

Short Communication

Leader Emotional Intelligence and Composite Ratings of Leadership

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Abstract

In a seminal meta-analysis, Harms and Crede (2010) found that correlations between leader self-rating of both leadership and emotional intelligence produce much stronger correlations than those calculated when the leader self-rates emotional intelligence but someone else rates the leader on leadership. Additionally, it is quite reasonable to question whether aspects of emotional intelligence are measuring very similar constructs to those of transformational leadership. In this study, 146 graduate students who were beginning graduate study in leadership completed *Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test*. Two followers, two colleagues and a supervisor rated each leader on the full range of leader behaviors. Among the findings were that correlations between leader emotional intelligence and 360-degree composite ratings of aspects of transformational leadership fell neatly between the meta-analytic correlations reported by Harms and Crede – lower than leader self ratings but higher than leader other rater ratings. Additionally, an exploratory factor analysis found that the four subscales of the *Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test* loaded on a different component than those of the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x*.

1 Introduction

Discussing the emotional intelligence of leaders is becoming a common seminar and conference topic. Sometimes, presenters cite narrow research results to posit that leader emotional intelligence is strongly related to positive aspects of leadership such as transformational leadership. Presenters doing this, however, may have failed to thoroughly research who rated whom on leadership.

Generally, research on leader emotional intelligence and leadership style occurs one of two ways. In the first model, the leader rates her/himself on emotional intelligence and others, such as a follower, peer, or superior rate the leader on her/his leadership style. In the second model, the leader rates her/himself on both emotional intelligence and leadership style. These two models produce strikingly different results.

The seminal meta-analysis of emotional intelligence and the full range model of leadership was conducted by Harms and Crede (2010). In the analysis, one of the moderator variables analyzed was whether the rater was the same (leader rated her/himself on both EI and leadership) or different (leader rated herself on EI but a supervisor, peer or follower rated the leader on leadership).

Table 1 highlights differences in the strength of the meta-analytic effect size based on the source of the rating. For example, when leaders rated themselves on EI and transformational leadership the effect size is $\rho = .47$, while if a different rater assesses how transformational the leader is the effect size is $\rho = .12$. This pattern runs throughout table 1.

Table 1 Differences in Effect Size Based on Source of Rating

Variable	Rater	k	N	Rho
Transformational	Same	47	4,994	.56
Transformational	Different	22	2,661	.12
Idealized Influence (Overall)	Same	17	1815	.42
Idealized Influence (Overall)	Different	7	730	.10
Individual Consideration	Same	17	1815	.45
Individual Consideration	Different	7	730	.10
Inspirational Motivation	Same	17	1814	.43
Inspirational Motivation	Different	7	730	.14
Intellectual Stimulation	Same	17	1815	.40
Intellectual Stimulation	Different	7	730	.10
Contingent Reward	Same	12	1272	.35
Contingent Reward	Different	6	622	.13
Laissez Faire	Same	13	1204	-.37
Laissez Faire	Different	8	617	-.17

Harms and Crede (2010). Dimensions of the meta-analysis with fewer than 5 studies were omitted from the table. The rho is the estimated true score correlation.

The differences found in effect sizes based on the source of the rating are not limited to emotional intelligence. Table 2 is a meta-analysis of differences between self-ratings leaders complete and ratings others complete on leaders. Leaders tend to overrate the degree to which they practice transformational or servant leadership and underrate the degree to which they practice contingent reward and consideration

Table 2 Differences in Leadership Ratings Based on Source

Variable	k	N	g
Leaders Rated Themselves Higher than Other Raters			
Transformational	46	5,569	.22
Servant	18	2,443	.30
No Difference or Leaders Rated Themselves Lower than Other Raters			
Initiating structure	10	3,567	.00
Contingent reward	13	1,552	-.03
Consideration	8	8,050	-.13

Lee and Carpenter (2018) used g as the mean sample size-weighted mean difference corrected for internal consistency reliability. A positive g score indicates leaders rated themselves higher than other raters.

Table 2 is a meta-analysis of differences between self-ratings leaders complete and ratings others complete on leaders. Leaders tend to overrate the degree to which they practice transformational or servant leadership and underrate the degree to which they practice contingent reward and consideration.

