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Head, Heart, and Harmony: A Study of Quotient Synergy in Conscious Leadership

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Abstract:

Self awareness, good communication and spiritual awareness in leadership are very important in an age of speedy organisational change and increasing ethical standards. This study is an attempt to understand the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI), Communication Quotient (CQ) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) with the development of more conscious leaders (CL). The study design was a cross sectional study. It is based on concepts of leadership psychology and human values to explore how these psychological concepts are merging into ethical and thoughtful leadership.

A total of 137 professionals were interviewed from Karnataka, India, to gather primary data. They were senior or mid-level managers who had 5+ years in management. The participants were selected using purposive sampling technique and a modified measurement instrument was administered to the participants to validate their responses. Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis were used to investigate the structure of the construct while the hypothesised relationships were investigated using Structural Equation Modelling.

The study underscores the important role of EI, CQ and SQ in Conscious Leadership. They are the ideal role models to regulate their emotions, to communicate consciously, and make value based decisions. The results of this study have implications for those leadership development programmes which should focus on the development of functional skills and inner strengths. This research is a step on the discussion of the effectiveness of the leaders, it introduces a model that can be applied across a range of organizational contexts and is based on data.

Keywords: Conscious Leadership; Emotional Intelligence; Communication Quotient; Spiritual Quotient; Cross-sectional Study; Structural Equation Modeling; Human-Centered Leadership

Introduction

Leaders today are not only good at strategy, they're good at operations too in a rapidly evolving business context. The needs of the workforce, value based governance and socio-emotional awareness are growing in complexity while a more holistic approach to leadership is needed, combining thinking with caring, talking with understanding and purpose with performance. Hence, the idea of Conscious Leadership has been increasingly popularised in the academic and practice areas. It's about the moral compasses, self awareness and authenticity of the leader in relation to relationships. Conscious Leadership is not only a model of leadership; it's a way of life. It brings to the art of leading with self-awareness, emotional balance, ethical intention and interpersonal sensitivity. The ones that understand are more suited to develop trust, deal with uncertainty and establish inclusive work environments. This is becoming clearer, but there are few empirical research studies of the factors that underlie conscious leadership.

According to the study, Emotional Intelligence (EI) (Hsu N, Newman DA, Badura KL., 2022), Communication Quotient (CQ) (Zentner A, 2016), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) (Reave, L., 2005) are three psychological and behavioral factors that enable conscious leadership (Mahmood K., and Qadir A. S., 2024). Emotional intelligence (EI) Ashkanasy & Daus (2005), Bar-On (2006) assists individuals in managing their emotions and relating to

others in a caring way. Communication intelligence (CQ) (Decuypere, A., & Pircher V. A., 2022) makes conversations clear, consistent, and trustworthy. Spiritual intelligence (SQ) provides people with a sense of purpose, values and moral reasoning. These ideas fit together well to help us understand how leaders can lead with purpose and care.

The study uses cross sectional design to collect data from middle and senior level managers in different industries of the Karnataka region of India to test this framework in a real world setting. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the people who have been leading for at least 5 years. The data obtained from this study were 137 individuals who were answered by the structured tool developed in this study, which is based on validated scales and 5 point Likert scale. The relationships were tested with the help of sophisticated data analysis methods including EFA, CFA and SEM.

While the number of conceptualizations of conscious leadership has grown, the psychological correlates supporting conscious leadership have been missing. This study seeks to fill this gap by using a correlational, theory-building approach to investigate the co-variation of EI, CQ and SQ with conscious leadership orientations. The study is not for empirical validation of coherence of constructs and hence not for causal inference. It also provides some valuable insights for programmes structured to develop leaders within their organisations. It aims to be an extension of what leaders can do within and what they embody as conscious, responsible and effective leaders in action.

Correlational evidence is a useful first step to empirically charting relationships between constructs prior to establishing causality, consistent with the tradition of theory-building research (Whetten, 1989; Edmondson & McManus, 2007; Ketokivi & McIntosh, 2017). Thus, the correlational design was used in the current study to examine the structural coherence between EI, CQ, SQ, and Conscious Leadership.

