

## **The Evolution of Emotional Intelligence**

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### **Abstract**

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a significant factor in the current paradigm shift to include affective abilities as integral competencies necessary to actualize leadership capabilities. Examining our emotions and the emotional makeup of others is necessary to determine how particular emotional abilities are used in specific work-related context. To underscore the importance of emotional intelligence, increased focus on the phenomenon has provided an opportunity for researchers to recognize emotional intelligence as a significant factor in determining leadership ineptitude. This paper examines the evolution of emotional intelligence as indicated by the revolutionary change in emphasis on leadership practices that reflect using a host of critical skills.

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, management, leadership development, and retention

**JEL Classification:** L22, L25

### **Introduction**

Since 1990, interest in exploring the significance of emotional intelligence (EI) and its influence on perception and behavior has increased. Emotional intelligent leaders negotiate new meaning from experience and simultaneously work through making sense of emotional content to reach new understanding (Brown, 2000). The realization that people are not yet skilled at spotting and using emotions provided an opportunity to increase questions about the ability to process emotional abilities.

Leading contemporary organizations through the next stage of growth requires training to promote better understanding of emotions and unique critical skills (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). The consequences for leadership are beneficial because even non-prescriptive analysis on emotional influence provides a practical way for leaders to realize the cause and effect of emotional relay. As the focus on emotional intelligence gained momentum, attempts to identify boundary and favorable conditions for EI enactment flourished to illustrate the empirical and theoretical objectives necessary to understand the requirements for leadership.

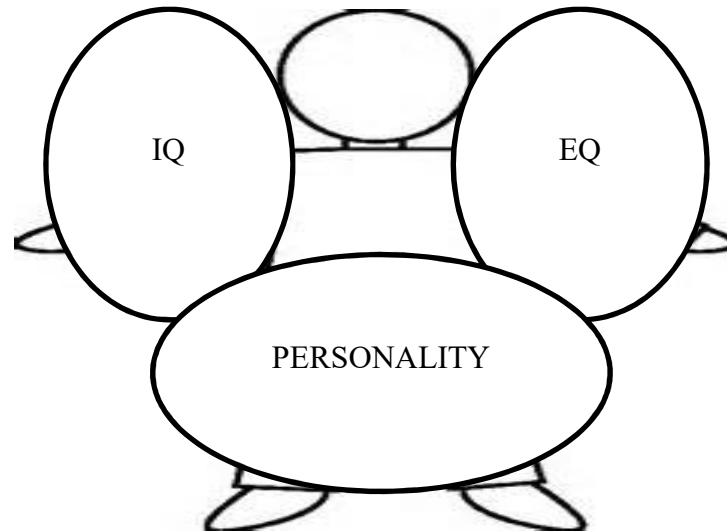
When emotional intelligence was first introduced, the concept served as the missing link in a peculiar finding (Bradberry & Greaves, 2012). To provide a point of reference, the genesis of the study of EI has its roots in David Wechsler's 1940 concept of, "non-collective aspects of general intelligence" (Nair & Nivedita, 2012). Despite continuous efforts to distinguish cognitive abilities as an absolute science, Gardner (1983) increased the awareness level of multiple intelligence capacities by introducing domains such as "intrapyschic" and "interpersonal skills". Gardner's introspective contributions to EI development provided an opportunity to introduce theoretical frameworks describing management philosophy and the leadership paradigm. Two major contributors to the introduction of emotional intelligence in academic literature were Salovey and Mayer. The theorists concluded from analysis of study results that aspects of emotional intelligence appear to be abilities that can be measured (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Theorists claimed that EI was the ability to monitor one's own and others emotions, to discriminate among distinct emotions, and to use information to guide thinking and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The announcement intensified the discussions for measurement of a new criterion separate to cognitive processing. Salovey and Mayer focused on adaptive behavior to create a distinguishing framework on emotional intelligence by describing its unique interfaces of existence.

### ***IQ, EQ and Personality Traits Distinction***

Bar-On and his associates increased understanding of the term Emotional Quotient (EQ) in the 1990s by identifying several brain areas that distinguish human skill sets from cognitive skill intelligence and influence one's ability to succeed. Bar-On study on neuropsychology provided the framework for IQ and EQ detachment by identifying several brain areas crucial for cognitive, emotional, and social intelligence. Theorists called for a clear distinction between cognitive abilities and emotional intelligence to innumerate capacities such as drive, persistence, motivation, and interpersonal chemistry (Goleman, 2011).

