

## Academic Leaders' Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership in Higher Education

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### Abstract

**Background:** Academic leaders occupy a crucial position in higher education institutions, and it is essential to consider their emotional intelligence in order to encourage transformative leadership and effective decision-making. Due to the numerous responsibilities, attitudes, behaviours, and emotions connected to a job or position, all academic leaders face a few challenges.

**Purpose:** The aim of this paper is to assess the prevalence of emotional intelligence (EI) and Transformational Leadership (TL) among college faculty members. Examining the association between the many different personal aspects of faculty members and their performance, and examining the correlation between transformational leadership among the investigated academic leaders. The purpose of this study is both descriptive and exploratory.

**Design/Methodology:** 125 full-time faculty members from various Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) were surveyed for their perspectives on emotional intelligence and the transformative leadership of their institution's top officials. This study primarily provides descriptive information.

**Results:** The findings highlight an alarming difference between the present state of emotional intelligence and the level required for successful management. The findings highlight the need for individualised development programmes that can enhance the social and interpersonal skills of students in HEI's, thereby enhancing their leadership effectiveness.

**Keywords:** India, Transformational Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, Higher Education Sector

### 1. Introduction

Any organization's ability to succeed is primarily dependent on its employees' capacity to recognise the proper goals and select the appropriate course of action to pursue them. The standard of decisions taken has a major bearing on how well an organisation does in organisations, leaders are most effective when they are dynamic and inspiring their followers to work more, think more creatively, and develop their skills and abilities, and help them make the best judgements and choose the best strategies for achieving their goals. Particularly, democratic leadership, which involves including students in decisions about the educational environment's learning process; passive leadership, which is centred on letting students accomplish tasks independently; and transformative leadership, which relies on idealised influence and intellectual stimulation, In order to better understand these links, this study will look at how these three leadership categories relate to the emotional intelligence skills of perception, regulation, and application.

Emotionally intelligent leaders are invaluable to any business because of their enhanced ability to assess circumstances and formulate effective solutions, keep their own emotions in check. A leader influences the mindset and actions of their followers to help them achieve their goals. Managers and leaders who are able to effectively utilise their emotions and knowledge may have a competitive advantage, according to certain studies. For organisations to function at their highest potential, they require leaders who can steer them towards the best decisions and keep them on track. Previous studies have linked high levels of emotional intelligence to successful leadership, as well as to better organisational outcomes (Abraham, 2006; Jones & Abraham, 2009) found that those who are emotionally knowledgeable are more methodical and make wiser decisions because they are in tune with their emotions.

Without leadership, no organisation or institution can survive. Leadership is a shared characteristic of all organisations and institutions. The capacity or style of leadership is inextricably linked to an organization's or institution's presence (Kesari & Verma, 2018). The most successful leadership style, according to research by Baba et al. 3, is transformational leadership (Bass, 1999; Leith wood, 1992). Transformational leaders place a strong emphasis on followers' internal motivation and growth. They mediate between the organization's goals and the hopes and dreams of its members. In general, followers are more loyal to companies led by transformational leaders, and these leaders motivate their teams to achieve greater results (Bass, 1998; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Many people look forward to transformational leaders because they are able to guide their followers through times of uncertainty and high risk in dynamic, fast-paced business environments (Voon, et al, 2011).

The educational status of a country has a major impact on its progress. The education system is what contributes to a nation's economic changing. Institutions that provide knowledge and awareness are thought of as sources since they educate people and maintain them prepared to work in various economic sectors as organisational inputs. Similar to this, India's higher education industry has made significant leaps since independence and made a significant contribution to the production of qualified and talented human resources, enabling the country's human resources can support its many economic sectors. Consistent criticism of the quality of information generated by this industry has come from academics, researchers, social leaders, and commercial and public sector employers. The right leadership behaviour of academic administrators (leaders) one of the variables that contributes to increased efficiency, skill, and success, despite the fact that educational institutions have a lot to keep track of. This is owing to the widespread belief that strong leadership is essential to improving educational outcomes, as it is in so many other fields.

