

Investigating Directors of Education's Use of Emotional Intelligent Variables in Saudi Arabian Education Sector

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Abstract

This study focuses on investigating specific aspects of emotional intelligence used by two Directors of Supervisors in the Office of Education in Saudi Arabia and the effectiveness of their leadership. This study is founded on theories which advocate for the use of emotional intelligence by leaders as essential for realising effective school and pupil outcomes and sought to provide insight to aid in the effective implementation of educational reforms in Saudi Arabia and improve the overall educational practice for education practitioners in the country. The study aimed to examine whether specific elements of emotional intelligence employed by the Directors are linked to certain behaviours associated with leadership effectiveness. The study utilised Goleman's 1995 model of intelligence to investigate whether the Directors exhibit different aspects of emotional intelligence in their leadership by collecting data from a conveniently selected sample of 22 participants based in two Offices of Directors of Educational Supervision in Asir region, Saudi Arabia. It considered the Directors' own perspectives with regards to their use of emotional intelligence to lead their teams effectively through interviews as well as the perspective of 10 supervisors in each office regarding their thoughts of the head teachers' actions through questionnaires. In this study, the questionnaires administered and interviews conducted aims to establish whether the Directors demonstrated the five key elements of emotional intelligence entrenched within Goleman's 1995 model in their leadership.

Keywords: Directors of Educational Supervision, Emotional Intelligence, Education, Leadership, Motivation, Empathy, Self Awareness

1. Introduction

The emotional intelligence of leaders has often been cited as one of the main factors influencing organisational performance and leadership outcomes in a wide spectrum of organisational or institutional domains (Hebert 2011). Originally introduced in the 1970s by Salovey & Mayer, emotional intelligence is a broad and multidimensional concept which lacks a precise or standard definition (Salovey, Brackett & Mayer 2004; Wharam 2009). It has been conceptualised as a set of abilities which allow leaders to effectively process emotional information as well as capacity to effectively identify, express, regulate and utilise emotions (Salovey et al 2004). In their framework (Salovey & Mayer 1990), the researchers suggested that these abilities are different in every individual and as such, they may account for differences in leadership styles or the effectiveness of leadership. In essence, what these studies suggest is that emotional intelligence predetermines leadership styles, skills, behaviour and outcomes (Salovey et al 2004; Wharam 2009). A majority of studies which have explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership outcomes have supported the proposition that effective leadership depends on understanding the abilities and emotions associated with emotional intelligence (Goleman 1998; Palmer et al 2000). Effective leadership encompasses the ability to influence people such that they are able to realise the set objectives. It is the ability to synergize people's abilities, knowledge, skills, talents and experiences towards the attainment of common goals as well as influencing people's feelings, thoughts, perspectives and behaviour and redirecting them towards the realisation of goals (Harris et al 2003).

Directors of Educational Supervisions oversee the management of schools, carry out inspections, supervise, support teachers and provide guidance on how to improve student outcomes.

In essence, the Director acts as the overall leader and overseer of supervisors' work. This study focuses on investigating specific aspects of emotional intelligence used by the Director of Supervisors in two Offices of Education in Saudi Arabia. In order to explore this, the study examined the extent to which Directors use specific aspects of emotional intelligence to lead their teams effectively.

2. Literature Review on Emotional Intelligence

Literature sources provide varied definitions and perspectives on what emotional intelligence entails. Salovey, Brackett & Mayer (2004) argue that emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, evaluate and regulate emotions to achieve goals. Conversely, Wharam (2009) notes that, emotional intelligence encompasses the potential to be aware of one's emotions and subsequently use these emotions to communicate and guide ones' self and others. Wharam (2009) further observes that, emotional intelligence is the ability to manage and motivate ones' self and others by understanding emotions. Generally, these definitions suggest that, emotional intelligence is a multidimensional concept that involves the ability to be aware of and manage ones' emotions and that of others to achieve goals.

Although, there are different views and perspectives in literature on what emotional intelligence entails, the concept of emotional intelligence was originally introduced in the 1970's by psychologists such as Jack Mayer, Peter Salovey and Howard Gardner among others. Salovey & Mayer (1990) conceptualised that emotional intelligence is a set of abilities that allow one to effectively process emotional information. They further argue that emotional intelligence constitutes of the capacity to effectively identify, express, regulate and utilise emotions. In their framework Salovey & Mayer (1990) suggest that these abilities are different in every individual and as such, they account for differences in the quality of interpersonal relationships that people have, their psychological wellbeing and overall life satisfaction.