Contemporary findings have contributed to accentuating the divide between IQ and EQ. Bradberry and Greaves (2009) research resulted in the discovery of EQ's significance to organizational success. Study results yielded that people with the highest IQs outperformed those with average IQs just 20% of the time, while people with average IQs outperformed those with the highest IQs 70% of the time. Ninety percent of top performers were found to possess high EQ levels (Bradberry & Greaves, 2012). The anomaly threw a massive wrench into what many people always assumed to be the source of IQ success. Scientists now realize and often claim (EQ) as the critical factor that explained success above one's IQ. Despite recent research findings suggesting that EQ is the critical success factor, there is construct overlap because personality also consists of motives, abilities, interest, goals, values, and life narratives (Roberts Harms Smith Wood & Webb, 2006). The result, at least in theory, constituted incremental validity (Tellegen & Waller, 2008).

**Figure 1. Sizing up the person to explain distinct qualities that people possess**



Adapted from: Bradberry, T. & Greaves, J. (2009). *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*

Emphasis on emotional intelligence evolved from the initial focus of separation from IQ to define its significance to the systematic development of models displaying distinct criteria of association. Consequently, theorists began to apply models reflecting a distinct formulation of several aspects of EI. Focus on cognitive ability decreased as theorists began to concentrate on developing a keen understanding about the significance of emotions. Academic intelligence was no longer the single measure or fundamental ingredient for describing smart behavior. Interest in EI became part of the current zeitgeist of modern Western society, which increasingly recognized the importance of emotions to identifying and understanding problem domains (Zeidner Matthews Roberts & MacCann, 2003). Efforts to operationalize the concept confirmed the changing dynamics and provided a connection for the discovery of the key dimensions of an ability model discriminating among emotional states.

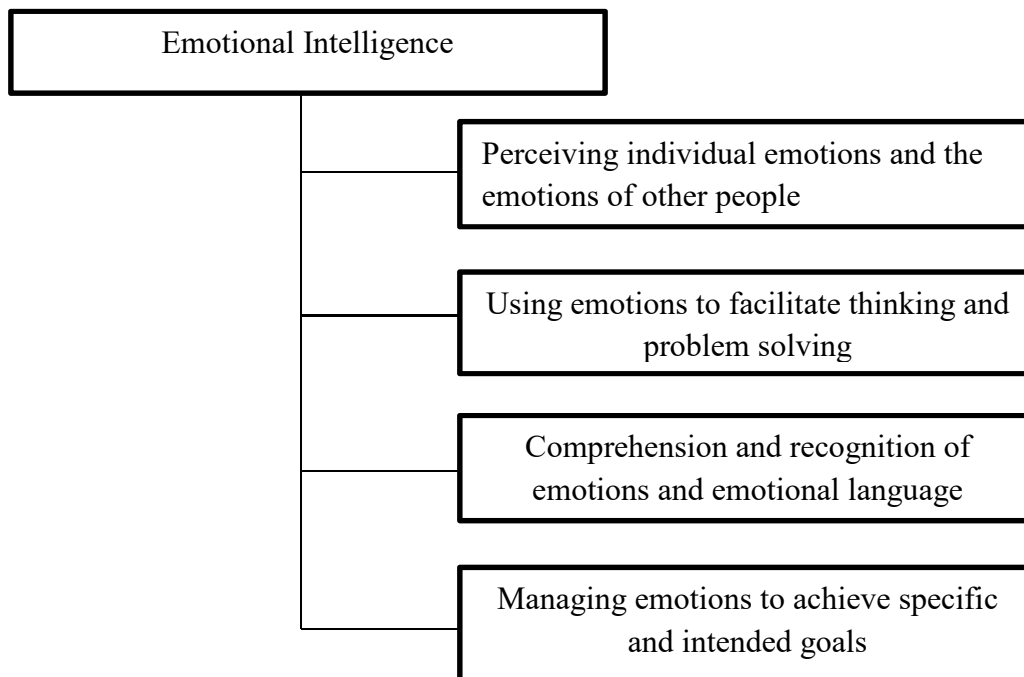
### ***Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence***

Unprecedented social change and emphasis on leadership in the early 1990s set the stage for the development of an ability model to assist practitioners in addressing personal and social complexities. The ability model, most closely associated with the work of Salovey and Mayer, predated the description of critical affective skills and consisted of an empirically derived combination of emotion and intelligence (Bratton Dodd & Brown, 2011). Salovey and Mayer (1997) established four distinct branches of emotional abilities: (1) perceiving emotions (2) using emotions (3) understanding emotions, and (4) managing emotions.

