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Exploring the Connection between Emotional Intelligence and Strategic Leadership: Perspectives from Medium-Sized Enterprises in Algeria

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Abstract:

This study endeavors to explore the impact of various dimensions of emotional intelligence on the attainment of strategic leadership qualities. By examining how emotional intelligence dimensions influence strategic leadership, a questionnaire was distributed to a random sample of 400 individuals, comprising senior and middle management personnel from economic institutions in Algiers, Boumerdes, Skikda, and Oued Souf.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS V25 software. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship, at a predetermined significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), between emotional intelligence dimensions and strategic leadership. Furthermore, the study suggests that the application of emotional intelligence dimensions has a discernible impact on strategic leadership.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence-strategic leadership-dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Introduction

The world is witnessing profound changes that impose numerous challenges on institutions. Leadership is considered one of the essential requirements to overcome these challenges. However, success in leadership requires more than just organizational skills; leadership is no longer merely an administrative process but rather a science, an art, and intelligence.

On the other hand, numerous studies have demonstrated that human relationships play a significant role and have a crucial impact on the success of an institution. Emotional intelligence reflects the ability to manage emotions in a way that allows for effective decision-making and the establishment of relationships

within the institution.

In this context, the concepts of strategic leadership and emotional intelligence emerge as key elements that pose a challenge and opportunity for leaders in the era of transformation and a crucial step in building an environment that supports creativity and success in the face of competition.

Emotional intelligence plays a role in enabling leadership to exploit the possibilities available to serve the organization. With rapid shifts in the business environment and strategic leadership developments, understanding emotional intelligence and its implications for strategic leadership has become a vital focus.

1.1. The Problem of the Study:

Through this article, we will try to answer the following main question:

What is the role of emotional intelligence in achieving of strategic leadership in the sample under study?

1.2. Sub-questions:

To answer this problem, the following sub-questions can be formulated:

-Is there a relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership in the studied sample?

-Do the dimensions of emotional intelligence affect strategic leadership?

1.3. Hypotheses:

To answer the problem of the study, the following hypotheses were developed:

The first main hypothesis (H1): There is a statistically significant correlation at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the dimensions of the independent variable (emotional intelligence and the dependent variable strategic leadership in the studied sample).

The second main hypothesis (H2): There is a statistically significant effect relationship at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the dimensions of the independent variable (emotional intelligence and the dependent variable Strategic leadership in the studied sample

1.4. Study Objectives :

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- Highlight what emotional intelligence and strategic leadership are;
- Contribute to understanding the relationship between emotional and leadership aspects and how they affect the performance of institutions and the achievement of strategic goals;

– Know how emotional intelligence can be exploited to improve strategic leadership and solve problems facing the organization.

1.5. Study Methodology :

The descriptive approach was relied on to determine the study variables, and the analytical method to know and explain the relationship between the study variables, with the help of the questionnaire and the analysis of its results using the social statistical methods package

2. Theoretical background of strategic leadership Theoretical

2.1. The concept of Strategic Leadership:

Strategic leadership is a systematic method of decision-making through which mutual leadership is integrated into its concepts and practices, and it is a means of interactive leadership that clarifies purposes and priorities. (Richard., 2010, p. 45).

Strategic leadership revolves around the ways of thinking and acting Managers to achieve competitive advantages. (Rezaian, Rezaian, & Naeiji, 2011, p. 4).

We can define Strategic leadership as a concept related to the ability of organizations to achieve excellence and innovation in a competitive environment. This means that the organization is not only able to survive in the market and adapt to shifts, but also seeks to set its own path and determine the directions it takes in the future.

2.2. Strategic Leadership Objectives:

Among the most important objectives of strategic leadership we mention:

– Successful strategic leadership allows for streamlining processes and enhancing productivity and innovation;

– Empower employees to be independent producers and able to create new ideas;

– Design bonus and incentive programs for ideal employees;

-Integrate the vision, creativity and innovation needed for long-term success;

-Improving communication methods ;

-Achieving the company's goals;

-Develop a productivity and management mindset and achieve strategic flexibility.

3. Emotional intelligence

The term Emotional intelligence was coined in the late twentieth century by Peter Salavoy and John Mayer and popularized by Dan Goleman in his 1996 book: Emotional intelligence (IE).

Emotional intelligence represents the ability to control one's own emotions and those of others, and discrimination among them, and use this knowledge to guide one's thinking and actions. (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 190)

Emotional intelligence is a combination of interpersonal interactive competencies and emotional, which affect an individual's behavior, thinking and how he interacts with others . (Macaleer & Shannon, 2002, p. 12).

