



# Emotional Intelligence: Why Its Matters in Change Leadership and Innovation in the 21st Century Styles of Work

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**Abstract:** Emotional intelligence (EQ) is recognized as a key leadership skill critical in achieving organizational goals and succeeding in a volatile and ambiguous global business environment. EQ accounts for 90% of what sets effective leaders apart from their peers with technical skills. The most effective leaders are alike in one crucial way: they all have a high degree of EQ. Hence, EQ is the sine qua non for superior leadership performance. Yet, emotions have consistently been overlooked by previous studies of leadership because the workplace was considered as a rational environment where emotions were understood as impediments to the science of sound judgement. Research studies on how EQ relates with leadership behaviour for leadership high performance are highly limited and mixed. Only a limited number of studies employed evidence-based research approach to establish the significance of their relationships. While emotions are not beyond the science of sound judgement in modern business contexts, we need adequate evidence-based research studies on how EQ relates with leadership high performance. This study uses the theory of EQ proposed by Goleman for leadership high performance. Responses were collected from 69 respondents in leadership roles from public and private sector organizations in the Australian business context and the measures and research hypotheses were analysed using linear regression. The results show that emotional self-awareness, self-motivation, empathy, and the averaged full EQ have a strong influence on leadership behaviour. These findings provide a better understanding of leadership behaviour factors of EQ contributing to superior leadership performance. Also, the results have implications for leadership search firms and human resource practitioners.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence; Leadership; Empathy; Social skill; Emotions; Self-motivation.

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## 1 Introduction

Throughout history, civilizations have focussed on their leaders, whether elected or appointed. Leaders such as prime ministers, presidents and university vice chancellors are entrusted with decisions that affect the lives of the people whom they serve. Leading the armies, establishing new opportunities, and defining what is and is not acceptable are among the myriad of responsibilities of great leaders (De Janasz et al. 2007). Today, business leaders face similar challenges on a frequent basis. Whilst business leaders do not need to bring their troops to the battleground, they must understand the environment in which they operate and establish the needful goals and objectives to motivate employees to achieve excellence to 'battle' in the marketplace (De Janasz et al. 2007; Mokhber et al. 2018). Even so, effective leaders must lead their 'troops' in a way that inspires them to perform their tasks effectively and participate in day-to-day decisions that affect their organizations (Cavaness et al. 2020; Palmer et al. 2001; Horth & Vehar, 2014).

The upward pressures on organizations to bring about change to survive in a volatile, complex, and ambiguous business environment – heightened geopolitical risks, hybrid working models, mergers, acquisitions, and the rise of millennial workforce cannot be overemphasized (Durth et al. 2022). Consequently, business leaders are now faced with challenges on how to successfully lead and manage change. But change per-se requires emotions and employees do not like to surrender the comfort associated with the status quo because change can lead to a situation filled with anxiety and uncertainty in the minds of employees. Nevertheless, business leaders must seize the opportunity associated with the change amidst these challenges to create a workplace culture with established standards and behaviours that enables everyone to thrive and fuel a large-scale transformation (Issa, 2018; Hill et al. 2023; Rieckhoff & Rose, 2022; HBS Online, 2022).

Today, employees are expected to play a meaningful role in organizational actions than previously thought due to a need for change (Hill et al. 2023; Rieckhoff & Rose, 2020). For example, in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical turmoil, which dramatically changed the way that organizations operate, through employee engagement and contribution, business leaders had had to have a broad view of business activities including, business models, supply chains, client engagement and workforce management to prioritize and utilize business concepts that they had hitherto taken for granted (Alexander et al. 2020; D'Auria & De Smet, 2020; Deshler, 2021; Barsh et al. 2008). A truly engaged employee can care deeply about the success of their organizations (Robbins et al. 2003; Goleman, 2019). In most cases, employees are willing to work hard and sacrifice their own time, although for a reward for organizational needs. By and large, business leaders must build bonds and rapport and provide positive feedback to employees to inspire them to work hard for change without sacrificing quality for speed. Praising an employee in front of the team will inspire the whole team to work hard to receive praise (Palmer et al. 2001; Robbins et al. 2003; De Janasz et al. 2007). In the health service industry, however, change leadership appears to take on a whole new spin. Leaders in many cases are doctors and physicians on the frontline dealing with patients and employees. Though medical profession teaches doctors and physicians about the many facets of medical practice, doctors

and physicians may have limited leadership skills, specifically for leading, and managing change in organizations (Braley, 2021).

Leaders are not immune to the pressure of people's expectations. Most importantly, employees depend on their leaders for direction, accountability, and clarity especially, in the midst of change (Moar & Park, 2023; Deshler, 2021). For example, Forbes article of September 2013, reveals some remarkable insights about change leadership and management. About 55% of leaders surveyed said that the change met initial goals, but the change leadership initiative over the long term was successful only 25% of the time. Also, more than 87% of leaders surveyed said that they trained their subordinates to oversee the process of change, but changes once implemented, did not last. More so, training was only effective amongst 22% of the participants in the survey, and whilst one third of the participants understood the reason for change, the important message did not filter down the hierarchy to middle managers or front-line supervisors (Deshler, 2021). These findings shows that although most leaders want to see change happening in their organizations, only a few leaders can certainly make it happen (Alexander et al. 2020; Slimane, 2015). In retrospect however, as schemers and manipulators vis-à-vis the business environment, leaders should view change not just as an occasional disruptor, but as the very essence of their roles, which characterizes the unending daily life of organization (Maor & Park, 2023; Schaffer, 2017). Great leaders must clarify the vision and communicate it effectively, connected with employee, remain committed and build the bridge between the organization and the envisioned change and hold themselves and others accountable which lies on emotional intelligence (Deshler, 2021; Goleman, 2019).

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is recognized as a key leadership skill critical in achieving organizational goals and succeeding in a volatile and unpredictable business environment. Still, emotions were consistently overlooked in past studies of leadership because workplaces were perceived as rational environments where emotions were understood as the impediment to the science of sound judgement (Cavaness et al. 2020; Goleman, 2019). Emotion was not thought to provide an explanation about workplace phenomena. Nowadays however, this belief no longer holds, Recent studies on EQ have shown how emotions influence and can be managed to improve organizational outcomes (Arizpe, 2022; Deshler, 2021). Consequently, it can be irrational to ignore human emotions because an attempt to do so can lead to amplification of emotions (Cavaness et al. 2020; Goleman, 2019). Accordingly, leaders with high emotional intelligence do not suppress their emotions, rather they utilize their emotional agility by which thoughts and feelings are handled mindfully to improve efficiency (Deshler, 2021). Thus, putting people first has become a key ingredient and priority for leadership success; it is a view that great leaders with high EQ do not take for granted (Hill et al. 2023; Arizpe, 2022).

The motivation for this study is the markedly limited research on the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective change leadership. Therefore, the primary aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and change leadership in an organizational setting. The study aims to establish a strong relationship between key components of emotional intelligence and effective leadership.

The result is to suggest that there is a strong relationship between emotional intelligence components and effective change leadership and/ or leadership high performance. In other words, a leader with high emotional intelligence is effective, ambitious, capable, and trustworthy to lead the organization to effective change leadership and management. Also, the results of this study will make significant contributions to the literature and managerial practice.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows: First, Section 2, presents literature search: 2.1, change leadership for organizational change, 2.2, personality qualities associated with effective leadership, 2.3, theoretical perspectives of emotional intelligence and 2.4, examines why emotional intelligence can be associated with leadership high performance. Secondly, Section 3, presents classification of previous studies on leadership and emotional intelligence, and research objective and research questions in subsection 3.1. Thirdly, Section 4, presents research model and research hypotheses and emotional intelligence in subsection 4.1. Next, Section 5, presents research methodology, sample selection, measure, descriptive statistics, regression analysis and results in subsections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 respectively. Fourthly, Section 6, presents discussion and conclusion in subsections 6.1 and 6.2, and followed by reference list in Section 7. We begin the literature search with change leadership for organizational change.

## 2 Literature Search

### 2.1 Change Leadership for Organizational Change

As a field of study, change leadership has been around for centuries. In recent times, it is increasingly clear that change leadership skills are critical for continuous improvement of products and services of the business. Knowing how to lead and manage through turbulent and challenging times can make or break an organization in the everyday business world. History shows that companies with favourite brands such as Kodak, Nokia and Netscape are no longer in operation due to their inability to adapt to changing market conditions (Schaffer, 2017). Nevertheless, we are intrigued by sheer magical powers of a few individuals who can move organizations and inspire people to follow their lead to bring about a complex social change (De Janasz et al. 2007; Braley, 2021; Robbins et al. 2003). Specifically, the notion of change leadership has become more challenging in the 21st century fast-changing world of business due to globalization, rapid development, constant innovation, the global COVID-19 pandemic, acquisitions, and mergers, like the case of BHP Billiton occur regularly due to strategic imperatives to do things differently conducive to success (Denti & Hemlin, 2012; Lunenburg, 2010; Hill et al. 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic for example has brought about various changes in businesses such as the hybrid and remote work models enabling employees to find balance greater meaning in their job roles (Durth et al. 2022; Rieckhoff & Rose, 2021). Consequently, a business that fails to adapt to change, risks losing in its decisions, strategies, processes, and performance (Schaffer, 2017; Braley, 2021). On the other hand, a business that adapt to change in challenging times can quickly and successfully embrace change and adapt effective in response. This is a great competitive

advantage because it allows the business to customize products and services for specific target markets across the globe, enjoy a great customer service experience also, it is open to new ideas, which helps to foresee change and do not panic when things do not go according to the plan.

Businesses operating in the moment of global uncertainty must have the flexibility, yet business disciplined framework and an effective change leadership dedicated to navigating positively throughout the organization to have an impact on change (Flournoy, 2015; Rieckhoff & Rose, 2021). Because without an effective leadership conveying the direction with optimism and energy about the future, employees would be resistant to change. Employees can even be stunned if they are unaware of the purpose for change and their roles in the change initiative. But when effective change leaders begin by making the case for the change they seek and provide a solid path and direction and desired outcome and identifying a common goal, it eliminates confusion about the change and inspires an action from employees (Flournoy, 2015). Additionally, business leaders must engage the right people at the right time to the right degree for the change to happen. Such an engagement starts when leaders re-cast the role of their employees and give preference to their ideas to encourage their participation in the change initiative (Alexander et al. 2020). Thus, great leaders should draw on the employee's engagement and contribution to impact change (Amabile & Khaire, 2008; Lunenburg, 2010). General Electric for example, transformed its electrical motor business from 0% to 25% ROI by leveraging market intelligence to enhance employee performance through creativity, innovation and competitors' products analysis and customer visits (Malik, 2021).

