



INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract:

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a crucial attribute for effective leadership in educational institutions, as it enhances decision-making, interpersonal relationships, and organisational outcomes. This systematic literature review explores the influence of EI on the teachers' working environment, focusing on its impact on the organisational climate. The inclusion criteria include studies that investigated the impact of the educational leader's EI on the work environment within public secondary schools worldwide, written in English peer-reviewed articles published no later than 2015, and articles that employed qualitative and quantitative methods from the ERIC database. This study found that EI plays a significant role in the work environment of education leaders, contributing to improved relationships, conflict resolution, teacher professionalism, and job satisfaction. However, challenges such as inadequate training, traditional leadership styles, and external factors need to be addressed to ensure the success of EI-based practices in education. Professional development trainings to enhance the emotional intelligence skills of the educational leaders and to foster an EI culture in the school organisation are recommended to address the challenges.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, educational leaders, organisational climate, teachers, principal

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1. Introduction

Educational institutions' complexity and dynamic systems necessitate leaders who play a vital role in forming a conducive working environment for the teachers. Educational leaders are expected to navigate change and foster inclusive environments. These leadership skills are far beyond their technical knowledge and their traditional leadership approaches. EI is regarded as a main attribute of effective leadership, which offers the potential to enhance leadership aspects like decision-making, interpersonal relationships and organisation outcomes.

Through this systematic literature review, the influence of emotional intelligence in the context of educational leadership will be explored, focusing on EI's impact on the teachers' working environment. It has been emphasized that organisational climate has a close relationship with leadership behaviours, and it is based on the collective perceptions of an educational institution's work conditions (Jihan *et al.*, 2024). When leaders have high EI, they create and promote a positive, collaborative and inclusive workplace culture. Managing their own emotions (Paschal *et al.*, 2024), understanding the team's emotional dynamics, and building trust are all critical to fostering a supportive and productive work environment. Though EI is not an inborn trait, it is through self-awareness, training, and reflective practice that it can be acquired. Such factors can guide educational institutions in designing the appropriate and suitable professional development programs to develop and enhance the emotional intelligence of leaders, which results in positive outcomes for the organisation. By synthesising the existing research, the role of EI in educational leadership is comprehensively understood and knowing the impact of an academic leader's EI on organisational climate contributes to the evidence in emphasising the importance of EI in promoting better educational settings.

This review aims to answer the question:

- How does educational leaders' emotional intelligence impact the organisational climate?