2 Purposes of the Study

Three areas of research are presented from this study. In the first area, leaders rated themselves on the *Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence (SSEIT)*. A supervisor, two peers and two followers also rated each leader on the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x*. The mean of these five scores was calculated as the dependent variable. Often called a 360-degree assessment, this sort of study analyses a more complete assessment of a leader’s style, as ratings are provided from above, laterally and below – hence the term 360-degree assessment.

In the second area, an exploratory factor analysis was run using the scales of both the *Schutte Emotional Intelligence Test* and the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x*. This analysis explored the degree to which the two instruments seem to measure different constructs.

Finally, correlations found between leader self-rated emotional intelligence and 360 ratings of leadership are provided.

3 Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 146 graduate students who were beginning graduate study in leadership. The emotional intelligence self-assessment and 360-degree ratings of leadership were conducted prior to the commencement of their participation in the study.

The participants came from across south Texas. They also came from a variety of workplaces including large publicly traded corporations, public schools, the state and federal government, and non-profit organizations. All of the participants held either a bachelor’s or master’s degree, but those degrees ranged from business to teaching to theology.

Ages of the participants ranged from 25 to 63. There were 94 Hispanic, 39 White, and 3 Black participants. Ten participants were grouped together as “other.” These were a mixture of Asian, American Indian and bi-racial participants. There were 92 females and 54 males in the study.

4 Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study. The *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x (MLQ)* is likely the most widely used validated measure of leadership. The MLQ measures nine dimensions of leadership.

Those nine dimensions can also be combined into three second-order scales.

4.1. Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, and Dornheim, (1998), developed the SSEIT with the purpose of assessing trait emotional intelligence in line with Salovey and Mayer’s (1990) emotional intelligence abilities and traits model conceptualized by the following branches: appraisal and expression of emotion; regulation of emotion; and utilization of emotion.

Schutte et al. (1998) performed a principal-components, orthogonal-rotation, factor analysis on the instrument’s 33 items representing all aspects of Salovey and Mayer’s (1990) model of emotional intelligence. Because all items loaded on factor one, a first factor dimension was revealed. An internal consistency analysis revealed a Cronbach’s alpha of .90 during the development of the instrument and a cross-check for internal consistency revealed a Cronbach’s alpha of .87. A two-week test-retest reliability further revealed a total scale score of .78 (Schutte et al., 1998).

The SSEIT contains 33 self-report that use a five-point Likert scale. Schutte et al. (2009) notes that the most widely used subscales obtained from the instrument are based on research by Petrides and Furnham (2000), Ciarrochi, Chan, and Bajgar, (2001), and Saklofske, Austin, and Minski, (2003). Some of the items across these three studies loaded on different factors and the authors labeled the four factors slightly differently. The current study used four subscales called Managing Others’ Emotions, Perception of Emotions, Managing Own Emotions, and Utilization of Emotions.

5 Results

5.1 Initial Exploratory Factor Analysis

An initial exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted with the nine first-order scales from the MLQ and the four first-order scales from the SSEIT, using the principle components method with varimax rotation. The EFA was conducted because of the similarity of the names of several of the scales. For example being individually considerate as measured by the MLQ seems to overlap with scales of the SSEIT that involve perceiving and managing other’s emotions. The factor analysis used the principal components method and varimax rotation. The standard for a scale to load on a factor was a factor loading The EFA resulted in a three-factor solution.

Table 5.1 Initial Exploratory Factor Analysis

Scale	Effective Leadership	Emotional Intelligence	Ineffective Leadership
Intellectual Stimulation	.885	-.071	-.108
Contingent Reward	.844	.009	.065
Inspirational Motivation	.809	.095	-.179
Idealized Influence Active	.805	.018	-.332
Idealized Influence Behavioral	.802	.241	-.010
Individual Consideration	.769	.019	-.419
Utilization of Emotions	-.039	.758	.025
Managing Own Emotions	-.024	.751	.035
Managing Others’ Emotions	.091	.751	-.314
Perception of Emotions	.201	.733	.175
Management by Ex Passive	-.290	-.122	.695
Laissez Faire	-.332	.069	.689
Management by Ex Active	.477	.124	.599

The first factor consisted of the six first-order scales of the MLQ considered to comprise effective leadership. The scales loaded on this factor

with an Eigenvalue of 4.5 and explained 34% of the variance in scores. The second factor consisted of the four first-order scales from the SSEIT. The scales loaded on this factor with an Eigenvalue of 2.3 and explained 18% of the variance in scores. The third factor consisted of the three first-order scales from the MLQ considered to be ineffective leadership. The scales loaded on this factor with an Eigenvalue of 1.8 and explained 14% of the variance in scores.