Management scholars have offered various theories and definitions as to what change leadership is and what makes an individual in a change leadership role successful (De Janasz et al. 2007). Due to its complexities, a single definition is not possible. Change leadership is the ability of leaders to move organizations to a higher level of performance by transforming their visions into significant actions (Lunenburg, 2010). In other words, change leadership is a process of social influence that involves shifting individual and group behaviours toward an achievement of the organizational goals through visions and actions, significant disruptions, transitions, and transformation. Thus, change leadership is all about the people, employee education, coaching and communication, setting priorities for, and listening to people who embody an organization to create awareness, knowledge, and reinforcement of the value of change and it impacts on the organization and the workforce (Slimane, 2015; Horth & Vehar, 2014; De Janasz et al. 2007; Deshler, 2021).

In summary, when it comes to change leadership, there are key considerations. Forasmuch as when organization undergoes change, it is not the organization that changes, but rather the behaviour of individuals within the organization as guided by their leaders. The change in collective behaviour is what produces the outcomes for the organization. New behaviour results and different outcomes or change needs are then achieved.



## 2.2 Personality Quality Associated with Effective Change Leadership

When we think of a “perfect leader”, we might picture someone who never lets his emotion get out of control, no matter what problems he faces. Or we might think of someone who has the complete trust of his staff, listening to his team, is easy to talk to, and always makes careful, informed decisions (Manktelow & Carlson, 2016; Alexander et al. 2020). These qualities describe someone with a high degree of leadership skills.

There are unique personality qualities consistently associated with effective leadership which help to facilitate the connection between the people part of change and the process part of change. Oftentimes, great leaders can demonstrate their adaptability to change and ultimately set the tone for organizational resilience. They develop certain behaviours and mindsets – both on their part and from their teams. This could include finding lessons and opportunities for organizations, acknowledging the nuance of workplace paradoxes like correct versus incorrect, and challenging their peers to step out of their comfort zones and championing the purpose and wellbeing of organizations. On-going listening tours and employees survey participation helps a leader to gather relevant feedback about organizational direction and what employees’ needs are (Maor & Park, 2023).

Effective leaders must set positive examples for their teams to keep the morale high and ensure employees embrace the organization’s core values (Robbins et al. 2003). Because everyone wants to work with great leaders who lead by example and remain consistent between words and deeds. Thus, effective leaders are not known to exhibit negative behaviours so that their employees do not question their leadership credibility for the organizational mission that they are piloting. It is worth noting that a leader’s negative behaviour to the team could undermine employee commitment to change and their allegiance to the organization (Kellerman, 2010). Communication comes in words and deeds, and the latter are often the most powerful form. Nothing undermines change more than behaviour by important individuals that is inconsistent with their words (Kotter 1995). Therefore, business leaders must ensure their behaviours in the team support the need for change. This includes, being approachable; getting projects done with the team on deadlines; having healthy conversations with employees and letting them know what is expected of them from day one; checking in with employees during one-on-ones; providing the right direction toward the goal and trusting employees which is the basic building block toward a good team spirit for the change (Melroy et al. 2015; Maor & Park, 2023).

Although effective leaders hold regular meetings with employees about the organizational goals, they must listen to employee concerns on organizational matters and involve employees in decisions impacting the need for change. Typical employee concerns could include lack of a clear business direction, training and development needs, communication, feedback, and motivational issues. Employees are critical organization’s human resources, it is imperative therefore, that their concerns are heard, listened to, and addressed by leaders (Robbins et al., 2003). When leaders listen to employee concerns, it can make a team’s day-to-day activities more efficient and better, builds trust and psychological safety and improve employees’ experience, motivation, and engagement at work (De Janasz

et al., 2007). Furthermore, when leaders involve their employees in decision-making process, this shows those across the organization that their opinion is valued, and trusted. It helps workers to feel more like experts and consultants in their respective areas of expertise (Alexander et al. 2020; Palmer et al. 2001). Employee involvement makes possible for leaders to enlist employees support for change and to build the bridge between organizations and the envisioned change to encourage everyone to support whilst also holding every team leader including themselves accountable at every milestone of the change process (Deshler, 2022). But when leaders fail to involve their employees in organizational matters, they risk damaging the culture they had worked hard to establish resulting in increased likelihood of conflict, employee turnover, absenteeism, diminished quality of expertise and employee disengagement (Eleza, 2020).

Effective leaders are self-aware, and they lead with introspection not authority. Leaders who are self-aware can recognize and manage their emotions. This helps them to respond with empathy to difficult and conflicting situations and with the confidence to lead and manage others because they can react to challenges in positive and less disruptive ways. Although navigating through the change process may be difficult, leaders who steer through the course with confidence and reflection are those who know the scope and limit of their power and can use it to make everyone feel safe. Being effective and self-aware at change are what every good leader strives to become, particularly, with regular acquisitions and mergers which are a standard part of the business world, these challenges, demand effective and skilled leaders who are self-aware and can command greater level of employee involvement and participation in a change initiative (Rieckhoff & Rose, 2021; Hill et al. 2023; Braley, 2021; Alexander et al. 2020).

Business leaders build effective relationship with employees and delegate important tasks and decision-making to their peers to build trust on the team and experience and confidence in others (Kellerman, 2010; Lunenburg, 2010). For a leader, building positive relationship with employees goes beyond having conversation about work responsibilities. It involves prioritizing time, to be visible and consistently connecting with employees where they are, resolving workplace conflicts amongst employees, building, and maintaining a healthy relationship based on respect, trust, honesty, and communication and actively listening to others (Hammer, 2017). Trallia et al. (2006) discusses seven characteristics for successful work relationships: trust, the foundation of successful collaboration; diversity, which broadens the number of potential solutions and enables individuals to learn from one another; mindfulness, which allows for openness to new ideas and promotes equal participation; interrelatedness, to understand how individuals work affects one another; respect, demonstrating values in other's opinions and the importance of problem solving; varied interaction, involving both professional and personal task-related practices; and effective communication which enables collaboration and understanding between employees and their leaders. Thus, great leaders must communicate both the "what" the "why" to their teams including explaining the purpose for the change and connecting it to organization values to create a stronger buy-in and urgency for change. Studies show that about 65% of high performing leaders believe that clear and frequent communication and a

strong relationship with employees are vital in driving the change effort (Eleza, 2020; Braley 2021; Barsh et al. 2008).

In summary, change leadership is critical for organizational change. Knowing how to lead and manage through tumultuous and unexpected change can make or break organizations in this moment of economic upheaval. The credibility of leaders can be threatened in difficult times, if demands for change outstrip the organizational capacity to implement the change. Change has been a constant trend in the business world, whether you seek it or not, one cannot avoid change. Thus, the task of a great leader is to bring about positive organizational change through a shared vision, strategic initiative, and employee involvement (Schaffer, 2017).

### 2.3 Theoretical Perspectives of Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (2005) researched over 200 large global companies on leadership and emotional intelligence. The study suggests that qualities/traits traditionally associated with leadership are insufficient for effective leadership. Consequently, Goleman contends that emotional intelligence is an indispensable skill for effective leadership. This section examines the theoretical perspectives of Goleman's emotional intelligence.

The concept of emotional intelligence (EQ) has received ample attention both in the scientific and the popular literature (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Salovey et al. 1995). EQ has been studied extensively for decades. The theory of EQ was pioneered by Mayer et al. (2004) who advanced extensive research knowledge of EQ by creating a 16-step developmental models ranging from childhood to adulthood and redefining EQ in cognitive – emotional terms. In line with Mayer et al., the model of EQ consists solely of abilities, such as to perceive, understand, manage one's emotions, and recognize and influence emotions of others. Thus, the ability-based model of EQ conceptualizes EQ as intelligence in the traditional sense consisting of a conceptually related set of mental abilities to do with emotions and the processing of emotional information (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Perez et al. 2005). Mayer et al. operationalized EQ corresponding to a four branch hierarchical model from basic psychological processes to higher more psychologically integrated processes. Consequently, Mayer et al. was credited with the genesis of EQ. But the theory of EQ was later popularized by psychologist Daniel Goleman who emphasized on the importance of EQ in leadership and asserted that people with high EQ can recognize their own emotions and emotions of others, use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately and adjust their emotions to adapt to the environment (Goleman, 2005, Goleman, 2019). He generates the theory of EQ by focusing on specific components that are distinguishable from an individual's intelligence quotient (IQ) which according to the Goleman study had failed to fully explain cognitive ability. Hence, the theory of EQ encompasses the awareness of one's emotions and those of others, the ability to manage emotions and those of others, and the ability to understand the impact of emotions and inspire oneself and others to action (HBS Online, 2022; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017).



Goleman redefined emotional intelligence as the array of skills and characteristics including the ability to perceive, control and evaluate emotions that drive leadership performance. He promoted the idea that there is more at stake than a mere IQ, which has previously been the gold standard of predicting success in life (HBS Online, 2022; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). Goleman's framework of emotional intelligence analysis and implementation supersedes that of IQ (Goleman, 2019). Whilst most studies of EQ suggest that EQ can be learned and strengthened, other studies claim that EQ is an inborn characteristic (Mayer et al. 2004; Goleman, 2005). Goleman's framework of EQ has been debated very widely, but experts agreed that EQ and IQ are in the realm of professional achievement. Yet, EQ has been popularized as a sine qua non for leadership high performance (HBS Online, 2022; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Goleman, 2005). EQ accounts for about 90% of what sets high performing leaders apart from their peers with technical skills and EQ is linked to the overall well-being and greater mental health of effective leaders (Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). Specifically, the difference between an outstanding leader and an average leader lies not in education or technical skills, but in their level of development of EQ (HBS Online, 2022). Whilst EQ contributes about 90% toward personal success of an effective leader, IQ contributes only 10%. This suggests that EQ is indeed an indispensable condition for competent leadership (Goleman, 2005). Leaders with high EQ can bring out the best in their employees to cultivate a successful team (Issah, 2018; Goleman, 2005). EQ is associated with empathy which involves an individual connection of their personal experiences with those of others (Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). Empathy is ranked as a critical skill in leadership. Leaders who master empathy perform more than 40% higher in engaging others, coaching and decision-making. Because of their empathetic behaviour toward their direct reports, great leaders are perceived as better performers by their superiors (HBS Online, 2022). Moreover, EQ has evolved over the years into a must-have skill for leadership. For example, research finding by EQ TalentSmart in the US has confirmed EQ as the strongest predictor of leadership performance (HBS Online 2022).

