

## **Mutual impacts of Emotional Quotient and Managers' Leadership Styles on Improvement of Employees' Performance in Asia Insurance Company (Case Study: Branches in Tehran)**

**Mohammad Jenabi<sup>1</sup>, Karim Hamdi<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup> Department of Business Management, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

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### **ABSTRACT**

The present research aims to investigate mutual impacts of EQ and managers' leadership styles on improvement of employees' performance in Asia Insurance Company (case study: Branches in Tehran City). In this research, employees (150 people) and managers (75 people) of Asia Insurance Company branches in Tehran city were surveyed. Wang's EQ scale and multifactor leadership styles questionnaire and standard questionnaires for measurement of employees' performance were used for data gathering. Structural equations modeling technique was used for evaluation of relationships proposed in this research. The results showed that transformational leadership style mediates relationships between managers' EQ and three variables performance, job satisfaction and employees' organizational commitment. However, managers' transformational leadership style did not have any mediating impact on relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job satisfaction. Findings contributes to insights on relationship between managers' EQ, leadership styles and outputs of employees and showed that intensity of the influence of managers' EQ on job satisfaction must be shown by means of a third party variable i.e. transformational leadership.

**KEYWORDS:** employees' performance, human resources, job satisfaction, emotional quotient, Asia Insurance Company

### **INTRODUCTION**

Leadership style is one of the main characteristics of managers. One of the most effective leadership styles is transformational leadership style (rather than transactional). Borenz (1978) considers a transformational leader as a person who seeks for potential motivations in employees, satisfaction of higher needs and involvement of all employees. In other words, a transformational leader is one who seeks for a mutual copying and promotion of employees which leads employees towards leadership level. Moreover, Borenz believes that transformational leadership style takes place when one or several people cooperate with others in a way that leaders and employees promote each other up to the highest level of motivation and ethics. In 1985, Bron Bas followed Borenz (1978) and stated that transformational leaders are able to motivate their employees to do their tasks more than that expected in normal conditions. Transformational leadership has stronger correlation with high levels of EQ than transactional leadership. Studies have shown that transformational leadership style has a positive relationship with organizational success, better performance of commercial sector, group performance, trust in leader, more attempts and satisfaction of subordinates and special attention to needs of subordinates. Therefore, transformational leadership style is considered as an important feature of leaders and brings a lot of positive results. The result of interaction between employees and leaders is that leadership styles of supervisors affect organizational success considerably. Many researchers have contributed to definition and development of EQ model. this concept has roots in studies of "social intelligence" (Thorndike, 1920). EQ model was developed by Golman. He defined EQ as "ability to identify feelings in oneself and in relationship with others". Studies showed that EQ concerns different job outputs including job performance, leadership success, citizenship behavior and quality of problem-solving. Carrochi et al (2002) believed that mediates relationship between stress and psychological health. According to transformational leadership theory, a leader needs to use internal players to do organizational duties in order to reach its goals. Transformational leaders aim to ensure that the route to success has been understood well by employees, eliminate potential barriers inside the system and convince employees to try to reach pre-determined targets (Boehnek et al, 2003). Considering the competition in insurance industry, it seems necessary for insurance companies to use efficient leaders. Organizations, therefore, try to find flexibility and dynamism and entrepreneurial tendencies in order to achieve competitive advantages (Covin and Corato, 2008). Moreover, organizations should be able to create strategies for controlling changes by means of transformational leaders. In fact, transformational leaders convince their subordinates and stimulate their innovative thoughts all over the organizations and create flexible organizational atmospheres so that employees' feelings are challenged and they are made to search for new innovative viewpoints (Gumusluoglu