Not only was that, but the focus of this research on transformative leadership. According to studies, transformational leadership is more common in the academic field. Because it is linked to creative behaviour and skill enhancement, both of which are essential for the sector (Martin, et al, 2003; Middlehurst, et al, 2009). The first part consists of several types of evaluation, gap analysis, target setting, and hypothesis making. Including the sample, tools, and method of data collecting. The analysis, findings, and study implications are presented in the third section.

## **2. Literature Review Emotional Intelligence**

According to (Palmer, et al, 2001), emotional intelligence is a concept that is becoming more widely recognised as a tool for identifying potential leaders and for building effective leadership abilities. Unsurprisingly, intelligence theories contain the conceptual roots of EI (Thorndike, 1920), "social intelligence" is "the ability to understand people and act or behave sensibly towards them." Both innate and acquired skills are considered in the notion of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993). Understanding for other people and acting on that empathy are two of the most characteristics of interpersonal intelligence in this context. Instead, one's own self-awareness is crucial to intrapersonal intelligence. In order to recognise one's emotional complexity, to comprehend the reasons behind one's behaviour, and to act in a manner that is appropriate for one's requirements, objectives, and capabilities.

According to (Sosik and Megerian's, 1999), meta-analysis of EI-related research in the workplace and classroom leaders with high EI tend to have more career success. In addition, transformational leadership, self-efficacy, and spirituality are all outcomes that have been shown to be strongly correlated with high levels of EI. life satisfaction, & academic success (Parker et al., 2004; Caroché, Chan, & Capti, 2000). Based on these studies' conclusions, emotional intelligence is now seen as a key factor in determining future achievement (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000).

### **Transformational Leadership**

James, 1978 coined the term "transformational leadership" in the context of a descriptive study of political leaders; nonetheless, the term is now extensively used in the field of psychology (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass

argues that leadership transitions occur along a continuum, with one leader and a follower mutually assist one another in achieving a better level of morals and motivation. This process results in substantial improvements for both the lives of the individuals involved and the organisations in which they work.

According to (Burns, 1978), the relationship between a leader and follower might take either a transactional or transformative shape. He defines TL as a leader's capacity to inspire followers through financial, political, or psychological rewards when all sides are aware of their respective roles and the issues at hand. According to Burns, a defining characteristic of transformational leadership is an emphasis on building trust with followers in order to boost morale and productivity. In 1994, Bass & Avolio developed the full-range leadership paradigm. It encompasses transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire approaches to management. The most effective management conduct is transformational leadership, wherein a leader fosters positive bonds with subordinates in order to raise their productivity. The only focus of transactional leadership is the leader's capacity to arrange agreements or contracts based on rewards and penalties rather than a relationship with followers to achieve specified aims. Laissez-faire managers take a passive, hands-off attitude to managing their staff. Four crucial components, according to (Bass, 1985) theory of transformative leadership, make this strategy workable. Idealism, inspiration, individual care, and mental challenge are the four pillars on which this structure rests. Idealised influence is a leader's capacity to instil confidence and authority in his or her followers by setting a good example.

An inspiring leader is one who can motivate and inspire others with their vision. When a leader shows individualised consideration for each of their followers, they become a coach or mentor to the people in their charge, paying close attention to their development and solving any issues that may arise. To intellectually stimulate a group means to encourage its members to think creatively about how to achieve the group's goals in ways that have not been tried before.

### **Leadership and emotional intelligence**

In his argument that transformative leaders require multiple intelligences, (Bass, 1990) brings into focus the significance of a leader's capacity to connect with and impact the emotions and actions of their followers. Positive correlations between EI and transformational leadership have been reported in a number of researches (Barling, et al, 2000; Palmer, et al, 2001), suggesting that these ideas are related conceptually and theoretically.

Based on transactional/transformational leadership theory, the researchers set out to assess the EI and management techniques of CEOs and executives who work in the great outdoors. Because the extent to which one develops in this area depends on engagement in a wide range of outdoor-related the experience levels of outdoor leaders were also examined to understand the connections between EI & leadership.