Following the introduction of this concept by psychologists such as Salovey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (1995) developed a model that suggests that emotional intelligence constitutes of five key domains. To date, Goleman's model of emotional intelligence is one of the most influential models that most contemporary studies on emotional intelligence are embedded on. In his model, Goleman (1995) postulates that emotional intelligence is a multidimensional concept that comprises of five key elements. These elements include; self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy and motivation. According to Goleman (1995), self-awareness entails the ability of being in touch or able to perceive ones internal states, preferences, feeling and intuition. Self-regulation entails managing one's impulses, feelings and internal states. Empathy is another element of emotional intelligence. It encompasses awareness, understanding and consideration of other people's feelings, needs and concerns. Another element of emotional intelligence according to Goleman (1995) is motivation. In this context, motivation entails guiding and facilitating behaviour towards the attainment of goals. Social skills are also key elements of emotional intelligence. In this context, social skills entail adeptness in evoking desirable behavioural responses in others (Goleman 1995; McKenzie 2011).

Over time, Goleman's (1995) model of emotional intelligence has influenced the development of other alternative models that seek to explain what emotional intelligence entails (Bar-On 1997, Cooper & Sawaf 1997, Mayer & Salovey 1997). Most of these models conceptualise emotional intelligence as a multidimensional concept that comprises of a wide range of elements. Generally, models of emotional intelligence can be categorised into three key theoretical frameworks namely; ability models, trait models and competency models. Ability models postulate that emotional intelligence encompasses mental abilities that enable the processing of emotional information (Mayer & Slovey 1997). On the other hand, trait models postulate that emotional intelligence is a set of socio-emotional qualities such as assertiveness (Bar-On 1997). Conversely, competency models suggest that, emotional intelligence is a set of learned capabilities (Goleman 2001). Although there are several differences between these models, Emmerling, Shanwal & Mandal (2008) observe that, models of emotional intelligence are complimentary rather than contradictory since they share some common elements. For instance, the ability and competency models are concerned with the capacity to perceive and regulate emotions in one and others. In retrospect to previous studies, we can conclude that emotional intelligence is a multidimensional concept that involves the ability to be aware of and manage one's emotions and that of others in order to achieve goals.

3. Methodology

This study used a mixed method research design that involves the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research approaches in the data collection and analysis process.

A mixed method research design is used in this study mainly because it provides a suitable framework for exploring the identified research issues in breadth and depth. This design capitalises on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Therefore, by integrating both qualitative and quantitative research design, this study effectively investigates and explores the use of emotional intelligence by Directors of Educational Supervision in Saudi Arabia. As a result of integrating these research designs, this study is likely to produce more accurate and reliable findings since each research design supplements the weakness of the other.

This study was based in two offices of Directors of Educational Supervision in Asir, Saudi Arabia. It involved a total of 22 participants; 20 supervisors and 2 Directors. The 2 Directors were the leaders of the two Educational Supervisors' Offices and the participants involved in the quantitative aspect of this study were selected through convenient sampling technique. This sampling technique essentially involves selecting a sample population from a large target population based on their proximity to the researcher and their availability during the period a study is taking place.

3.1 Methods of Data Collection

In this study, the data collection process primarily involved the use of two techniques or methods of collecting data. These methods include; questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The questionnaires were administered to 20 supervisors whereas in-depth interviews were conducted with two Directors of supervisors from two different offices.

This study used close-ended questionnaires mainly because they provide participants with an easier task when answering questions, unlike open-ended questionnaires which can sometimes be tedious. The response options included in the questionnaire were based on the "Likert Four Point Scale" which requires participants to show their level of agreement to questions or prompts by either marking or shading options such as "Highly Agree" Agree' 'Disagree' and 'Highly Disagree'. The questionnaires were administered to the 10 education supervisors in each of the two supervisors' offices via email after having been translated into Arabic to encourage more supervisors' responses. The questionnaires administered sought to establish whether the Directors exhibit the various aspects of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.

In this study, an in-depth semi-structured interview was carried out with the two Directors of Supervisors. The interview lasted for an average of 30 minutes. During the interview, relevant research questions pertaining to the use of emotional intelligence in leadership and leadership effectiveness were asked. The interview was undertaken in Arabic as the Directors were not fluent in English. Thereafter, the responses were translated by the researcher. The data collected through the in-depth interview with the Director of supervisors was interpreted and analysed based on grounded theory. Basically, the grounded theory of data analysis postulates that the process of data analysis should be exclusive and independent of any underlying theory or hypothesis. Using this approach, qualitative data collected was analysed without taking into account any underlying theory or hypothesis. This approach was used in the study mainly because it emphasises on objectivity thus reducing biases that may be postulated in underlying theories or hypothesis.

