SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.574 Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0003 ISSN: 2250 – 2017
International Journal of Global Economic Light (JGEL)
Volume: 11 | Issue: 12 |December 2025 -Peer Reviewed Journal

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE: THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Mr. Basavaraj M Naik[a], Mrs. Bhagyashree Hiremani [b]
Ms. Shweta Siddannavar [c]

[a] *Teaching Faculty, Department of Commerce, Sangolli Rayanna First Grade Constituent College, Belagavi, Karntaka, India.*
[b] *Teaching Faculty, Department of Commerce, Sangolli Rayanna First Grade Constituent College, Belagavi, Karntaka, India.*
[c] *Teaching Faculty, Department of Studies & Research in Commerce, Bagalkot University Jamkhandi, Karntaka, India*

Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra25293
DOI No: 10.36713/epra25293

ABSTRACT

Organisational change is a key aspect of today's dynamic business environment, requiring leaders who can guide employees effectively. Emotional intelligence (EI) – the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others – has emerged as a crucial leadership competency. This study examines the relationship between leaders' EI and leadership effectiveness during organisational change. Using a mixed-method approach, data were collected from 220 employees and 25 leaders across IT, finance, and manufacturing sectors. Quantitative analysis included correlation and regression to assess the impact of EI on leadership outcomes, while thematic analysis of interviews provided qualitative insights. Results indicate that leaders with higher EI demonstrate superior communication, c. onflict resolution, and employee engagement, resulting in smoother change adoption. Recommendations for developing Emotional Intelligence in leadership are provided to enhance organisational adaptability and performance.

KEYWORDS: *Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement, Change Management,*

1. INTRODUCTION

Organisational change—prompted by technological advancements, market demands, mergers, and restructuring—is essential for competitiveness and growth. Effective leadership is critical to guide employees through transitions, reduce resistance, and ensure successful implementation of change initiatives (Shanti et al., 2025; Bajaj, 2025). Emotional intelligence (EI) enables leaders to manage their emotions, understand employees' emotional responses, and foster engagement and trust during change (Goleman, 1998; Mayer & Salovey, 2021). Despite widespread acknowledgement of EI's importance, there is limited empirical research investigating its role in leadership effectiveness specifically during organisational change across multiple industries (Kour & Ansari, 2025; Gabhane et al., 2025). This study addresses this gap by exploring how EI competencies—self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills—influence leadership effectiveness, employee engagement, and organisational outcomes during change.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Examine the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing leadership effectiveness during organisational change.
2. Identify which EI competencies most strongly influence change management success.
3. Assess the relationship between EI-driven leadership and employee engagement, trust, and acceptance of change.
4. Provide actionable recommendations for developing EI in leaders to improve organisational change outcomes.

SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.574 Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0003 ISSN: 2250 – 2017
International Journal of Global Economic Light (JGEL)
Volume: 11 | Issue: 12 |December 2025 -Peer Reviewed Journal

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

EI has been widely acknowledged as a predictor of leadership success. Leaders with high EI demonstrate effective communication, conflict resolution, and relationship management (Goleman, 1998; Boyatzis & McKee, 2021; Floman et al., 2024). Recent studies highlight that EI enhances leaders' ability to handle workplace stress and guide teams during complex organisational challenges (Bhatt, 2023; Bajaj, 2025).

3.2 EI in Organisational Change

Organisational change often triggers uncertainty and resistance among employees. Leaders with high EI can recognize emotional responses, address concerns empathetically, and build trust, increasing employees' adaptability (Jordan & Troth, 2020; Shanti et al., 2025). Meta-analyses confirm that EI positively influences change management success by reducing resistance and enhancing engagement (Narendran et al., 2024).

3.3 Organisational Outcomes and EI

High EI leadership correlates with employee engagement, satisfaction, trust, and performance during change (Li & Mohamed Nasir, 2024; Kour & Ansari, 2025). Leaders who combine self-regulation, empathy, and social skills foster collaboration, improve morale, and facilitate smooth transitions (Ćwiąkała et al., 2025; Praveen, 2025).

