

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE INFLUENCE IN LEADERSHIP

**Cristian PANAIT, Vasile BUCINSCHI**

”Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy, Braşov, Romania (cristian\_pnt@yahoo.com)

DOI: 10.19062/2247-3173.2018.20.67

**Abstract:** *In this paper, I analysed the data obtained from an emotional intelligence test I applied to a group of military students and related the results to a survey I applied to the same group of students, which had the purpose to identify the members most qualified to occupy a leadership position due to their qualities and attributes. The purpose of the study is to analyse the importance and influence of emotional intelligence on a group's leadership emergence and recognition.*

*The methods I used are both qualitative and quantitative research. The target group consists of all senior military students of the Romanian Air Force Academy, the author of the study being their direct commander. The Emotional Intelligence test was designed by Daniel Goleman, which contains 10 items that represent different scenarios which puts the subjects in different critical situations and the survey has 5 items with open answers that have the purpose to identify the recognised group leaders.*

*The conclusions highlight the importance of emotional intelligence as a quality of a future leader and verifies the hypothesis that someone who has the qualities of a leader is being recognised by his group.*

**Keywords:** *emotional intelligence, leadership, leader*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional Intelligence as a concept, was formulated for the first time by Wayne Leon Payne in 1985. He considered that Emotional Intelligence implies a creative relationship with fear, pain and desire. In 1990, John Mayer and Peter Salovey, two american professors, published two articles in which they tried to develop a scientific method to measure the differences between individuals from abilities point of view. They discovered that some individuals are more able to identify their own feelings and to those around them and also in solving problems regarding emotions. Emotional Intelligence theory started with those researches which combines feelings with rationality and rationality with feelings.

Emotional Intelligence became one of the most discussed subjects in the United States of America after Daniel Goleman, published his book with the title “Emotional Intelligence”. Daniel Goleman combined the previous research available with his own result from investigations and came up with a theory that succeeded to give definitions to this concept. He defined Emotional Intelligence as “the ability to understand and control our own emotions and those around us.”

Emotional Intelligence is a key ability of a leader. By the end of the studies in the Air Force Academy, a graduate needs to be able to command a platoon. Accepting the responsibility for himself and his subordinates in the military organisation according to high standards requires competencies, initiative, self motivation and trust in his own powers.

His behaviour, reactions, level of communication skills, decision making needs to be done many times under stressful situations, therefore a high level of EQ (emotional quotient) is in high demand.

## **2. PURPOSE**

This paper aims to underline the importance of Emotional Intelligence in leadership development during military studies by evaluating the level of emotional intelligence, a group of senior military students, have reached at the end of their studies.

Another purpose of this paper is to establish a cause – effect relation between the level of emotional intelligence and a leader recognition among a cohesive group. The group of students had been members of the same group for three years.

The first test has the purpose to identify the emotional quotient level of each member while the survey has the purpose to collect the data provided by the subjects regarding the members which have developed the most suited qualities to fulfil the duties of a leadership position within the academy. The leadership position refers to a platoon commander deputy position for a platoon of military students from first and second year of study.

The study was taking place at the beginning of third year of studies for the target group of students. One of the beneficial side effects of this study is that as being the direct commander of this group of students I reached also a better understanding of my subordinates and during the regular counselling and mentoring I had a more appropriate and scientific data to discuss certain issues, individually, also create personalised plans for their development.

## **3. OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of this study are:

- Collecting and analysing the data obtain from an emotional intelligence test filled out by the senior military students of Air Force Academy “Henri Coandă” – Braşov.

- Collecting and analysing the data from a survey of leadership emergence during their three year period of study within the Air Force Academy and identifying the leaders as recognised by the members of their group.

- Establishing the relation between the level of emotional intelligence from the test with the subjects that were recognised as suited for a leadership position, having the qualities and attributes of a leader, most developed.

Have a better understanding of my subordinates as a direct commander of the target group of the study.

## **4. RESULTS**

The test designed by Daniel Goleman consists of 10 items which presents different critical scenarios, situations that someone can experience. The test completion has as a purpose to emerge the subject into a scenario with empathy, or remember such an experience from the past, the answer to one of the reactions indicated as the most appropriate.

Item 1

The person is in a critical life threatening situation. Three of the answer variants relate to the ability to be conscious of personal emotions, to get to know the situation from the affective point of view and to answer adequately, balanced at unusual or stressful critical situations.