Several models were developed to measure EQ, namely, the ability model (Mayer et al. 2004), the trait model (Petrides & Furnham, 2001), and Goleman (2005) mixed model of EQ, which is the focus of this study (Goleman, 2005). Goleman focuses on EQ as a wide array of competencies that drives leadership performance. The model consists of five key core components namely: self-awareness, self-regulation, social skill, empathy, and self-motivation. He incorporates a set of emotional competencies within each component of the EQ. His study reveals that emotional competencies are not innate talents but rather leaned capabilities that must be worked on and can be developed to achieve superior performance. A summary of key core components of EQ (also, see Table 1) is presented as follows:

- Self-awareness – the ability to know one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives, values, and goals and recognize their impact on the self and others whilst using gut feeling to guide decisions. Being self-aware when you are in a leadership position also means having a clear picture of your strengths and weaknesses and behaving with humility.

- **Self-regulation** – the ability to manage, control and redirect one’s disruptive emotions and impulses and adapt to changing circumstances including a positive outlook. Leaders who lack self-regulation tend to react and have a harder time keeping their impulses in check. The more in tune leaders are with their EQ, the easier they can make the transition from reaction to response. Self-regulation is also about staying in control of oneself and being flexible and committed to personal accountability.
- **Self-motivation** – self-motivated leaders can understand their thoughts and feelings which inspire action. A self-motivated leader works consistently toward his/her goals and has extremely high standards for the quality of their work.
- **Social skill** – the ability to recognize others’ emotions and the dynamics it plays within your organization. Leaders who excel in social awareness practice empathy. They strive to understand their employees’ feelings and perspective. This enables them to communicate and collaborate more effectively with their employees and their peers. Leaders with social skills are open to hearing bad news as well as good news. They are experts in getting their team to support them and be excited about a new project. They are also good at managing change and resolving conflict diplomatically.
- **Empathy** – the ability to consider other people’s feelings especially when making decisions. By communicating with empathy with others, leaders with high EQ can support their teams and improve the individual’s performance by giving constructive feedback and listening to those who need it.

**Table 1.** Emotional Intelligence Domains and Competencies

Domains	Focus	Competencies
<b>Self-awareness</b>	Ability to recognise your emotions and drives and the effects on others.	Self-confidence, emotional, self-awareness, accurate self-assessment.
<b>Self-regulation</b>	Ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulse	Self-control, trustworthiness, positive outlook, conscientiousness, innovation, adaptability.
<b>Self-motivation</b>	Ability to remain persistent in the face of adversity	Zeal, achievement, drive, commitment, optimism
<b>Empathy</b>	Ability to read and respond to others’ feelings	Understand others, service orientation, political awareness, develop others.
<b>Social skill</b>	Ability to build bonds, networks, rapport, and common ground with others	Handle emotional responses to others, influence communication, manage interpersonal relationship and lead teams, collaboration, cooperation, teamwork, conflict management, build bonds with others.

Source: Adopted from Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017

## 2.4 Why Emotional Intelligence (EQ) can be Associated with Leadership High Performance

There are many reasons why EQ can be associated with effective leadership. It is noted that the technical skills that help people to secure their first employment might not necessarily guarantee their promotion into a leadership role unless they undergo training to obtain relevant leadership skills. If a person is aspiring to a leadership role, there are certain emotional competencies namely, self-awareness, self-regulation, social skill, empathy, and self-motivation that s/he must acquire. It is these competencies that make those leaders with high EQ likely to succeed in coaching a team, managing stress, delivering feedback, fostering transparent communication and to collaborate with others (HBS Online, 2022; Issah, 2018).

Change leadership begins and often begins well, when a business has a good leader with high EQ who sees the need for change, set the tone for change and builds a positive workplace culture by engaging with employees (D'Auria & De Smet, 2020; Kotter, 1995). Having a leader with a positive attitude and uplifting workplace culture creates a sense of pride and loyalty surrounding the job, which encourages every employee to do their best and to be the best. But leaders with low EQ in a high-pressure workplace can often be the cause of employee disengagement and resistance to change initiatives. Moreover, when the leader fails to recognise the need for change and/ or to make fundamental changes in how business is being conducted to help cope with a new, more challenging market environment, their technical skills get overlooked. This can cause employees to disengage resulting in absenteeism, workplace injuries, resignations, and employee turnover.

According to Goleman (2019), there is a strong relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership high performance. This assertion supports the argument that emotional and relational competency set are a distinguishing factor in leadership high performance (HBS Online, 2022; De Janasz et al. 2007). Several studies suggest (e.g., Cavaness et al. 2020; HBS Online, 2022) EQ is a must-have skill by people working in leadership positions. Also, EQ is the strongest predictor of high performance of a leader (Landry, 2019; HBS Online, 2022; Palmer et al. 2001). Various hiring managers have underscored the importance of EQ in leadership. For example, about 71% of employers surveyed by the CareerBuilder in the US revealed that employers value EQ over IQ (Landry, 2019; HBS Online, 2022). Moreover, leaders with high EQ are more likely to stay calm under pressure, resolve conflict effectively and respond with empathy to their team members and colleagues. Thus, effective leaders are akin in one crucial way; they all have a high degree of EQ (HBS Online, 2022; Manktelow, 2016).

Leaders with high EQ can recognize and manage their emotions and are well equipped to perceive the feelings of others. For example, Goleman gave a narrative of his experience on leadership and emotions in his article. He states, that "In my experience, I have never seen a tendency toward radical outbursts to surface as indicators of strong leadership". He contends that those who acknowledge their emotions and give themselves time to process emotional information can carefully craft their responses to situations and avoid taking actions that endanger the goodwill they had worked hard to build (Goleman,

2005; HBS Online, 2022). Leaders with high EQ can motivate and inspire their employees with visions to work hard to bring about change in organizations (D'Auria & De Smet, 2020). In bringing out the best in employees, leaders with high EQ first brought out the best in themselves in order to model the behaviours they would like to see in their team and other employees (Coursera for business, 2023; Palmer et al. 2001). But teams with leaders who lack EQ often make worse decisions and may be ineffective in managing a conflict. (HBS Online, 2022). Thus, businesses with strong leadership talents can outperform their rivals with ease and can navigate through the complexity with greater efficiency, and acting more decisively, and anticipating and responding to challenges with ease (HBS Online, 2022; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2019).

Empathy is a critical key component of EQ. Empathy enables leaders with EQ to place themselves in the shoes of others to gain a better understanding of their situations. Empathy has been ranked the top leadership skill needed in change leadership. Leaders who excel in listening to their employees and responding with empathy are more than 40% effective at planning, coaching and decision-making (D'Auria & De Smet, 2020; HBS Online, 2022). When a leader listens to their employees and can learn their concerns, they are in a better position to develop effective methods to addressing their grievances and concerns to optimize the workplace for everyone to strive (Landry, 2019). Empathy is crucial in change leadership situations where employees' resistance to change can lead to workplace conflicts which can only be alleviated with more empathy from leaders (Robbins et al. 2003; HBS Online, 2022).

Leaders who have self-motivation inspire a shared vision and can appeal to employee values, beliefs, and emotions, rather than dictating the directions (Goleman, 2019). This helps employees to align themselves with organizational mission which reflects the greater good (D'Auria & De Smet, 2020). Hence, leaders who passionately believe in their teams and other employees can exude enough enthusiasm to infect them with their passion. They can also lead the way as a part of, not apart from the team and the power exists not so much in their leadership role but from that which is granted by their followers (Arizpe, 2022). Leaders with high EQ can walk the walk and model behaviours that they expect to see in their employees by demonstrating consistency between words and deeds. This allows an intrinsic motivation to permeate throughout the organization (Vann et al. 2017; Rizeanu et al. 2022).

Finally, leaders with high EQ do not give up in the face of adversity which undermines the spirit of the workforce and its faith in the future, rather they uphold their commitments to the organization and continue to work hard despite challenges in order to inspire the workforce with compelling vision for the organization that is communicated in a credible and effective manner about not just what the change entails but also why organization is making it (Goleman, 2019; Peregrine, 2022). By explaining the reason for certain actions and connecting the workforce with the business mission, employees can understand the purpose of change and the impact on their work. This means, leaders with high EQ can swing into high gear to engage with various constituencies, more staff meetings, substantive, and sincere town-hall style frequent gathering with employees for

projections on the future about expected and unexpected changes. Consequently, their leadership message of energy, optimism, and enthusiasm at the top underscore confidence in the organization and its ability to control its own destiny by countering insidious and unsettling impacts of change fatigue (Peregrine, 2022; Schaffer, 2017). As highlighted by Goleman, Table 2 presents a comparative representation between people with high EQ and people with high IQ.

**Table 2.** Comparative Representation of People with High EQ And People with High IQ

People with High EQ	People with High IQ
Socially poised and reach out to new people, outgoing and cheerful, and not prone to fearfulness or worried,	Adept in the realm of mind but inept in personal world
Notable capacity for contentment to people or causes for taking responsibility and for having an ethical outlook.	Ambitious and productive, predictable, and dogged, and untroubled of concerns about themselves
Sympathetic and caring in relationships.	Critical and condescending, fastidious and inhibited.
Rich emotional life and comfortable with themselves, others, and social universe they live in.	Unexpressive and detached, emotionally blank and cold.
Interact smoothly with others – are social stars	Uneasy with sexuality, and sensual experience, fluent in expressing thoughts, value and intellectual matters and have high range of intellectual and aesthetic interests.
Assertive and express feelings directly and feel positive about themselves; life holds meaning for them	Introspective, prone to guilt, anxiety, and rumination and hesitant to express anger openly, though can do so indirectly.

Source: Idea Adopted from Goleman, D. 2005

In summary, though these portraits seem extreme because everyone has a mix IQ and EQ in varying degrees, it offers an instructive look at what each of these dimensions adds separately to a person's qualities. To the degree, a person has both cognitive and EQ, these pictures merge. Still, of the two, EQ adds far more of the qualities that make people particularly ambitious leaders more fully human in handling complexities and challenges of the business.