\*Corresponding author: Karim Hamdi, Department of Business Management, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. E-mail: Hamdi\_karim1@yahoo.com

and Ilsev, 2009). Moreover, the present research investigates whether EQ has a positive relationship with problem-solving strategies and has a negative relationship with discussion strategies in conflict management. In general, it has been shown that EQ has a positive influence on behaviors, performance and working attitudes of employees. Therefore, organizations need leaders for coping with uncertain environment and continuous changes. It is obvious that traditional leadership will be of no use in the third millennium and the world requires transformational leaders. Transformational leadership is considered as a leadership paradigm in organizational psychology and has been investigated a lot in relationship to subordinates satisfaction (Ansari and Teimouri, 2007). Today, in Asia Insurance Company, just like all other economic institutes, increase in employees' performance and productivity has received a lot of attention by managers and investors. Presence of employees with positive working performance will guide the company through fulfillment of targets and acquisition of competitive advantage. Considering the role and importance of employees' empowerment in development and improvement and due to the importance of leadership styles in attitudes and behaviors of employees, managers' management style is effective in fulfillment of organizational goals. Therefore, use of the best management style results in an increase in effectiveness and performance of employees so that some researchers of management believe that there are differences between successful and unsuccessful organizations in leadership style (Fakhimi, 2000). Asia Insurance Company is the greatest private company in Iran and the second giant Insurance Company in Iran. It also requires permanent transformations and improvements in order to promote its place in Iranian Insurance Industry. This entails knowledgeable, empowered, creative and efficient human force. Empowerment is a collection of motivational and psychological techniques which is designed and implemented via increasing participation and individual self-efficacy for improvement of performance of organizational human resource empowerment of human resource is a multidimensional concept and it involves transformation in all structural, behavioral and contextual dimensions. Up to now, no internal research has investigated potential mediating impacts of transformational leadership style on relationship between managers' EQ and employees' results (outputs) like performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job stress. Thus, it seems that investigation of factors which affect employees' performance and provision of necessary solutions for its improvement will contribute a lot to Asia Insurance Company and Iranian Insurance industry. Therefore, the main target of the research is to investigate factors which affect employees' performance in Asia Insurance Company, especially the role of managers' leadership style. it also investigates the mediating role of transformational leadership style on relationship between managers' EQ and employees results (outputs) like employee performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job stress.

#### Research model

The following figure involves a model which embraces relationships assumed between EQ, leadership style and their impacts on employees' output (employee's performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job stress).