### **Ability to Influence Others and Emotional Intelligence in Leadership**

Multiple studies (Leban & Zulauf, 2004; Mandell & Pherwani, 2003) have found that emotionally intelligent leaders tend to be more successful. Analysis of the connections between EI and the various tenets of the TL model (Palmer, et al, 2001) found the TL traits of inspiration, motivation, and attention to the individual were all connected with emotional regulation skills. Similarly, (Gardner & Sough, 2002; Barbuto & Burbach 2006) found that variations in leaders' capacity to implement change in their businesses could be largely attributed to their levels of emotional intelligence. According to a synthesis of research, followers rated leaders higher on transformational leadership traits if they had higher emotional intelligence. Moreover, transformational leaders exhibit emotional intelligence personality characteristics including sympathy, drive, self-awareness, trust, and mental and emotional steadiness (Bar-on, 1997; Goleman, 1998).

The elementary school principals' EI impacts their ability to lead (Cook, 2006). Researchers found that EI played a major role in leadership success. Emotional acuity was unrelated to chronological age, years of experience, or demographic characteristics like gender. Similar to the above, (Zahed-Babelan and Rajabi, 2009) found transactional and authoritarian leadership styles correlate negatively with EI, while transformational and

EI are positively correlated.

Following this trend, a quantitative study of school administrators (Hebert, 2011) investigated the emotional quotient relates to transformational management. Principals and aspiring principals were proven to benefit from developing their transformational leadership behaviours and becoming more self-aware of their emotional intelligence strengths and shortcomings in order to improve their leadership skills. Sunland, Iran high school principals' (Hamidi and Azizi, 2012) emotional intelligence was correlated with their leadership ideologies. Two schools of thinking on leadership were shown to be significantly correlated with EI, however there was no such relationship found between EI and self-awareness (Gardner & Sough, 2002) investigated the link between EI and leadership philosophies. The findings indicated a positive correlation between correlation between Emotional Quotient and transformative leadership styles and an inverse correlation with authoritarian forms of management. Emotional intelligence and transformative leadership have been investigated, as have gender differences and their predicted correlations (Mandell and Pherwani, 2003). Transformative leadership was found to be significantly associated with high levels of emotional intelligence. The emotional intelligence ratings of male and female managers were drastically different.

### **The Quasi-Organization of the Higher Education Classroom**

Some have equated a course in a higher education institutions to a quasi-organization (Pounder, 2008; Weaver & Qi, 2005). The HEI course is what it "likes," Workplaces are social organisations where official and informal social structures interact to establish authority, allocate roles, and facilitate communication and cooperation among employees (Weaver & Qi, 2005). In this "small social quasi-organization," In a classroom setting, the professor or instructor plays the position of leader, and the students, the role of followers (Pounder, 2008; Weaver & Qi, 2005). From a macro viewpoint, (Harrison, 2011) argued that the organisational context and HEI course are comparable because instructors have an impact on students by guiding their future development and initiating them into the field of study in a manner akin to how organisational leaders have an impact on and initiate their workforce. The relationship between teacher and student requires a delicate balancing act of communication, coordination, and activity control, not unlike that seen in organisational settings (Kuchinke, 1999). Teachers in higher education institutions (HEIs) coordinate learning activities towards learning goals through means such as assigned readings, lectures, and tutorials; when in charge, they relay information about what is to be learnt, such as objectives or outcomes. and they exert control by periodically assessing monitoring students' progress through assessments like midterms and finals, and acting on the results of these evaluations if they show significant performance gaps.

The effectiveness of transformative leadership behaviours in organisations has been extensively studied (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Northouse, 2012), However, research into the causes of such behaviours is scarce (Harms & Credé, 2010). Leadership that aims to transform an organisation seeks to do so by fostering an environment that is more conducive to learning, growth, and open communication among its members through intellectual stimulation, motivation, transparency, trust, and relationships. According to (Mortazavi & Nazemi, 2006). In order to create an environment of possibilities through ongoing, effective communication and relationship development, leaders must focus on two key areas: relational leadership and imparting knowledge (Halpern, 2006). Motivational influence must be studied by researchers who have examined charismatic and transformative leadership (Shamir, et al, 1993). The connection between TL and altruism is a result of the widespread acceptance that transformational leaders assist followers in putting the needs of their group or organisation ahead of their own (Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Shamir et al., 1993). The first stage in transformational leadership is self-awareness, or the recognition of one's own mental processes and the impact those processes have on one's actions (Sur & Prasad, 2011). Goleman (1995) stressed the value of empathy in leadership by showing how it correlates positively with followers' intrinsic drive. Leaders are truly transformational when they encourage their followers to become leaders who prioritise the organization's interests over their own, as stated by (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999). Given the need for scholars to investigate the many factors that contribute to effective leadership, considered a leading indicator of successful leadership, the proposed study would examine the nature and extent to which emotional intelligence plays a role among academic leaders.