Salovey and Mayer (1997) ability model permeated a crystallized view of intelligence that involved the accurate processing of emotion-relevant information to assist in finding solutions (Killian, 2012). Consequently, the ability model of emotional intelligence presented a powerful

display of how emotional content manifest itself in adaptive behaviors. For example, several research studies included an empirical and theoretical framework on the legitimacy of the EI ability model in establishing construct value (Gardner, 1983; George, 2000; Jordan & Troth, 2004). EI model development originated with Greenspan (1989), was expanded by Salovey and Mayer (1990), and has been further refined by Goleman (1998), and Bradberry and Greaves (2009). Figure 2 represents a composite of the EI ability construct and lists the four-branch model and attributes that, according to Salovey and Mayer (1997), await greater development and maturity. Clarification of distinct characteristics was important to identify, distinguish, and understand emotions and the nature of the abilities they represent.

**Figure 2. The theoretical design of the four-branch ability model of emotional intelligence (EI)**



(Salovey, & Mayer, 1997)

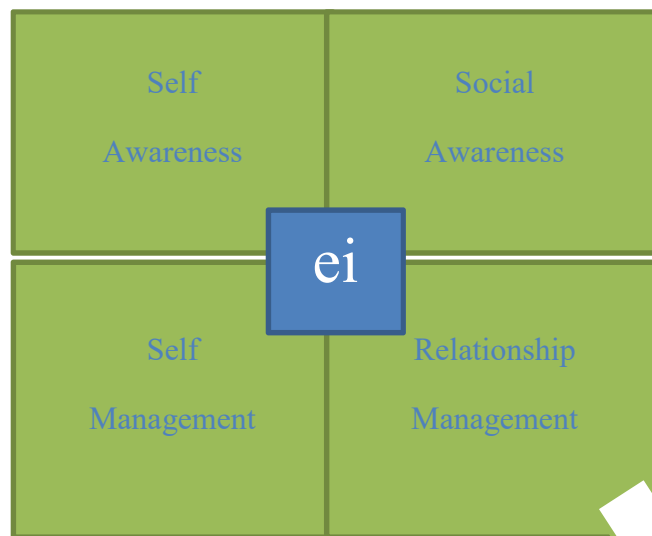
### ***Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence***

The shift from classifying EI as merely intelligence was influenced by the claim that EI is a combination of affective skills that influence individual ability (Bar-On, 1997; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Bar-On (1997) offered a theoretical model of EI suggesting the need for an umbrella construct of interrelated emotional competencies that influence the ability to cope with daily demands and pressures. Bar-On's (1997) conceptualization of EI set the stage for what is now known as "mixed model theory." One major contributor to the era of conceptualizing EI was Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist who introduced a mixed model outlining an emotional competence framework. Goleman (1998) devoted his energy to identifying five constructs of EI that he considered learned capabilities:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-regulation
3. Motivation
4. Empathy
5. Social skills

Ultimately, Goleman’s (1998) paired with similar competence based constructs transcending the focus to examining a host of critical skills to inventory abilities (Bar-On, 1997; Boyzatis & McKee, 2002; Dulewicz et al., 2003). Goleman (1998) identified personal and social competencies that contribute more to workplace achievement than technical skills, cognitive ability, and standard personality traits combined as noted from prior research: (a) personal competencies, (b) self-assessment self-confidence, (c) trustworthiness and conscientiousness, (d) achievement drive and optimism (e) social competencies, (f) empathy and developing others, (g) communication and conflict management, (h) change catalyst and collaboration and cooperation. Goleman, considered by many as the founder of EI, collaborated with Boyatzis and Mckee (2002) to streamline the mixed model approach unmasking two capability dimensions and four domains. The lack of understanding about leadership and the need for better comprehension of factors that influence workplace relationships inspired the movement to propose theoretical constructs on affective abilities. Self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship-management represented the reflection of a sub-unit categorization of competency domains that operationalized the unique facets of EI.

