

Full Length Research Paper

Relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership styles of principals in high schools

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The purpose of the present research as a descriptive-correlative research was to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership styles of principals who work in high schools of Sanandj city in Iran. Sample included 42 high school principals and 252 teachers that were selected by proportional stratified sampling. The leadership styles profile (LSP) and emotional intelligence questionnaire were used as research instruments. Data analyzed by descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, Independent t test and One Way ANOVA. Results showed: (1) There was significant relationship between EI and two styles of leadership; (2) The relationship between self-awareness and leadership styles were not statistically significant; (3) There was positive statistically significant relationship between self-regulation and open style; (4) There was direct significant relationship between motivation and open style but indirect significant relationship with motivation and closed style; (5) There was positive statistically significant relationship between empathy and open style but negative relationship between empathy and closed style. So, effective principals will support and encourage teachers to model behaviors promoting collegiality and a professional working environment.

Key words: Emotional intelligence (EI), leadership styles, principals, self-awareness, social skills.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence is a person's ability to recognize personnel feelings and those of others and to manage emotions within themselves and in their relationships with others (Goleman, 1998a). Emotional intelligence includes four competencies. (1) Self-awareness is the ability to accurately perceive one's emotions and remain aware of them as they happen, including the ability to manage one's response to specific situations and people. (2) Self-management is the ability to be aware of one's emotions and have the flexibility to positively direct one's behavior in response to those emotions, to manage emotional reactions in all situations and with all people. (3) Social awareness is the ability to accurately identify the

emotions of other people and thus understand the effects of those emotions, that is, to understand what other people are thinking and feeling even though the perceiver does not feel the same way. (4) Relationship management is the ability to use awareness of one's own emotions and those of others to successfully manage interactions, that is, to provide clear communication and effectively handle conflict (Bradberry and Greaves, 2003).

In 1972 federal definition of intelligence was beyond the cognitive ability so that leadership ability was mentioned as a separate and independent model of intelligence (Young and Olszewski-Kubilius, 2006). According to Cherniss (2000), (as cited in Salovey and Mayer, 1990), Salovey and Mayer used the term emotional intelligence "as a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action."

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Emotional intelligence has been identified through the popular press and some researchers as that critical element needed for effective leadership. Goleman (1998a) sets forth that “the most effective leaders are alike in one crucial way; they all have a high degree of what has come to be known as emotional intelligence (p. 94). Wolff et al. (2002) also believe that emotional intelligence is as critical as IQ to an individual’s effectiveness.

The challenge with these standpoints is twofold, (1) the study of leadership and what makes leaders effective has been found to be much more complicated than a single dimension like emotional intelligence; and (2) organizations have incorporated many of these emotional intelligence beliefs into their work systems and performance expectations without researching what some authors claim is true and achievable. The study of leadership, its effectiveness and its impact on organizational performance is a key interest to human resource development (HRD) scholars. Two types of leadership styles are:

(a) Open styles: The open style revolves around teamwork, collaboration, conflict management and influence. Such leaders are true collaborators. They work more as team members and less as top down leaders. They are good at quelling conflict and creating a sense of harmony. Such leaders delegate and give employees challenging assignments that stretch them (Williams, 1999, p. 47).

(b) Closed styles: Such leaders expect immediate compliance with orders, without explaining the reasons behind them. If subordinates fail to follow orders, the leaders resort to threats. Such leaders do not delegate authority. They seek tight control of situation and monitor it studiously. As praise is uncommon while criticism is free, close leaders erode people’s spirits and the pride and satisfaction they take in their work. People tend to become alienated from their jobs. Close leadership revolves around influence, achievement and initiative. This kind of leadership style may be appropriate while managing a crisis. It can also be useful while dealing with problem employees. This kind of leadership may go off track in the absence of self awareness, emotional self control and empathy (Williams, 1999, p. 47).

Moss et al. (2006) for instance, found that emotional intelligence might enhance the capacity of managers to adapt their leadership style appropriately, but only in some contexts. In another study, Alon and Higgins (2006) reported the fact that emotional intelligence (EQ), analytical intelligence (IQ), and leadership behaviors are moderated by cultural intelligence (CQ) in the formation of global leadership success.