### 3 Classification Of Previous Studies on Leadership and Emotional Intelligence

Today, the increasingly volatile, and complex global business environment is forcing businesses to transform at an unprecedented pace (D'Auria & De Smet, 2020). Particularly, the rapid evolution of workplace technology, the COVID-19 pandemic, constant innovation, mergers, and acquisitions have accelerated the pace of change (Alexander et al. 2020; Durth et al. 2022). Consequently, businesses operating in the current uncertain economic climate must recognize the need for change to remain competitive. Hence, change is a reality for all



businesses. Though businesses that resist change, risk losing their influence in the industry, which is not only damaging to their image among competitors and allied companies but can also contribute to a negative brand image amongst their clients and consumers and are unlikely to survive in their industries (Brauns, 2015; Robbins et al. 2003). Therefore, it is imperative for business leaders to deploy relevant tools and resources to impact change for survival (Lafley, 2009). Horth and Buchner (2014) underscored the need for business leaders to play critical roles in the management of change due to challenges and unpredictable circumstances in business environments. Moreover, Denti and Hemlin (2012), suggest the need for business leaders to collaborate with their teams as they turn their creative efforts to innovation and continuous improvement of products and services. Accordingly, as businesses seek to drive results at the tactical level, leaders must team up with their employees to streamline business activities to impact change (Issa, 2018; Barsh et al. 2008; Braley, 2021).

Emotional intelligence is acknowledged as a key leadership skill critical in achieving organizational goals and succeeding in a volatile and unpredictable business environment (Goleman, 2005; Hammer, 2017; Hill et al. 2023). Still, emotions were consistently overlooked by past studies of leadership because the workplace was considered a rational environment where emotions were understood as impediments to the science of sound judgement (Cavaness et al. 2020; Goleman, 2019). Goleman (2019) suggests how EQ can contribute to leadership high performance on team building, problem-solving, impacting change and overcoming employee resistance to change. As a result, there has been an increased research focus on EQ and leadership (e.g., Goleman, 2019; Issa, 2018). Most of these research studies are based on a review of secondary data (e.g., Issa, 2018; Lunenburg, 2020; Gayathri & Meenakshi, 2013; Landry, 2019), other studies (e.g., Denti & Hemlin, 2012; Slimane, 2015) however, do have some elements of empirical data on leadership but lack the value of EQ and its key competencies of Goleman's theory which have however been elevated a gamechanger for higher leadership performance. The most significant observation in this research is that research studies on emotional intelligence and leadership with evidence-based research approach are relatively few and mixed (e.g., Palmer et al. 2001; Valerie et al. 2017; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Only a limited number of studies explore the relationship between emotional intelligence key competencies and leadership behaviour variables (e.g., Cavaness et al. 2020; Reshetnikov et al. 2020;) using evidence-based research approach to establish the research outcome.

Goleman (2019) model focuses on EQ as a wide array of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance. The framework conceptualizes EQ as intelligence in the traditional sense comprising of a conceptually related set of abilities namely self-awareness, self-regulation, social skill, empathy, and self-motivation that has to do with emotion and the processing of information for effective leadership (Goleman, 2019). Emotional competencies are not innate talents, but rather learned capabilities that must be worked on and developed to achieve outstanding performance (Goleman, 2005). Still, there has been limited research studies into EQ competencies and leadership behaviour using evidence-based research approach and methodology. However, understanding precisely how

emotional intelligence relates to leadership high performance can have various managerial implications for human resource practitioners and leadership search consultancy firms. Therefore, we need adequate research studies on EQ and leadership with evidence-based research approach to establish the significance of the relationship between EQ key competencies and leadership behaviour variables in the current business context. Table 3 presents a summary of previous research studies on emotional intelligence and leadership into five major groups. A discussion of the research group and a reflective summary for the present study is presented.

**Table 3.** Classification of Previous Studies on Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

Research Group	References
i. Linking Emotional Intelligence to successful leadership in organizations	Amabile & Khair, 2008; Palmer et al. 2001; Rizeanu et al. 2022; Reshetnikov et al. 2020; Vann et al. 2017; Cavaness et al. 2020.
ii. Managing Change: The Role of Change Agent	Lunenburg, 2010, Braley, 2021; HBS Online, 2022; Schaffer, 2017; Melroy et al. 2015; Brauns, 2015; Amabile & Khair, 2008; Hammer, 2017; Rieckoff & Rose, 2021
iii. Change leadership: The Role of Emotional Intelligence in leadership high performance.	De Janasz et al. 2007; Issah, 2018; HBS Online, 2022; Gayathri & Meenakshi, 2013; Landry, 2019.
iv. Organizing for Change	Braley, 2021; Schaffer, 2017; Brauns, 2015; Amabile & Khair, 2008; Hammer, 2017
v. Leadership and Innovation	Horth & Vehar, 2014; Slimane, 2015; Denti & Hemlin, 2012; Barsh et al. 2008; Mokhber et al. 2018; Horth & Buchner, 2014; Melroy & Smith, 2015

#### In Summary,

- i. Linking Emotional Intelligence to Successful Leadership in Organizations – Research studies (e.g., Reshetnikov et al. 2020; Rizeanu et al. 2022; Cavaness et al. 2020). This group focuses on linking emotional intelligence to successful leadership in organizations using evidence-based studies. Reshetnikov et al. explore leadership and emotional intelligence: current trends in public health professional training. Data for the study was collected on psychophysiological and emotional characteristics testing and management style assessment from 242 participants including medical students, preventive care residents, and undergraduate students for “Factory of Health Leaders” to evaluate the level of professional training and indicators of EQ. The result suggests that students who studied in the “Factory of Health Leaders” program had better indicators of EQ than ordinary students, but their rates are comparable with residents’ rates. Similarly, Cavaness et al. investigate how EQ can be linked to successfully health care leadership based on the Big Five Personality Model. The article identified EQ as a critical skill for surgical leaders who must interact constructively with teams, administrators, patients, colleagues, and the wider community. When one

becomes aware of EQ, it adds to the repertoire of surgical leaders and provides an insight into the dynamic of interpersonal relationships. The paper concluded that EQ and its connection to dimensions of personality provide additional tools for surgical leaders to become more effective and successful in their roles. On the other hand, Rizeanu et al. investigates the role of emotional intelligence in leadership in relation to the dynamic nature of the business environment and employee motivation for organisational goals. Data for the study was collected from 136 respondents. The result suggests that emotional intelligence is closely related to leadership skills. All the same, Vann et al. examines how individual's self-evaluation of EQ relates to the use of three-self leadership strategies: behaviour-focused, natural reward and constructive thought pattern. The article underscores the diverse importance of business leaders tasked with decision-making, problem solving, and change leadership. The study used the trait-based EQ questionnaire to measure EQ as a global trait based on the data collected from 386 respondents. The result suggests a medium effect of the relationship between EQ and behaviour-focused strategies of self-leadership.

- ii. Managing Change: The Role of Change Agent - Research studies (e.g., Braley, 2021, Rieckhoff & Rose, 2021; Lunenburg, 2010). This group focuses on managing change and the role of the change agent. Lunenburg study indicates that organizational change, whether large or small, requires one or more change agents. The article highlights types of change agent roles, and characteristics of successful change agents and defines a change agent as anyone with skills and power to facilitate change efforts. It argues that change agents could be recruited internally or hired externally, but the success of change efforts heavily depends on the quality of the relationship between change agents and key decision makers within the organization. Similarly, Rieckhoff & Rose study reviews change agent challenges. They note that the role of change agent is among the most important, and difficult, in any lean-management transformation. The article brings together a three-part-series of the change agent challenge: "The agent and the line," "The agent and the institution," and "The agent as an individual". It is noted that the best agents for the line are usually the best people from the line – charismatic individuals with extensive experience in the company's processes and technology. Braley study on the other hand, looks at why holistic change management approach is the most critical leadership skill. The author emphasizes that knowing how to lead and manage through tumultuous and unexpected changes can make or break a company. He noted that being skilled at change management is something that leaders should take seriously and prioritize, due to frequent mergers, acquisitions, and other challenges in organizations, where leaders are more prepared to lead through these challenges.
- iii. Change leadership and the role of emotional intelligence – Research studies (e.g., Issa, 2018; Gayathri & Meenakshi, 2013; Landry, 2019). This group focuses on change leadership and the role of emotional intelligence in leadership high

performance. Issah reviews the role of emotional intelligence in leading change in an organization. He underscores different perspectives of EQ with detailed discussion of EQ components namely, self-awareness, self-regulation, social skill, empathy, and self-motivation. In conclusion, he suggests how EQ can contribute to change leadership focusing on building a team to effect change and overcoming resistance to change. In view of the challenges confronting leaders in the 21st century, he believes training future leaders toward developing EQ is important to prepare them for effective leadership. Gayathri & Meenakshi study extend the narrative into the evolution of EQ theory. The article considers different concepts and beliefs pertaining to emotions and cognition (e.g., problem solving, reasoning skills, logical prowess, and ability) and how they culminate into the theory of EQ. They conclude their article with a discussion of the three major models of EQ including Goleman's competency, Bar On's Trait model and the ability model of emotional intelligence.

- iv. Organising for Change – Research studies (e.g., Amabile & Khaire, 2008; Schaffer, 2017). This group focuses on organising for change. Amabile and Khaire examine the creativity in business and the role of business leaders. It notes that understanding how to generate great ideas has become an urgent managerial priority in today's innovation-driven economy. The paper asserts that the priority of leadership is to engage the right people, at the right time, to the right degree in creative works. Motivating people to perform at their peak is vital in creative work. In conclusion, they contend that the theory and practice on creativity and leadership would increasingly come together to advance the understanding of creativity in business. Also, in his study of change management, Schaffer claims that all management is change management. He asserts that the job of management always involves defining what changes need to be made and seeing that those changes take effect. In conclusion, he noted that the critical part of the evolution of management is holding managers accountable for continuing improvement to allow them to develop the capacity to lead continual change while the people develop the capacity to implement it, and specialist experts can be used for support, but the actual management of change must remain in the hands of managers.
- v. Leadership and Innovation – Research studies (e.g., Barsh et al. 2008; Slimane, 2015; Mokhber et al. 2017; Denti & Hemlin, 2012). This group focuses on leadership and innovation. Denti & Hemlin investigate the factors that moderate or mediate the relationship between leadership and innovation. The results show that the relationship between leadership and innovation appears strongest with a supportive culture for innovation, and where organizational structures are deformalized and decentralized. The paper concludes that great leaders stimulate innovation on the individual level by influencing creative self-efficacy and introducing norms that encourage the team reflections through debates, open communication, and divergent thinking. Similarly, Slimane investigates the relationship between innovation and leadership based on survey

questionnaire methodology. The result suggests that innovation and leadership are closely related, and that leadership helps to shape and provide a space for people to unite and work toward their potential goals. Finally, Mokhber et al. investigates the relationship between leadership and innovation: the moderator role of organisational support for innovative behaviour based on a sample of 63 companies from top 100 Iranian companies. The result suggests that transformational leadership promotes the innovative activities within organizations and ensures the market success of the innovation.