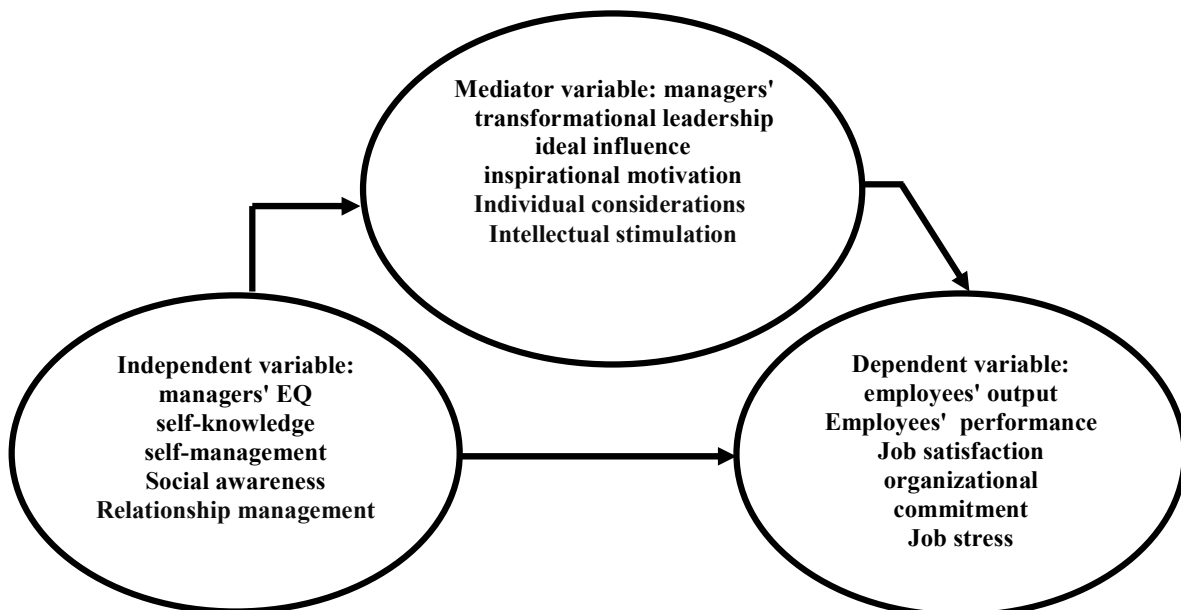


Figure 1.conceptual model  
Research extracted from San Lam et al (2013)

### Research hypotheses

First hypothesis: managers' transformational leadership style contributes to the positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' performance.

Second hypothesis: managers' transformational leadership style contributes to the positive relationship between managers' EQ and job satisfaction.

Third hypothesis: managers' transformational leadership style contributes to the positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' organizational commitment.

Fourth hypothesis: managers' transformational leadership style contributes to the positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job stress.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is an applied study. In terms of nature of subject and research goals, it is a "descriptive survey". Because data have been gathered in a particular time period, it is a sectional study. Statistical population of the research included all managers and employees of Asia Insurance Company (branches of Tehran City). They were 1105 people in number. Considering the fact that Asia Insurance Company has 10 branches in Tehran, their employees were 1105 people in number. Managers and supervisors of this company amounted to 154 people in Tehran branches.

Simple random sampling method was used for picking sample members. Cucheran's formula was used for calculation of sample size.

$$\epsilon = 0.05 ; p = 0.5 ; q = 1 - p = 0.5 ; \alpha = 0.05 ; Z_{1-\frac{\alpha}{2}} = 1.96 ;$$

$$n = \frac{NZ_{1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2 pq}{N\epsilon^2 + Z_{1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2 pq}$$

Managers

$$n = \frac{154 \times (1 / 96)^2 \times 0.25}{154 \times (0.5)^2 + (1.96)^2 \times 0.25} \approx 85$$

Managers n=85

$$n = \frac{Z_{1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2 pq}{\epsilon^2}$$

Employees

$$n = \frac{1105 \times (1 / 96)^2 \times 0.25}{1105 \times (0.5)^2 + (1.96)^2 \times 0.25} \approx 184$$

Employees n=184

Therefore, sample size was equal to 184 people for employees and 85 people for managers.

### Data analysis

#### Conceptual model test

Structural equations modeling technique (based on partial least squares method) was used for testing the research conceptual model and research hypotheses. The output of the software after testing the conceptual model has been shown in figure 2. According to the conceptual model, this research has 78 observable variables which are the every questions of the questionnaire which evaluate three main indices and 12 sub-indices. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted by means of structural equations modeling and AMOS software in order to confirm significance of the measurement model. fit indices are important indices in structural equations modeling technique analysis. These criteria try to answer this question: whether the model depicted by data confirms the research measurement model or not? Many fit indices have been propounded in methodology of structural equations modeling to answer this question. It must be mentioned that RMSEA, GFI and NFI are the best and most well-known indices of all different indices which are used for determination of fitness of a model (Hooman, 2002). RMSEA ≤ 0.10 shows that this model has a good fit with data in the real world (Joreskong and Sorbom, 1989).