Item 2

A child is very upset, and the adults who stood around him are trying to help him overcome this negative emotional state. Parents, educators or adults in general, who have high levels of emotional intelligence, use the situation to work out their emotions, leading them to understand where the negative emotional state (grief) comes from, what determine to be hurt, to understand what they feel noticing the alternatives they can try in order to find appropriate solutions.

Item 3

An adult subject is in a situation which must be changed in order to obtain some benefits. This test item refers to intrinsic motivation, the ability to develop a plan to overcome obstacles, frustrations and the ability to track a goal. "Hope" is the target as a dimension of emotional intelligence.

Item 4

The scenario presented refers to a person who has repeated failures in a certain direction. Only one of the variants of the answer refers to the degree of optimism which can help the subject to overcome obstacles, to continue with perseverance without blaming himself or demoralize.

Item 5

This situation presented by the test aims the behaviour of the subject towards minorities, his attitude about the ethnic, cultural diversity, just one of the variants of the answer indicate the best way to create an open atmosphere of diversity. The focus of the item is upon the prejudice change through action and through adoption of a democratic model to manage anger.

Item 6

This item refers to the way an angry person can calm. The correct version of the answer refers to the ability of the person, the empathetic way to manage anger.

Item 7

This item represents a situation in which the subject is overwhelmed by aggressiveness, anger. The best response in the event of a dispute is to take a break, interval in which the person can calm down, and thus no longer distorts perception of the situation. After this period, the person may be much better prepared for a useful, productive discussion.

Item 8

While working in a group a solution to a delicate or a tedious problem must be found. The given answer must look like the members of the team need to ensure a harmonious relation, to allow personal idea expression in a natural and creative way.

Item 9

One adult can find himself in relatively stressful situations because, on the one hand, their personal shyness, and on the other hand, a relatively new unusual situation that emphasizes a state of fear. The answer shows the implication of the subject in new situations.

Item 10

A subject which welcome change in their activities is more prepared to engage with pleasure in a new type of action, learns faster how to obtain superior performances.

The Emotional intelligence levels are quantified as follows:

- >100 = Under average
- 100-150 = Average
- >150 = Above average
- 200 = Exceptional

The group of study consisted of 43 subjects, based on their answers the level of emotional intelligence is as follows:

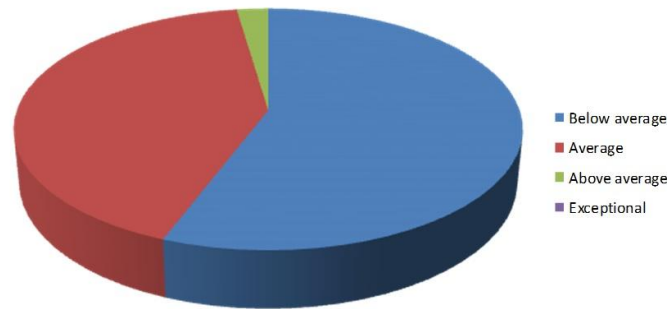


FIG. 1. EQ results

The second part of the study was a survey conducted by their direct commander and author of this study. The survey consisted of 5 items which were focused on identifying the subjects that are recognised as able to occupy a leadership position. Another purpose of this survey was to name the students that are in charge of commanding a group of students organised as a platoon from the first and second year of study.

Item 2 of the survey had the purpose of collecting data about the group leaders' recognition among group members.

Item 2: *Name at least 5 of your colleagues (importance order) which you find best suited to occupy a leadership position. State the reason of your choice.*

From 43 possible maximum answers, the subjects named a total of 14 colleagues that are suited to occupy a leadership position. The frequency was ranging from 1 to 41. All subjects named 5 of their colleagues in the order of importance as they evaluate them. The position they were named which represent the importance was quantified by giving each place an amount of points:

- First position = 5 points
- Second position = 4 points
- Third position = 3 points
- Forth position = 2 points
- Fifth position = 1 point

In the chart below I selected the first 14 frequencies (there were 14 leadership positions available). Subjects were named from 1 to 14 in the frequency order, however the value quantified from the position (as of importance which was a criteria of the survey item).