To summarize, out of the five research groups on emotional intelligence and leadership presented in Table 4, it is only group (i) research studies (Linking Emotional Intelligence to successful leadership in organizations) that employ evidence-based research approach to establish an understanding of how emotional intelligence relates with leadership high performance (e.g., Valerie et al. 2017; Cavaness et al. 2020; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Research studies on the relationship between EQ and leadership with evidence-based research approach are relatively few and mixed (e.g., Palmer et al. 2001; Valerie et al. 2017; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Only a limited number of research studies explore the relationship between EQ key competencies and leadership behaviour variables (e.g., Cavaness et al. 2020; Reshetnikov et al. 2020) using evidence-based research approach to establish the significance of their relationships.

Whereas research studies in group (ii), group (iii) and group (iv) in Table 4, above are primarily based on a review of secondary data (e.g., Issa, 2018; Lunenburg, 2020; Gayathri & Meenakshi, 2013; Landry, 2019). However, research studies in group (v) (e.g., Denti & Hemlin, 2012; Slimane, 2015) do have elements of empirical data on leadership but lack the value of EQ set of competencies of Goleman's theory now considered as a gamechanger for leadership high performance (Cherniss, 1999; Goleman, 2019).

Thus, from the preceding discussion, on the relationship between EQ leadership variables, it is only group (i) research studies that employ evidence-based research approach to establish the significance of the relationships. In other words, only 25 percent of previous research studies in Table 4 above focussed on the relationship between EQ key competencies and leadership variables, and potentially, maybe about 75 percent of the studies looked at the business acumen rather than emotions. Therefore, we can confidently assert that emotions are not beyond the science of sound judgement in the modern business context.

This shows that without adequate evidence-based research studies on how EQ relates with leadership high performance, the outcomes of three of the five groups cannot be realised including managerial and leadership effectiveness. Thus, we need adequate evidence-based research studies on how EQ set of competencies relate with leadership high performance in the current business context. Next, section 3.1 presents the research objective and research questions.



### 3.1 Research Objective and Research Questions

It is increasingly clear why change leadership is a critical skill for organizational change and succeeding in the global business environment. Primarily due to, the COVID-19 pandemic, rapid evolution of workplace technology, heightened geopolitical risks, hybrid working models, mergers and acquisitions have accelerated the pace of change globally (Durth et al. 2022). Knowing how to lead and manage through unexpected challenges can make or break organizations (Schaffer, 2017). The credibility of business leaders can be threatened in challenging times, where the demand for change outstrips the capacity to implement change (Alexander et al. 2020; D'Auria & De Smet, 2020). Change has become a constant trend in the business world, whether you seek it or not, you cannot avoid change in this period of upheaval. Change is the norm. Beer and Nohria (2000) contended that over 70% of change initiatives in organizations have failed to materialize due to poor business practices and employee resistance to change. Change can be painful and risky but adapting to it requires strategic initiatives and effective leaders with high emotional intelligence (Lafley, 2009).

Emotional intelligence is an indispensable skill for effective leadership. EQ is recognized as the key leadership set of skills critical in achieving organizational goals and succeeding in volatile and ambiguous business environments (Goleman, 2019). EQ accounts for almost 90% of what sets high performing leaders apart from their peers with technical skills. The most effective leaders are alike in one crucial way: they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2019). Thus, EQ is the sine qua non of leadership (Goleman, 2005; Goleman, 2019). De Janasz et al. (2007) stressed that leaders with high EQ apply social skill to influence others, create strong relationships with clients and employees. Furthermore, the Consortium for Research on EQ in organizations emphasized that there is a business case in favour of emotional intelligence (Cherniss, 1999). Yet, emotions have consistently been omitted by previous studies of leadership because the workplace was considered as a rational environment where emotions were understood as impediments to the science of sound judgement (e.g., Denti & Hemlin, 2012; Slimane, 2015). Research studies on how EQ relates with leadership behaviour for leadership effectiveness and high performance are highly limited and mixed (e.g., Palmer et al. 2001; Valerie et al. 2017; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Only a limited number of studies employed evidence research approach (e.g., Cavaness et al. 2020; Reshetnikov et al. 2020) to establish the significance of the relationship between EQ key competencies and leadership variables.

Consequently, given the limited empirical study of the relationship between EQ key competencies and leadership variables, and the growing importance of higher emotional intelligence and higher leadership effectiveness for the achievement of organizational goals and survival, in the Australian business context, the task of measuring the level of their effectiveness practices remains complex and ambiguous.

The primary objective of this study is therefore, to investigate whether there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and effective change leadership in the organizational setting in the Australian business context. Specifically, the study aims to provide answers to the following two research questions:

1. Do leaders with high emotional intelligence perform successfully in their change leadership roles in the organization setting in the Australian business context?
2. If any, to what extent is an emotional intelligence predominately a critical skill in leadership and change management situations in organisations?

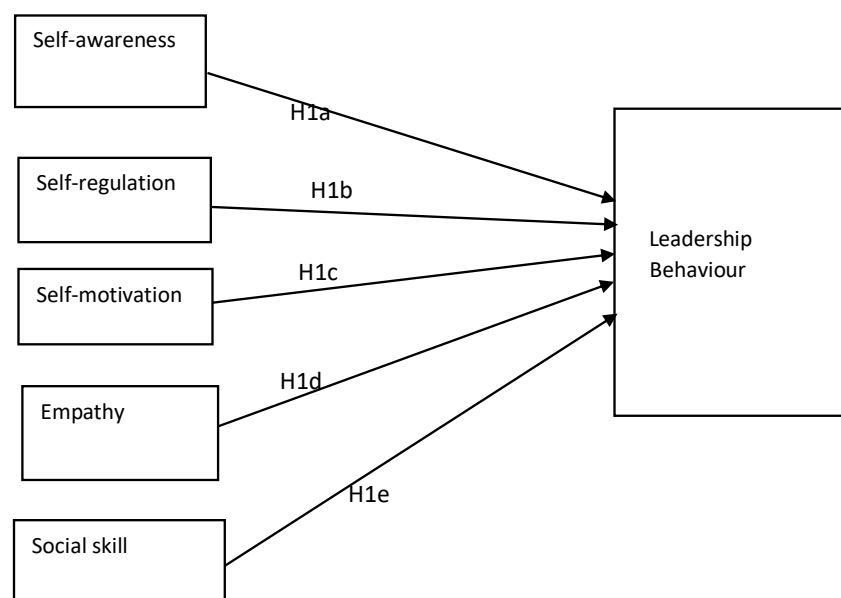
## 4 Research Model and Research Hypotheses

### 4.1 Emotional Intelligence

The theoretical grounding for this research study comes from the work of Goleman, (2005; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). The model focusses on Emotional Intelligence (EQ) as a constellation of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance (Goleman, 2019). The model consists solely of abilities, such as to perceive, understand, manage one's emotions and recognize and influence the emotions of others (Mayer et al. 2004). However, Goleman redefined EQ as the array of skills and characteristics including the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions that drive leadership performance (Goleman, 2005; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). The ability-based model of EQ conceptualizes EQ as intelligence in the traditional sense comprising of a conceptually related set of mental abilities namely self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skill that has to do with emotion and the processing of emotional information for effective leadership (Goleman, 2005; Salovey et al. 1995; Petrides & Furnham, 2001, Perez et al. 2005). Goleman (2019) drew attention to the fact that effective leaders had high degree of EQ because they can recognize their own emotions and emotions of others, use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately and adjust their emotions to adapt to the environment. But sound technical knowledge and a good IQ were threshold capabilities which were entry level requirements (Goleman, 2005). Goleman promoted the idea that there is more at stake than a mere IQ which has previously been the gold standard of predicting success in life. Hence, the theory of EQ analysis and implementation supersedes that of IQ (Goleman, 2005). As portrayed by Goleman, leaders with high EQ are social stars, assertive and optimistic in endeavours. These same leaders can reach out to people to express their feelings directly when need arises. Moreover, EQ contributes to leaders developing stronger and positive relationships with peers, co-workers and to perform efficiently in work teams. This benefits performance of leaders by providing emotional support and instrumental resources needed to succeed in their roles. Emotionally intelligent leaders have better resources to cope with stressful situations and demanding tasks which enable them to outperform in such situations (Seibert et al. 2001). EQ is an undeniably a better predictor than most of the hiring methods used in businesses today including cover letter, reference letter, amongst others. As would be expected, about 147 companies and consulting firms in the USA had developed programs that involved EQ training and hiring of employees (Joseph et al. 2015). Corporations and scholars now use EQ as an integral factor in the leadership process. According to George (2000), leaders with high EQ practice knowledge transformation, generate enthusiasm, confidence and

encourage empowerment. These suggest that leaders with high EQ have increased ability to solve problems and can identify opportunities within the organization.

Consequently, given the growing importance of EQ and leadership for organizational change, the task of measuring the level of effective practices remains complex and ambiguous. This section presents the research model and research hypotheses of EQ for the study. As the description of the model shows, Goleman's EQ model is not only very complete but can influence leadership behaviour to impact change. For the purpose of this study, it appeared more appropriate to focus on EQ variables including self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skill most relevant to explaining leadership behaviour (LBDQ). Moreover, given that leadership behaviour is instrumental in understanding the impact of EQ in leadership performance, the leadership behaviour variable was adopted from the work of Stogdill (1963) and embedded in the research model as the dependent variable for all predictor variables of the research model. The research model adopted for this study is depicted in Figure 1. It includes six variables: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, social skill, and leadership behaviour. The major statement of this model is that self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skill directly influence leadership behaviour. Thus, in this study we test EQ key competencies of the Goleman's theory applied to leadership behaviour in Australian business context. Specifically, we examined the direct effects of self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skill on leadership behaviour which we were interested. The relevant variables of the Goleman's model are discussed in more detail in section 2.3 and Table 1. The operationalization of these variables is presented in section 5.2. However, our use of Goleman's model is not to predict leadership behaviour but to explain it. In line Goleman's proposal, the following hypotheses are embedded in the research model and were tested.