Emotional intelligence can be defined as a pattern of social intelligence that gives the ability to observe the individual and the feelings and emotions of others, to distinguish them and guide the person's thinking and action.

3.1. The importance of Emotional Intelligence:

The importance of emotional intelligence becomes evident in the following :

- Improve productivity ;
- Reduce turnover ;
- Reducing the volume of complaints;
- Avoid wasting time in side problems.

3.2. The dimensions of emotional intelligence :

Goleman identifies five key competencies within emotional intelligence: Self-awareness, emotional management, empathy, motivation, and relationship management.

These competencies are pivotal for effective leadership and are exemplified through leadership behaviors.

-Awareness of feelings refers to the ability to accurately perceive one's own emotions and comprehend their influence. It encompasses assessing one's self-confidence.

-Empathy is the capacity to comprehend and share the feelings of others, along with the ability to recognize their emotional signals. This skill relies on being attuned to emotions and is regarded as a cornerstone in leadership and a crucial aspect of human nature. Those who possess empathy are better equipped to understand others and can engage with them more effectively.

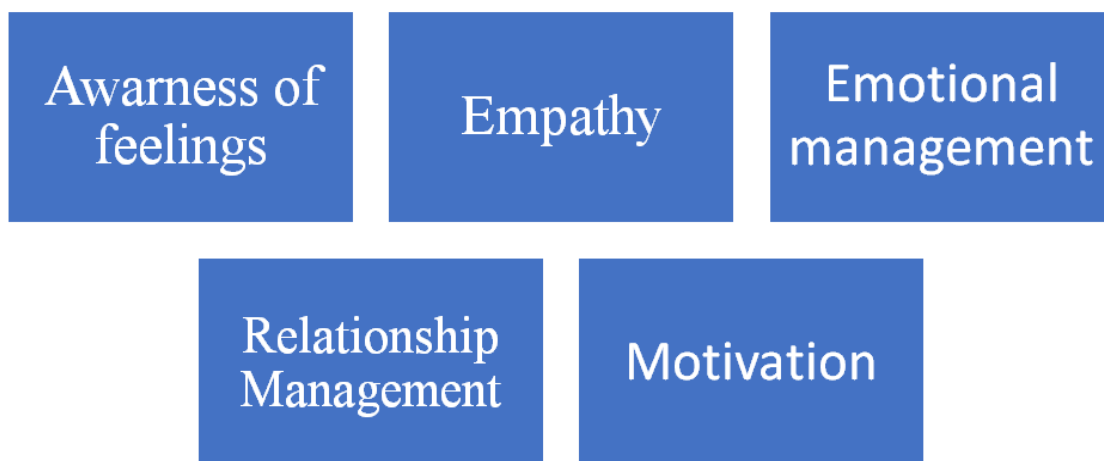
-Emotional management refers to a leader's ability to regulate their negative emotions effectively, converting them into positive ones. It also involves adeptly handling emotions, self-soothing, and addressing feelings of anger, anxiety, and impulsiveness.

- **Relationship management** involves the ability to inspire and influence others while also aiding in their development, particularly in navigating conflicts.

-Motivation refers to the ability to self-motivate and entails a leader's capacity to organize and direct emotions towards a specific goal to achieve excellence and accomplishment. The effective leader acts as the source of motivation for oneself and utilizes emotions and reactions in making decisions and crafting optimal strategies. (Goleman, 1998, pp. 23-31)

The dimensions of emotional intelligence can be summarized in the following figure:

Fig.1. dimensions of emotional intelligence



Source: prepared by researcher

4. Research population and sample

The current research population was determined by determining the number of medium-sized enterprises in Algeria, a sample of size was selected, 250 medium enterprises in Algeria, 400 questionnaires were distributed to members of senior and middle management, using the random method from the statistical research community, the questionnaire was distributed to them by mail, or by hand, 200 questionnaires were retrieved, only 150 are valid for analysis.

The questionnaire was distributed during the period from 15/08/2023 to 12/02/2024, in Algiers, Boumerdes, Skikda, and Oued Souf.

4.1. Study variables:

The Independent Variable: Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

Dependent Variable: Strategic Leadership.

The research tool covered a set of variables that can be divided into two main parts as follows:

The first part: It includes (03) paragraphs containing general information about some personal variables or what is known as the demographic questions of the research sample, including: gender, academic qualification, years of seniority.

Part II: Special to study variables, with restricted answers divided into:

The first axis: consists of (15) paragraphs for the variable dimensions of emotional intelligence, represented in the following: (dimensions of Self-awareness, emotional management, empathy, motivation, and relationship management.)