4. Emotional Intelligence

One of the key objectives of this study is to identify how the Directors of Education use emotional intelligence when leading their teams. In order to realise this objective, it was foremost crucial to investigate whether these Directors exhibit the five key aspects of emotional intelligence as depicted in Goleman's (1995) model. The questionnaire administered incorporated a set of questions aimed at investigating whether the Directors exhibit self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy and motivation. The sections below present these findings.

4.1 Self-awareness

To establish whether the Directors exhibit self-awareness, through the questionnaires administered, the respondents were asked whether their Director were introspective and aware of their strengths, weaknesses, emotions, preferences, values and goals.

In Office A, 5 out 10 supervisors who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they "Highly Agree", that their Director is introspective and aware of her strengths, weaknesses, emotions, preferences, values and goals. 4 supervisors indicated that they "Agree" whereas 1 supervisor indicated "Disagree".

In Office B, only 1 out of 10 supervisors who responded to the questionnaire indicated “Agree” that their Director is introspective and aware of his strengths, weaknesses, emotions, preferences, values and goals. 6 supervisors in this office indicated “Disagree” whereas 3 supervisors indicated “Highly Disagree.” These findings are represented in the Figure 1.

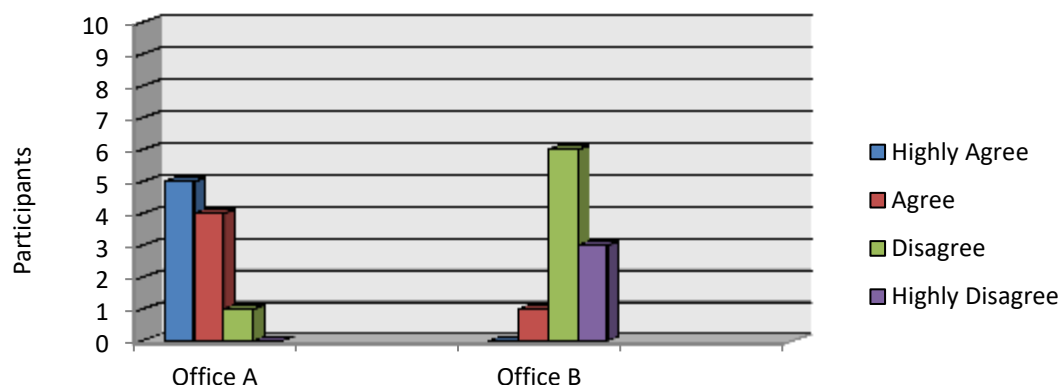


Figure 1: Self-Awareness

According to these questionnaire responses, it is evident that in Office A, there was 90% consensus that the Director exhibits self-awareness whereas in Office B, there was only 10% consensus. Overall, 50% of the supervisors involved in this study affirmed that their Director exhibits self-awareness.

4.2 Self-Regulation

Based on Goleman’s (1995) model, self-regulation is identified as one of the key aspects of emotional intelligence. It generally involves, managing one’s impulses, feelings and internal states. Therefore, to establish whether the Directors of supervisors exhibit this aspect, the respondents were asked whether the directors respond well to pressure and on-going work demands.

In Office A, 6 out of 10 supervisors who participated in this study indicated “Highly Agree” whereas 4 supervisors indicated “Agree”.

In Office B, 5 out of 10 supervisors indicated that they “Highly Agree” that their director responds well to pressure and on-going work demands whereas the rest indicated “Agree”. Figure 2 represents these findings.

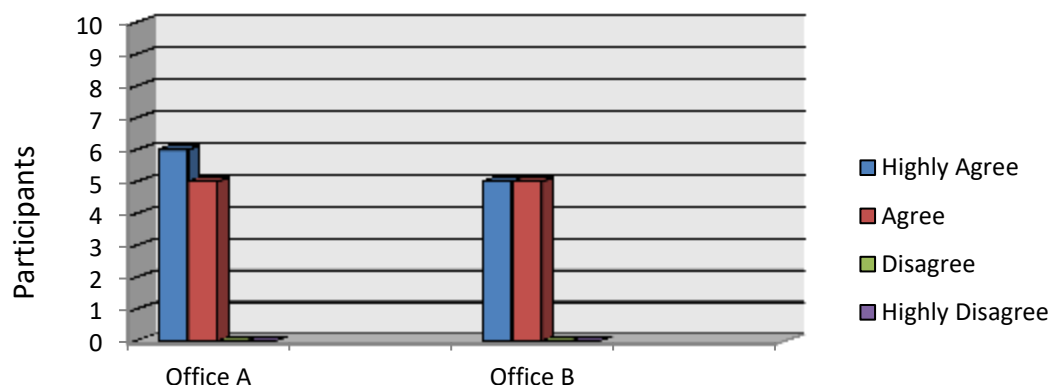


Figure 2: Self-regulation

In reference to these responses, it is apparent that in both offices, there is 100% consensus that the Directors exhibit self-regulation.