**Figure 3. Emotional intelligence framework**



(Goleman Boyatzis & Mckee, 2002)

**Trait Model of Emotional Intelligence**

Trait EI, or emotional self-efficacy model, emerged due to ambiguities and a lack of clear conceptualization of constructs (Zeidner Matthews Roberts & MacCann, 2003). Previous focus was relegated to understanding the nature of EI constructs for developmental tracks and performance measurement. Trait EI is a logical extension of constructs that have a particular affinity for individual self-perception or self-rating of emotional abilities. Petrides and Furnham, (2001) introduced Trait EI by referring to the construct as a constellation of self-perceived affective abilities and dispositions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies. There was reasons to suggest overlap with the mixed approach because Goleman (1998) offered a personality model of EI that included character traits such as trust, commitment, initiative, and conscientiousness. Uncertainties about the multiple and unique constituency needs provided the justification for examination of different formulas associated with EI theoretical constructs.

**Figure 4. Definitions of the EI construct alongside different models to its measurement**

<b>EI Models</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Dynamics</b>	<b>Differentiation</b>
Ability	Sought to understand EI by a person's ability to adapt	Development of high quality ability test to measure EI	Understanding why the whole is greater than the sum of parts
Mixed	Clearly defines EI domains and competency skills	Identified importance for leadership development	Learned capabilities that can be developed through training
Trait	Contributes to personality level analysis of self perceived EI abilities	Dimensions of psychological interest	Innate attribution to genetic factors for the development of EI differences

(Salovey & Mayer, 1997; Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1998; Petrides & Furnham, 2001)

### ***Empirical Synopsis***

Vigorous criticism and disputes emerged due to the lack of scientific rigor assigned to how EI is measured and about the nature of the relationship between desired outcomes (Conte, 2005; Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Landy, 2004; Brown & Moshavi, 2005). To provide attention to matters of describing EI as solely conceptually relevant, several researchers examined the predictive validity of EI using statistical instruments to assess and formulate measurements (Jordan Ashton-James & Ashkanasy, 2006; Groves McEnrue & Shen, 2008).

The attempt to assess various aspects of EI led to several experiments analyzing the ability to perceive, and understand emotions that facilitate thinking and influence organizational behavior (Schmidt & Andrykowski, 2004; Clarke Bradshaw Field Hampson & Rose, 2005). Abraham (2000) investigation of emotionally intelligent employees provided valuable information establishing the relationship between job satisfaction levels and commitment to the organizations. To prescribe value to the measurement of EI levels, Gardner and Stough (2002) examined leaders high in emotional intelligence and concluded they are likely to work harder, and desire success. The focus of EI analysis during the early 21<sup>st</sup> century also expanded to include measurement of demographic factors, student academics, and training and development (Rozell Pettijohn & Parker, 2002; Salsa, 2002; Turner & Walker, 2008).

Consequently, EI evolved as research moved beyond focusing on using conceptual models to include a comprehensive scale of scientific analysis. Developers began to use two distinct measurement approaches to assess various aspects of the EI construct. Initial approaches to assessing various abilities associated with EI conformed and attempted to integrate ability based measures and the cognitive approach (Mayer Salovey and Caruso, 2002; De Sousa, 1987). The self-report assessment format provided an opportunity for researcher's to measure EI as a dispositional construct representing personality, motivation, and affective competencies (Parker Saklofske Wood Eastabrook & Taylor, 2005).