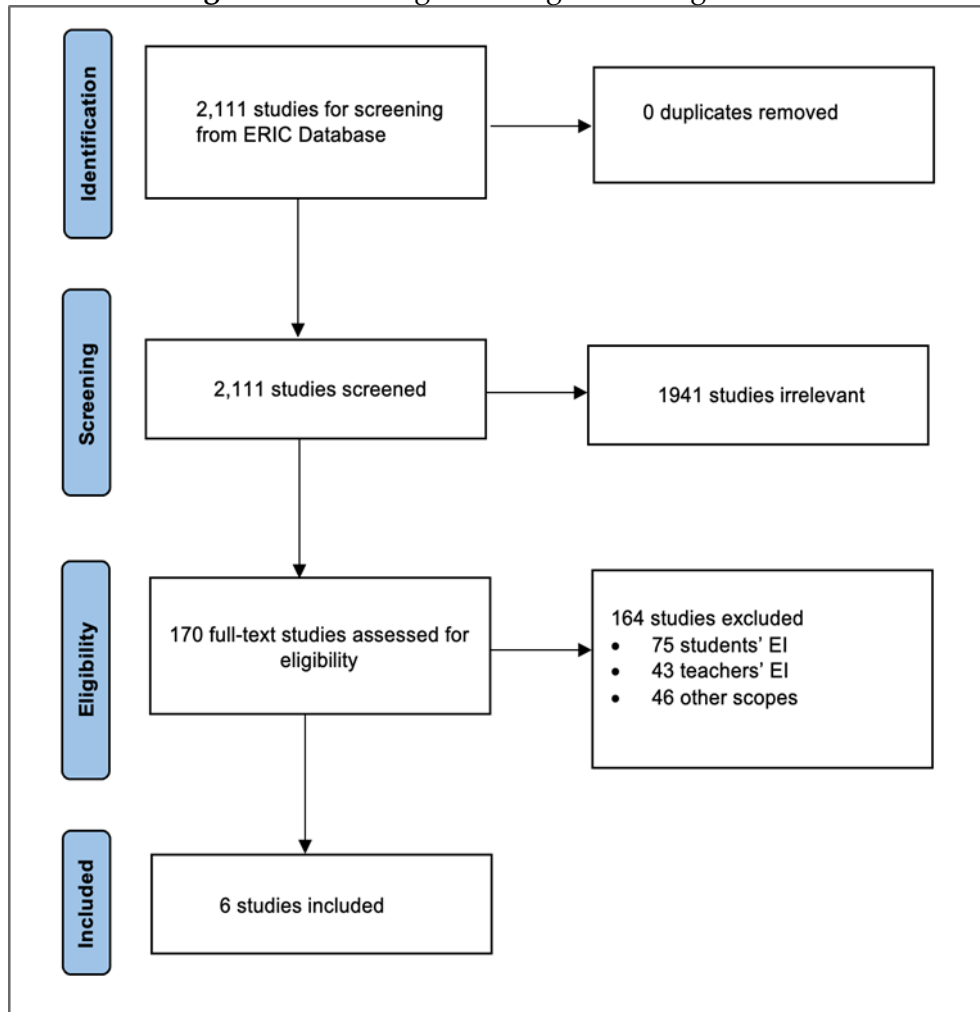
2. Methods

This review adheres to the conditions adapted from Page *et al.* (2021) Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-analysis (PRISMA), which consists of a set of guidelines for researchers to conduct and report evidence-based literature reviews. It has two (2) key components, namely: the PRISMA Checklist, which provides details on how to report, and the Flow Diagram that illustrates the number of identified, screened, included and excluded studies. The inclusion and exclusion criteria of the systematic literature review are established to refine the scope and maintain the relevance and quality of the chosen studies. The first inclusion criteria are the studies that investigated the impact of the educational leader's EI on the organisational climate within public secondary schools worldwide, involving principals and department heads. Another

inclusion is the written in English peer-reviewed articles published no later than 2015 to ensure timely relevance. In addition, research that employed the qualitative method, where the experiences, perceptions and behaviour of the participants are gathered via interviews, is sought in this review. In addition, articles that utilise quantitative methods of research are also included. On the other hand, the review excludes EI studies that deviated from the context of the educational leadership of principals and department heads in the public secondary school setting. Articles that are peer-reviewed but written in other languages, and participants from basic education, private secondary schools, colleges, and universities are also part of the exclusion criteria.

The key phrase “*emotional intelligence*” was encoded and searched using the ERIC database, resulting in 2,111 peer-reviewed articles. However, when the inclusion criteria were applied, the ERIC database searched peer-reviewed journal articles on EI, resulting in 170 articles. The inclusions encoded are the publication date from 2015 to 2024, Emotional intelligence and secondary education as descriptors, journal articles as publication type, and secondary education for the level. The research locale is not limited to a specific country or geographic area due to the minimal studies conducted concerning the emotional intelligence of school leaders in public secondary schools. During the eligibility phase, each title of the journal article, which is determined to be eligible based on the inclusion criteria set for the database, is reviewed for its relevance. Once an article passes the title screening, its Abstract and full-text are evaluated for relevance. Out of the 170 articles regarded as relevant to the review topic, 164 are identified as ineligible, as these articles are about the teacher’s or student’s emotional intelligence, while some articles are unrelated to education or are from non-educational organisation.

Figure 1: Flow diagram using PRISMA guidelines



3. Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the six (6) studies included based on the set criteria for the review. Table 1 shows the journal article title, author/s, published year, type of research and findings of each research article relevant to the research question.

Table 1: List of Studies Included in the Review

Title	Author/s	Year Published	Type of Research	Findings
1. The Influence of Emotional Intelligence and School Principal Leadership on Teacher Work Behavior	Ramlah Sukirman Nurdjan; Hilal Mahmud	2023	Quantitative	Principal's EI and leadership are significant to teachers' behaviour at the workplace.
2. Considering Emotional Intelligence as a Leadership Competency for Lesotho Secondary School Principals	Sepiriti Sepiriti	2023	Qualitative	Principal's EI sustains strong and positive relationships at school.