**Figure 1.** Research Model for Emotional Intelligence and Leadership High Performance

#### 4.1.1 Self-awareness

According to Goleman (2019), leaders who are self-aware can recognize their own emotions, drives and the effects on others. They can have a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses and can lead with introspection not authority (Goleman, 2019; Braley, 2021). This means that these same leaders are self-confident, adaptable, assertive and can behave with humility. Further, Gewertz (2006) noted that an increase in financial profitability occurs when a leader displays a high level of self-management and self-awareness because they can respond with empathy to conflicting situations and react to challenges in positive, less disruptive ways. Consequently, we hypothesize:

*H1a: There will be a positive relationship between self-awareness and leadership behaviour.*

#### 4.1.2 Self-regulation

Leaders who can control their disruptive emotions and impulses to adapt to changing circumstances would have a high degree of emotional self-regulation (Goleman, 2019). These same leaders have a high propensity to suspend judgement to think before acting. Generally, these same leaders are trustworthy, conscientious, innovative, and adaptable to their employers and followers. Because they are more in tune with their emotions, they can make transitions from reaction to response such as self-controlling and delay gratification to serve as an example to followers (Goleman, 2005; Vann et al. 2017). Hence, we hypothesize that:

*H1b: There will be a positive relationship between self-regulation and leadership behaviour.*

#### 4.1.3 Self-motivation

Self-motivation leaders have the zeal, drive, optimism, and are achievement orientated (Mullen et al. 2018; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). These same leaders can be persistent in the face of adversity and setbacks for an action (DeJanasz et al. 2007; Palmer et al. 2001). They can use their deepest emotions to move and guide themselves toward goals. Emotionally self-motivated leaders have extremely high standards for quality of work (Manktelow and Carlson, 2016). As role models in their organizations, they can recognize the importance of contingent rewards as a motivational tool to transform behaviours within an organization (Vanne et al. 2017). Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

*H1c: There will be a positive relationship between self-motivation and leadership behaviour.*

#### 4.1.4 Empathy

According to Petrides & Furnham (2001), leader who are empathetic have the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference, that is, the capacity to place oneself in another's position. Leaders who can consider other people's feelings when making decisions based on their self-awareness are empathic (Goleman, 2019). Empathy is ranked as an essential leadership skill (HBS Online, 2022; Goleman, 2019). Leaders who master empathy perform more than 40% higher in engaging others, making decision, and coaching and are considered as better performers

toward their direct reports (HBS Online, 2022; Landry, 2019). In a study conducted to analyse the relationship between school counsellor's EQ and leadership skills, it was noted that several participants were good leaders because their EQ was developed in counsellor preparations, where empathy is taught (Mullen et al. 2018). Thus, leaders who display the ability for inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and individual consideration, when managing relationships are highly empathetic (Goleman, 2005; Gewertz, 2006). Accordingly, we hypothesize that:

**H1d:** *There will be a positive relationship between empathy and leadership behaviour.*

#### 4.1.5 Social Skill

Based on Goleman (2005), business leaders have the proficiency to build bonds, establish networks with peers and other stakeholders, build rapport, and establish a common ground with employees and other stakeholders. Similarly, these same leaders can handle emotional responses to others, manage interpersonal relationships and conflict situations at work (Issa, 2018; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). These same leaders are socially poised and can reach out to connect with their peers and employees to set clear work expectations, provide direction, built trust and praise employees for good work well done and achievements (Manktelow and Carlson, 2016; Goleman, 2019). Consequently, we hypothesize that:

**H1e:** *There will be a positive relationship between social skill and leadership behaviour.*

Table 4 presents a summary of Interrelationship of the hypotheses in the research study.

**Table 4.** Summary of Interrelationship of the Hypotheses in the Research

Hypotheses	Predictors	Dependents
H1a	Self-awareness leaders (EQSAL)	Leadership Behaviour (LBDQ)
H1b	Self-regulation leaders (EQSRL)	Leadership Behaviour (LBDQ)
H1c	Self-motivation leaders (EQSML)	Leadership Behaviour (LBDQ)
H1d	Empathy leaders (EQEL)	Leadership Behaviour (LBDQ)
H1e	Social Skills (EQSSL)	Leadership Behaviour (LBDQ)

## 5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Sample Selection

The sample for the study comprised a diverse range of industries of across the public and private sectors in Australia business context: banking and finance; academic institutions; small and midsize enterprises; Government agencies; communications; and manufacturing. The data was collected from different levels of leadership namely, top-level management, middle management, lower-level management, and the frontline management. The mean number of employees and annual revenue of these organizations ranges from 1700 and above \$3 billion respectively. The population of interest were people



in leadership roles (defined as managers, professionals, and frontline officers) responsible in leading and managing business needs. The study excluded individuals from a non-leadership position.

One hundred and twenty (120) survey questionnaires were distributed throughout these industries. All participants were instructed in the cover letter of the questionnaire and agreed to being of anonymous identity. A total of eighty (80) questionnaires were returned, for a gross response rate of 67 percent. Three respondents returned their questionnaires uncompleted with a note stating that they would not participate in the study due to organizational policy. Secondly, one respondent did not answer three questions concerning leadership behaviour. Thirdly, one respondent did not provide an answer to five questions concerning emotional intelligence. Finally, two (2) respondents did not answer all the questions concerning the subset of emotional intelligence and leadership behaviour. These respondents were removed leaving a final sample of sixty-nine (69) respondents (a net response rate of 58%). The respondents represented a wide variety of job classifications across these industries. For example, gender group: 59.4% were males and 40.60% were females. This suggests the gender imbalance in the sample and possibly in the organisation or field from which the sample was drawn. For age group, most of the sample falls within the '46-55' age range, followed by the '36-45' and 'Over 55' age ranges. This suggests that the sample, and possibly the organisation or field, is primarily composed of middle-aged and older individuals, because there are fewer young adults (ages '18-25' and '26-35') represented in the sample. In terms of education, most of the individuals in the sample have a postgraduate level of education (44.93%), followed by those with an undergraduate degree (23.19%). This suggests a high level of education among the sample population, indicating that the individuals likely occupy roles that require or benefit from advanced education. Finally, for job position, there are more individuals in middle management (30.43%) and frontline positions (28.99%) than in top level-management (26.09%) or lower-level management positions (14.49%). This could be reflective of the hierarchical organizational structure, where there are fewer top-management roles compared to middle management or frontline roles. Table 5 presents demographic statistics of variables in the study.

To determine whether there is a significant difference between males and females on EQ and LBDQ dimensions, a two-sample independent t-test was performed to compare the means of the two independent groups. Further, it was evaluated whether there was statistical evidence that the associated population means were significantly different.

As indicated, the results, suggest that there is no statistically significant difference between males and females in terms of their overall EQ and LBDQ scores:

- Thus, EQ as a dimension; t-statistics = 1.63, p-value = 0.11 > 0.05
- Also, LBDQ as a dimension; t-statistic = 1.33, p-value = 0.19 > 0.05

**Table 5.** Descriptive Statistics of Respondents (n=69)

Demographic factors	Valid items	Frequency	Percentage %
<b>Gender</b>	Female	28	40.6
	Male	41	59.4
<b>Age group</b>	18 – 25	4	5.79
	26 – 35	12	17.39
	36 – 45	16	23.19
	45 – 55	20	28.99
	Over 55	17	24.64
<b>Education</b>	High School	3	4.35
	TAFE	7	10.14
	Diploma	12	17.39
	Undergraduate	16	23.19
	Postgraduate	31	44.93
<b>Job Position</b>	Frontline	20	28.99
	Lower-Level Management	10	14.49
	Middle Management	21	30.43
	Top-Level Management	18	26.09

## 5.2 Measure

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) instrument was used to measure variables in the study. This is because the TEIQue is a constellation emotional self-perception located at the lower levels of personality (Petrides & Furnham 2001). According to Petrides et al. (2007), the trait-based emotional intelligence (EO) is an individual's self-perception of their emotional abilities or emotional self-efficacy. The EQ comprises behavioural dispositions and self-perceived abilities. The TEIQue is measured by self-report, as opposed to the ability-based model which refers to actual abilities or cognitive emotional abilities (Palmer et al. 2001; Salovey et al. 1995; Petrides et al. 2007; Perez et al. 2005). Moreover, TEIQue tends to measure typical behaviour to provide a good prediction of actual behaviours. For example, TEIQue provides an operationalization for the model of Konstantinos and Furnham (2001), which conceptualizes EQ in terms of personality. Psychometric properties of TEIQue were investigated in a study conducted in a French-speaking population and the findings were that the TEIQue scores were globally normally distributed (Mikolajczak et al. 2007). Additionally, TEIQue scores were positively related to some of the Big Five personality traits (e.g., extraversion, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness but inversely related to alexithymia and neuroticism of the Goleman mixed model. Recent studies (e.g., Martins et al. 2010; Gardner & Qualter, 2010) involving direct comparisons of multiple EQ tests yielded favourable results for TEIQue. Thus, because of its excellent internal consistency, TEIQue is widely used for EQ studies (e.g., Salovey et al. 1995; Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Perez et al. 2005).

Given that leadership behaviour is instrumental in understanding the impact of EQ in leadership performance, the leadership behaviour description questionnaire (LBDQ) developed by Stogdill (1963) was used as a subset of questions for the study. The LBDQ measures component aspects of a leader's behaviours as a dependent variable of EQ for the study. LBDQ is widely used to study leadership behaviours (Rizeanu et al. 2022; Stogdill, 1963). Researchers compared the results of studies employing the LBDQ. The results obtained use a Likert-style scale with, 1 indicating that the ideal leader should never exhibit the behaviour, and 5 indicating that the ideal leader should always exhibit the behaviour.

TEIQue instruments used contain 50 personality test questions on EQ. The test instrument incorporates 10 subscales organised under the Goleman's EQ five factors: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skill. The items were comparable to the Trait Meta Mood Scale (TMMS) (Salovey et al. 1995) and TEIQue (Petrides & Furnham, 2001) although the subscales were adjusted to 10 items to facilitate the response rate. A five-point Likert scale, with 1 strongly disagree, and 5 strongly agree was used throughout (e.g., Salovey et al. 1995; Palmer et al. 2001). For the LBDQ instrument, five-point Likert scale with anchors 1, never and 5, always was used throughout. The LBDQ questions merely asks the leader to describe as accurately as possible a specific way in which s/he behaves toward members of the group under his/her supervision.

To confirm the reliability and validity of the instruments for the main study, the questionnaire was pretested on experts and academics (Ikart, 2019). All comments and feedback provided for validity, consistency, and clarity of the instrument were carefully considered and incorporated into the questionnaire for its face value and rigor (Ikart, 2019). The next paragraph describes measurement scales used for each variable of the research model.

