



The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Effective Leadership: A Review

Sidrotun Naim^{1*}, Feri Irawan², Ahmad Zain Sarnoto³, Windy Dian Sari⁴, Elismayanti Rembe⁵, Aat Ruchiat Nugraha⁶, Eko Nursalim⁷, Diah Fatma Sjoraida⁸, Tomi Apra Santosa⁹, Andi Rahmah¹⁰

¹ IPMI Jakarta, Indonesia

² Institut Teknologi dan Sains Padang Lawas Utara, Indonesia

³ Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, Indonesia

⁴ STAI Fatahilah, Indonesia

⁵ STAIN Mandailing Natal, Indonesia

^{6,8} Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia

⁷ STAI Sangatta Kutai Timur, Indonesia

⁹ Akademi Teknik Adikarya, Indonesia

¹⁰ Universitas Indonesia Timur, Indonesia

*) corresponding author: sidrotunnaim@ipmi.ac.id

Keywords	Abstract
<i>Emotional Intelligence, Effective Leadership, Conflict Management</i>	<i>Effective leadership is often associated with a variety of competencies and personal characteristics, where emotional intelligence (EI) has been a major focus in the last decade. This study examines the role of emotional intelligence in effective leadership through a comprehensive literature review. Using a systematic approach, we analyzed relevant articles and books from 2022 to 2024, which included theory, empirical research, and case studies on EI and leadership. The results of this review show that EI contributes significantly to effective decision-making, conflict management, and the development of interpersonal relationships in the context of leadership. Furthermore, emotional intelligence allows leaders to be more effective in managing stress and motivating subordinates. These findings underscore the importance of integrating EI training in leadership development programs to improve leadership effectiveness in various sectors. The study proposes several recommendations for leadership practices and future research directions, reinforcing the view that EI is an essential key to successful and sustainable leadership.</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership is one of the important factors that determine the success of an organization. Effective leadership not only affects team performance and productivity, but also plays a vital role in inspiring and motivating employees. An effective leader can guide an organization through challenges and changes, ensuring that his team is able to navigate competition and market dynamics efficiently (Zeidner et al., 2004). With solid leadership, an organization can achieve its strategic goals while maintaining a harmonious and productive work environment. Furthermore, effective leaders also play a crucial role in developing and implementing the organization's vision and mission (Pio et al., 2021). They are responsible not only for making strategic decisions, but also for ensuring that all team members understand and are committed to those directions and goals. Through strong communication skills and information-driven decision-making, effective leaders can steer organizations

towards sustainable growth and innovation. This shows that without effective leadership, organizations may find it difficult to adapt to changes and take advantage of existing opportunities (Kukah et al., 2020).

Effective leadership is very important in determining the success of an organization. Effective leadership not only impacts team performance and productivity, but it also plays a vital role in inspiring and motivating employees. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a key component here, allowing leaders to recognize, understand, and manage emotions both themselves and others (Kamassi et al., 2019; Alhamami et al., 2020). A leader with high emotional intelligence is able to guide his team through challenges and changes more effectively, ensuring that every team member feels supported and valued. This, in turn, creates a more harmonious and productive work environment, which is crucial for achieving the organization's strategic goals.

Effective leaders with good emotional intelligence are responsible for developing and implementing the organization's vision and mission. They not only make strategic decisions, but also ensure that all team members understand and are committed to those directions and goals. Emotional intelligence strengthens communication skills and decision-making abilities, allowing leaders to steer the organization towards sustainable growth and innovation (George, 2000). EI's presence in leadership supports the organization's adaptation to change and helps in capitalizing on opportunities in a more empathetic and strategic way, demonstrating how integral EI is in building and maintaining effective leadership (Fianko et al., 2020).

Emotional intelligence plays a fundamental role in shaping effective leadership. Qualities such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social abilities are the pillars that support leaders in managing daily interactions and making critical decisions. Self-awareness allows leaders to understand their personal strengths and weaknesses, while emotional regulation helps them in controlling or adjusting their emotions according to the situation (Fianko et al., 2020). The ability to empathize allows leaders to understand subordinates' needs and emotions, while social skills facilitate effective communication and foster strong relationships. With high emotional intelligence, leaders can be more effective in motivating teams, managing stress and conflict, and leading by example.

Emotional intelligence in leadership contributes not only to the management of internal relationships but also to external aspects such as negotiation and partnership. Leaders with high EI are able to recognize and understand the emotions of other stakeholders, which can be a strategic advantage in negotiations or when establishing strategic partnerships (Palmer et al., 2001). This allows them to respond in a supportive and constructive manner, strengthening professional networks and enhancing the organization's reputation. Overall, emotional intelligence enriches leadership practices by adding a layer of understanding and sensitivity to human dynamics, which in turn increases the effectiveness of leadership in meeting organizational goals and advancing its growth (Karakus et al., 2021).