3. Arab Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of Trust and Regulation and Their Contribution to School Processes	Khalid Arar	2018	Qualitative	Trust between principal and teachers has significant effects to the entire school.
4. The Effect of Leadership, Organizational Culture, Emotional Intelligence, and Job Satisfaction on Performance	Muhammad Ilyas; Tamrin Abdullah	2016	Quantitative	Principal's quality of leadership positively affects teachers' performance at work.
5. The relationship between emotional intelligence of school principals in managing change and teacher attitudes towards change	Mei Kin Tai; Omar Abdull Kareem	2018	Quantitative	School principal's EI and management skills when incorporated result to effective school leadership.
6. Teachers' perceptions of the utilisation of Emotional Intelligence by their school principals to manage mandated curriculum change processes	Bennie Grobler; Connie Moloi; Sunita Thakhordas	2016	Quantitative	School leader's EI affects the implementation of the curriculum changes.

4. Results

"The Influence of Emotional Intelligence and School Principal Leadership on Teacher Work Behavior" by Nurdjan and Mahmud (2023) is a study that aims to identify the impact of two variables, the emotional intelligence and leadership of school principals, on teachers' work behaviours in Palopo, Indonesia, secondary schools. To identify the impact of the two variables, the quantitative research method is used, where the collected numerical data undergo statistical treatments, in addition to the ex-post facto causal method, a means to study events or phenomena that have happened to see how they can cause another. Through random sampling, 77 teachers from different schools were chosen as respondents to questionnaires. Multiple linear regression, t-tests, and F-tests were performed by SPSS software to find out relationships. It has been identified that the principal's high level of emotional intelligence, the ability to understand one's feelings and the feelings of subordinates, is significant in promoting better teacher work behaviour. In addition, it is because of the principal's good leadership that encouraged teachers were encouraged to show utmost professionalism. It has been concluded in the study that both emotional intelligence and leadership of principals are determinants of teacher behaviour determinants, considering the two variables significant to teacher work behaviour in schools. Therefore, the study implies that teachers exhibit a higher standard of performance and positive behaviour in the workplace when leaders are equipped with leadership skills and endowed with the capacity to handle others emphatically, which follows the argument of Noori, Orfan, and Noori (2023) that suggests a leader's EI enhances the teachers' emotional well-being and professionalism.

“Considering Emotional Intelligence as a Leadership Competency for Lesotho Secondary School Principals” by Sepiriti (2023) explores how emotional intelligence (EI) support school leaders like principals to perform their jobs excellently in Maseru, Lesotho. Participants of the research consisted of principals, teachers and parents, with each group having five, using semi-structured interview questions to be able to understand their experiences and feelings. Based on the study's findings, principals' emotional intelligence is crucial in building strong relationships, resolving conflicts and staying calm and composed during challenging situations. Thus, the school climate remains positive while smooth working relationships are maintained. Further findings are the strategies to improve the principals' emotional intelligence, such as undergoing self-enrichment activities for further education and self-study and practising EI skills by attending structured training programs organised by the ministry. Finally, the researcher recommends that the principals be given tests before assuming the position to assess their emotional intelligence and ensure that they are endowed with the required emotional intelligence skills. The ministry should also regularly offer professional development programs to enhance the EI skills of the school leaders. Therefore, it implies the necessity of EI-related professional development training to equip educational leaders like principals with the knowledge and skills on how to maintain and promote better relationships and a positive workplace, as supported by Hsieh *et al.* (2024) when emphasising the importance of EI in school leadership and that developing principals' EI fosters a positive educational environment that actualises teachers' potentials and contribution in the community.

“Arab Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of Trust and Regulation and Their Contribution to School Processes” by Arar (2018) investigates the school principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding trust and further discovers the factors that promote or hinder the nurturing of trust in schools. The researcher used qualitative methodology, where detailed information was collected from a specific group of participants in the form of semi-structured and in-depth interviews that consisted of guide questions to 20 secondary school principals and 15 secondary school teachers. The outcome of the research showed that trust is perceived by the participants as very significant in the school context, and it contributed to the performance of the school, improved students' academic performance and ameliorated the way principals and teachers converse with each other. According to Hsieh *et al.* (2024), organisational trust, which is disposed of by emotionally intelligent principals, is an important factor in establishing a positive workplace environment. When principals trust their subordinates, a positive interpersonal relationship is established, and the performance of the entire school and its students is ameliorated, which is supported by Alzaabi & Al Khaimah (2023) when trust is claimed as a significant factor that contributes to effective leadership. Based on teachers' point of view, they opined that they should be given more freedom to make decisions, work support, and show understanding and empathy from the school principals. Thus, it refers to the emotional intelligence of the principals and the importance of the principal's awareness and management of their own emotions. On the

contrary, family and political connections in the context of the research are discovered to be more influential than trusting each other. Moreover, the Ministry's rules and regulations for the schools were perceived as hindrances for the people in the educational community to trust each other.