In their study of the relationship between emotion and leadership, Gardner et al. (2009) reviewed the literature

of emotional labor and authentic leadership and identified three categories of leader emotional displays: surface acting, deep acting and genuine emotions. “The consistency of expressed leader emotions with affective display rules, together with the type of display chosen, combines to impact the leader’s felt authenticity, the favorability of follower impressions, and the perceived authenticity of the leader by the followers” (p. 466). They also explored the influence on leader emotional labor of contextual dimensions of the environment, including the omnibus (national and organizational culture, industry and occupation, organizational structure, time) and discrete (situational) context.

Goleman et al. (2002) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective performance, especially in leaders. They observed to what degree emotional intelligence manifests itself in the work place. Goleman’s (1998a) research was designed to determine which personal capabilities drove outstanding performance. He grouped the skills into three categories: technical skills, cognitive skills and competencies demonstrating emotional intelligence. His data revealed dramatic results. Goleman states, “My analysis showed that emotional intelligence played an increasingly important role at the highest levels of the company” (p. 94).

Goleman et al. (2002, p. 21) posited that leaders use emotional intelligence (EI) to develop relationships that are in-sync with their organization by forming “emotional bonds that help them stay focused even amid profound change and uncertainty.” Essentially, the principals of the future will need to be attuned to the big picture, and be able to think conceptually as they transform the organization through people and teams. They will also need to possess strong interpersonal skills, be able to get along with others, and exercise high levels of intelligence and energy. Fullan (2002) emphasized that “emotionally intelligent leaders are aware of their own emotional makeup, are sensitive and inspiring to others, and are able to deal with day-to-day problems as they work on more fundamental changes in the culture of the organization” (p. 3).

School leaders are faced with an abundance of issues when they assume a leadership position, second only to high expectations for systemic and transformational change in the school system. Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) presented in their report, preparing school leaders for a changing world, key components necessary for exemplary principal preparation programs. The recommendations proposed in these reports are valid, but equally important is the balance of training in the area of “emotional intelligence” (EI) for an educational leader’s success in becoming a change agent for the improvement of instruction. As defined by Goleman (1997), EI is the ability to lead, recognizing four emotional areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, each having

specific characteristics. These four cluster areas focus on identified traits, behaviors and characteristics of successful leaders. Research has identified additional areas including organizational and management skills, shared values and beliefs, collegiality, and staff building. In each of these areas emotional intelligence is a common theme.

Marzano (2003) highlights three principles for effective leaders. The first revolves around the principal functioning as a strong cohesive force; the second is to provide strong guidance while demonstrating respect; and the third principle is characterized by specific behaviors which enhance interpersonal relationships. Principle three further establishes three characteristics of importance: optimism, honesty, and consideration. Optimism increases teachers' self-esteem and motivation. "Honesty is characterized by truthfulness and consistency between words and actions" (p. 177). Consideration "is sometimes referred to as a people orientation or a concern for people" (p. 178). Honesty and consideration both help build interpersonal relationships. These three characteristics require development and must be acted upon for effective leadership.

Sokolow (2002) identified eight principles of enlightened leadership: intention, attention, unique gifts, gratitude, life lessons, holistic perspective, openness and trust. "Becoming more conscious of these principles and moving them to the forefront of our awareness will help us exercise sound judgment as we, as leaders, meet the challenges we face as we strive to shape a better and brighter future for our youth" (Sokolow, 2002). In addition, effective principals must not only know themselves, but are also true to themselves (Hausman et al., 2000; Sergiovanni, 1996).

Hausman et al. (2000) contend, "Their actions are congruent with their values." The authors continue stressing the need for the leader to understand their needs and emotions as well as their strengths and limitations. "The ideal principals must focus intensely on their interpersonal skills, capacity to read and adjust to the environment, and the ability to understand and cope with far ranging issues. They must be politically astute, prepared to adjust their leadership styles, and ethically grounded" (Hausman et al., 2000).

Learning experiences for principals cannot just reinforce old "platitudes" of being effective, but must encourage principals to question their practices and attempt change. At times leadership is viewed as a mysterious and elusive concept. The challenge is for individuals to look inward to achieve effective leadership (Chopra, 2002).