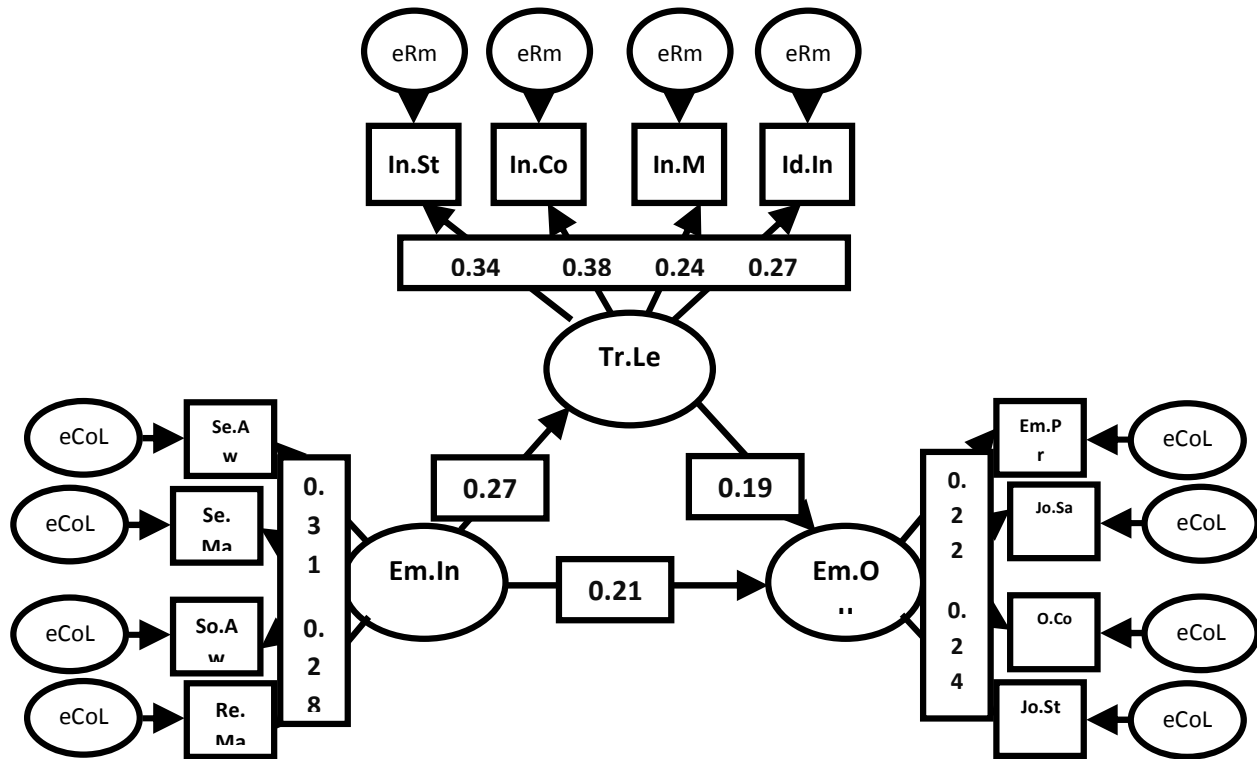


Figure 2.research conceptual model test

Figure 2 indicates latent and observable variables and also path coefficients and factor loadings. Numbers which can be seen between model latent variables (variables which have been depicted by means of an ellipsoid) and observable variables (rectangular variables which are the very sub-dimensions of latent variables) indicate factor loadings. Relationships which have been defined between latent variables are the very research hypotheses and the numbers indicated on these relationships are path coefficients. Before partial fit of the model or the very test of the hypotheses, we investigate general fit of the conceptual model. structural equations models are combinations of measurement model (indicating sub-variables of latent variables) and structural models (indicating relationships between independent and dependent variables). AMOS software calculates measurement model fit, composite reliability and average variance extracted and provides R-squared value for fitting of structural model. Values greater than 0.5 for AVE, greater than 0.7 for composite reliability and greater than 0.3 for R-squared indicate goodness of fit of the model (Azar, Gholam Zadeh and Ghanavati, 2012). Table 1 indicates fitness of measurement model for research variables. these results show that the level covered by Ki-squared statistic is greater than 5% and this means that the gathered data indicate good fit for research variables. root mean square error approximation (AMSEA) is another important criterion. If it is greater than 10%, the model is identified as inappropriate. Considering the fact that this error value is equal to 2.7%, the model is appropriate. Other indices of model fit have also appropriate values: RMSEA=0.027, GFI=0.99, AGFI=0.96, NFI=0.97, and NNFI=0.94. therefore, the model has enough fitness and it is generally accepted because RMSEA is smaller than 10% and GFI and NFI are greater than 90%, and the six observable variables can explain 96% of main latent variables of the research both directly and indirectly and different dimensions of the research variables are appropriately placed within the framework of concerning factors.