4.3 Empathy

In order to establish whether the Directors in the Offices of Education are empathetic, the respondents were asked in the questionnaires whether their Director shows concern to the difficulties that they face at work and provide encouragement.

In Office A, 7 out of 10 supervisors indicated “Highly Agree” 2 indicated “Agree” whereas 1 supervisor indicated “Disagree”.

In Office B, 1 supervisor indicated “Agree” that the Director shows concern to the difficulties that they face at work and provides encouragement. 8 supervisors indicated “Disagree” whereas 1 indicated “Highly Disagree”. These findings are represented in the Figure 3.

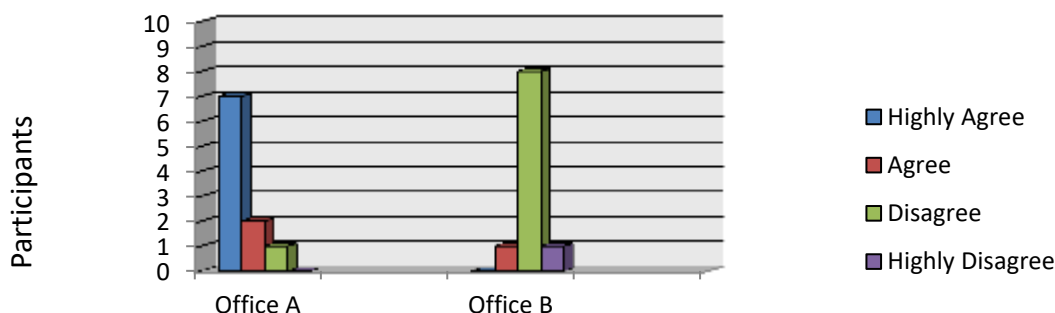


Figure 3: Empathy

Based on these responses it is evident that in Office A, there was 90% consensus amongst the supervisors that the Director is empathetic. On the other hand in Office B, there is only 10% consensus. Overall, 50% of the supervisors involved in this study affirmed that their Director is empathetic.

The interview conducted also provided invaluable insight on the views of the Directors regarding empathy. During the interview sessions, the directors were asked whether it is important to consider the needs and concerns of their subordinates.

The Director of Office A replied that “*Yes of course, it’s very important, these are people not machines. It’s very important to listen to their feelings and concerns and to be aware of their needs. A happy or at least content and comfortable work force will ensure greater productivity...*” On the other hand, the Director of Office B responded that, “*Yes it is important, but our job is to effectively supervise teachers in schools. In a professional environment it is important to carry out your job without being influenced by feelings and emotions. That doesn’t mean that my employees can’t come to me with their feelings and concerns, of course they can. However, we need to ensure that staffs are professional and first and foremost the requirements of their job are met.*” These responses suggest that, the Director in Office A exhibits more empathy than the Director in Office B.

4.4 Motivation

Based on Goleman’s (1995) model, motivation is identified as one of the key aspects of emotional intelligence. In this case, motivation entails the ability to guide and facilitate the behaviour of others towards the attainment of goals. In order to establish whether the Directors of supervisors possess this attribute of emotional intelligence, the supervisors were asked; whether their Directors use a wide range of motivational strategies to improve the performance of the department.

In Office A, 7 out of 10 supervisors indicated “Highly Agree”, 2 supervisors indicated “Agree” whereas 1 supervisor indicated “Disagree”.

In Office B, 5 out of 10 supervisors indicated “Agree” that their Director uses a wide range of motivational strategies to improve the performance of the department. Other supervisors indicated “Disagree.” Figure 4 represents these findings.