Educational leadership programs should include emotional intelligence theory as a component for reform. Programs have been focusing on the development of course content; the time has come to embrace the research on emotional intelligence and provide a balanced approach. As Dewey advocated the teaching of

the "whole child" for maximum gains, so should programs for leadership include the social, emotional, intellectual and physical components. It is through the combination of these focused areas that transference of meaningful change will take place in our schools. Strong leadership development processes are focused on emotional and intellectual learning and they build on active participatory work: action learning and coaching, where people used what they are learning to diagnose and solve real problems in their organizations (Goleman et al., 2002, p. 234). So, successful schools need educational leaders who have the abilities to facilitate sustained and lasting change. As Fullan (2003) reiterated, "these new educational leaders will need to have a strong sense of moral purpose for direction and great emotional intelligence as they build relationships" (p. 9). According to recent research, any person who is in a high position needs to have traits of a good manager and a good leader. The combination of good leadership and management skills always leads to successful organisations (good performance of the workers). It is important to note that leadership is not better than management or a replacement for it. Leadership and management complement each other, and expertise in both is necessary for successful strategy implementation and survival in the contemporary working situation/environment (Kouzes, 2003: 315).

In Iran also, there are some investigations concern to the present research. Karimi (2007) investigated his research about the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership styles of junior schools of Mashhad. Also, Banihashemian and Moazen (2011) concluded that employee's satisfaction concerns to manager emotional intelligence and leader styles. Keavanloo et al. (2011) showed that there is a direct significant relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership styles while there was a negative relation between emotional intelligence and transactional leadership styles.

In effect, principals will not only need strong intellectual skills to be a great influence on the school culture, but they must be able to influence and understand relationships and the feelings and emotions of those they serve and lead. The research basis purpose, then, was to investigate the impact of EI on leadership styles of principals who work in high schools in Iran.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population and sampling

Research method was descriptive-correlative. Statistical population included all principals and teachers of high schools of Sanandj, a small city in Iran. Forty-two principals and 252 teachers were selected as the sample of this study.

Instruments

Research instruments were two questionnaires of leadership styles

Table 1. Correlation coefficient between emotional Intelligence and principal's leadership styles.

Leadership styles	Emotional intelligence		
	n	r	Sig
Open style	42	0.714	0
Closed style	42	-0.0719	0

Table 2. Correlation coefficient between self-awareness and principals' leadership styles.

Leadership styles	Self-awareness		
	n	r	Sig
Open style	42	0.296	0.057
Closed style	42	-0.242	0.123

profile (LSP) and emotional intelligence of shrink.

Shrink's emotional intelligence questionnaire

This questionnaire has 33 items, which has been devised shrink on the basis of Goleman's theory. The reliability of this questionnaire was reported to be 0.82. The findings of the present study also showed that emotional intelligence scale had a very high reliability.

Leadership styles questionnaire

This questionnaire measures leadership styles in 32 items. It measures two kinds of leadership styles: open styles and close styles leadership. A pilot study of the questionnaire with 30 managers revealed an Alpha Cronbach coefficient of 0.86 for this scale.

DATA ANALYSIS

General hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the leadership styles of high school principals in Sanandaj city. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine this hypothesis. The result is reported in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, correlation coefficient between emotional intelligence and open leadership style, $r = 0.714$ is significant at level $p < 0.000$. Accordingly, there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and open leadership style. It means that the principals with high emotional intelligence apply open leadership style more.

The result also shows that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and closed leadership style with $r = -0.719$ which is significant at level $p < 0.000$. Accordingly, there is a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and closed leadership style. It means that the principals with high

emotional intelligence apply closed leadership style less. According to the obtained results, "null hypotheses" as a clue of no relationship between emotional intelligence and the principals' leadership style cannot be confirmed.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between self-awareness and leadership styles. Pearson correlation coefficient has been used to examine this hypothesis. The results are reported in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2, correlation coefficient between self-awareness and open leadership style, $r = 0.296$ is not significant at level $p < 0.000$. Accordingly, there is no significant relationship between self-awareness and open leadership style.

Also, Table 2 shows that there is no significant relationship between self-awareness and closed leadership style. The Pearson correlation coefficient between self-awareness and closed leadership style ($r = -0.242$) is significant at level $p < 0.000$. Accordingly, there is a negative relationship between self-awareness and closed leadership style. Thus "null hypotheses" as a clue of no relationship between self-awareness, the principals' leadership style cannot be confirmed but instead the "research hypothesis" is confirmed. It means that there is no significant relationship between self-awareness and open styles and also closed styles.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between self-regulation and leadership styles. Pearson correlation coefficient has been used to examine this hypothesis. The results have been given in Table 3.

As shown in Table 3, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.420$) between self-regulation and open leadership style is significant at level $p < 0.006$. Accordingly, there is a significant relationship between self-regulation and open leadership style. It means that principals with high self-regulation apply open leadership style more.

Table 3. Correlation coefficient between self-regulation and principals' leadership styles.