Firstly, Self-awareness is measured by assessing the degree to which the leader recognizes oneself emotions and drives and the effects on the self and others through self-perceived ability and self-report (Perez et al. 2005; Salovey et al. 1995). Secondly, Self-regulation is measured by assessing the degree to which oneself can control impulses and disruptive emotions and adapt to changing circumstances through self-perceived ability and self-report (Perez et al. 2005). Thirdly, Self-motivation is measured by assessing the degree to which oneself uses the deepest emotions to move and guide oneself toward goals through self-perceived ability and self-report (Salovey et al. 1995; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Fourthly, Empathy is measured by assessing the extent to which oneself considers and responds to others' feelings on his/her self-awareness based on self-perceived ability and self-report (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Salovey et al. 1995; Perez et al. 2005). Finally, Social skill is measured by assessing the degree to which oneself manages relationships, build bonds and rapport with others based on self-perceived ability and self-report (Salovey et al. 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). As noted, leadership behaviour (LBDQ) was instrumental in the relationship and was used as the dependent variable for all EQ predictor variables. The scale is comparable to TMMS scale, which has been found to be reliable (full scale reliability  $\alpha=82$ ) and provided a valid index of what is purported to measure (Salovey et al. 1995; Palmer et al. 2001).

### 5.3 Descriptive Statistics and Coefficient of Reliability for TEIQue Scales

The internal consistency for the scales was assessed by computing Cronbach's alphas. The Cronbach alphas for construct variables are displayed in Table 6. The Cronbach alpha values of leadership behaviour (LBDQ) and EQ (i.e., self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skill) range between 0.65 (LB) and up to maximum of 0.883659246 (full EQ). This was expected as variables used were based on well-established instruments (e.g., Palmer et al. 2001; Salovey et al. 1995; Patrides & Furnham, 2001). However, the low reliability for LBDQ scales could be attributed to the small number of items in the scales because the calculation of Cronbach's alpha is affected by scale length. Given the exploratory nature of the study, the scales are deemed adequate to continue but indicate that future studies should develop stronger measures (Thompson et al. 1991). Also, as shown, the means and standard deviations (SDs) are relatively high and consistent with previous studies (e.g., Palmer et al. 2001; Avolio et al. 1999). This demonstrates generally, the positive response to the variables. The SDs suggest a good spread of all responses around the mean.

**Table 6.** Descriptive Statistics, No. of Items, and Reliability Coefficient for the 10 TEIQue Scales

Variable	Count	Mean	Standard Deviations	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
EQ Self-awareness (EQSAL)	69	3.98	0.81	10	<b>0.72715559</b>
EQ Self-regulation (EQSRL)	69	3.86	0.75	10	<b>0.707863096</b>
EQ Self-motivation (EQSML)	69	3.96	0.85	10	<b>0.791319687</b>
EQ Empathy (EQEL)	69	4	0.59	10	<b>0.715236992</b>
EQ Social skills (EQSSL)	69	3.68	0.77	10	<b>0.741269152</b>
Full emotional Intelligence (EQ)	69	3.9	0.33	50	<b>0.883659246</b>
Leadership Behaviour (LBDQ)	69	3.99	0.41	10	0.651967507

### 5.4 Regression Analysis

To recapitulate the impact of the model independent variables of EQ and identify which independent variables were most important in explaining the dependent variable, LBDQ, we performed a series of linear regression analyses where each dimension or variable of EQ is used to predict LBDQ. We used linear regression analysis because it provided a scientific calculation for identifying and predicting future outcomes. The ability to find predictions and evaluate them can help provide benefits to businesses and individuals, such as optimized operations and detailed research materials. Five separate linear regression analyses were performed. For *H1a*, the study investigates whether EQ variable, self-awareness (EQSAL), has a positive effect on leadership behaviour (LBDQ). For *H1b*, the study investigates whether self-regulation (EQSRL) of EQ has a positive effect on the dependent variable LBDQ. For *H1c*, the study investigates whether the independent variable self-motivation (EQSAL) of EQ has a positive effect on the dependent variable, LBDQ. For *H1d*, the study investigates whether the variable empathy (EQEL) of emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the dependent variable, LBDQ. And for *H1e*, the study investigates whether social skill variable (EQSSL) has a positive effect on the dependent

variable, LBDQ. A linear regression analysis was used to test each of the associated hypothesis including *H1a*, *H1b*, *H1c*, *H1d* and *H1e*.

## 5.5 Results

First, the result of hypothesis *H1a* (Table 7), shows that the dimension of self-awareness (EQSAL) significantly affects leadership behaviour (LBDQ) ( $p < 0.05$ ) = 0.042, and approximately 6.04% of the variance in LBDQ can be explained by EQSAL. Also, EQSAL has a positive influence (coefficient,  $r = 0.224$ ) on LBDQ, but the result is significant ( $p < 0.05$  = 0.042). Therefore, *H1a* is supported.

**Table 7.** Results of Linear Regression Analysis for Self-awareness vs. Leadership Behaviour

R = 0.246		
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.0604		
F = 4.31: Sig F = 0.041		
Variable	Coefficient	Sig T
Self-awareness	0.224	0.042

\*=  $P < 0.05$

Secondly, the result of hypothesis *H1b* (Table 8), shows that the dimension of self-regulation (EQSRL) significantly affects LBDQ ( $p > 0.05$ ) = 0.14. As shown, approximately 3.3% of the variance in LBDQ can be explained by EQSRL. Moreover, EQSRL has a positive influence (Coefficient,  $r = 0.16$ ) on LBDQ, but the result is not significant ( $p > 0.05$  = 0.14). Therefore, *H1b* is not supported.

**Table 8.** Results of Linear Regression Analysis for Self-regulation vs. Leadership Behaviour

R = 0.181		
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.033		
F = 2.26: Sig F = 0.14		
Variable	Coefficient	Sig T
Self-regulation	0.16	0.14

\*=  $P < 0.05$

Thirdly, the result of hypothesis *H1c* (Table 9), shows that the dimension of self-motivation (EQSML) significantly affects LBDQ ( $p < 0.05$ ) = 0.019 and approximately 7.9% of the variance in LBDQ can be explained by LBDQ. Also, EQSML has a positive influence (Coefficient,  $r = 0.23$ ) on LBDQ, but the result is significant ( $p < 0.05$  = 0.019). Therefore, *H1c* is supported.



**Table 9.** Results of Linear Regression Analysis for Self-motivation vs. Leadership Behaviour

R = 0.281		
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.079		
F = 5.75: Sig F = 0.019		
Variable	Coefficient	Sig T
Self-motivation	0.23	0.0192

\* = P &lt; 0.05

Fourthly, the result of hypothesis *H1d* (Table 10), shows that the dimension of empathy (EQEL) significantly affects LBDQ ( $p < 0.05$ ) = 0.022. As shown, approximately 7.7% of the variance in LBDQ can be explained by EQEL. Furthermore, EQEL has a positive influence (Coefficient,  $r = 0.23$ ) on LBDQ, but the result is significant ( $p < 0.05 = 0.022$ ). Therefore, *H1d* is supported.

**Table 10.** Results of Linear Regression Analysis for Empathy vs. Leadership Behaviour

R = 0.275		
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.063		
F = 5.49: Sig F = 0.022		
Variable	Coefficient	Sig T
Empathy	.023	0.0221

\* = P &lt; 0.05

Fifthly, the result of hypothesis *H1e* (Table 11), shows that the dimension of social skill (EQSSL) significantly affects LBDQ ( $p > 0.05$ ) = 0.69. As shown, approximately 0.2% of the variance in LBDQ can be explained by EQSSL. Moreover, EQSSL has a positive influence (Coefficient,  $r = 0.113$ ) on LBDQ, but the result is not significant ( $p > 0.05 = 0.69$ ). Therefore, *H1e* is not supported.

**Table 11.** Result of Linear Regression Analysis for social skill vs. Leadership Behaviour

R = 0.049		
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.0024		
F = 0.163: Sig F = 0.69		
Variable	Coefficient	Sig T
Social skill	0.113	0.688

\* = P &lt; 0.05

Finally, the averaged full emotional intelligence (EQ) was tested on LBDQ, (hypothesis *H1f*), the result (Table 12), shows that in general, all the dimensions of EQ (avg.) significantly affect LBDQ ( $p < 0.05$ ) = 0.033. As shown, approximately 6.6% of the variance in LBDQ can be explained by the EQ (avg.). Also, EQ (avg.) has a positive influence

(Coefficient,  $r = 0.32$ ) on LBDQ, but the result is significant ( $p < 0.05 = 0.033$ ). Therefore, *H1f* is supported.

**Table 12.** Result of Regression Analysis for Emotional Intelligence vs. Leadership Behaviour

R = 0.257		
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.066		
F = 4.75; Sig F = 0.033		
Variable	Coefficient	Sig T
EQ_avg	0.32	0.0328

\*=  $P < 0.05$

The tests for hypotheses provide moderate support for the model based on Goleman framework of emotional intelligence and leadership high performance. Four of the six hypothesized (*H1a*, *H1c*, *H1d* & *H1f*) relationships were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), and the amount of variance in leadership behaviour explained by each of these independent variables were: *H1a*, 6.04%; *H1c*, 7.6%; *H1d*, 7.7% and *H1f*, 6.6%. Support was found for Hypothesis *H1a*, which postulated that there will be a positive relationship between self-awareness and leadership behaviour ( $r = 0.224$ ,  $p < 0.05 = 0.042$ , and the variance in LBDQ explained by self-awareness equal to 6.04%). *H1b*, was not supported. The coefficient for self-regulation,  $r = 0.16$ ,  $p > 0.05 = 0.14$  and the variance in LBDQ was as low as 3.3%. Thus, *H1b* was not statistically significant. For hypothesis *H1c*, as predicted, there was a significant positive relationship between emotional self-motivation and leadership behaviour ( $r = 0.23$ ,  $p < 0.05 = 0.192$ , and the variance in LBDQ explained by EQSML = 7.9%). Similarly, Hypothesis *H1d*, which stated that emotional empathy (EQEL) will have a positive relationship with leadership (LBDQ), this was supported by the results ( $r = 0.23$ ,  $p < 0.05 = 0.022$  and the variance in LBDQ explained by EQEL equal to 7.7%). Hence, *H1d* was statistically significant. But hypothesis *H1e* was not supported ( $r = 0.113$ ,  $p > 0.05 = 0.688$ , and the variance in LBDQ explained by EQSSL, as low as 0.2%). Finally, as expected, hypothesis *H1f*, which postulated that there will be a positive relationship between emotional intelligence (the averaged full EQ) with leadership behaviour was supported ( $r = 0.32$ ,  $p < 0.05 = 0.0328$ , & variance in LBDQ explained by average full EQ equal to 6.6%). Thus, *H1f* was statistically significant.