Literature Review:

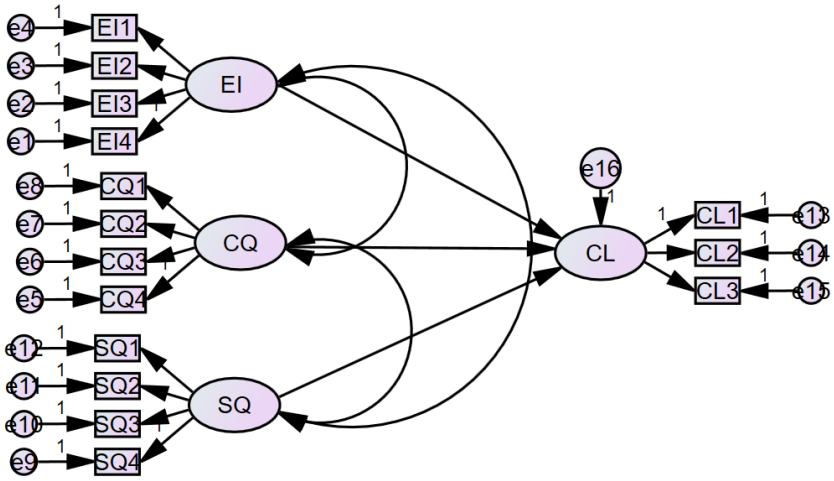

Fig. 1: Hypothesized SEM

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study was cross-sectional research study which was of quantitative type. This design is suitable to explore relation between psychological and behavioural constructs at one time point. The design allowed for the view of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Communication Quotient (CQ), Spiritual Quotient (SQ) and Conscious Leadership (CL) to be observed in various types of organisations. Also, it enabled a cross-sectional approach to be followed within the time and resources available and yet gave some useful information on the ideas related to leadership.

Data Collection

Primary data was obtained from middle and senior-level professionals of the industries like IT, Manufacturing, Consulting, Education and healthcare from Karnataka, India. The researchers approached the participants personally, and urged them to be serious and thoughtful in their response. Finally, 137 valid responses have been collected using manual data collection.

Participants were selected to have at least five years of leadership experience so that they could discuss in detail their emotional, communication and spiritual abilities. Scales used to construct the measurement tool have been tested and validated in the literature. But the data had to be taken by hand in order to make it more reliable and the quality of the answers more. Using this tool, all the items in the four constructs were rated on 5-point Likert scale in which 1 means "Strongly Disagree" and 5 means "Strongly Agree".

Construct	Number of Items	Source/Scale Adopted From	Reliability (α) in This Study
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	4	Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)	0.825
Communication Quotient (CQ)	4	Adapted from Rubin & Martin's Interpersonal Communication Scale	0.885
Spiritual Quotient (SQ)	4	King's Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI)	0.904
Conscious Leadership (CL)	3	Derived from literature on authentic and ethical leadership	0.962

Sampling Technique

Persons who met the following criteria were identified using purposive sampling, and included five who had had leadership experience in the past or are currently in a leadership role. The non probability sampling was beneficial as the study was exploratory and the identification of respondents who could give in-depth and reliable information on the dimensions of leadership.

It was a conscious decision to choose manual administration. The concepts of such constructs as Conscious Leadership and Spiritual Quotient are quite intricate and need a lot of thinking. This approach enabled direct interaction, which permitted to clear up any doubts and verify data authenticity by minimizing the number of inattentive or disengaged responses typical of anonymous online surveys. Trust and reflection on participation, particularly on deeper issues of value alignment, ethical leadership and self-awareness, were also fostered through manual administration..

Data Analysis

This study was based on three major concepts of CQ namely CQ, EQ, SQ. It is assumed that these concepts intersect, in the influence on the emergence and practice of Conscious Leadership among leaders in organisations.

- Communication Quotient (CQ) is a leader's capacity to convey ideas, listen actively and inspire open, honest dialogue between teams and throughout the organization.
- Emotional Quotient (EQ) includes the ability to recognize, understand, and control your own emotions and the emotions of others. This helps with empathy, getting along with others, and controlling your emotions.
- Spiritual Quotient (SQ) is a measure of how well someone knows themselves, their purpose, and their values. It helps leaders lead with honesty, mindfulness, and a sense of higher purpose.

This research seeks to determine whether any of the three areas listed above, when seen as a form of awareness and development, are related to the effectiveness of a leader in the field of conscious leadership, defined as a conscious awareness of self, integrity, and the awareness of how the leader's actions and decisions affect others.

To practice this relationship, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to determine the actual composition of the items used to assess the three quotients. Prior to the factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted to assess the suitability of data for factor analysis. The KMO value was 0.858 which was above the acceptable level of 0.70. There is therefore a lot of common variance between variables and good reason to proceed with factor analysis. The high value of KMO indicates that the correlation matrix is small enough to give us clear and reliable factors.

Bartlett's Test was statistically significant as well ($p < 0.05$) which means that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix. This is consistent with the view that the variables are meaningfully related. These statistical results suggest the structural validity of the measurement items and provide evidence in support of the concept that CQ, EQ, and SQ are significant antecedents of Conscious Leadership.

.Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.869
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1879.616
	Df	105
	Sig.	.000

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
SQ1	.872			
SQ3	.860			
SQ4	.781			
SQ2	.737			
CQ2		.880		
CQ4		.784		
CQ3		.728		
CQ1		.641		
EI1			.864	
EI4			.828	
EI2			.729	
EI3			.624	
CL2				.854
CL1				.835
CL3				.813

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix[a]

Exploratory Factor Analysis

To reveal the hidden dimensions underlying the constructs of Spiritual Quotient (SQ), Communication Quotient (CQ), Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Conscious Leadership (CL), EFA with Varimax rotation of PCA was used. The rotation converged in six iterations on a clear four-factor solution that fit well with the conceptual framework of the study. Items with factor loading of 0.45 and above were retained. On the other hand all items that were retained exceeded this cut-off. This is an indication of a good and strong factor structure.

The first factor obtained was Spiritual Quotient (SQ) which is composed of four items, namely SQ1, SQ3, SQ4 and SQ2. There was high consistency among the items (loading coefficient ranged from 0.737-0.872). In terms of ideas the reflective and existential aspects of spirituality are: SQ1 - Integrity; SQ3 – Bravery; SQ4 – Systems Thinker; and SQ2 – Sense of Purpose in Life.

The second factor was about Communication Quotient (CQ). The second factor loaded the items CQ2, CQ4, CQ3 and CQ1 with factor loadings ranging from 0.641 to 0.880. This factor is related to person's communication skills. Personally looking at things such as: the accuracy and completeness of the information (CQ2); respectfulness of the person (CQ4); clarity and articulateness of the person (CQ3); and conciseness and relevance of the person (CQ1). The very high loading of CQ2 (0.880) suggests that accuracy is an important trait in defining communication competence in this sample.

Thirdly, EI was measured, which comprised the components EI1, EI4, EI2 and EI3. The loadings ranged from 0.624 to 0.864. This construct contains a set of basic emotional skills like self-awareness (EI1), self-motivation (EI4), emotional regulation (EI2) and empathy (EI3). These skills involve the personal and social aspects of emotional functioning.

The fourth factor was in line with Conscious Leadership (CL) and consisted of CL2, CL1 and CL3 with loadings ranging from 0.813 to 0.854. This includes dimensions such as ethical judgement and decision making (CL2), authenticity (CL1) and reflective leadership practice (CL3). It shows styles of leadership based on morals and values. CL4 is omitted from the rotated factor solution as it has a very low factor loading, indicating that it does not have a sufficiently strong connection to the idea of Conscious Leadership. Therefore, CL4 did not meet the minimum standards for retention and was excluded from the final factor structure as it did not contribute much to the overall model.

The extracted factors have a high factorial validity with high factor loadings and no cross-loadings. This gives evidence of discriminant validity of constructs. Loading pattern is clear and makes sense and gives a good empirical basis for the next steps of the research which include CFA and construction of a SEM framework.

This study utilized measurement scale of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Communication Quotient (CQ), Spiritual Quotient (SQ) and Conscious Leadership (CL) and reliability of this scale was tested. Reliability here is degree to which the tools can measure the constructs they are meant to measure across a range of items. Cronbach Alpha was mainly used to measure reliability, with α of 0.70 or more considered acceptable in social science research.

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	137	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	137	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Scale: EI Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.825	.831	4

Cronbach's Alpha score of four-item EI scale was 0.825, indicating a very high internal consistency. The Cronbach's Alpha of four items of Communication Quotient (CQ) scale was 0.885, indicating very high reliability. The scale for Spiritual Quotient (SQ) showed high internal consistency with all four items having Cronbach's Alpha of 0.904. The Cronbach's Alpha of three remaining items of the Conscious Leadership (CL) scale was very high (0.962), which means the scale is very reliable.

Scale: CQ Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.885	.887	4

Scale: SQ Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.904	.907	4

Scale: CL Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.962	.962	3

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

In general, the results show that all four measurement tools are robust and reliable, which provides a solid foundation for future statistical analyses and model testing in the study.

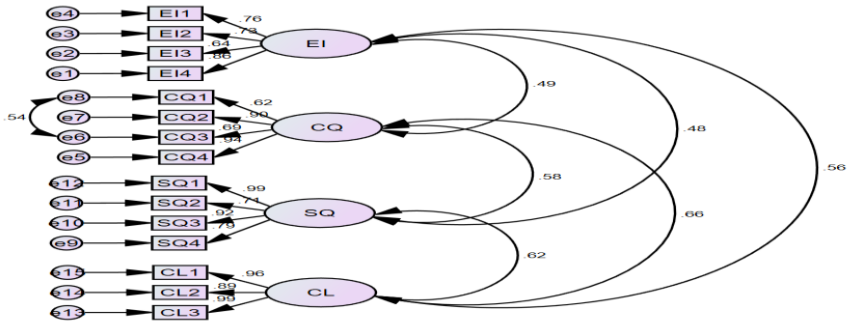

Fig 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Model for SQ, EI, CQ, and CL Constructs

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	SQ	EI	CQ	CL
SQ	0.917	0.737	0.386	0.987	**0.858**			
EI	0.837	0.566	0.317	0.859	0.483	**0.752**		
CQ	0.875	0.642	0.438	0.933	0.580	0.489	**0.801**	
CL	0.962	0.895	0.438	0.981	0.621	0.563	0.662	**0.946**

Table 4: Discriminant Validity Assessment using Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

A CFA was run using standardised estimates for the four latent constructs: SQ, EI, CQ, and CL. This was performed to test construct validity of measurement model. Results showed that model had good psychometric properties, thus supporting the convergent and discriminant validity of model.

