

The Relationship Among Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Styles of Law Enforcement Executives

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ABSTRACT

A quantitative correlational study that examined the relationship among leadership styles and emotional intelligence (EI) of law enforcement executives. Hypotheses were tested using data collected from 139 members of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Results indicated that EI had a statistically significant relationship with six leadership styles factors.

PROBLEM

Policing in the 21st century is becoming more complex and dynamic, as law enforcement executives deal with operational, political, and economic challenges. The research problem addressed was that literature indicates a strong relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership effectiveness (Kerr et al., 2006; Rosete & Ciarrochi, 2005), as well as leadership styles and employee outcomes (Andreescu & Vito, 2010; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Schafer, 2009); however, these relationships have not been investigated among law enforcement executives.

PURPOSE

- To help law enforcement executives understand the relationship between EI and leadership styles to address organizational change.
- To provide law enforcement executives with leadership information to addresses the operational, political, and economic challenges facing their agencies.

RELEVANT LITERATURE

The new reality in American policing for law enforcement executives required an examination of several EI and leadership models and theories.

Theoretical Framework

- situational leadership theory** (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977)
- full range leadership model** (Avolio & Bass, 2002)
- trait EI theory** (Petrides, 2009)
- leadership effectiveness, organizational change, and organizational outcomes.**

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- RQ1:** What, if any, correlation is there between a transformational leadership style and EI among law enforcement executives?
- RQ2:** What, if any, correlation is there between a transactional leadership style and EI among law enforcement executives?
- RQ3:** What, if any, correlation is there between a laissez-faire leadership style and EI among law enforcement executives?
- RQ4:** To what extent do two or more leadership styles collectively add independent information in predicting EI among law enforcement executives?

PROCEDURES

- A convenience sample of 139 participants out of 1,214 law enforcement executives participated in the study via an Internet survey. **(11% response rate)**
- Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short Form (TEIQue-SF)**
- Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X-Short)**
- Hypotheses were tested using Pearson's correlation coefficient and stepwise multiple linear regression analysis
- Statistical analyses consisted of a two-tailed test with a .05 alpha level

LIMITATIONS

- The use of a correlational design was one limitation of the study and causation was not determined.
- The use of a self-report questionnaire, which precluded me from asking probing questions to gain additional information about executive perceptions.
- The use of a convenience sampling method, in which participants were selected from one law enforcement organization.

CONCLUSIONS

- Policing in the 21st century is becoming more complex and dynamic, as law enforcement executives deal with traditional policing, community policing, homeland security, and economic hardship.
- The results of the study could be useful to law enforcement executives and management practitioners in making decisions regarding a wide range of organizational change and leadership development practices.
- Organizational leaders may want to place an emphasis on developing comprehensive leadership development programs that include full range leadership and EI.

DATA ANALYSIS

RQ	Data Elements	Statistical approach
RQ1	5 transformational leadership style scores and EI	Pearson's correlation coefficient
RQ2	3 transactional leadership style scores and EI	Pearson's correlation coefficient
RQ3	laissez-faire leadership style score and EI	Pearson's correlation coefficient
RQ4	9 leadership style scores and EI	Multiple linear regression analysis

FINDINGS

- Hypotheses 1-3 indicated that EI had a statistically significant relationship with all five measures of transformational leadership style and one transactional leadership style (contingent reward)**
- There was no evidence of a relationship between EI and a laissez-faire leadership style.
- Hypothesis 4 provided evidence that inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and management-by-exception (passive) leadership styles collectively better predict EI than any single leadership style alone.

SOCIAL CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- Expand leadership development programs that leverage a full range of leadership skills and EI traits to address the new reality of American policing to benefit communities and society.
- Increases awareness of law enforcement executives on how certain leadership styles and EI skills contribute to organizational effectiveness.
- Promotes future research in the area of law enforcement leadership and EI.