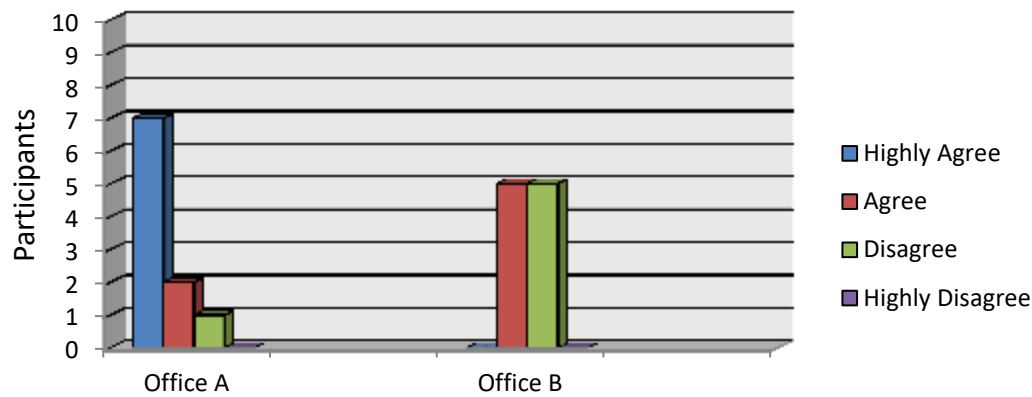


Figure 4: Motivation

According to these questionnaire responses it is apparent that 90% of the supervisors who participated in this study affirmed that their Director is motivational.

Conversely in Office B, 50% of the supervisors who took part in this study affirmed that their Director is motivational. Overall, there was 70% affirmative response that motivation as an attribute to emotional intelligence is exhibited by the Directors of supervisors.

Additionally, the interviews conducted with the Directors from Offices A and B provided insight regarding motivation. In order to establish whether the Directors exhibit this attribute, during the interview they were asked how they motivate their employees. The Director from Office A explained that; *“When a command from the top comes, I sit down with my staff and say, look we have been told to implement this directive, what are your thoughts on it and how can we implement it in the most effective way. This motivates my staff to work with me rather than being resistant to change...”* On the other hand, the Director from Office B described that, *“We have regular appraisals which help to identify the strengths and weaknesses of my team. Where there is weakness, I enroll them on training courses to help them to develop themselves”*. From these responses it is evident that although both Directors motivate their employees, they use different motivational strategies.

4.5 Social Skills

In Goleman’s (1995) model, social skills are identified as an integral aspect of emotional intelligence. In this context, social skills encompass adeptness in evoking desirable behavioural responses in others. In order to establish whether the Directors of supervisors possess this attribute, the supervisors were asked whether their Director is an effective communicator and as a result is able to induce desirable emotional and behavioural responses that contribute to positive work outcomes.

In Office A, 8 out of 10 supervisors who participated in this study indicated, “Highly Agree”, the rest indicated “Agree”.

In Office B, all the supervisors who participated in this study indicated “Disagree”. These findings are represented in the Figure 5.

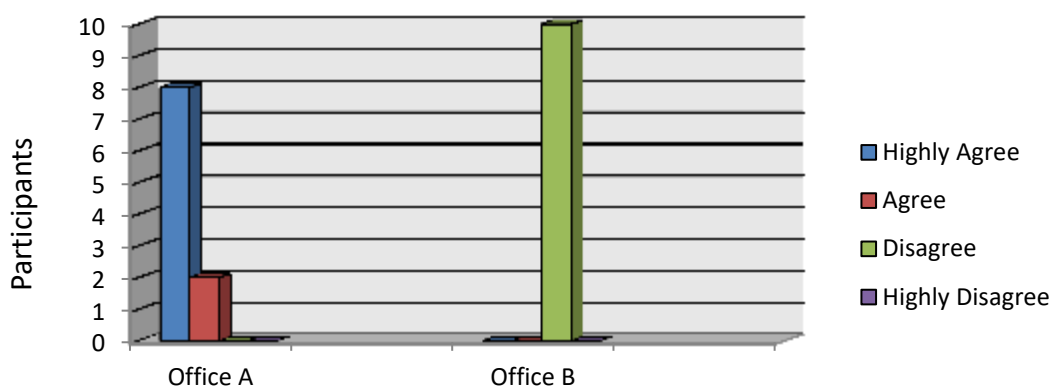


Figure 5: Social Skills

Based on these findings, it is apparent that in Office A there is 100% consensus that the Director exhibits social skills.

However, in Office B there was no affirmative response. Overall in the two offices, there was 50% affirmative response that the Director exhibits effective social skills.