Three methods were used to evaluate convergent validity: factor loadings, AVE, and CR. Every item's loading on its corresponding latent construct was higher than the minimum value of 0.60 and statistically significant. This indicates that the variables under observation are excellent markers of the constructs they stand for.

All constructs reported above AVE was more than the recommended value (0.50) (SQ>0.737, EI>0.566, CQ>0.642, CL>0.895) indicating good convergence. CR values were also significantly higher than suggested threshold of 0.70 (SQ = 0.917, EI = 0.837, CQ = 0.875 and CL = 0.962) indicating the high level of consistency and reliability of all the constructs. These all indicate that the measure has convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity: We tested discriminant validity by using Fornell–Larcker criterion to ensure that square root of AVE for each construct was higher than its correlations with other constructs. Table 4 shows the square root of AVE (√AVE) for each latent construct, which are found to be greater than the correlation between constructs. The √AVE of CQ is 0.801, greater than the correlation of CQ with SQ (0.580), EI (0.489), and CL (0.662). The same pattern was found for all other constructs, which lends support to the model's discriminant validity.

Additionally, each construct's MSV values were lower than its AVEs. Another measure of the strength of the discriminant validity. For instance, the AVE of CL is 0.895 which is much greater than its MSV of 0.438. The MaxR(H) values which represent the reproducibility of the model are also within the expected range and remain close to the CR values, indicating the stability of the model.

The results of the CFA show a good fit of measurement model and construct validation. All latent constructs show high convergent validity and high level of discriminant validity and internal consistency of model. The measuring model's results are encouraging and provide a solid basis for testing the suggested correlations between SQ, EI, CQ, and CL in the study using SEM.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.727[a]	.529	.518	.77481

a. Predictors: (Constant), SQ, EI, CQ

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	89.506	3	29.835	49.698	.000[b]
	Residual	79.845	133	.600		
	Total	169.351	136			

a. Dependent Variable: CL

b. Predictors: (Constant), SQ, EI, CQ

Table 5: Model Summary

As revealed in the Model Summary, the multiple regression model which has EI, CQ and SQ is the independent variable has a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.727. This means that the set of antecedents is highly positively correlated with CL. To sum up: More EI, more CQ and more SQ equal more conscious leadership.

Coefficient of determination (R2) is 0.529 which indicates that the model explains approximately 52.9% of the variance in Conscious Leadership. The adjusted R2 value (0.518) shows that proposed model has a significant explanatory value. Observational SEM, on the other hand, suggests that these numbers represent associative, not causal relationships.

ANOVA test shows that regression model is statistically significant. The F-statistic is 49.698 and p value is 0.000 which is less than usual significance level of 0.05. This means that the regression equation as a whole has a good relationship with the outcome variable that supports the idea that EI, CQ and SQ have good relationship of Conscious Leadership.