### 3. Research Methodology

The sample for the current study, which was exploratory and descriptive in character, comprised faculty members of various ranks from universities in the north Indian states chosen for the study. The number of research items was used to determine the sample size. Their itemized sample size was 140 (28 items x 5) because the instrument included 28 items. For the purpose of determining a representative sample size, there must be at least 5 and no more than 10 responses to each question (Hair, et al, 1998). In total, 180 surveys were sent out, with only 125 meeting the criteria for further examination. The personnel from the investigated universities were subject to the proportionate sampling guidelines. The information included in the study came from both primary and secondary resources. Literature-based and previously- validated scales were used as measurement instruments in the study. The survey was divided into two parts. Section 'A' of the questionnaire focused on basic demographic information, while Section 'B' assessed respondents' emotional intelligence and leadership abilities through a series of self-reporting comments. Age and gender were the demographic variables. This research made use of updated versions of the TL scale and the EI scale. The items, however, were modified to better reflect the current study's aims and context. Both the EI scale and the TL scale were adapted from their respective sources (Hyde, Pethe, & Dhar, 2002; Bass & Avolio, 1995). Throughout the study, responses from the sample elements were recorded using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 to 5: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = highly agree). In total, there were 28 questions on the survey. The transformational leadership scale consists of 10 factors, while the emotional intelligence scale has 8. Common methodological flaws were also addressed in this investigation. According to (Podsakoff, et al 2003), process design and/or statistical controls are the two basic methods for addressing the potential for bias introduced by the use of a certain technology. Despite the fact that the study was conducted on rats, the same principles apply to humans. Employees have been utilized as a barometer of a leader's EI and transformative skills. To avoid potentially skewed results, the study did not inquire into the leaders' estimations of their own emotional intelligence and capacity for transformational leadership.