Based on the EFA with this sample the SSEIT seems to be measuring different constructs than the MLQ.

5.2 Correlations Between Leader EI and 360-Degree Leadership Ratings

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	POE	MOE	MOE2	UOE	OEI
Idealized Infl Behavioral (IIB)	.287**	.222**	.199*		.254**
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	.166*		.194*		.194*
Individual Consideration (IC)			.238**		
MBE Passive (MBEP)			-.262**		
Transformational (TF)	.180*		.225**		.151*
Transactional (TA)	.245**				
Passive Avoidant (PA)			-.228**		

*p < .05, ** p < .01. POE: Perception of Emotions; MOE:Managing Own Emotions; MOE2: Managing Others' Emotions; UOE: Utilization of Emotions; OEI: Overall Emotional Intelligence. Scales measured by the MLQ that were not correlated with EI were not included in table 5.2.

A first observation from table 5.2 is that the emotional intelligence dimension of managing others emotions was the most frequent correlate of 360 degree ratings of leadership. Although the correlations are generally weak; nonetheless, they tended to align along the theoretical model that accompanies the concept of transformational leadership.

A second observation is that the correlations for managing others' emotions align well with the full range model of leadership. This model posits that the five I's and contingent reward are active and effective methods of leadership, while management by exception active, passive and laissez-fair behaviors are passive and ineffective methods of leadership. In this study leaders' self-rated ability to manage others' emotions was positively related with idealized influence behavioral, inspirational motivation, individual consideration and the second order composite score called transformational leadership. Conversely, ability to manage others' emotions was negatively related management by exception passive and the composite score called passive avoidant leadership .

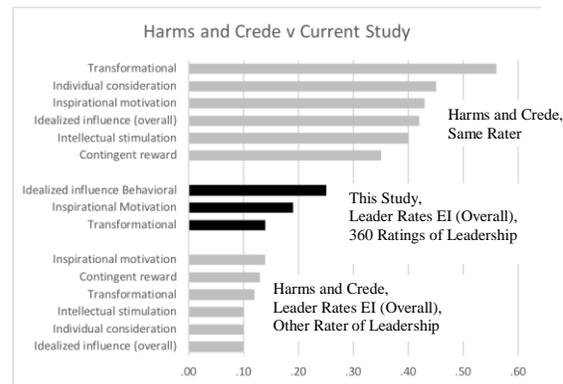
Table 5.3 Correlation Direction Displayed with the Full Range Model of Leadership

Transformational IIA IIB, IM, IC, IS Active and Effective Leadership	Transactional CR Passive and Ineffective Leadership	Passive Avoidant MBEA MBEP LF
Findings Between Leader Management of Others Emotions and Full Range Model of Leadership		
IIB, IM, IC and TF Positively Correlated with Leader EI	MBEP and PA Negatively Correlated Leader EI	

Figure 5.3 demonstrates that the results from this study not only revealed significant relationships between leader rated EI and 360 ratings of leadership, but also shows that they fell in between Harms and Crede's (2010) same rater findings and their other rater findings. This is somewhat expected since Harms and Crede's (2010) study was a meta-analysis that averaged the correlations across multiple samples whereas this study relied on only one sample. It is also important to note that the correlation between transformational leadership and EI from this study is very closely aligned to the correlation for the same reported by Harms and Crede

(2010) with both reporting a weak relationship between leader EI and others' ratings of that leader's transformational leadership.

5.3 Correlations from this study aligned with Harms and Crede's Meta-Analytic Findings



6 Discussion

How leaders manage their emotions and the emotions of others and how others perceive their leadership is a critical area of study in understanding leadership. This study suggests that leaders should consider ways to develop their Emotional Intelligence in order to be perceived as an effective leader. Learning how to manage one's own emotions along with managing emotions of others may allow leaders to be regarded by their followers as having more favorable types of leadership behaviors.

Additionally, based on the associations of transformational leadership and EI in the current study and meta-analytic literature findings from recent studies (Banks, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016; Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn, & Wu, 2016) which demonstrated positive organizational outcomes that transformational leadership yields in areas of performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work conditions, organizations should consider encouraging both leadership and EI training for their leaders.

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