The second axis: consists of (16) paragraphs related to the variable of strategic leadership

The 3-point Likert scale (1-3) was used, where the number (1) indicates no agreement at all, while the number (3) indicates the maximum degree of approval.

The sample details are shown in Table (01) below.

Table 1. Statistical description of sample items

| Statement | | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Gender | Male | 30 | 20 |
| | Female | 120 | 80 |
| Qualification | Bachelor | 136 | 90.38 |
| | Post-graduation | 14 | 09.62 |
| Years of seniority in the job | Less than 5 years | 28 | 19.23 |
| | 5 to 10 years | 49 | 32.69 |
| | More than 10 years | 73 | 48.08 |
| Total | | 150 | 100 |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSSv25 program

Table 01 shows:

- The number of respondents is mostly male, with 80% and females 20%.

- The majority of the sample members are bachelor's degree holders, where their percentage reached (90%) while the percentage of post-graduation reached (9%).

- The seniority category (from 5 to 10 years) and the category (more than 10 years) combined came by (80%), which means that there is a good percentage of the sample members have great experience to work.

4.2. variable data analysis:

The following table shows the arithmetic mean and standard deviations of the answers for the dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Table 2. Respondents' answers to the dimensions of Emotional intelligence

| Statement | Disgree | Neutral | Agree | Arithmetic mean | Standard deviation |
|--|---------|---------|-------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Awareness of feeling | | | | | |
| you aware of your strengths and weaknesses? | 14 | 06 | 30 | 2.51 | 0.553 |
| you know what sets you apart from others? | 19 | 11 | 20 | 2.14 | 0.733 |
| you clearly define your personal goals? | 70 | 20 | 60 | 2.01 | 0.551 |
| Emotional management: | | | | | |
| you control your emotions and thinking in difficult circumstances | 50 | 30 | 70 | 2.01 | 0.627 |
| you have the ability to deal with stress effectively? | 20 | 30 | 00 | 2.26 | 0.613 |
| you make your decisions based on logic and conscious thinking | 7 | 03 | 40 | 2.16 | 0.825 |
| Empathy | | | | | |
| you show understanding and appreciation for the feelings of others | 09 | 40 | 01 | 1.88 | 0.605 |
| you show genuine interest in the problems and needs of others | 28 | 8 | 14 | 1.75 | 0.510 |
| you express empathy and understanding | 02 | 10 | 38 | 2.72 | 0.854 |

| | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|------|-------|
| effectively | | | | | |
| Motivation | | | | | |
| you feel motivated and interested in your personal and professional goals | 10 | 30 | 10 | 2.27 | 0.563 |
| you work hard and dedication to achieve your goals | 10 | 50 | 90 | 2.31 | 0.735 |
| you show determination and optimism even in the face of challenges and obstacles | 07 | 00 | 43 | 2.54 | 0.629 |
| Relationship Management | | | | | |
| you build strong and trust-based relationships with others? | 07 | 05 | 38 | 2.17 | 0.854 |
| you understand the needs and expectations of others and act accordingly? | 1 | 10 | 39 | 1.13 | 0.214 |
| you communicate with others in a positive and productive way | 00 | 01 | 49 | 2.12 | 0.429 |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSSv25 program

The table shows that the arithmetic mean values of the answers ranged between 1.13 and 2.72, with the lowest percentage corresponding to the dimension of social relations management with a standard deviation of 0.214.

The empathy dimension had the largest arithmetic average for the question of the ability to empathize and understand the other.

The arithmetic mean of motivation ranged between 2.27 and 2.54 with a standard deviation between 0.536 and 0.629.

The majority of the sample under study agreed that it enjoys and applies the qualities and dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of strategic leadership

| Statement | Arithmetic mean | Standard deviation |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Strategic leadership | 2.35 | 1.88 |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSS program

The arithmetic mean for strategic leadership was calculated as 2.35, with a standard deviation of 1.88. The mean suggests a moderate level of agreement among participants regarding strategic leadership. However, the relatively high standard deviation of 1.88 indicates significant variation in responses, meaning that opinions on strategic leadership may vary widely among participants.

4.3. Search tool stability

In order to ensure the stability of the research tool, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated, so that it is acceptable if its value is equal to or greater than (60%), and by reviewing the results of the statistical test, it was found that the general stability coefficient of the questionnaire is high, as it reached (0.873), i.e. by (87%), and the values of the stability coefficient for the dimensions of emotional intelligence ranged between (0.758-0.873), while the general stability coefficient for strategic leadership combined reached (0.844), which confirms the distinction of the paragraphs of The resolution has a high degree of stability.