"The Effect of Leadership, Organizational Culture, Emotional Intelligence, and Job Satisfaction on Performance" by Ilyas and Abdullah (2016) investigates how teachers' work performance in six government secondary schools in Palopo, Indonesia, is affected by leadership, organisational culture, teachers' understanding and managing emotions and their job satisfaction. The quantitative approach is employed by requesting a sample of 78 teachers to answer a survey questionnaire. The gathered data is analysed through path analysis and linear regression to find out the relationship between the variables. The result showed that having good leadership enhances teacher performance in a way that leaders provide guidance and encouragement and promote respect, while emotionally intelligent teachers can understand and control emotions, resulting in better job performance since they can establish positive relationships with their co-teachers and stay calm when issues arise, resulting in happier teachers at work. Teachers' better performance creates a peaceful and organised workplace when they feel happy and given support at work, while having good leaders in school who are fair and respectful, promotes happier teachers in the organisation, creating a positive environment which encourages teachers to work in teams and conceive unconventional ideas. This implies that a leader's attitudes towards his subordinates affect the attitude and performance of the workers in an organisation (Kuchinke, 1998). Based on the findings, the researchers suggested that leadership should be improved in schools to encourage teachers to perform better. However, teachers should also undergo training to know how to handle and understand their emotions. A friendly and inclusive workplace is to be promoted by schools to make their teachers happy and satisfied, while school policies should secure fairness and supportive outcomes to motivate and improve teachers' performance.

"The relationship between emotional intelligence of school principals in managing change and teacher attitudes towards change" by Tai and Abdull Kareem (2018) aims to investigate the relationship involved between *"principal change leadership emotional intelligence (PCLEI) and teacher attitudes towards change (TATC)"* in Malaysian high schools. These schools are classified as *"Malaysian High-Performing Secondary Schools (HPSS), Mediocre-Performing Secondary Schools (MPSS), and Low-Performing Secondary Schools (LPSS)"*. A total of 1,195 teachers answered a survey questionnaire from the three mentioned schools. The research resulted in a positive correlation between *"principal change leadership emotional intelligence (PCLEI) and teacher attitudes towards change (TATC)"* and a strong relationship between Malaysian High-Performing Secondary Schools (HPSS) and Mediocre-Performing Secondary Schools (MPSS), while a moderate relationship in Low-Performing Secondary Schools (LPSS). The study suggested that the emotional intelligence aspect of leadership in the school context should be given the utmost attention since the traditional type of leadership is inadequate to cater for the contemporary educational situations of schools. A leadership that is EI-based has positive

effects on the academic environment as emotionally intelligent principals can better manage their own and others' emotions, resulting in effective interpersonal communication and dispute resolutions at the workplace (Angwaomaodoko, 2024; Su, Zeng & Zhao, 2024)

"Teachers' perceptions of the utilisation of Emotional Intelligence by their school principals to manage mandated curriculum change processes" by Grobler, Moloi and Thakhordas (2016) investigates the perception of teachers on how school leaders manage curriculum changes and how leaders employ their emotional intelligence to manage these curriculum changes. A survey questionnaire was distributed to 600 teacher respondents in Johannesburg, Africa. The questionnaire covers the respondent's background information, perceptions on curriculum changes and the school leaders' application of emotional intelligence. The study revealed that curriculum changes can be successfully implemented when school leaders use emotional intelligence, which implies that principals are school leaders who should possess the ability to understand and perceive the teachers' and students' needs and concerns when implementing curriculum changes in schools (Love, 2014). However, the study further reveals that teachers' perceptions of emotional intelligence use vary depending on the gender, type of school and socio-economic status. Based on the findings, the researchers suggested that training on emotional intelligence must be offered to leaders and teachers so that they can cope with and manage changes related to the schools' curriculum and create a supportive and communicative educational environment.