Bar-On research (2019), found that emotional intelligence has a strong correlation with leadership performance, especially when it comes to influencing employee satisfaction and loyalty. Another study by Goleman (2021) identified that leaders with high scores in EI tend

to have more cohesive and productive teams, suggesting that a leader's emotional intelligence can directly affect organizational climate and team output. Research by Mayer and Salovey (2019) shows that leaders who can manage their own emotions and the emotions of others tend to be better at handling conflict situations, which allows them to achieve more effective resolutions and maintain harmonious relationships in the workplace. Research by Caruso and Salovey (2014) also found that emotional intelligence helps leaders in making more informative and ethical decisions, linking EI to improved analytical ability and scrupulousness in the decision-making process. These two studies and many others support the idea that emotional intelligence is a crucial asset that strengthens leadership competencies in the face of dynamic challenges in the modern world of work.

Based on this, this study aims to play the role of emotional intelligence in effective leadership through a comprehensive literature review.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a systematic literature review to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and effective leadership. The data was collected through extensive searches across several academic databases including PubMed, PsycINFO, JSTOR, and Google Scholar using keywords such as "emotional intelligence", "effective leadership", "EI and leadership", and "emotional intelligence in management". The inclusion criteria for the literature under review were publications that explicitly examined the impact or role of EI in leadership contexts, published between 2022 - 2024. The selected articles were then reviewed to identify the research methods, study population, EI measurement tools used, and key outcomes related to effective leadership.

The data analysis process in this review involves a qualitative synthesis of findings extracted from relevant literature. Assessment criteria include the validity of the research methodology, relevance to the leadership topic, and consistency of results between studies. This review aims to integrate insights from various studies to build a comprehensive understanding of how EI affects effective leadership. From this analysis, the research aims to identify emerging patterns, lacunas in the existing literature, and propose recommendations for future research. The study also evaluated the implications of the findings for leadership practice, with a focus on developing interventions or training programs to improve EI competencies among leaders.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership Performance

Emotional intelligence (EI) has gained widespread recognition as a key factor influencing leadership performance in various organizations. Studies have shown that leaders with high EI levels tend to be more effective in leading their teams and organizations. This is because EI involves the ability to identify, understand, and manage the emotions of oneself and others, which is a crucial aspect of leadership. Leaders who are able to understand and respond appropriately to their employees' emotions are able to create a more positive and supportive

work environment, which in turn improves team motivation and performance (Pulido-Martos et al., 2024).

A leader's ability to manage emotions is crucial in decision-making. Leaders with high EI can be better at assessing situations from multiple perspectives, considering emotional and rational aspects in every decision. This helps them make more informed and balanced decisions, which is important in an often complex and changing business environment (Yadisaputra, 2021). Leaders who can maintain calm in stressful situations and manage their emotional reactions effectively are more likely to inspire trust and respect among team members, amplifying their influence as leaders. In addition, EI also plays an important role in conflict management, an important skill in leadership. Leaders who understand and can manage emotional dynamics in a team are more likely to resolve conflicts effectively. They use empathy and communication skills to listen and understand various perspectives, assisting them in formulating solutions that satisfy all parties. Thus, leaders with high EI can not only reduce the frequency of conflicts within the team, but can also turn those conflicts into opportunities for learning and innovation (Debeş, 2021).

Emotional intelligence also affects a leader's ability to motivate team members. Leaders with good EI abilities are often more effective at identifying what motivates their employees individually. They tailor their approach to meet the emotional and professional needs of employees, which can increase engagement and dedication. This is especially important in the face of challenges or when extra teamwork is needed, as leaders who are sensitive to their team's needs and concerns can maintain a strong collaborative spirit. At the organizational level, leaders with high EI are often more effective at managing change and guiding their organization through the transition. They use their emotional intelligence to dig into and respond to resistance to change, implementing supportive and inclusive strategies that minimize distractions and improve adaptation. This is especially important in the era of globalization and digital transformation, where organizations must continue to adapt to rapidly changing market conditions (Alshammari et al., 2020).

Finally, the influence of emotional intelligence on leadership performance reflects the importance of EI skill development in leadership training programs. Organizations that invest in the development of their EI leaders tend to see improvements in job satisfaction, employee retention, and overall business outcomes. Through continuous training and learning, leaders can continue to hone their ability to manage emotions—both themselves and others—to maximize the effectiveness of their leadership in facing today's business challenges.