5. Use of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership by the Directors of Education

Based on evidence from various literature sources reviewed, the concept of emotional intelligence is depicted to be somewhat broad and multidimensional (Salovey, Brackett & Mayer 2004; Wharam 2009). Since this study aims to examine how the Directors use or reflect emotional intelligence when they are leading their teams, it was foremost crucial to establish what the concept of emotional intelligence entails. According to Salovey et al (2004), emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, evaluate and regulate emotions to achieve goals. On the other hand, Wharam (2009) argues that emotional intelligence encompasses the potential to be aware of one's emotions and use these emotions to communicate, guide and motivate one and others. Besides these definitions, various models on emotional intelligence have been developed over the years in attempt to decipher what this concept entails (Salovey & Mayer 1990; Goleman 1995). A good example of such models include Goleman's (1995) model of emotional intelligence which conceptualises emotional intelligence as a concept embedded on five key elements namely: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Although there are other models of emotional intelligence, this study uses Goleman's (1995) model as the benchmark for investigating how the Directors of Education from the two offices exhibit different aspects of emotional intelligence in their leadership. Goleman's model is used in this study mainly because it is one of the most influential models that most contemporary studies on emotional intelligence are embedded on (Jordan 2005; Holt & Jones 2007; McKenzie 2011).

Using Goleman's model of emotional intelligence as the benchmark, questionnaires incorporating questions on emotional intelligence were administered to 20 supervisors from two different offices. Additionally, interviews were conducted with the Directors from these two offices. Data collected using these methods revealed significant differences in how the two Directors use or reflect emotional intelligence when leading their teams. The table below summarises the total percentage of supervisors from each office who believe their director exhibits the five elements of emotional intelligence. It also provides the total average percentage showing the overall score of each Director in relation to the use of emotional intelligence. In this instance it is assumed that, R represents an affirmative response from each supervisor regarding each element of emotional intelligence. The percentage scores were thus obtained using the following formula ($\frac{R}{20R} \times 100$). See Table 1.

Elements of Emotional Intelligence	Office A	Office B
Self-awareness	90%	10%
Self-Regulation	100%	100%
Empathy	90%	10%
Motivation	90%	50%
Social Skills	100%	0%
Total Average Score	94%	34%

Table 1: Percentage score of Directors from A and B based on Goleman's (1995) model of Emotional Intelligence.

Director, Office A

Based on the responses provided by the supervisors, the Director of Education in Office A demonstrated a strong use of emotional intelligence in leading her team. A majority of supervisors in this office believed that the Director exhibited self-awareness (90%), self-regulation (100%), empathy (90%), motivation (90%) and social skills (100%). On average 94% of the supervisors affirmed that their Directors employ emotional intelligence when leading their teams, as can be seen in Figure 6.

Office A : Emotional Intelligence

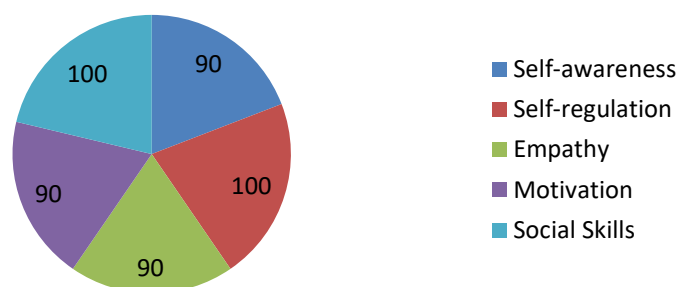


Figure 6: Percentage of supervisors' affirmative response about the emotional intelligence attributes displayed by the Director in Office A.

Director, Office B

Conversely, as compared to Office A, the responses provided by supervisors showed that the Director in Office B demonstrated less use of emotional intelligence when leading his team. Key areas of weakness when it comes to the use of emotional intelligence were evident in areas such as self-awareness (10%), empathy (10%) and social skills (0%). Self-regulation (100%) was singled out as the Director's key area of strength, as shown in Figure 7.

Office B : Emotional Intelligence

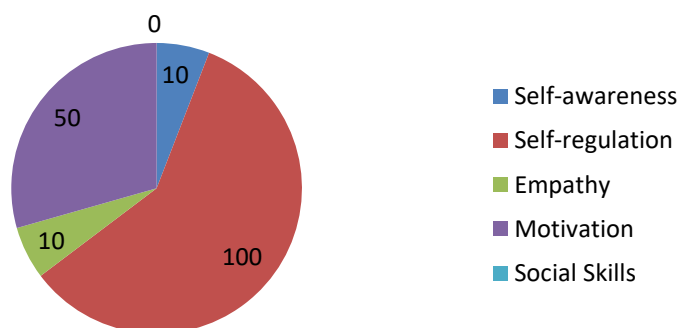


Figure 7: Percentage of supervisors' affirmative response about the emotional intelligence attributes displayed by the Director in Office B.