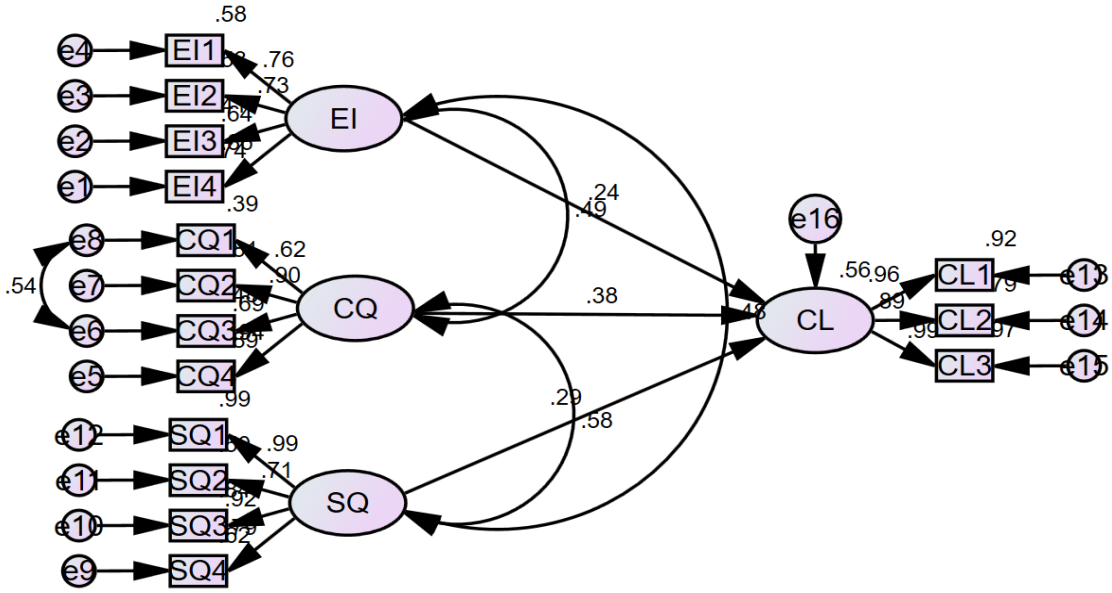

Fig 3: SEM Framework Path Analysis

Structural Model Results and Direct Effects

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique was used to investigate theory-consistent relational patterns among latent constructs. SEM gives us directional specification based on theory, but it does not lead directly to causal identification in observational contexts. Thus, the estimated paths may be considered as provisional associations that are open to endogeneity and omitted variable bias.

The results of checking several model fit indices to know whether the measurement model was good enough are shown in Table 6. These indicators provide a complete picture of fit of proposed CFA model to data actually collected.

CMIN was 221.453 with 83 degrees of freedom. This gave a CMIN/DF (normed chi-square) value of 2.668 which is acceptable as it is below 5.0 (Byrne, 2010). In large samples one would expect chi-square value to be statistically significant. The normed chi-square, however, is a better indicator of good fit for model.

SRMR was 0.029, which is well below suggested threshold of 0.06. This suggests that the observed and predicted correlations were very similar.

GFI was 0.830, and AGFI was 0.754. The GFI exceeds the recommended minimum value of .80 but the AGFI is marginally below the desirable value. But AGFI is typically conservative when it comes to complex models. So a value that is a little lower than the one that is most commonly used may still be okay if there are other strong fit indicators that support it.

Fitness Indicators	Extracted Values	Threshold Limit
CMIN	221.453	
DF	83	
CMIN/DF	2.668	< 5.0
Standardized RMR	0.029	< 0.06
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.830	> 0.8
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.754	> 0.8
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.887	> 0.8
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.926	> 0.8
RMSEA	0.093	< 0.08

Table 6 – Fitness Indicator

Other incremental fit indices also indicate the model is good enough. NFI and CFI was above the minimum cut off of 0.80 with the value of 0.887 and 0.926, respectively. This means that model is good fit relative with null model.

RMSEA was 0.093 which is a bit higher than the ideal value of 0.08. This means the fit is at a low to moderate level of fit, and in the social sciences, there is generally a healthy fit of between 0.08 and 0.10 with good SRMR, CFI and NFI values (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The model is good fit of data. Most of fit indices are adequate or better than standard and the overall structural coherence of the model makes up for slight differences in the other indices. These results lend support for the proposed four-factor model i.e. Spiritual Quotient (SQ) and Emotional Intelligence (EI), Communication Quotient (CQ) and Conscious Leadership (CL). This means it's possible to perform SEM with it.

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
CL	<---	EI	.415	.138	3.006	.003	par_15
CL	<---	CQ	.582	.124	4.680	***	par_16
CL	<---	SQ	.465	.150	3.095	.002	par_17
EI4	<---	EI	1.000				
EI3	<---	EI	.670	.087	7.676	***	par_1
EI2	<---	EI	.901	.099	9.063	***	par_2
EI1	<---	EI	1.174	.123	9.513	***	par_3
CQ4	<---	CQ	1.000				
CQ3	<---	CQ	.898	.082	10.895	***	par_4
CQ2	<---	CQ	.910	.060	15.156	***	par_5
CQ1	<---	CQ	.689	.073	9.482	***	par_6
SQ4	<---	SQ	1.000				
SQ3	<---	SQ	1.342	.103	12.988	***	par_7
SQ2	<---	SQ	1.128	.124	9.131	***	par_8

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
SQ1	<---	SQ	1.544	.108	14.238	***	par_9
CL1	<---	CL	1.000				
CL2	<---	CL	.844	.043	19.507	***	par_10
CL3	<---	CL	1.049	.033	31.629	***	par_11

Table 7: Direct Effects

H1: Emotional Intelligence (EI) is positively and significantly associated with Conscious Leadership (CL).

Results of structural model indicate that EI has a significant effect on development of Conscious Leadership ($\beta = 0.415$, $p = 0.003$), strongly supporting the hypothesis. All the underlying EI indicators of Self-Awareness (EI1), Emotional Regulation (EI2), Empathy (EI3) and Self-Motivation (EI4) have significant loadings, confirming their relevance in shaping conscious leadership behaviour. The conscious leader is more likely to be reflective rather than reactive. They are able to master their emotions. They remain calm in difficult situations. Their compassion helps them to understand others more easily. But they are self motivated and this helps them to focus on their goal and inspire others without any validation from outside. These emotional competencies are the basis of ethical and people-centric leadership and make the case for EI as a key enabler of conscious leadership.