5. Discussion

This section answers the research question: "How does educational leaders' emotional intelligence impact the organisational climate?" Specifically, the studies present several positive impacts of EI on the organisational climate. First, education leaders can build strong relationships with their teachers. This indicates that leaders who understand their own behaviour and others' can promote positive relationships (Paschal *et al.*, 2024) with other stakeholders, such as students, teachers, and parents. Floman *et al.* (2024) found a correlation between leaders' emotional management capabilities and enhanced educator well-being, which aligns with this result. This finding supports a theory on humanistic psychology cited by Farsi (2022) that puts emphasis on the importance of positive relationships and personal growth. Furthermore, the theory acknowledges that a strong relationship between a leader and their teachers can nurture a supportive environment. Second, education leaders can resolve conflicts effectively. Through EI, leaders can address disputes with composure and constructiveness that will result in favourable outcomes. This finding supports the conflict resolution theory, which asserts that a leader possessing strong EI skills can effectively manage conflicts (Sharma, Dhanta & Sharma, 2024). Third, the emotional intelligence of education leaders contributes to fostering a positive school climate. This denotes that principals' emotional intelligence may enhance a healthy school climate by cultivating a sense of belonging, trust, and respect. Fourth,

education leaders' EI promotes teacher professionalism. By demonstrating exemplary behaviours and providing support, leaders can influence their teachers to exhibit professionalism and commitment. The findings align with Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy, in which a leader's positive influence can enhance teachers' self-efficacy, resulting in increased motivation and performance. Lastly, the EI of education leaders has the potential to enhance job satisfaction, thereby contributing to a high employee retention rate (Alonderiene & Pilkiene, 2020). When they feel valued, supported, and understood by their leaders, teachers are more satisfied and stay. In the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory (Miner, 2015), various factors such as relationships with colleagues and supervisors influence job satisfaction, implying that a positive relationship quality between the leader and subordinates or vice versa affects one's satisfaction at work.

On the other hand, there are challenges to consider based on the results of the six studies presented. These obstacles include a lack of proper training, the presence of traditional leadership styles, and other external factors. Regarding insufficient training, several education leaders lack formal education in EI, which may hinder their ability to clearly understand the role of EI in their leadership. Another challenge that is related to the lack of training is the conventional leadership style that principals use. This means that certain leaders rely on traditional authoritarian leadership styles, which are actually less favourable in promoting a conducive work environment (Pizzolitto *et al.*, 2022). Finally, external factors like bureaucratic constraints and limited resources can negatively impact the EI of education leaders (Geropoulos *et al.*, 2022) in an organisational setting. The former suggests that strict adherence to regulations can stifle autonomy and creativity, leading to frustration and reduced job satisfaction, while the latter suggests that limited resources restrict professional development opportunities to only higher levels of management, like principals. This, in turn, deprives the teacher of the chance to learn EI-based practices. Given these challenges, education leaders require proper training that focuses on both enhancing EI skills and leadership development (Zelenco *et.al.*, 2024). The training will aid education leaders in developing their EI skills, which will ultimately benefit the organisation by employing EI-based practices, while the leadership development will enable the leaders to implement coaching and mentoring for the teachers. Finally, we can evaluate leadership development and its impact on the organisation if it works. Aside from training, the organisations need to push for a culture of EI, which is possible by encouraging all the members, not just the leaders, to communicate openly, promote empathy, and encourage active listening within the academic community. When people speak openly, the organisation can establish a feedback mechanism to identify issues related to EI leadership. Aside from communication, a culture that promotes empathy will help the leaders understand their subordinates regarding the latter's concerns or issues related to the job. Open communication and empathy require active listening, especially from leaders. It is through active listening that a leader to be a competent communicator and empathetic leader.

6. Recommendations

Based on the studies included in the review, the recommendations are as follows. First, consider other studies conducted in non-Asian and non-Arab countries. In the selected studies, participants were either Asian or African respondents. This implies that the findings failed to take into account other cultural factors that could influence organisations in other regions, including America, Antarctica, Europe, and Australia. Second, conduct longitudinal research to analyse the long-term effects of EI and educational leadership not just on organisational climate but also on student outcomes. Finally, conduct systematic evaluations of the organisational climate and its relationship with the EI of the leaders to identify areas for improvement and assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the EI of education leaders has the potential to cultivate strong relationships with their teachers, effectively resolve conflicts, foster a positive school climate, promote teacher professionalism, and ultimately lead to an improvement in job satisfaction. This, in turn, can lead to a high employee retention rate. However, the review identifies some challenges, including inadequate training, traditional leadership styles, and external factors like bureaucratic constraints and limited resources. Education leaders must receive proper training that not only enhances their EI skills and leadership development but also fosters an EI culture within the organisation to effectively manage these challenges. This is possible by encouraging all the members, not just the leaders, to communicate openly, promote empathy, and encourage active listening within the academic community.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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