3.4 Research Gap

While EI's role in leadership is documented, few studies examine its **specific impact during organisational change** across multiple sectors and geographical contexts, particularly with recent 2023–2025 empirical evidence.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

A **mixed-method approach** was adopted:

- **Quantitative:** Surveys measuring leaders' EI and leadership effectiveness.
- **Qualitative:** Semi-structured interviews exploring EI practices during organisational change.

4.2 Sample

- **Employees:** 220 respondents from IT, finance, and manufacturing sectors.
- **Leaders:** 25 senior managers responsible for change initiatives.

4.3 Data Collection Tools

- **Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (2002)**
- **Leadership Effectiveness Questionnaire**
- Semi-structured interview guide

4.4 Data Analysis

- **Quantitative:** Correlation and regression to examine the relationship between EI and leadership effectiveness.
- **Qualitative:** Thematic analysis to identify key EI practices facilitating successful change.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Demographic Profile

Table 1: Respondent Demographics

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	120	54.5%
Female	100	45.5%
Age 25–34	90	40.9%
Age 35–44	85	38.6%
Age 45+	45	20.5%
IT	85	38.6%
Finance	70	31.8%
Manufacturing	65	29.6%

5.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variables	EI	Leadership Effectiveness	Employee Engagement
EI	1.00	0.71	0.65
Leadership Effectiveness	0.71	1.00	0.73
Employee Engagement	0.65	0.73	1.00

Interpretation: EI positively correlates with leadership effectiveness and employee engagement (Shanti et al., 2025; Bahshwan, 2024).

5.3 Regression Analysis

Table 3: Effect of EI on Leadership Effectiveness

Predictor	Beta (β)	Significance (p)
Emotional Intelligence	0.71	<0.001

Interpretation: EI significantly predicts leadership effectiveness during organisational change (Dhingra & Rani, 2024).

5.4 Qualitative Findings

- Leaders with high EI actively listen, acknowledge employee concerns, and communicate changes clearly (Carter, 2024; Ćwiąkała et al., 2025).
- Empathy and social skills reduce resistance and foster trust.
- Self-regulation enables rational decision-making during stressful periods (Floman et al., 2024; Praveen, 2025).

6. DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that EI is a critical driver of leadership effectiveness during organisational change. Leaders with high EI build trust, increase engagement, and foster adaptability among employees. These results are consistent with prior research (Goleman, 1998; Boyatzis & McKee, 2021) and are reinforced by recent studies from 2023–2025 (Shanti et al., 2025; Bajaj, 2025; Kour & Ansari, 2025). Developing EI competencies—self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills—can significantly enhance change management success.

7. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

1. **EI Training:** Implement programs to develop EI in leaders.
2. **Transparent Communication:** Maintain open channels during change.
3. **Employee Involvement:** Encourage participatory decision-making to strengthen trust.
4. **Emphasis on Empathy:** Recognize emotional challenges employees face during transitions (Li & Mohamed Nasir, 2024; Ćwiąkała et al., 2025).

8. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- **Scope:** Covers IT, finance, and manufacturing sectors.
- **Limitations**
  - Self-reported surveys may contain bias.
  - Cross-sectional design limits causal inference.
  - Cultural and organisational differences may affect generalisability.

9. CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence is vital for effective leadership during organisational change. Leaders with high EI demonstrate superior communication, empathy, and conflict management skills, leading to higher employee engagement, trust, and successful adoption of change. Organisations investing in EI development can achieve smoother transitions, improved performance, and stronger employee morale. **Leadership effectiveness during change is fundamentally linked to emotional intelligence**, balancing organisational goals with human considerations.

