverse followers to allow for generalization of findings relevant to leadership influence (Dabke, 2016). However, leadership effectiveness evidently does not solely depend on a leader's abilities, particularly when managing a culturally diverse workforce, hence the unsuitability of approaches adopted by prior studies (Cavazotte et al., 2012). As such, approaches that give emphasis toward cultural practicality are more likely to contribute to the EI – leadership relationship (Osman-Gani et al., 2017).

This paper suggests for future studies to be done in a cross-cultural context, as per past suggestions for future research (Cavazotte et al., 2012; Miao et al., 2018; Kanwal et al., 2017; Osman-Gani et al., 2017).

Though the study of this relationship continues to grow, with greater attention on how they are designed, there remains a continuous call for the inclusion of culture. This signifies genuine potential for culture, possibly as a moderator on the EI-LE relationship, to not only improve the generalization of this knowledge, but to discover greater understanding of the relevant configuration of behaviours that governs both emotion and leadership constructs in this literature.

Though research on the relationship are not uncommon, past and recent literature has continuously called for an inclusion of culture to explore its influence on the relationship. With workforces vastly expanding with a growing diversity, particularly in multinational corporations, a notable need to explore this knowledge gap in the literature poses a valuable opportunity for suitable studies to be properly designed and conducted.

Though there are vast amounts of cross-cultural studies completed, these are still relatively limited with regards to its influence on leadership, and none on the relationship. This is especially crucial when our business society will be further enriched by cultural diversity, entailing different leadership style preferences.

In addition to the vast growth and acceptance of globalisation along with the emergence of 'cultural intelligence', there is plenty that business studies have yet to explore on how culture may have significant influence in both direct and moderating emotional intelligence.

The development of a study to incorporate culture as a moderator along with the results that could be yielded from ensuing studies will hopefully contribute to solidifying the current literature.

Figure 2 (below) provides an illustration of the proposed conceptual framework with the moderating effects of culture toward the existing relationship.
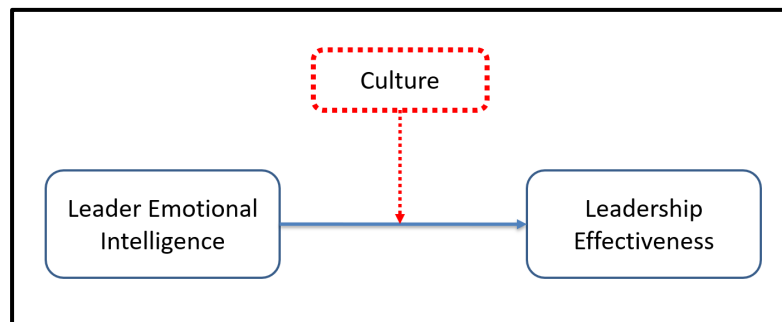

Figure 2: Culture as a Moderator

One such conceptual framework that could lend to this would be Selvarajah's conceptual framework, which explores universal leadership factors manifested in behaviours practiced in the cultural context (Selvarajah & Meyer, 2008a; Selvarajah & Meyer, 2008b; de Waal et al., 2012; Selvarajah et al., 2012; Selvarajah et al., 2013a; Selvarajah et al., 2013b). Exploring the cultural relevance of global leadership excellence could offer invaluable insights to the cultural diversity of a particular study's context and better inform the study's design (Selvarajah et al., 2017).

The framework can then be assessed with transformational leadership to represent leadership effectiveness as with other studies (Kanwal et al., 2017) to provide greater empirical validity.

Conclusion

This review has explored the developments of the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness relationship. Literature from its inceptive period and various studies conducted to further explore the concept were of particular significance.

The findings noted that though the concept's fundamental theory have been widely accepted, doubts still remain over its claims due to certain methodological shortcomings that prior studies have failed to adequately address. Additionally, a significant concept such as this has also struggled to be generally applicable, in terms of the influences its variables would be subjected to under differing contexts.

As such, two major conceptual suggestions have been proposed. The nature of how EI behaves and interacts in the workplace between leaders and followers should be better accounted for, thus requiring some form of inclusion of follower EI assessment of leadership as a mediating construct. To enhance the generalization of the concept, culture has been noted as an essential moderator to be included due to the increasing diversification of workplaces.

The proposed moderating and mediating constructs would offer greater empirical validity to better establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness with suitable measures to constructively combat doubts over its claims and findings.

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