Leadership styles	Self-regulation		
	n	r	Sig
Open style	42	0.42	0.006
Closed style	42	-0.472	0.002

Table 4. Correlation coefficient between motivation and principal's leadership style.

Leadership styles	Motivation		
	n	r	sig
Open style	42	0.515	0
Closed style	42	-0.481	0.001

Table 5. Correlation coefficient between empathy and open principal's leadership style.

Leadership styles	Empathy		
	n	r	sig
Open style	42	0.367	0.017
Closed style	42	-0.355	0.021

In addition, the relationship obtained from Table 3 show that there is a significant relationship between self-regulation and closed leadership style. Pearson correlation coefficient between self-regulation and closed leadership style ($r = -0.472$) is significant at level $p < 0.002$. Accordingly, there is a negative relationship between self-regulation and closed leadership style. It means that the managers with high self-regulation apply closed leadership style less. According to the obtained results, "null hypotheses" as a clue of no relationship between self-regulation, the managers' leadership style cannot be confirmed but instead "research hypothesis" is confirmed. It means that there is a significant relationship between self-regulation and leadership styles.

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between motivation and open leadership styles. Pearson correlation coefficient has been used to examine this hypothesis. The results have been given in Table 4.

As shown in Table 4, correlation coefficient between motivation and open leadership style ($r = 0.515$) is significant at level $p < 0.000$. Accordingly, there is a significant relationship between motivation and open leadership style. It means that principals with high motivation apply open leadership style more.

Also, the relationship obtained from Table 4 shows a significant relationship between motivation and closed leadership style. Pearson correlation coefficient between motivation and closed leadership style ($r = -0.481$) is significant at level $p < 0.001$. Accordingly, there is a

negative relationship between motivation and closed leadership style. It means that principals with high motivation apply closed leadership style less. According to the obtained results, "null hypotheses" as a clue of no relationship between motivation and principals' leadership style cannot be confirmed but instead "research hypothesis" is confirmed. It means that there is a significant relationship between motivation and leadership styles.

Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between empathy and leadership styles. Pearson correlation coefficient has been used to examine this hypothesis. The results have been given in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, the correlation coefficient between empathy and open leadership style ($r = 0.367$) is significant at level $p < 0.017$. Accordingly, there is a significant relationship between empathy and open leadership style. It means that principals with high empathy apply open leadership style more.

The relationship obtained from Table 5 also shows that there is a significant relationship between empathy and closed leadership style. Pearson correlation coefficient between empathy and closed leadership style ($r = -0.355$) is significant at level $p < 0.021$. Accordingly, there is a negative relationship between empathy and closed leadership style. It means that principals with high empathy apply closed leadership style less. According to the obtained results, "null hypotheses" as a clue of no relationship between empathy and principals' leadership

Table 6. Correlation coefficient between social skills and principal's leadership style.

Leadership styles	Social skills		
	n	r	Sig
Open style	42	0.459	0.002
Closed style	42	-0.557	0

Table 7. The results of t test for differences between EI and its dimensions in principals according to gender.

Variables		n	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
EI	Female	22	124.9	0.89	0.89	40	0.78
	Male	20	122.2				
Self-awareness	Female	22	31.45	1.9	10.9	40	0.69
	Male	20	32.65				
Self-regulation	Female	22	26.14	-1.97	-1.97	40	0.48
	Male	20	24				
Motivation	Female	22	23.95	0.26	0.26	40	0.46
	Male	20	23.7				
Empathy	Female	22	23.14	0.8	0.8	40	0.89
	Male	20	22.25	3.3			

style cannot be confirmed but instead “research hypothesis” is confirmed. It means that there is a significant relationship between empathy and open styles and closed leadership styles.

Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between social skills and leadership styles. Pearson correlation coefficient has been used to examine this hypothesis. The results have been given in Table 6.

As shown in Table 6, correlation coefficient between social skills and open leadership style ($r = 0.459$) is significant at level $p < 0.002$. Accordingly, there is a significant relationship between social skills and open leadership style. It means that principals with high social skills apply open leadership style more.

The relationship obtained from Table 6 also shows that there is a significant relationship between social skills and closed leadership style. Pearson correlation coefficient between social skills and closed leadership style ($r = -0.557$) is significant at level $p < 0.000$. Accordingly, there is a negative relationship between social skills and closed leadership style. It means that principals with high emotional intelligence apply closed leadership style less. According to the obtained results, “null hypotheses” as a clue of no relationship between social skills and principals' leadership style cannot be confirmed but instead the “research hypothesis” is confirmed. It means

that there is a significant relationship between social skills and open and close leadership styles.