3.2 Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Organizational Climate

Emotional intelligence (EI) has a significant influence on an organization's climate, playing a crucial role in shaping employee perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors within a company. Organizations with leaders with high EIs tend to have a more positive work climate, where employees feel valued, understood, and supported. Leaders who can recognize and respond appropriately to the emotional needs of their employees create a more empathetic and inclusive work environment, which encourages employee engagement and productivity. It also

reflects higher levels of job satisfaction and lower turnover, as employees feel more connected and committed to the organization (Kukah et al., 2022).

Furthermore, EI in leadership facilitates more open and effective communication between management levels and employees. Leaders with a strong EI are more adept at communicating the organization's vision, values, and goals clearly and persuasively. They are also more skilled at listening, a critical aspect of communication that is often overlooked (Waglay et al., 2020). These listening skills allow leaders to understand the problems, concerns, and suggestions from employees, which helps in making more informed and inclusive decisions. This openness strengthens trust and transparency in the organization, vital components of a healthy work climate.

The emotional intelligence of leaders also supports more effective conflict resolution, which is important in maintaining a harmonious work climate. Leaders who can manage and resolve conflicts in a constructive way minimize the negative impact of conflicts on team morale. By using a solution-focused and empathetic approach, they not only resolve conflicts but often turn challenges into opportunities for learning and team development (Fianko et al., 2020). This shows that emotional intelligence not only minimizes the losses of conflict but also enriches the work climate by promoting growth and adaptation. The influence of EI on an organization's climate also extends to human resources policies and practices. Leaders with high EI are more likely to develop and implement policies that support employee well-being, such as work flexibility, mental health support, and professional development programs. It demonstrates the organization's commitment to employee well-being, which increases their loyalty and dedication. Employees who feel supported in their professional and personal aspects are more likely to give their best performance, which positively affects the overall organizational climate (Thapa & Parimoo, 2022).

In addition, emotional intelligence affects an organization's adaptability to change. Leaders with high EI can feel nuances in employee morale and team dynamics that may affect adaptation to change. They use this sensitivity to manage change in a way that considers its emotional impact on employees, facilitating smoother transitions and reducing resistance. As such, emotional intelligence is not only important in stable situations but also in times of transition, allowing organizations to remain resilient in the face of uncertainty. The influence of emotional intelligence on the organizational climate reflects the importance of investing in EI training and development at all levels of the organization. Through training initiatives designed to improve emotional intelligence, organizations can proactively shape and maintain a supportive and collaborative work climate. These programs not only improve an individual's ability to manage emotions but also improve the overall interpersonal dynamics within the team, which directly affects operational effectiveness and job satisfaction. Thus, the investment in EI generates great value, strengthening the foundation for a dynamic and adaptive work climate (Karakus et al., 2021).

3.3 Emotional Intelligence as a Predictor of Effective Leadership

Emotional intelligence (EI) has proven to be one of the most effective predictors of effective leadership. Research in this area has shown that EI not only affects individuals'

success in managing and leading teams, but also on their ability to formulate strategies and make informed decisions in stressful situations (Zeidner et al., 2004). Leaders with high EI levels tend to have better abilities at recognizing emotions both in themselves and in others, allowing them to respond more effectively to team needs and organizational dynamics. The aspect of self-awareness, which is a component of EI, allows leaders to understand their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as their emotional impact on others. This is crucial in building trust and credibility among team members. Leaders who are aware of their limitations are better able to ask for input and get support when needed, strengthening team trust and fostering a culture of greater transparency and collaboration within the organization (Grobelny et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the ability to regulate emotions is a key feature of EI that influences effective leadership. Leaders who can manage their own emotions and stay calm under pressure are able to make more rational decisions and are less affected by emotional bias or stress. It not only helps in crisis management but also in day-to-day decision-making, where emotional clarity can provide a more stable foundation for choosing the most profitable option for the organization. Empathy, another element of EI, is critical in understanding and responding to the needs and views of team members (Baba et al., 2019). Empathic leaders are better at building relationships, motivating staff, and encouraging a supportive and inclusive work environment. This ability is invaluable in facilitating teamwork and resolving conflicts, as leaders can navigate individual differences and seek solutions that benefit all parties involved.

Social skills, which are also part of EI, enable leaders to be effective in communication, persuasion, and networking. Leaders who have strong social skills can more easily influence and motivate others, foster cooperation, and promote synergy within the team. This ability allows leaders to steer teams toward a common goal more efficiently, leveraging the collective strength of their team members to achieve superior results. The importance of emotional intelligence in leadership shows that EI development should be an integral component of leadership training programs (Dasborough et al., 2022). Organizations that focus on improving the EI of their leaders will not only see an improvement in leadership performance but also an increase in employee well-being and satisfaction. Investing in emotional intelligence not only increases individual effectiveness but also strengthens an organization's resilience to the challenges that can arise in a dynamic and often unpredictable business environment (Pio et al., 2021).