According to these findings, it is evident that there are significant differences between the scores of the Directors in Offices A and B as far as the different elements of emotional intelligence are concerned. Major differences in scores are evident in areas such as self-awareness, empathy, motivation and social skills.

In relation to self-awareness, there was 80% difference between the scores of the Director in Offices A and B. This difference implies that, the Director in Office A demonstrates a stronger ability to perceive her internal states, preferences, feelings and intuition than the Director in Office B. As evident in the interview responses provided due to a high level of self-awareness, the Director in Office A explained that she is more open with the supervisors working under her. She communicates her feelings, values and views to team members. On the other hand, the low score in self-awareness of the Director in Office B is exhibited through his lack of openness with the supervisors working under his. In reference to the data collected during the interview, it is apparent that the Director in Office B is less open with his staff.

He does not openly communicate his feelings, values and views to team members. In support of these observations, Coco (2011) notes that, self-awareness translates to understanding of one's values, emotions and motivation. This in turn causes a leader to communicate and exhibit a strong sense of purpose, passion and direction. However, some studies refute the claim that there are aspects of emotional intelligence such as self-awareness which influence leadership (Antonakis 2004; Locke 2005; Hanley 2013). For instance Antonakis (2004) suggests that leaders without high or inordinate levels of emotional intelligence are also capable of communicating openly and displaying a strong sense of purpose. His argument give the impression that the ability to know and understand oneself has very little to do with emotional intelligence.

With regards to self-regulation, the average score of the Directors in Office A and B were similar. These results suggest that both Directors in Offices A and B are able to effectively manage their impulses, feelings and internal states (McKenzie 2011). Although data collected through this study did not effectively demonstrate how the Directors demonstrate self-regulation in their leadership, there is compelling evidence in literature that suggest that self-regulation as an element of emotional intelligence, influences leadership. For instance, Goleman (1995) argues that self-regulation can help to facilitate cohesive working relationships and team work. He notes that self-regulation is an important prerequisite for maintaining cohesive workplace relationships. When leaders and employees in an organisation are able to regulate their emotional responses and inclinations, conflicts can be averted or addressed constructively. This could in turn result to team cohesiveness (Martin, Knopoff & Beckman 1998). Based on these sentiments, it is plausible to argue that since both the Directors in Office A and B exhibit high levels of self-regulation, there is likelihood that through their leadership they are able to maintain cohesive workplace relationships.

In relation to empathy, there was a large gap between the scores of the Directors in Offices A and B. On average, there was 80% difference between the scores of these Directors. These results suggest that the Director in Office A is considered to be more understanding and considerate towards the needs, feeling and concerns of supervisors than then Director in Office B (Goleman 1995). Data collected using questionnaires provided a glimpse of how the Directors demonstrate empathy in leadership. This data suggests that, as compared to the Director in Office B, the Director in Office A demonstrates more empathy in leadership by showing concern to the difficulties supervisors face at work and providing encouragement. She provides staff in her department the opportunity to share their concerns and feelings. Similar to these findings, a number of studies have examined the link between empathy and leadership and have established a positive correlation (Klarner et al 2011; McKenzie, 2011). For instance, McKenzie (2011) argues that empathy can help leaders to effectively lead change within an organisation. Changes taking place within an organisation can spur a mix of emotional reactions from staff that can in turn affect the effectiveness of the change process (Klarner et al 2011). In acknowledgement of this possibility, McKenzie (2011) asserts that empathy can help leaders to relate to and understand the effect that the changes implemented has on employees and subsequently address difficult issues before they disrupt the change process (Kerber & Buono 2005). Hence, according to these findings empathy is a viable tool for facilitating organisational change. However, Fambrough & Hart (2008) criticise the notion that emotional intelligence can be employed in leadership. Unlike Antonakis (2004) and Hanley (2013) who focus on questioning the validity of emotional intelligence, Fambrough & Hart (2008) question the ethicality of the use of emotional intelligence as a tool for leadership development. They observe that, the use of emotional intelligence as a tool for leadership development raises concerns over the potential for leaders to abuse power more skillfully and manipulatively to pursue personal interests or take advantage of their subordinates.