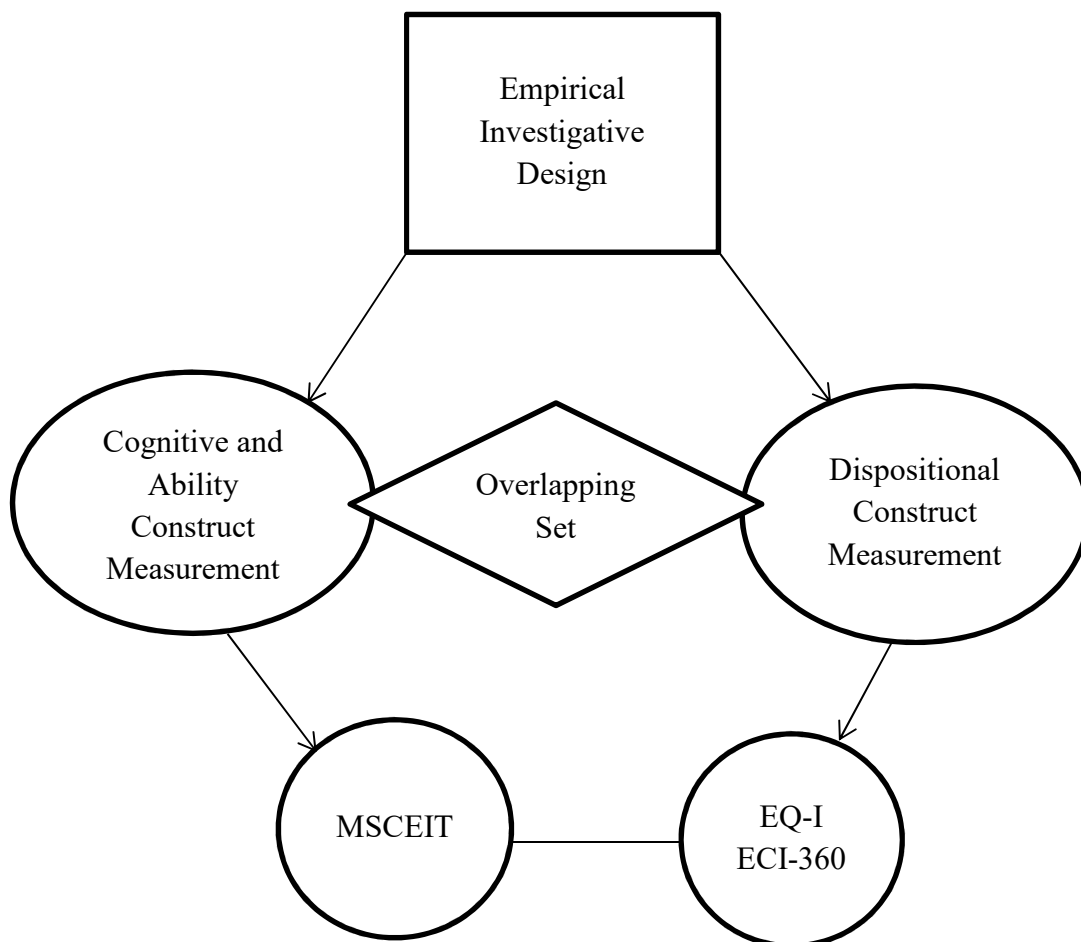
Test developers like Bar-On (1997) initialized self-report assessments by suggesting that EI was a dispositional construct representing personality, motivation, and affective attributes (Parker et al., 2005). The 133-item self-report inventory assessed EQ-I using impression scale, omission rate, and inconsistency index. Bar-On's design for measuring EI inspired other researchers to focus on analyzing the dispositional components of the construct.

Salovey Mayer Caruso followed earlier assessment by actualizing the (2000) MSCEIT emotional intelligence test to provide an accurate measure of distinct emotional abilities. A second study was conducted to include a 141-item ability scale enacting scores for experiential and strategic EI and area scores for perceiving, facilitating, understanding, and managing emotions. The MSCEIT differed substantially to any other EI ability tests and was labeled the broadest capacity EI measurement model. O'Connor and Little (2003) found significant correlations between the EQ-i, extraversion, anxiety, and independence, and concluded the EQI is measuring personality traits while the MSCEIT was not.

Subsequent studies focused on establishing a correlation of EI to managerial effectiveness, gender roles, team development, and organizational commitment. After collecting data from senior managers, Carmeli (2003) revealed that emotionally intelligence increases job satisfaction, performance, and effectiveness. Van Rooy Alonso and Viswesvaran (2005) examined gender and found that females have significantly higher reported emotional intelligence than males. Additional data was collected and established that EI contributes to increasing team performance and facilitates the ability to work well with others (Elizabeth & Wolff, 2008; Naseer Chishti Rahman & Jumani, 2011). Several theorists examined the relationship of EI to performance as a framework for determining manager effectiveness and success ((Samad 2009; Pearman 2011; Maini et al., 2012; Zhang Chen & Sun, 2015).

Ultimately, questions surrounding the functionality of EI assessment tools contributed to the continuous debate about the viability of measuring different EI compositions to determine if significant correlation exists. Escalating interest in the influence of EI and critical skills on organizational behavior provided a shift in focus to examining the impact of affective experiences on employee sustainability and leadership development resulting from EI training.