Table 1. CFA fit indices for investigation of construct validity

factor	Dimensions measured	SFL	(t-value)	Composite (CR) <sup>1</sup> reliability	Average extracted (AVE) <sup>2</sup> variance
Managers' EQ	(Se.Aw) Self-awareness	0.73	6.30**	0.85	0.79
	(Se.Ma) Self-management	0.77	3.33**	0.89	0.82
	(So.Aw) Social awareness	0.81	7.27**	0.88	0.87
	(Re.Ma) Relationship management	0.79	4.94**	0.82	0.78
Mangers' leadership style	(Id.In) Ideal influence	0.74	3.54**	0.93	0.81
	(In.Mo) Inspirational motivation	0.75	3.57**	0.89	0.75
	(In.Co) Individual considerations	0.80	4.88**	0.87	0.74
	(In.St) Intellectual stimulation	0.83	5.09**	0.94	0.72
Employees' output	Employees' performance (O.Po)	0.85	4.22**	0.95	0.83
	Job satisfaction (J.Sa)	0.71	5.24**	0.81	0.82
	Organizational commitment (O.Co)	0.76	3.18**	0.78	0.83
	Job stress (J.St)	0.82	4.17**	0.89	0.68
<b>Goodness-of-fit indices</b> <b>Kai-square test (<math>\chi^2</math>) : 541 (p=0.000)</b> <b>Kai-square df <math>\chi^2</math> : (3.02)</b> <b>GFI=0.99</b> <b>AGFI=0.96</b> <b>NFI=0.93</b> <b>NNFI=0.97</b> <b>RMSEA=0.031</b> <b>NNFI=0.94</b>					

After verification of the fitness of the model, we present and deal with the structural model which indicates relationship between latent variables. Research structural model has been also developed by AMOS software (version 18). Figure 2 indicates coefficients between research variables. Of course, the calculated significance coefficients must be investigated along with t values. T value is an index which indicates supporting or rejection of a hypothesis. If t value is between -1.96 and 1.96, the relationship is rejected and if the t value has a relationship outside this area, the relationship is supported (Hooman, 2010: 84). The calculated t value is outside -1.96 and 1.96, therefore the hypothesis is supported.

### Research hypotheses test

After general fit of the model, we come to partial fit of the model or the very testing the hypotheses. In this stage, impact coefficient and significance of the coefficient is investigated. Therefore, we can make decisions on supporting or rejection of research hypotheses. Table 2 indicates internal correlation between research variables. as it can be seen, there are positive/negative significant correlations between some variables. the values located on the diagonal of the matrix are all greater than values below them and this indicates calculation of discriminant validity. Discriminant validity refers to weak correlation between questions of one area and other areas. In other words, correlation coefficient between one question and other questions should be smaller than correlation coefficient between that question and areas related to it. As the results show, correlations between dimensions pairs are smaller than correlations between questions of every dimension with itself. This indicates an appropriate discriminant validity for dimensions of the research.

### Simple correlation

Table 2 indicates mutual correlations between research variables. according to the results, managers' EQ has a positive and significant correlation with transformational leadership style ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $r = 0.67$ ). moreover, managers' EQ has a positive and significant correlation with employees' performance ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $r = 0.61$ ) and a positive and significant correlation with employees' job satisfaction ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $r = 0.65$ ) and has a negative correlation with employees' job satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.14$ ). moreover, managers' EQ does not have any significant correlation with employees' organizational commitment ( $p > 0.05$ , and  $r = 0.11$ ). managers' transformational leadership has a positive and significant correlation with all outputs of employees: employees' performance ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = 0.47$ ), employees' job satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.22$ ) and employees' organizational commitment ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $r = 0.37$ ) and has a negative and significant correlation with job stress ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $r = -0.22$ ).