4. Conclusion

From this study, it can be concluded that emotional intelligence (EI) plays an important role as a predictor of effective leadership. This research underlines various aspects of EI such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills as the foundation that enables leaders to improve performance, motivate teams, and maintain a positive organizational climate. From the literature analysis, it is clear that leaders with high emotional intelligence are better able to manage internal and external challenges, communicate effectively, and make strategic decisions that enrich the overall performance of the organization. Therefore, the development of EI competencies in the context of leadership not

only increases individual effectiveness but also has a significant impact on organizational success.

REFERENSI

- Alhamami, N. M., Ismail, W. K. W., Kamarudin, S., & Abdullah, F. Z. (2020). Linking Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership to Job Performance in a Conflict-Stricken Environment. *Talent Development*.
- Alshammari, F., Pasay-an, E., Gonzales, F., & Torres, S. (2020). Emotional intelligence and authentic leadership among Saudi nursing leaders in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 36(6), 503–509. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2020.04.003>
- Baba, M., Makhdoomi, U., & Siddiqi, M. (2019). Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership Among Academic Leaders in Institutions of Higher Learning. *Global Business Review*, 22, 097215091882242. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150918822421>
- Dasborough, M. T., Ashkanasy, N. M., Humphrey, R. H., Harms, P. D., Credé, M., & Wood, D. (2022). Does leadership still not need emotional intelligence? Continuing “The Great EI Debate.” *The Leadership Quarterly*, 33(6), 101539. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101539>
- Debeş, G. (2021). *THE PREDICTIVE POWER OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON SELF EFFICACY: A CASE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS*.
- Fianko, S. K., Afrifa Jnr, S., & Dzogbewu, T. C. (2020). *Does the Interpersonal Dimension of Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence Model Predict Effective Leadership?* 221–245.
- George, J. M. (2000). Emotions and Leadership: The Role of Emotional Intelligence. *Human Relations*, 53(8), 1027–1055. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700538001>
- Grobelny, J., Radke, P., & Maczka, D. P. (2021). Emotional intelligence and job performance: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion*, 12(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJWOE.2021.115620>
- Kamassi, A., Boulahlib, L., Manaf, N., & Omar, A. (2019). Emotional labour strategies and employee performance: The role of emotional intelligence. *Management Research Review*, ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-03-2019-0097>
- Karakus, M., Usak, M., & Ersozlu, A. (2021). Emotions in Learning, Teaching, and Leadership: A Bibliometric Review of Asian Literature (1990–2018). *Sage Open*, 11(1), 2158244020988865. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020988865>
- Kukah, A. S., Akomea-Frimpong, I., Jin, X., & Osei-Kyei, R. (n.d.). *EI research in the construction industry*.
- Kukah, A. S., Owusu-Manu, D.-G., & Edwards, D. (2022). Critical review of emotional intelligence research studies in the construction industry. *Journal of Engineering Design and Technology*, ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEDT-08-2021-0432>
- Palmer, B., Walls, M., Burgess, Z., & Stough, C. (2001). Emotional Intelligence and Effective Leadership. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 22, 5–10. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730110380174>

- Pio, L., Cavaliere, L. P. L., Poddar, A., Poddar, S., Padma, S., Koti, K., Chakravarthi, M. K., Rajest, S., & Rajan, R. (2021). Emotional Intelligence and Driving Change in Public Sector: The Mediating Role of Culture. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 12, 2071–2115.
- Pulido-Martos, M., Gartzia, L., Augusto-Landa, J. M., & Lopez-Zafra, E. (2024). Transformational leadership and emotional intelligence: Allies in the development of organizational affective commitment from a multilevel perspective and time-lagged data. *Review of Managerial Science*, 18(8), 2229–2253. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11846-023-00684-3>
- Thapa, A., & Parimoo, D. (2022). *Transactional Leadership Style and Organizational Performance: The moderating role of emotional intelligence*.
- Waglay, M., Becker, J. R., & Du Plessis, M. (2020). The role of emotional intelligence and autonomy in transformational leadership: A leader member exchange perspective. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 46. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v46i0.1762>
- Yadisaputra, M. (2021). Systematic literature review on emotional intelligence and conflict management Systematic literature review on emotional intelligence and conflict management. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science*.
- Zeidner, M., Matthews, G., & Roberts, R. D. (2004). Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace: A Critical Review. *Applied Psychology*, 53(3), 371–399. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2004.00176.x>