H2: Communication Quotient (CQ) is positively and significantly associated with Conscious Leadership (CL)

Among the three antecedents, Communication Quotient has the highest correlation with Conscious Leadership with a standardised regression coefficient of 0.582 and highly significant p-value ($p < 0.001$). The finding highlights the importance of communication in developing conscious leadership behaviours. The contributing attributes i.e. Clarity (CQ1), Accuracy (CQ2), Articulation (CQ3) and Structure (CQ4) have high factor loadings confirming their critical role in shaping a leader's communicative effectiveness. Conscious leaders handle complexity, solve ambiguity, and align diverse perspectives. Leaders who can communicate ideas clearly and accurately, develop good stories and who are able to organise information logically will increase their ability to inspire trust, create shared understanding and lead transparently. "The results show that communication is not simply a transactional function, but a transformational force in the process of conscious leadership."

H3: Spiritual Quotient (SQ) is positively and significantly associated with Conscious Leadership (CL).

The Spiritual Quotient was also found to be significantly and strongly correlated with Conscious Leadership. The standardised regression coefficient is .465, $p = .002$ This supports the hypothesis and importance of the broader attributes of value based leadership . The SQ construct has four highly loaded dimensions. These are Resilience (SQ1), Life Purpose (SQ2, Compassion (SQ3) and Vision Alignment (SQ4). The best SQ leaders are resilient and purpose-driven to keep grounded, even when challenged. They are empathetic and can link personal values to the organisation's vision, creating a culture of inclusion and understanding in the workplace and underpinning ethical and sustainable leadership. These qualities of spirit help to elevate leadership from authority to stewardship, thereby enhancing the relevance of SQ in today's value-conscious organisational landscape. Finally, all three hypotheses are supported by statistically significant . Conscious Leadership has a profound and unique effect on Emotional Intelligence, Communication quotient and Spiritual quotient. The overall impact indicates at the multidimensionality of leadership, not only competent but also conscious, communicative and spiritually aligned.

Discussion

Findings of this study should be understood in terms of theory-building frameworks, which focus on empirically exploring if theoretically anticipated constructs demonstrate stable, meaningful associations. Previous research

has argued that this correlational mapping is an essential aspect of developing and refining organizational theories (Whetten, 1989; Edmondson & McManus, 2007; Ketokivi & McIntosh, 2017). Thus, the correlations we observed amongst EI, CQ, SQ, and Conscious Leadership provide empirical support rather than causal backing.

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the interaction of Emotional Intelligence (EI) (Ashkanasy & Daus 2005; Bar-On 2006), Communication Quotient (CQ) (De Vries, et. al, 2010) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) (Fry, 2003; Marques, 2010) on the development of Conscious Leadership (CL) (Loewe 2007; McKinney 2006; McKinney, et. al, 2004). The findings provide important insights into the psychological basis of leadership consciousness (Walumbwa, F. O. et. al., 2008; George, B., 2003) and empirical evidence for the proposed structural model.
Results of CFA supported the structural validity of four latent constructs. Convergent validity is supported because all factor loadings were higher than recognized cut-off of 0.60. Additionally, to verify that each concept represented a distinct domain, discriminant validity was examined by comparing AVE and MSV values. The four constructs were all found to be highly reliable (Cronbach's Alpha), providing additional evidence for the robustness of the measurement model.

In the SEM analysis, all the three independent variables EI (Palmer, et. al,. 2001), CQ (Riggio, Ronald E., 2024), and SQ (Cowan, D. A. 2005) demonstrated statistically significant and positive paths towards Conscious Leadership. Among them, Communication Quotient ($\beta = 0.582$) had the most significant association, proving that the practice of conscious leadership behaviours depends on the ability to communicate effectively, empathetically and clearly (Riggio, Ronald E. 2024). This result is consistent with previous studies emphasising the significance of open and values-based communication for the development of trust and moral decision-making in the context of leadership (Bennis, 2009; Hackman & Johnson, 2013).

Another significant association was emotional intelligence ($\beta = 0.415$), highlighting the relevance of self-awareness, empathy (Krznaric, R., 2014) and emotional regulation for conscious leadership. Emotionally aware leaders are more likely to manage the complexity of interpersonal relationships, to create psychologically safe spaces and to deal with conflict in a positive way (Cherniss, C., 2010). This is consistent with previous studies conducted by Goleman (1998) and Boyatzis (2018) who propose that emotionally intelligent leaders are more likely to act thoughtfully, ethically and inclusively.