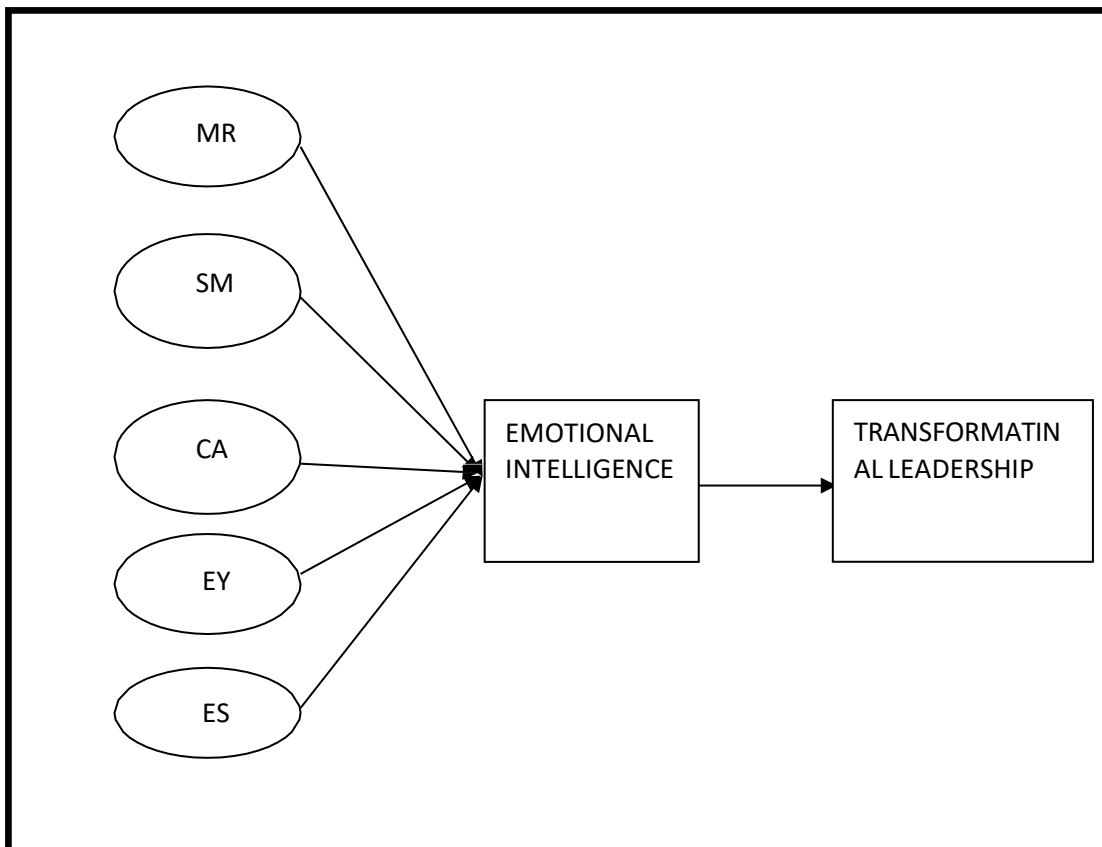


Figure 1. Research Model

**Source:** (Author based On Hyde, Pethe, and Dhars Model Of 2022)

**Notes:** MR = Managing Relation; SM = Self-Motivation; CA = Commitment and Altruism; EY = Empathy; ES = Emotional stability;

**Table 1. Result of the Measurement Model**

Latest Variable	Item Code	Factor Loading	AVE	MSV	CR
MR	MR1	0.890	0.742	0.366	0.959
	MR2	0.780			
SM	SM1	0.880	0.800	0.380	0.850
	SM3SM5	0.740			
		0.881			
CA	CA1	0.755	0.850	0.400	0.750
	CA2 CA4	0.889			
		0.741			
EY	EY1 EY2	0.758	0.780	0.456	0.818
	EY3	0.850			
		0.744			
ES	ES 1	0.900	0.800	0.751	0.856
	ES 2	0.890			
	ES 3	0.760			

**Sources:**(Author, 2023)

**Validity**

**Validity Converging**

Convergence validity was established through the use of standardised factor loading, build trustworthiness and the standard deviation of the variance.  $AVE > 0.5$ ,  $CR > AVE$ , and  $CR > AVE$  are the thresholds for convergent validity. Research by multiple authors (Hair et al., 2010). Table 2 shows that the extracted 14 individual dimensions' AVE values were more than 0.5. As a result, the final scale included 28 elements in total for all the factors being investigated and most of the variables in this study have adequate loadings on their latent dimensions (SFL

$> 0.6$ ). The factor loadings of all variables and the fit criterion were all satisfactory, indicating that each concept satisfies the requirements for convergent validity.

**Differential Validity**

Considering the variables' AVE and MSV, which is the greatest shared variance, discriminate validity was also demonstrated.  $MSV > AVE$  is a criterion for proving discriminate validity (Hair et al., 2010). The MSVs for each of the 14 distinct constructs have been identified in the current investigation. Due to the MSV of each individual construct being lower than its corresponding AVE estimates, the measurement model established discriminant