Table 4. Cronbach alpha stability coefficients for resolution axes

| Questionnaire Themes | Axis stability |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Awarnes of feeling | 0.805 |
| Emotional management | 0.815 |
| Empathy | 0.803 |
| Motivation | 0.758 |
| Relationship Management | 0.873 |
| Strategic leadership | 0.844 |
| Overall Stability Rate | 0.873 |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSS program

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary hypothesis (H1) posits that there exists a statistically significant correlation, at a significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$, between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership.

To examine this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed. The results are presented in Table (05).

Table 5. Matrix of correlation coefficients between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership

| Variables | emotional intelligence | Awareness of feeling | Emotional management | Empathy | Motivation | Relationship Management | strategic leadership |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| emotional intelligence | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Awareness of feeling | 0.653 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Emotional management | 0.663 | 0.663 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Empathy | 0.658 | 0.640 | 0.664 | 1 | - | - | - |
| Motivation | 0.633 | 0.601 | 0.628 | 0.584 | 1 | - | - |
| Relationship Management | 0.689 | 0.642 | 0.633 | 0.554 | 0.539 | 1 | - |
| strategic leadership | 0.847** | *0.845 | 0.781** | 0.873** | 0.873** | 0.854*** ¹ | 1 |

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSS v25 program

From Table (05), it can be inferred that:

The correlation coefficient is 0.847, and the significance value (Sig.) is lower than the accepted significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This indicates a positive correlation between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership. Thus, an increase in emotional intelligence is associated with enhanced strategic leadership. Therefore, implementing emotional intelligence dimensions within the organization can lead to improved strategic leadership.

- The previous statistical results support the validity of the first main hypothesis.

The second main hypothesis (H2):

- There is a statistically significant effect relationship at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership in the required sample.

To test this hypothesis, regression analysis was used and in order to test the significance of the linear regression model, the (F) test was used, as there is a significant effect if the calculated value of (F) is greater than the tabular value of (F) at the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) and using the program (SpssV.25), and tables (06), (07) and (08) illustrate this.

Table 6. The value of (F) calculated for the relationship of influence between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership

| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
|---|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 4.017 | 1 | 3.979 | 17.741 | .001 ^b |
| | Residual | 122.155 | 149 | .412 | - | - |
| | Total | 126.202 | 150 | - | - | - |
| a. Dependent Variable: strategic leadership | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), emotional intelligence dimensions | | | | | | |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSS program

The insights derived from Table (06) are as follows: The calculated value of (F) was statistically significant at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), with a value of (17.741), indicating significant importance in explaining the dependent variable (strategic leadership) through the independent variables, dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Table 7. The value of (R^2) calculated for the relationship of influence between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .824 ^a | .712 | .580 | .94035 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Dimensions of emotional intelligence combined

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSS v25 program

Conclusions drawn from Table (07) include the following:

The coefficient of determination (R^2) amounted to 0.824, indicating that the independent variables explain 82.4% of the variance in the dependent variable (strategic leadership). This suggests that the combined dimensions of emotional intelligence have a strong and significant impact on achieving strategic leadership. The remaining 17.6% of the variance is attributed to other factors not addressed in the model.

Table 8. The value of (β) calculated for the relationship of influence between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and strategic leadership

| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B. | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 4.683 | .573 | - | 10.174 | .000 |
| | The dimensions of emotional intelligence) | .611* | .480 | .701 | 9.587 | .008 |

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic Leadership

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results extracted from the SPSS program

From Table (08), we can derive the following conclusions:

The marginal regression coefficient (β) for the combined dimensions of emotional intelligence is (0.611). This indicates that a one-unit increase in the application level of emotional intelligence dimensions, measured in standard deviations, results in a (61.1%) improvement in strategic leadership, measured in standard deviation units. Based on these findings, it can be inferred that emotional intelligence dimensions positively impact the enhancement of strategic leadership within the analyzed sample.

- The previous statistical results support the validity of the second main hypothesis.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it appears that understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and strategic leadership can be of great importance for medium enterprises in Algeria. Focusing on developing the emotional intelligence of leaders and enhancing strategic leadership practices can boost performance and achieve success. The results of the study indicate that there is an association and influence between emotional intelligence and strategic leadership in the studied sample, which

emphasizes the importance of understanding and strengthening this relationship in the business context. Based on these findings, organizations can leverage the emotional intelligence of leaders and the development of strategic leadership skills as part of their strategy to achieve excellence and success in a competitive business environment.

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