Another important predictor of CL was Spiritual Quotient ($\beta=.465$). The results show that the values-based orientation, life purpose and inner meaning influence leadership behaviour (Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M., 2003). SQ assists leaders to align with more long-term, ethically sustainable visions and to reflect on deeper, existential issues (Sultan, S., Khan, M., & Kanwal, F. 2017; Baykal E, 2024). SQ is considered to be a higher order dimension of intelligence that underpins wisdom, integrity and service-oriented leadership (Zohar & Marshall, 2004). The goodness-of-fit indices yielded interesting results. The CFI and NFI were high and the goodness of fit indices such as GFI and AGFI were moderately acceptable . This points to robustness of the model but also leaves room for contextual or latent variables not captured in the design to explain more variance in CL at this point in time. Future models could be based on psychological safety, ethical climate or mindfulness. It was interesting to note from the ANOVA and regression analysis that the three independent variables explained about 53% variance in Conscious Leadership. The high explanatory power indicates the perfect synergy of psychological (Coronado M, Benítez M, 2023), communicative (Decuypere, A., & Pircher Verdorfer, A., 2022) and spiritual qualities (Pinto CT, et. al, 2024) that build leadership quality (Percy, S.C., Butler, S.H., 2025). Most importantly, this means that leadership development interventions must be conceived within a larger paradigm than discrete characteristics such as technical skills or personality traits. The answers were more believable as the data was collected in hand from leaders in real organisations. We selected middle and senior level professionals because we wanted to ensure that insights were gained from the real-life experience of leadership and not speculation. However, due to the limitations as stated above, generalizability may be limited due to sample and geographic factors. The findings are significant both practically and theoretically. The present study offers a theoretical base for the multidimensional approach to leadership, internal cognition (EI and SQ) and external behaviour (CQ) are interdependent in the development of conscious leadership (Ward SF, Haase B., 2016). The study reveals that leadership development programs in organisations provide instruction on reflection of values, emotional

intelligence and communication. The model can be used as a road map for HR professionals and leadership coaches to evaluate and take steps to build conscious leadership in organisations.

Implications

Although causal relationships cannot be concluded, the observed relationships provide tentative guidance for leadership development initiatives.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes significantly to theoretical knowledge of leadership and its psychological underpinnings. The study extends the traditional cognitive and behavioural dimensions of leadership theories by empirically validating a multidimensional framework of Spiritual Quotient (SQ), Communication Quotient (CQ) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) as antecedents of Conscious Leadership (CL).

First, the inclusion of spiritual and emotional domains into the leadership model adds to the literature of conscious and values-based leadership. Past models such as transformational or authentic leadership have emphasised integrity and self-awareness, but at times, have under-theorized the deeper spiritual orientation of the leader. The findings of study support view that SQ as a measure of a leader's moral compass and sense of inner purpose is critical in driving moral and people-centred leadership behaviours.

Secondly, this research introduces a new and relevant concept in the world of leadership studies — Communication Quotient (CQ). CQ is operationalized and tested in this study in a specific manner rather than in general terms as in communication skills frameworks designed for leadership development.This study is an empirical attempt to operationalize and test CQ in a specific manner, which includes articulation, structure, clarity and accuracy, as opposed to communication skills in general that are commonly used in leadership frameworks. It can be seen as a theoretical enrichment of the effectiveness of communication in leadership situations.

Third, this study advances integrative leadership models by demonstrating that EI, CQ and SQ are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary, in accounting for over 50% of the variance in CL. This paves the way for an interdisciplinary view from psychology, management and spirituality that could contribute to developing a more comprehensive theoretical perspective on leadership development.

Last but not least, the high values of AVE and CR from the strong measurement model when tested using CFA added value to the method because it has provided the tools that can be used in further research. The discriminant validity and structural integrity of the constructs may provide good grounds for cross-cultural research and replication studies.

Marketing Implications

Results of this study have significant ramifications for marketing and organizational branding, despite its focus on leadership development.

Both Internal Branding and Leadership Persona: EI, CQ and SQ show the importance of conscious leadership in internal and external perception of the brand. These leaders are empathetic, clear and purpose driven in their behaviour and act as brand ambassadors to their stakeholders and employees." This is the perfect time as markets become more aware of this alignment of leadership character and brand values can serve as a sign of focus around credibility, authenticity and trust.

2. Greater Knowledge of Stakeholders (Customers, investors and employees) was found to be closely related to communication effectiveness (CQ). Good communicators are brand storytellers, crisis managers, conversationalists, with emotional intelligence, and they can boost consumer loyalty and brand image.

3.The importance of value based marketing strategy is indicated by the relevance of Spiritual Quotient (SQ) in leadership model, this shows that value based marketing strategies are becoming more relevant in leadership

model. Today's shoppers are looking for a brand with a purpose and authenticity. Authentic cause campaigns, purpose campaigns and social responsibility initiatives can be initiated when leaders live what they preach.