Furthermore, there is a positive and significant correlation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $r = 0.55$ ). moreover, there was a significant and negative correlation between job stress and employees' job satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.43$ ).

<sup>1</sup>-Composite Reliability

<sup>2</sup>-Average Variance Extracted

Table 2. mean, SD and internal correlation between research variables

	(Em.In) Managers' EQ	Transformational leadership style (Tr.Le)	Employees' performance (O.Po)	Job satisfaction (J.Sa)	Organizational commitment (O.Co)	Job stress (J.St)	gender	age	Education level	Working experience
(Em.In) Managers' EQ	(0.89)									
Leadership style transformational	0.67**	(0.85)								
Employees' performance (O.Po)	0.61**	0.47*	(0.80)							
Job satisfaction (J.Sa)	0.65**	0.34*	0.49**	(0.82)						
Organizational commitment (O.Co)	0.11	0.37*	0.51**	0.55**	(0.79)					
Job stress (J.St)	-0.14*	-0.22	0.06	-0.43*	0.09	(0.84)				
gender	-0.11	0.9	0.07	0.04	0.06	0.07	N/A			
age	0.26**	-0.08	0.19	0.11	0.42**	-0.03	0.05	N/A		
Education level	0.09	0.04	0.23*	0.12*	0.10	0.06	0.04	-0.06	N/A	
Working experience	0.21**	0.07	0.32**	0.17*	0.35**	0.03	0.07	0.55**	0.07	N/A
Diagonal numbers indicate second root of AVE, Cronbach's alpha has been presented diagonally in parentheses. Numbers below diagonal indicate correlation of construct dimensions. N/A means unusable. * correlation is significant in 0.05 level (two-tailed) and ** correlation is significant in 0.01 level (two-tailed)										

### Analysis of moderator regression

Following the three-stage process described by Kenny and Baron (1986), the results of the models obtained from moderator regression have been described as follows:

#### Model 1:

Mediator variable (managers' transformational leadership style) was regressed on control variables (gender, age, education level and working experience) and independent variable (managers' EQ). according to the results of this model, there is a positive and significant relationship between managers' EQ and managers' leadership styles (beta=0.55,  $p < 0.01$ ).

#### Model 2:

Outputs (employees' performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job stress) were separately regressed on control variables and managers' EQ. the results of model 2 indicate that managers' EQ has a significant relationship with employee performance (beta=0.37,  $p < 0.01$ ), job satisfaction (beta=0.38 and  $p < 0.01$ ) and organizational commitment (beta=0.41, and  $p < 0.01$ ). although beta=-0.26 for regression between managers' EQ and employees' job satisfaction is significant, because F statistic value is smaller than the specified value for this part of the model, it can be concluded that relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job stress is not significant.

#### Model 3:

Finally in the third model, the results were separately regressed on control variables, managers' EQ and transformational leadership style. The results of model three showed that relationship between managers' EQ and job satisfaction was significant in model 2. Further, when managers' transformational leadership style entered the model as a mediator variable, the impact of leadership style on relationship between EQ and other three variables became also significant. These three variables include: employees' preface (beta=0.42,  $p < 0.01$ ), job satisfaction (beta=0.31,  $p < 0.01$ ) and organizational commitment (beta=0.30,  $p < 0.01$ ). All F values for this mode are significant I (0.01) significance level like the previous model. However, the impact of leadership style on relationship between EQ and job stress is not significant. These results show that managers' transformational leadership style mediates completely the relationship between managers' EQ and the three variables: performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In spite of this, transformational leadership style of managers does not have a mediating impact on relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job satisfaction.

**First hypothesis**

Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' performance.

The results of data analyses in table 3 using correlation coefficient test shows that the statistic covers an area below 5% (sig=0.000). the results show that managers' transformational leadership style has an influence on relationship between managers' EQ and employees' performance.