**Figure 5. The model of constituencies that guide EI research**





### ***EI Training and Measure Considerations***

Organizational executives highly regard employees who demonstrate emotional intelligence (EI) in dealing with the everyday political, social and emotionally-charged interpersonal exchanges and relationships that impact performance in the workplace (Gill Ramsey & Leberman, 2015). Although workers with EI skills are in high demand, managers continually face daily challenges of employing people who are capable of demonstrating emotional intelligence. The question of whether or not EI is learnable has been of interest since the concept was first introduced in 1995 and essentially paved the way for empirical studies to investigate and evaluate the improvement of EI subscales through training.

Salsa (2002) conducted a study using the competency model to evaluate the impact of EI training on 39 participants consisting of Brazilian managers, consultants, and workers at a large United States accounting organization. The ECI-2 self-assessment tool was used to measure EI before and after training. Study results revealed that training improved eight of 20 EI competencies for the first group and 19 of 20 for the second group.

Two other contributors extended inquiry concerning EI training and development to quality of life. Slaski and Cartwright (2003) utilized the “mixed model” construct of EI to evaluate the effects of training on 60 retail managers. EI measurements were conducted using the EQ-I and the EI-Q to analyze general health, psychological distress, morale, subjective stress, and performance. Results obtained from the study revealed that EI training was significantly effective in reducing stress and improving health, morale, and well-being.

Additional claims in the area were made by Boyatzis(2002) and Rhee (2008) who analyzed the effects of EI competencies in a university setting during a course entitled “Leadership Assessment and Development”. A mixed methods approach was used to extract data from participants. The results of the study indicate that students improved in EI competencies based on their participation in the program.

Despite advances in research concerning the positive effects of EI training, some theorists acknowledged various limitations with the scope of analysis. Groves McEnrue and Shen (2006) conducted a study to empirically test the possibility of deliberately developing emotional intelligence (EI) as conceptualized by the ability model. The intent of the study was to address the following limitations of previous research:

- (a) EI conceptual and measurement concerns;
- (b) limited information concerning the training treatment and short duration of treatment; and
- (c) absence of a control group and/or necessary statistical controls.

Groves et al. (2006) study results revealed that EI can be deliberately developed indicating statistically significant EI gains across each EI dimension. Additional research concurred that emotional intelligence scores of organizational employees could be improved as a result of

training (Beigi & Shirmohammadi, 2011; Thory, 2013; Sabzevar Sarpoosh Esmacili & Khojeh, 2016). The practical findings of previous studies encourages the need for additional research investigating the effects of EI training relative to the relationship between managers, subordinates, characteristics, organizational factors, and their mediating role in leadership development (Zijlmans Embregts Gerits Bosman & Derksen, 2015).

### ***Linking EI to Management and Leadership Development***

Continued efforts to operationalize EI to the management and leadership paradigm solidified a movement toward support of the potential value of EI in defining organizational behavior and performance (Momeni, 2009; Rahim & Malik, 2010). Some theorists even suggested that in addition to EI best training practices, EI measures to determine increases are also described as being appropriate for leadership development (Groves McEnrue & Shen, 2006). During the last two decades, interpersonal skills have become an integral component of effective management (Thavaraj, 2012). Coelho (2012) acclaimed Goleman's model of emotional intelligence as a desirable leadership approach to assess leadership development and success in organizations. In contrast, Matthias Gouthier and Rhein (2011) contended that while it may be tempting to make assumptions that managers utilize emotions for ensuring success, emotional intelligence skill may be less important at the organizational level. Inseparably, the ironic dichotomy is the belief leaders make better decisions when emotions are removed, and the mind is bent to perform without intuition or emotional reaction (Hess & Bacigalupo, 2013).

To accentuate the logical extension of the EI affect, several studies contributed to establishing a distinguishing framework aligning emotional intelligence and leadership development (Cote Lopes Salovey & Miners, 2010; Hong Catano & Liao, 2011; Chang Sy & Choi, 2012). Haycock (2011) continued the trend linking EI to management and leadership by providing valuable information on exemplary library branch managers. The essential concept that Haycock proposed indicated a demand for managerial emotional competencies that can enhance not only effectiveness but also enhance leadership, responsiveness to community needs, and the ability to facilitate organizational change. Seyal and Afzaal (2013) offered a reminder that new dimensions of manager behavior such as understanding emotional intelligence, shared leadership, and employee commitment continue to gain rapid prominence in the organization. A new theory associated with the role of EI emerged based on the idea that organizational management and leadership are more likely to flourish with the improvement of one's ability to display emotional intelligence skills.