5. Developing Leaders in Marketing Organisations – those that market themselves as people first or conscious brands are increasingly expected to have programmes which focus on developing leaders in the marketing department. Training marketing leaders in EI, CQ and SQ can help create a team of strategic, caring, moral and communications-minded marketing leaders, all essential traits for marketing leaders today.

5. Employer branding and talent attraction – HR-marketing approach: Intentional leadership creates shared purpose, psychological safety and inclusive culture, key elements of employer branding. Conscience companies can leverage and keep the best talent who embrace the emotional and moral values of the brand.

Practical Implications

The study's conclusions provide practitioners of leadership development, organizational strategists, and talent management specialists with useful information. Through the empirical validation of Emotional Intelligence (EI), Communication Quotient (CQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) as prominent indicators of Conscious Leadership (CL), this study offers a multifaceted perspective for evaluating, developing, and maximizing leadership potential in organizations.

Organisations can use the validated model in this study to help them create leadership development programmes that are broader than managerial or technical development. Workshops focusing on emotional intelligence (e.g. self-awareness, empathy) are likely to be part of the training, as will be sessions on developing communication skills (e.g. clarity, articulation and accuracy) and reflective practices on purpose, resilience and value-centric thinking.

The results are used to help identify talent and to develop succession plans for middle and senior management. The lenses of EI, CQ & SQ can be used to evaluate leaders as well as to develop more thorough and predictive talent pipelines for leaders of the future. This whole systems assessment reflects the evolving needs of the leadership role in a dynamic, but ethically complex, business world.

For dynamic and meaningful executive coaching and performance management interventions to happen, all three dimensions need to be integrated into the executive coaching and performance management systems. For instance, a leader who has high SQ and has poor communication skills can benefit from structured communication training, while a leader who has high CQ, but poor EI skills, can benefit from emotional regulation training.

4. Multi-Functional and Industry-Agnostic Usage: executives across multiple industries based out of Karnataka have been part of this study, which is being used across multiple industries including manufacturing, IT, healthcare, education and financial services. The flexibility of the framework to deal with different organisational settings and work culture shows its cross-sectoral validity.

5. Importance of Region & Culture The research is based on leaders from the Karnataka, India. So, it suggests the importance of the cultural dimensions of leadership models. The information gained from such experiences can be used by other organisations operating in similar sociocultural settings to adjust their leadership practices to local norms and values, especially regarding interpersonal harmony, ethical base and effectiveness of leadership.

6. Organisation Culture: To create a more conscious and compassionate culture in the corporation through spirituality, emotional development and communication. As leaders learn these skills they become more effective in establishing psychological safety, openness, and inclusivity – key attributes in a productive team, employee satisfaction, and organizational sustainability..

Limitation & Scope

One of the drawbacks of this current study is that it does not attempt to identify causes. EI, CQ and SQ are self-reported as well as observed, thus reverse causality and omitted variable explanations are not excluded. This

restriction is not to the detriment of this study, however, because it is even more applicable to its goal of theory-building.

The study's findings provide insightful information about how Spiritual Quotient, CQ, and EI affect CL, it is important to recognize study's limitations. Study was carried out in Karnataka region and was of cross-sectional type, meaning that the type of study was not recommended for generalizing the results of the study to other geographical or cultural context. Future studies with longitudinal design or multi-regional design may provide more in-depth and generalizable findings.

It was purposive, for example, as 137 leaders with over five years' experience were purposively sampled; this might restrict the range of views and introduce bias. Subjective ratings via self-report measures are effective at gathering subjective ratings and also susceptible to social desirability bias. Further research might involve the use of objective measures of performance or other sources of data.

Finally, the model only included three important factors and other relevant factors that might affect conscious leadership could be missing. The theoretical model and individual in-depth analyses of case studies would be developed further, thus resulting in more advanced knowledge about leadership process dynamics in various contexts.

Conclusion

The study's objective is to examine how Spiritual Quotient (SQ), Communication Quotient (CQ), and Emotional Intelligence (EI) relate to the prediction of Conscious Leadership (CL) across a range of Karnataka industries. Of these, the Communication Quotient was most positively correlated, emphasizing the importance of smart, effective communication in today's leaders' approach.

Reliability tests were employed to check internal consistency of scales used. CFA and SEM supported robustness of the measurement model. The findings offer empirical evidence of the multidimensionality of conscious leadership, and the need to combine spiritual, cognitive and emotional intelligence to promote ethical and sustainable leadership outcomes.

Conscious leaders who can lead with empathy, clarity and purpose in a business environment that is characterised by volatility and change are not only desirable, but necessary. The study is a significant contribution to growing body of knowledge on holistic leadership development and offers a foundation for future research and application in field.

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