Table 3.the results of the first hypothesis test

First hypothesis	Correlation coefficient	Fvalue	Sig.	result
Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' performance.	0.42	10.06	0.000	supported

**Second hypothesis**

Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job satisfaction.

The results of data analyses in table 4 using correlation coefficient test shows that the statistic covers an area below 5% (sig=0.000). the results show that managers' transformational leadership style has an influence on relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job satisfaction.

Table 4.the results of the second hypothesis analysis

second hypothesis	Correlation coefficient	Fvalue	Sig.	result
Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job satisfaction.	0.31	12.01	0.000	supported

**Third hypothesis**

Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' organizational commitment.

The results of data analyses in table 5 using correlation coefficient test shows that the statistic covers an area below 5% (sig=0.000). the results show that managers' transformational leadership style has an influence on relationship between managers' EQ and employees' organizational commitment.

Table 5.results of the third hypothesis

third hypothesis	Correlation coefficient	Fvalue	Sig.	result
Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' organizational commitment.	0.30	6.62	0.000	supported

**Fourth hypothesis**

Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job stress.

The results of data analyses in table 6 using correlation coefficient test shows that the statistic covers an area below 5% (sig=0.000). The results show that managers' transformational leadership style has an influence on relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job stress.

Table 6.results of the fourth hypothesis analysis

fourth hypothesis	Correlation coefficient	Fvalue	Sig.	result
Managers' transformational leadership style contributes to positive relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job stress.	-0.25	3.22	0.08	rejected

**Multiple regression results**

In this section, we conducted a separate multiple regression analysis between three dimensions of employee results (employee's performance, organizational commitment and job stress) without inserting managers' EQ-which was inserted in model 3-. The results summarized in table 7 indicate that managers' transformational leadership style has a direct relationship with employee's performance and organizational commitment but it does not have any significant impact on job stress. Therefore, it can be concluded that employees' performance, organizational commitment and job stress is directly affected by managers'

transformational leadership style and without EQ intervention. The results show that only EQ does not have any significant impact on employees' job stress.

Table 7. Results of multiple regression analysis: managers' transformational leadership and impacts of three variables of employees' output

variables	Employees' performance	Organizational commitment	Job stress
controls			
gender	0.36	0.21	0.23
age	0.04**	0.06**	-0.02
Education level	0.22	0.17	-0.09
Working experience	-0.04	-0.15	0.13
impacts			
Transformational leadership	0.52**	0.36**	-0.35**
total	0.22	0.16	0.06
total adjusted	0.20	0.14	0.04
F	11.94**	7.99**	2.93

\* correlation is significant at 0.05 level. (two-tailed)\*\* correlation is significant at 0.01 (two-tailed)

## Conclusion

The present research investigated mutual impacts of managers' EQ, leadership styles and employees' outputs in employees of Asia Insurance Company in Tehran City based on Golman's EQ model and Boss's leadership styles model. The research dealt with mutual relationships among concepts of managers' EQ and transformational leadership style and job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job stress.

- The results of the research hypotheses showed that managers' transformational leadership mediates relationship between managers' EQ and performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees.

Therefore, it can be concluded that selection and education of managers who have EQ and have transformational style have advantages for Asia Insurance Company. Since a high EQ improves transformational leadership, it can be considered as a criterion for selection and training of transformational leadership by a method which facilitates success.

- Moreover, the results showed that transformational leadership has a mediating role in relationship between managers' EQ and employees' job satisfaction. It can be concluded that managers' EQ can predict job satisfaction via transformational leadership. In other words, Asia Insurance Company will benefit a lot by combining managers' EQ and transformational leadership.
- Considering the above discussions, R&D department of Asia Insurance Company can allocate some resources for improvement of EQ level and transformational leadership style. group structure is effective in those who want to spend time on transformational leadership style training. Moreover, regulation of the time for transformational leadership training program should be used at the beginning of group lifecycle as a vital factor. Usually, it lasts 6 months to 1 year to improve transformational leadership.

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