## 6 Discussion and Conclusion

### 6.1 Discussion

In this study, the theory of emotional intelligence proposed by Goleman (2019) for leadership high performance was adopted as the basis for examining the strength of EQ components of emotional self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skill on leadership behaviour. Specifically, the findings showed that emotional self-awareness, self-motivation, empathy, and the averaged full emotional intelligence had significant effects on leadership behaviour for high performance. There was no evidence

that emotional self-regulation and emotional social skill (as defined) influence leadership behaviour and high performance. Nevertheless, there are certain limitations of the study that should be mentioned and considered for future studies. Firstly, there were gender and age issues with the sample groups. The sample for the study contained more males than females. This shows a gender imbalance in the sample and possibly in the organization or field from which the sample was drawn. Moreover, in terms of age range, most of the sample falls within '46-55' age range, followed by the '36-45' and 'over 55' age ranges. This suggests that the sample and possibly the organization or field, is primarily composed of middle-aged and older individuals. There were fewer young adults (ages '18-25' and '26-35') represented in the sample. Secondly, the leadership behaviour (LBDQ) variable that was used must be revisited. Whilst our belief is that the items chosen in this study measure LBDQ, they do not measure all possible facets of leadership behaviour for effective leadership. Therefore, this scale needs to be bolstered by including additional items. Finally, the study used the TEIQue instrument. TEIQue measures self-report as opposed to the ability-based model which measures actual abilities (or cognitive emotional abilities) (Petrides et al. 2007; Perez et al. 2005). It is recommended that future studies should employ a combination of TEIQue and the ability-based model measures to bolster the results of the study.

Turning now to the results, the relationship between emotional self-awareness and leadership behaviour is positive and significant. This is consistent with Goleman's (2019) theory of emotional intelligence (EQ). However, the non-significant relationship between emotional self-regulation and leadership behaviour is inconsistent with Goleman's theory of EQ. One possible explanation could be the tendency toward lack of individual emotional restraint amounting to negative behaviour pattern to surface amongst a significant number of people entrusted with leadership positions from the sample. This is because some leaders who lack self-regulation tend to react and have a harder time keeping their impulses in check. Thus, when people in leadership positions fail to evoke strong positive emotions toward self and others to make the workplace enjoyable, emotional self-regulation would not have an impact. Also, the inconsistency of the result with the Goleman's theory may be as result of varying contexts being studied. While this study is conducted in the Australian business context, Goleman's studies were based on the US and European business contexts (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Goleman, 2005). Moreover, it is more likely that the observed differences are a result of the different theoretical structures because our result is inconsistent with Palmer et al. (2001), who found a significant and positive relationship between inspirational motivation with both the emotional monitoring and emotional management. Whilst this study measured the direct effect of self-regulation on leadership behaviour, Palmer et al. appear to measure an indirect effect. It could be more likely, however, that the observed differences are a result of the different measurement instruments used. Whilst we used TEIQue instrument for this study (Petrides & Furnham, 2001), other research studies on EQ employed the Big Five personality trait measurement instrument (e.g., Cavaness et al. 2020) and MSCEIT (Mayer et al. 2003).

As expected, the relationship between emotional self-motivation and leadership behaviour is positive and significant. This is consistent with the Goleman's theory of

emotional intelligence regarding self-motivation component of EQ. The result is also consistent with Palmer et al. (2001), which found that inspirational motivation and individualized consideration of transformational leadership were significantly correlated with both the ability to monitor and manage emotions in oneself and others. Furthermore, the result is also consistent with Rizeanu et al. (2022), who found a significant and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and an increased in ability of leadership. Also, the test result for the relationship between empathy of EQ and leadership behaviour is positive and significant. This is consistent with Goleman's theory of EQ. Empathy has been ranked as an essential leadership skill. Leaders who master empathy are said to perform 40% higher in engaging others, coaching, and decision-making (HBS Online, 2022). Similarly, in a study conducted to analyse the relationship between school counsellor EQ and leadership skills, it was found that several participants were good leaders because their EQ was developed in counsellor preparations, where empathy is taught (Mullen et al. 2018). However, the negative relationship between social skill of EQ (EQSSL) and leadership behaviour (LBDQ) is inconsistent with Goleman's theory (2019). The observed differences to Goleman's theory may be as a result of varying contexts being studied. While this study is conducted in the Australian business context, Goleman's studies are based on US and European business contexts (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Goleman, 2005). Moreover, it is more likely that the observed differences are a result of the different theoretical structures because our result is inconsistent with Rizeanu et al. (2022), who found a significant and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and an increased in ability of leadership. Whilst this study measures the relationship between individual components of EQ (in this case, social skill) with LBDQ, Rizeanu et al. measured the emotional intelligence construct rather than its variables. Another possibly explanation could be due to gender imbalance between males 59.4%, and females 40.60%, in the sample groups and possibly in organizations from which the sample were drawn. It should be noted that women tend to score higher levels in EQ than men. More importantly, EQ is not necessarily a universally positive trait because study of EQ between managerial work performance and the team have yielded mixed results of negative, low, and high correlations (Farh et al. 2012). Finally, the relationship between the averaged emotional intelligence and leadership behaviour is positive and significant. This is consistent with Goleman theory of EQ. The result is also consistent with the result by TalentSmart in the US which found EQ as the strongest predictor of leadership performance (HBS Online, 2022) and as well as Rizeanu et al. (2022) who highlighted certain aspects of the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership namely: increased ability of leadership, high level of consideration of a leader and the level of tolerance of uncertainty. The result is consistent with the result by Cavallo and Brienza (2006) which found a strong relationship between superior performing leadership and emotional intelligence in their study conducted on 358 managers cross the Johnson and Johnson Consumer and Personal Care Group.

## 6.2 Conclusion

Globally, the results of this study show that leadership high performance as measured by leadership behaviour, is determined in order of importance by emotional

intelligence set of abilities. These abilities are self-motivation, self-awareness, empathy, and the averaged full emotional intelligence of a leader. While this research does have some limitations, it has nevertheless, provided findings which contribute to a better understanding of leadership behaviour factors of emotional intelligence. These factors contribute to leadership superior performance. These results also have some implications for leadership research and practice. In light of preceding arguments, future research should aim for cumulative tradition by continuing to utilize Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence as a theoretical foundation to further understand the phenomenon of leadership high performance and/ or effective change leadership within social science research context. For instance, there are self-report measures of EQ (e.g., TEIQue employed in this study) and ability-based measures of EQ such as the MSCEIT (Mayer et al. 2003). Self-report measures of EQ measure a person's self-perceived EQ rather than his/her actual EQ. Though the relationship between ability and performance criteria are found to be more reliable and valid when assessed by performance-based tests of ability rather than self-reports of ability (e.g., Mayer et al. 2003), the relationship between EQ and effective leadership may be best established with a combination of self-report measures of EQ and the ability-based measures of EQ to bolster the results and percentage of variance in LBDQ explained by EQ variables. Yet, this needs to be empirically tested. Moreover, there is a need for gender balance and possibly more females and young adult leaders representation in the sample drawn for research studies. An explanation for this may suggest gender differences in EQ as women tend to score higher levels than men (Joseph & Newman, 2010) and probably young adult leaders (ages 18 – 25' and 26 -35') may do so as well. Future research should take this issue into consideration. Furthermore, while we believe that items chosen in this study to measure the dependent variable, LBDQ, are deemed adequate, they do not measure all possible facets of leadership behaviour for effective and superior leadership. Therefore, to increase the practical relevance of this line of research one should consider bolstering these scales by including additional items for stronger measure. Future research may also need to operationalize the leadership behaviour in the relationships with EQ variables into two major variables; for instance, initiating structure (the extent to which a leader defines his or her role and roles of team members for a goal attainment) and consideration (the extent to which a leader has job relationships characterised by mutual trust and respect for team members ideas and feelings). These variables of leadership behaviour are thought to contribute to creative thinking and flexible planning of a leader for intellectual stimulation. This may further bolster the strength of the result and variance explained in leadership behaviour variables (Thompson et al. 1991).

It is interesting to know whether any of the variables in this study and the research model could be influenced by management action. In that regard, one could look at the fully or partially controllable variables to obtain practical orientation. The following points are found to be fundamental for effective management and human resource applications, particularly, in the modern Australian business context.

First, improving the perceived relationship between self-awareness of EQ and leadership behaviour could be accomplished through flexibility and resilience in leadership.

Leaders should welcome change, learn from mistakes, and motivate resilience in the team to address issues effectively and motivate collaboration and an all-inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels appreciated (Farh et al. 2012). Moreover, training and development should be aimed at leaders to develop specific skills so that they can know what they are good at, what they are not good at and to understand the identity of the people around them and the organization they represent (George, 2000). Every individual has a core identity, that core identity will improve leadership and ensures leaders surround themselves with the right people that may leverage their weaknesses or enhance their strengths (Flournoy, 2015).

Secondly, the perceived relationship between self-motivation and leadership behaviour could be enhanced through role modelling and business purpose driven. When leaders model ethical and good behaviours in the workplace, their peers and other employees can observe and emulate them, resulting in transforming behaviours in the team (HB Online, 2022). Equally, purpose is the mission and the driving force behind an organization, and leaders should clearly know and understand both their purpose and that of the people who are part of the organization (Lafley, 2009). In many cases, team members may not know the real purpose of their jobs or even that of their organization. It is the job of all leaders to effectively convey the mission and purpose to others as they are expected to have such knowledge (Gewertz, 2006).

Thirdly, good communication reduces conflict, confusion, and stress in the workplace, and as a result, empathy can be enhanced when leaders practice effective communication, which is empathetic, compassionate and above all two-ways. This helps team members to understand not just what should be done but why it should be done and when it should be done (Robbins et al. 2003). Also, by acting as a coach or mentor, a leader can build stronger connections with employees, and this gives employees a sense that they are being treated with respect, empathy, and compassion (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). For, example, in a study conducted to analyse the relationship between school counsellor EQ leadership skills, it was noted that several participants were good leaders because EQ was developed in counselling preparations, where empathy is taught (Mullen et al. 2018). Nonetheless, social skill and self-regulation could be developed and influenced where leaders practice listening rather than just talking, encouraging people to buy-in to their plan by empowering and involving them building connection, rapport, common ground with them and recognizing and acknowledging good work in the team. Willpower is critical to all leaders and to succeed, one must know how to moderate their emotions and not allow others to control their emotions or dictate their reactions (Goleman, 2005).

Finally, understanding precisely how emotional intelligence relates to leadership high performance may have various managerial implications for leadership search firms and human resource practitioners. Specifically, emotional intelligence variables including self-awareness, self-motivation and empathy and other characteristics identified as fundamental attributes of leadership high performance may provide additional selection criteria for identifying potential future great leaders. As a final note, the knowledge gained from research into EQ can increase the understanding of effective leadership and help



employers and their human resource to develop powerful tools for recruitment, selection and training and development of future leaders to enhance and transform the business climate and performance in continually evolving business context.

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