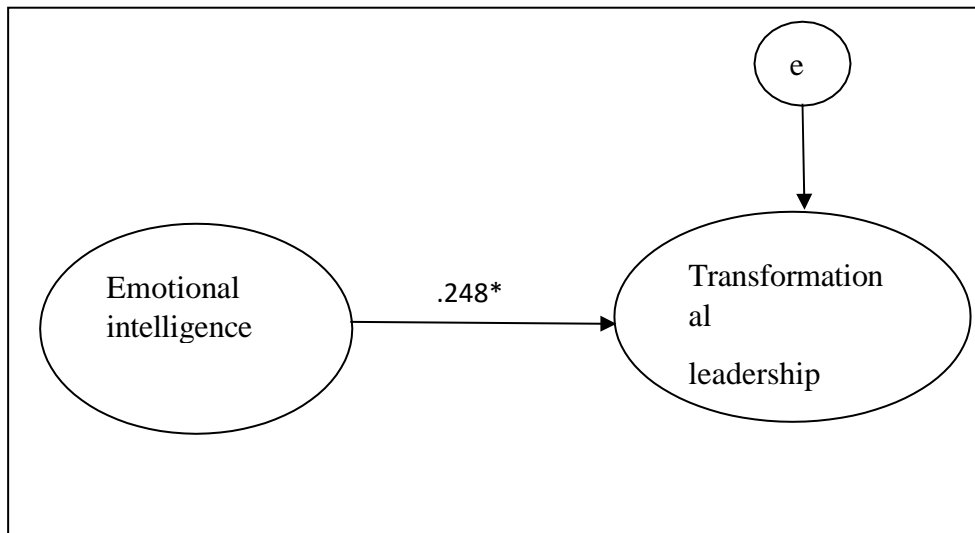
validity (Table 1).

**Impact of emotional intelligence on transformational leadership**

Figure 2 displays the data showing that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of transformative leadership ( $\beta= 0.238$ ;  $p< 0.05$ ). CMIN/DF= 1.342, GFI = 0.904, AGFI = 0.911,

CFI = 0.961, RMR = 0.056, and RMSEA = 0.043 are all inside the allowable range for a well-fitting model.

The emotional intelligence traits of self-awareness, empathy, emotional stability, value orientation, and integrity, as well as those of self-motivation, commitment, and altruism, have been shown to significantly impact transformational leadership. CMIN/DF= 1.336; GFI = 0.942; AGFI = 0.926; CFI = 0.914; RMR = 0.026; RMSEA = 0.047; all are inside the allowable range for a well-fitting model. Transformational leadership is best predicted by value orientation and integrity ( $\beta= 0.268$ ), one of the five components of emotional intelligence.



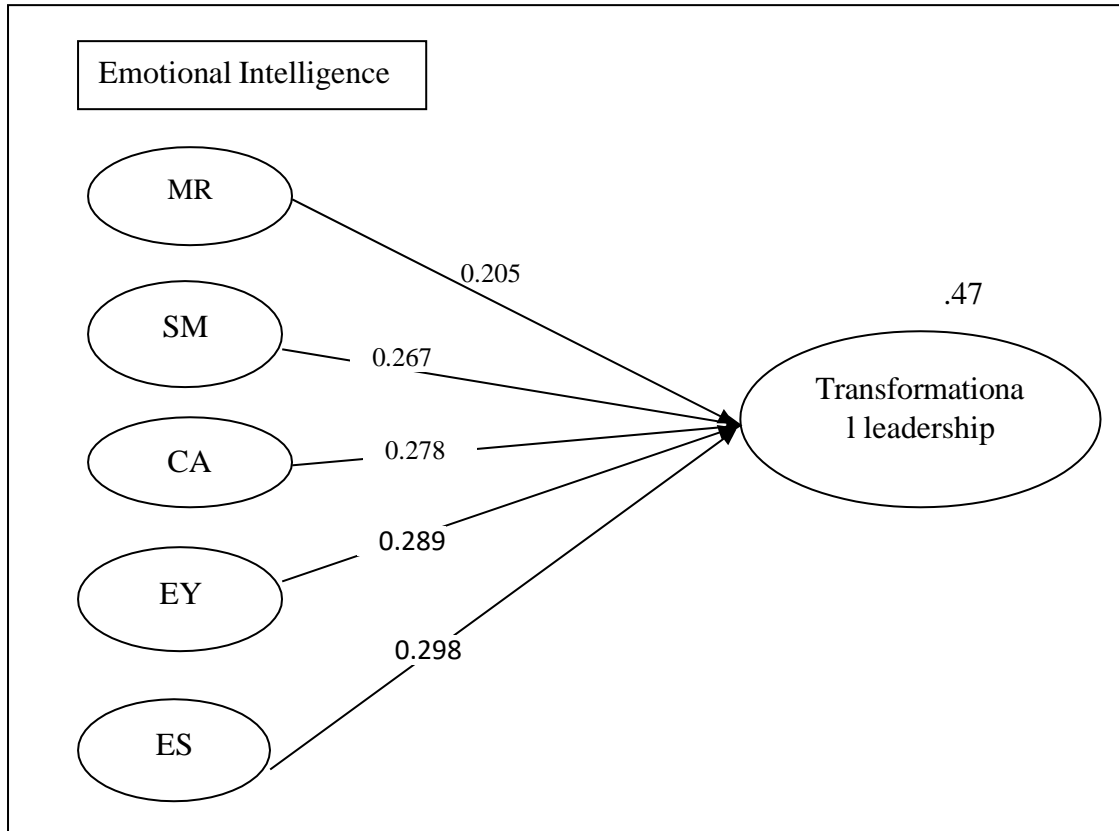
**Figure 2.** Cause and Effect Relationship among Variable under Study