REFERENCES

1. *Bajaj, T. (2025). The role of emotional intelligence in leadership transformation: A systematic review of emerging trends and practices. Shodh Manjusha: An International Multidisciplinary Journal, 2(1), 135–154.*
2. *Kour, K., & Ansari, S. A. (2025). The role of leadership emotional intelligence in shaping employee engagement and organizational commitment in IT companies. Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management, 10(35s).*
3. *Gabhane, D., Sharma, A., Ahmad, F., Katekhaye, D., & Jayadeva, S. M. (2025). The role of emotional intelligence in transforming HR leadership. South Eastern European Journal of Public Health. https://doi.org/10.70135/seejph.vi.3842*
4. *Bahshwan, A. F. (2024). The role of emotional intelligence in effective leadership. International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology, 13(05).*
5. *Dhingra, A., & Rani, B. (2024). Exploring the impact of emotional intelligence and leadership style on organizational growth: A study of key performance indicators. ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts, 5(1), 1602–1610. https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.4006*
6. *Carter, A. (2024). Impact of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness in corporate settings in South Africa. International Journal of Psychology, 9(6), 55–65.*
7. *Narendran, S., Jaiswal, R., S., R., & Mishra, A. K. (2024). Exploring the impact of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness: A meta-analysis in management studies. Educational Administration: Theory and Practice, 30(4), 1668–1673.*
8. *"Emotional intelligence, leadership, and work teams: A hybrid literature review." (2023). Heliyon, 9(10), e20356. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e20356*
9. *Naznin, H. (2024). The correlation between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership behavior: Insights and implications. Frontline Marketing, Management and Economics Journal, 4(10), 9–15.*
10. *Li, Z., & Mohamed Nasir, N. S. (2024). Transformational leadership and employee well-being: The role of emotional intelligence and organisational culture in China. Uniglobal Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 3(2), 317–322. https://doi.org/10.53797/ujssh.v3i2.32.2024*
11. *Damnjanović, A., & Simonović, M. (2023). Digital transformation and emotional intelligence of leaders. Journal of Humanities and Nature, 1(1), 25. https://doi.org/10.64051/jhn.v1i1.25*
12. *Praveen, K. C. (2025). The role of emotional intelligence in change management: A case study approach. Jabalpur Journal of Organizational and Developmental Studies, 1(1).*
13. *Ćwiąkała, J., Gajda, W., Ćwiąkała, M., Górka, E., Baran, D., Wojak, G., Mrzygłód, P., Frasunkiewicz, M., Ręczajski, P., & Piwnik, J. (2025). The importance of emotional intelligence in leadership for building an effective team. arXiv. https://arxiv.org/abs/2510.07004*
14. *Floman, J. L., Ponnock, A., Jain, J., & Brackett, M. A. (2024). Emotionally intelligent school leadership predicts educator well-being before and during a crisis. Frontiers in Psychology, 14, 1159382. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1159382*
15. *Bhatt, A. S. (2023). The role of emotional intelligence in leadership development: A multi-industry analysis of performance outcomes. ESP Journal, 9(10), 3117.*
16. *IJNRD Journal. (2024). Leadership and emotional intelligence: Concept, relevance and implications. IJNRD Journal, 9(5).*
17. *Journal of Marketing & Social Research. (2025). The role of emotional intelligence in enhancing leadership effectiveness: A conceptual perspective. https://doi.org/10.61336/jmsr/25-05-54*
18. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science. (2025). Linking emotional intelligence to transformational leadership: Implications for the Indian IT-BPO industry. https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.909000512*
19. *Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2021). Resonant leadership: Renewing yourself and connecting with others through mindfulness, hope, and compassion (2nd ed.). Harvard Business Review Press.*
20. *Goleman, D. (1998). Working with emotional intelligence. Bantam Books.*
21. *Jordan, P. J., & Troth, A. C. (2020). Emotional intelligence and conflict resolution in teams: A multi-level study. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 41(7), 689–705. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2431*
22. *Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (2021). The nature of emotional intelligence. Cambridge University Press.*
23. *Wong, C. S., & Law, K. S. (2002). The effects of leader and follower emotional intelligence on performance and attitude: An exploratory study. Leadership Quarterly, 13(3), 243–274. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(02)00099-1*