Table 1. Frequency and value on surveys Item 2

	Frequency	Importance value	EQ
Subject 1	41	180	140
Subject 2	34	115	100
Subject 3	28	85	105
Subject 4	25	86	140
Subject 5	17	59	150
Subject 6	16	29	105
Subject 7	15	32	120
Subject 8	14	41	105
Subject 9	11	24	80
Subject 10	9	22	100
Subject 11	8	18	120
Subject 12	6	13	85
Subject 13	4	12	105
Subject 14	4	6	120

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

After conduction this study, I draw the following conclusions:

- 56% of the student have an under average level of Emotional Intelligence, which needs to be developed through special curricula during their studies such as giving them as many possibilities as possible to discover the best course of action in multiple situations.

- The 14 subjects that were acknowledged as suited for a leadership position scored majority in the average range:

- 1 above average

- 11 average

- 2 below average

- Emotional Intelligence is a major factor in managing human interactions and moreover, leadership.

- The hypothesis that in order to become a good leader, a person needs to be recognised by his group, regardless his expertise (the 14 subjects are not all the ones with the highest grades and marks from the group).

At first glance, the fact that % of the students that participated in the research scored below average, might look suspicious. However, the EQ test that was used in this research is a test for adults. The participants age of the study group ranged from 20 to 23 years. Their age underlines the fact that in order to have a high EQ we need to pass through a series of development phases grounded on life experiences.

The group of 14 individuals who were identified as suited to occupy a leadership position within the academy, scored predominantly above the median of the entire group.

Emotional Intelligence is considered a powerful indicator for the standards they will reach in the management of human relations and also shows a disposition for one to become the leader of his group. A leader of his subordinates is understood beyond the formal authority that resides from rank and formal position. Emotional Intelligence is a part of the foundation on which, competencies are built, competencies that favours his recognition and appreciation among the members of the group or team.

The classifications resulted from grades, make no importance on who becomes a leader. The group I identify as suited for a leader position are not the group with the highest grades, therefore we cannot claim a causality between the grades obtained through evaluations and the recognition among a group as leaders.

It is well known that the correlation between inter – section researches, cannot prove causality, especially in the situations when we don't know which variable came first. Therefore, it is not suited for me to make the affirmation that EQ level is the cause of leader emergence or appreciation as suited leaders within a group of individuals. Higher EQ leaders are more likely to make better decisions, engage and influence more effectively and create the right atmosphere for the task received. Emotional Intelligence is a core skill grounded in science that emphasizes performance. Studies show that between 48% and 80% of what differentiates high and low performing leaders can be attributed to EI.

The decisions we make in our military life are many times based on our emotions and emotional intelligence. It makes sense that when individuals have a great sense of communication and organizational skills, they will be lead to having the ability to make proper decisions and interactions with others. Emotional intelligence is a trait that can always be nurtured and strengthened in all of us, but without having a developed sense of it, the individuals will lack social functioning.

Becoming more aware of the impacts and the differences of our own EQ and IQ can make us better leaders because being true to oneself is the best starting point in any form of development, for leadership as a bigger goal. In this global age, it is necessary to compile a high sense of emotional awareness.

## **REFERENCES**

- [1] Goleman, D. "Emotional Intelligence". New York, Bontom Books, 1995;
- [2] Shackelton, V. "Business Leadership". London: Routledge, 1995;
- [3] Roco, M. "Creativitate și Inteligență Emoțională". București, Ed. Polirom, 2001;
- [4] Richard Paul, „Critical Thinking: What Every Person Needs To Survive In A Rapidly Changing World”, Santa Rosa, 1993;
- [5] Peter Facione, "Critical Thinking" A Statement of Expert Consensus for the Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction, Millbrae, 1990;
- [6] Manfred Kets de Vries, „Leadership: Artă și măiestria de a conduce”, Editura Codecs, București, 2003;
- [7] Gheorghe Arădăvoaice, Comandantul și arta de a conduce, Editura Sylvi, București, 2000;
- [8] Bass, B. VMI's High Contrast Culture: A setting for the development of civilian and military leaders. Binghamton, New York: Center for Leadership Studies, 1992;
- [9] Bass, B. Stogdill's handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research. New York: Free Press, 1981;
- [10] Fiedler, F., & Garcia, J. New approaches to effective leadership: Cognitive resources and organizational performance. New York: Wiley, 1987;
- [11] Yammarino, F. & BASS, B. Person and situation-views of leadership: A multiple level of analysis approach. Leadership Quarterly, 1991.