Source: Author 2023 Note: \* $P<05$ ; el: error term

**Table 2.** Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Transformational Leadership

Independent variable (elements of emotional intelligence)	Dependent variable	
	Transformational leadership	
MR	0.205**	
SM	0.267**	
CA	0.278*	
EY	0.289**	
ES	0.298**	

Source: Author, 2023



**Figure 2.** Impact of emotional intelligence on transformational leadership

**Source:** Author, 2023

( $\beta = 0.205$ ;  $p < .01$ ), emotional stability ( $\beta = 0.267$ ;  $p < .01$ ), self- motivation ( $\beta = 0.278$ ;  $p < .01$ ), empathy ( $\beta = 0.289$ ;  $p < .01$ ), commitment and altruism ( $\beta = 0.298$ ;  $p < .05$ )

Table 2 shows that the 5 facets of emotional intelligence (managing relations, self-motivation, commitment and altruism, empathy, and emotional stability) jointly account for 47% of the variance in transformational leadership ( $R^2 = 0.47$ ). Therefore, it is demonstrated that academic leaders' emotional intelligence has a favourable and significant effect on their transformative leadership behaviour.

### Discussion

Emotional awareness according to the outdoor leaders' adaptability score, they have sufficient degrees of emotional and social aptitude to handle common issues. This score, however, was considerably lower than the normative sample's. The ability to deal effectively with difficulties as they arise by conducting reality checks, being adaptable, and applying problem-solving techniques is known as adaptability (Bar-On, 2002). It is characterised as the capacity to manage change. It was expected that outdoor leadership tasks would differ from those in other sorts of usual work settings. For instance, because to safety concerns, outdoor leaders are frequently forced to adhere to a predetermined set of rules and guidelines rather than trying forth novel ideas.

Multiple management statistics indicate that, in contrast to the normative group, outdoor leaders exhibit a more transformational type of leadership. For instance, compared to the normative group, outdoor leaders performed better, especially in the areas of inspirational motivation and individual consideration. Leaders, according to (Bass and Avolio, 1997), can inspire their followers by using symbolic metaphors to help them become more aware of and appreciate the objectives that have been set for both an individual and a group.

Leaders take into account each individual student's demands as well as how best to help them achieve their



objectives and overcome their difficulties.

### Conclusion

One of the most influential factors in determining whether or whether a Higher Education Institutions faculty members are productive, efficient, and satisfied with their jobs is the leadership style of its academic leaders. Emotional intelligence is a key factor in charismatic & transformative leadership styles, according to the findings of recent studies. The findings showed that, as seen by the faculty members, there is a robust and clear connection between the emotional intelligence of HODs and their capacity to lead through transformation. Many separate probes (Barling et al., 2000; Palmer et al., 2001; Sivanathan, 2002; Wang & Huang, 2009) have been done to corroborate this.

HEIs should support successful leadership philosophies to inspire the desired motivation. The institutional culture of universities plays a significant impact in determining the leadership position. More colleges are likely to follow best practises, which will increase collaboration, delight workers, and boost output. It has been noted, nonetheless, that putting these practises into practise is not always simple.

Experiential education, such as outdoor leadership training, has been linked to increased levels of EI&TL, but further study is needed to see if this is indeed the, which is likely the most crucial question. Intuitively, it would seem to make sense that there is a correlation, as this study suggests. This and related issues should be investigated in more detail in the future study.

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