### ***Transformative EI Approach***

Greater emphasis on linking EI to management and leadership trended an overriding focus on determining the influence of personal and social competencies on workplace and leadership behavior. Since the inception of EI, a sophisticated understanding persisted to offer practical insights on how to self-improve and become more aware about others (Goleman, 1998; Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Bradberry and Greaves offered a mixed ability model that filled gaps and expanded Goleman's construct by focusing on the intersection of emotions and the intangible qualities that great leaders have in common. More specifically, Bradberry and Greaves

emphasized developing EQ and linked the concept with decision-making, outcome concerns, generational divide, career advancement, global success, and higher paying jobs. Although both models overlap with each other in some areas, each essentially make very different claims regarding the nature of EI and the target of intervention required for leadership development.

In 2012, Bradberry and Greaves offered an expansion of the EI construct through adaptive leadership. The adaptive leadership construct extended the importance of personal and social competencies that contribute more than education, experience, and knowledge or intellectual horsepower combined as noted from prior research: (a) EI involving self-awareness self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, (b) Organizational justice involving decision fairness, information sharing, and outcome concerns, (c) character involving integrity, credibility, values, and differences social competencies and, (d) development involving lifelong learning and developing others. Using Bradberry and Greaves adaptive leadership theory contributed to research discovery that emotional intelligence is significant to actualizing leadership development (Cote Lopes Salovey & Miners, 2010; Hong Catano & Liao, 2011; Tomuletiu & Gyorgy, 2013).

### ***Impact on Leadership Development and Retention***

Attempts to examine the relational context of emotional intelligence and the leadership paradigm gained rapid prominence as researchers became increasingly concerned about retaining workers in the organization (Allen Bryant & Vardaman, 2010;). According to Hogan and Kaiser (2009), research indicates 50 percent of staff derailment is due to key skill deficits and the inability to regulate emotions. Moreover, before a manager can identify human skills necessary to develop as an effective leader, better understanding of the propensity to be socially adept is required (Colfax Perez & Rivera, 2010).

Singh (2013) offered a reminder that research data indicates that in leadership positions, ninety percent of the competencies necessary to remain with the company are social and emotional in nature. Building an atmosphere of trust, openness, and teamwork and building long-term relationships through emotional intelligence has become an organizational focus (Christie Jordan & Troth, 2015). Leaders' expressions now serve as affective events influencing member emotions through the processes of emotional contagion and affective empathy, which determine the progress and development of decision-makers (Cropanzano Dasborough & Weiss, 2016).

### ***Implications***

A review of the various conceptual models provided new and meaningful knowledge regarding the history of EI, highlighted by the importance of EI training to develop leaders. This extensive theoretical framework, however, must be considered in relation to the historical impact of these opinions on emotional intelligence relative to meaning and importance. According to the present findings, staff training aimed at improving EI is effective and can lead to increases that may be appropriate for leadership development (Groves McEnrue and Shen, 2006; Zijlmans et al., 2015). Building a desire to learn EI may also be needed to accentuate the causality between action and

success during training (Gill et al., 2015). The MSCEIT is one of only a few available performance-based EI assessments and the only performance-based assessment with substantial evidence showing its validity and reliability. In an attempt to increase EI training, the intent may need to be to impose a pragmatic process to improve performance and service quality by increasing the emotional intelligence of organizational members.

### **Conclusion**

The shift from the industrial to post-industrial economy calls for a leadership model that caters to the constantly changing needs (Shek Chung & Leung, 2015). The overwhelming availability of data and information in the workplace could very well be the variable that next influences focus on emotional intelligence in a direction and path to leadership. Over the years, theorists acknowledged shortcomings with using statistical tests to measure EI such as the inability to measure typical performance (Hess & Bacigalupo, 2013; Fiori et al., 2014). With increased emphasis on defining the value of EI, additional research is required to determine how emotions affect managerial competence and workplace relationships. Another area of future inquiry would be to examine the fields of personality and to conduct ability research. According to Hess and Bacigalupo (2013), the need for qualitative research on the utilization of emotional intelligence and skill development is compulsory.

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