The data collected in the course of this study also showed significant difference between the scores of Directors in Offices A and B when it comes to motivation. Generally, there was a 40% difference between the scores of these Directors. From these results, we can deduce that the Director in Office A is considered to be more proactive than the Director in Office B when it comes to guiding and evoking positive behaviour that contribute towards the attainment of goals amongst staff. Based on the data collected, the Director in Office A demonstrates this aspect of emotional intelligence in her leadership by engaging and involving her staff in decision making. For instance, during the interview she revealed that; *"I sit down with my staff and say, look we have been told to implement this directive, what are your thoughts on it and how can we implement it in the most effective way. This motivates my staff to work with me rather than being resistant to change"*. Moreover, data collected through this study also showed that the Director in Office B also demonstrates motivation in his leadership by conducting regular performance appraisals and promoting staff development through training. During the interview, he revealed that; *"We have regular appraisals which help to identify the strengths and weaknesses of my team."*

Where there is weakness, I enroll them on training courses to help them to develop themselves.” As an aspect of emotional intelligence, some studies have also found that motivation can be employed by leaders in improving the holistic wellness of employees, reducing stress and improving performance (Boyatzis et al, 2006). Nevertheless similar to empathy, the questions raised by Fambrough & Hart (2008) regarding the ethicality of using emotional intelligence in leadership also emerge when focusing on motivation. As Fambrough and Hart postulate, there is a likelihood that contributions of emotional intelligence could bring about emergence of inauthentic transformational leadership that involve the use of skills such as motivation to meet unscrupulous personal goals.

With regards to social skills, data collected through the use of questionnaires and interview varied significantly. Data extracted from the questionnaires administered to supervisors showed a substantial difference in the scores of Directors in Offices A and B. According to this data, in Office A, all supervisors who took part in this study expressed that their Director exhibits social skills, in Office B none of the supervisors affirmed that their Director exhibits this aspect of emotional intelligence (Goleman 1995; McKenzie 2011). In contrast, the interviews conducted with the Directors showed that they both demonstrate social skills in their leadership. The conflicting findings between the data collected through questionnaires and interviews can perhaps be attributed to differences in perception between the supervisors and Directors.

In general, despite the fact that the Directors expressed that they have a vague or very little knowledge of what emotional intelligence entails, based on the findings established, 94% and 34% of supervisors in Office A and B respectively believe that their Director exhibits emotional intelligence in their leadership. Overall, these findings suggest that the Director in Office A demonstrates a strong use of emotional intelligence in leadership. In contrast, the Director in Office B demonstrated less use of emotional intelligence when leading his team.

6. Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. It particularly focused on investigating the relationship between leadership effectiveness and the emotional intelligence of Directors of Educational Supervision in Saudi Arabia. This study sought to identify how the Directors use emotional intelligence when they are leading their team and subsequently establish whether specific elements of emotional intelligence employed by the Directors can be linked to certain behaviours associated with leadership effectiveness. In order to achieve these objectives, a mixed method research design involving the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research approaches in the data collection and analysis process was used. Using questionnaires, this study considered the perspective of 10 supervisors in each office regarding the emotional intelligence of their Director and their leadership effectiveness. It also considered the Directors’ own perspectives with regards to their use of emotional intelligence to lead their teams effectively through interviews. In this case, Goleman’s model of emotional intelligence was used as the benchmark for assessing whether the Directors exhibit different elements of emotional intelligence.

In the course of this study data collected showed that, the Director of Education in Office A demonstrated a strong use of emotional intelligence in leading her team. On average 94% of the supervisors affirmed that their Directors employ emotional intelligence when leading the team. Conversely in Office B, the responses provided by supervisors showed that the Director demonstrated less use of emotional intelligence when leading his team. Overall, only 34% of supervisors in this office affirmed that their Director employs emotional intelligence when leading.

Generally, the findings established through this study suggest that in Office A, the Director employs emotional intelligence to lead her team by exhibiting all five key aspects of emotional intelligence. On the other hand, this study found that in Office B, the Director exhibits low use of emotional intelligence in leadership. Nevertheless it was established that, the Director in Office B exhibited strength in areas such as; self-regulation and motivation. The findings established through this study provide invaluable insights on how the Directors in the Office of Education use emotional intelligence when leading their teams. It also provided significant insights regarding the link between some aspects of emotional intelligence of the Directors in the Office of Education in Saudi Arabia and their leadership effectiveness. By looking into the relationship between specific aspects of emotional intelligence and leadership skills used by the Director of Supervisors, this study has provided valuable discernment that could aid in the effective implementation of educational reforms in Saudi Arabia and improve the overall educational practice in the country especially in today’s volatile, dynamic and continuously changing educational environment.

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