Hypothesis 6: There is a significant relationship between EI and its components according to age and gender:

(a) The relationship between principals' gender and EI and its components: A t test was used to compare the differences between EI and its dimensions in principals according to gender. The results were given in Table 7.

The result of t test showed that there was no significant relationship between principals' EI and its components ($t = 0.89$, $sig = 0.78$, $P, 0.05$). Moreover, no relationship between gender and EI's components was observed. Accordingly, the “null hypothesis” is confirmed.

(b) The relationship between principals' age and EI and its components: To find out the relationship between principals' age and EI and its dimensions, a one way ANOVA was used. The results have been reported in Table 8.

The results of ANOVA reported in Table 8 showed that there was no relationship between principals' EI and age. $F = 0.648$, significance = 0.528 at $p < 0.05$ is not significant. Just in self-awareness the obtained F is significant ($F = 3.42$, significance = 0.043, $p < 0.05$). Other components of EI and principals' age were not

Table 8. The results of one way ANOVA for the relationship between principals' age and EI.

Variables		Sum of squares	df	mean of squares	F	Sig.
EI	Between groups	125.15	2	62.57	0.648	0.528
	Within groups	3764.19	39	96.52		
	Total	3889.34	41			
Self-awareness	Between groups	77.43	2	38.7	3.42	0.043
	Within groups	441.54	39	11.32		
	Total	518.97	41			
Self-regulation	Between groups	4.36	2	2.18	0.16	0.85
	Within groups	536.04	39	13.75		
	Total	540	41			
Motivation	Between groups	13.64	2	6.82	0.66	0.52
	Within groups	400.18	39	10.26		
	Total	413.83	41			
Empathy	Between groups	45.7	2	22.85	1.9	0.16
	Within groups	468.86	39	12.02		
	Total	514.57	41			
Social skills	Between groups	10.9	2	5.45	0.67	0.517
	Within groups	317.1	39	8.13		

significantly different. Accordingly, the "null hypothesis" is confirmed and the "research hypothesis" is not confirmed.

Conclusions

The results of this research indicated that emotional intelligence has a positive effect on principals' leadership performance. This supports the body of research that emotional intelligence has a positive effect on leadership performance. Effective leadership requires a wide range of skills. Emotional intelligence is one skill that may assist principals as they strive to more effectively meet the needs of students. Based on the results of general hypothesis, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and open leadership style. It means that principals with high emotional intelligence apply open leadership style more and try hard to make enthusiasm among their team members, also encourage others strongly to make them sustain trying. The findings suggest that among organizational duties there should be performing plans related to the emotional intelligence skills. In addition, in the process of appointing managers and employees, emotional intelligence should be considered as one of the criteria. The high school principals with emotional intelligence can achieve the various goals like removing

the obstacles, solving the dissensions and also improving the education outcome in school.

Based on the results of six hypotheses, it can be concluded that the results related to differences of emotional intelligence and its components among high school principals and their gender are in agreement with Bryan (2007), Shah (2007), Hatamiyan (2007) studies. Goleman (1998b) also believes that the gender differences have no influence on emotional intelligence. Also, based on the obtained results "null hypothesis" as a clue of no relationship between emotional intelligence and the age of high school principals was confirmed. Besides "research hypothesis" was not confirmed too. The result is in agreement with studies carried out by Karimi (2007) and Banihashemian and Moazen (2011). They concluded that employee's satisfaction concerns to manager emotional intelligence and also their leader styles. Also, Keavanloo et al. (2011) showed that there is a direct significant relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership styles while there was a negative relation between emotional intelligence and transactional leadership styles. It means that managers' emotional intelligence caused more productivity of organizations and decreases stress pressure of employees.

As the results showed, emotional intelligence characteristics have been recognized as positive

attributes in effective leaders. The characteristics are attributes associated with success and the frequency of the “emotional” trait was strong, as cited by Kouzes and Posner (2002), Maxwell (1999) and Sergiovanni (1992).

The question remains, how do we prepare and mentor future administrators for success in leading transformational change in our school system? In order for collaboration, response and mobilization to occur, self-reflection on the part of the leader is the starting point for successful relationships within the school community. To promote success for all students, leaders must become acquainted with the areas related to emotional intelligence and the competencies necessary to be successful. Educational leadership programs should include emotional intelligence theory as a component for reform. Programs have been focusing on the development of course content; the time has come to embrace the research on emotional intelligence and provide a balanced approach.

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