

# Testing a leadership model among managers in a corporate environment

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## **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

### **DECLARATION**

I, Wessel Van Jaarsveldt, hereby declare that “Testing a leadership model among managers in a corporate environment” is my own work, and that the views and opinions expressed in this study are those of the author and the relevant literature references as shown in the reference list. I also declare that the content of this research will not be submitted for any other qualification at any other tertiary institution.

Wessel Van Jaarsveldt

May 2015

## DECLARATION FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR

I, Aartia Joubert, accredited member of the South African Translators Institute, hereby declare that I have edited the script, **Testing a model leadership among managers in a corporate environment**, for language and technical correctness.

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## COMMENTS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- The references and the editorial style as prescribed by the Publication Manual (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA) were followed in this dissertation. This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University to use APA style in all scientific documents, as of January 1999.
- This mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article. The editorial style specified by the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (which agrees largely with the APA style) is used, but the APA guidelines were followed when constructing tables.

## SUMMARY

**Topic:** Testing a leadership model among managers in a corporate environment.

**Keywords:** Leadership, authentic leadership, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being, managers

The effect of emotional intelligence on leadership has attracted substantial interest in research in the last decade. Most of the research pertaining to emotional intelligence and leadership is based on the assumption that leaders in the corporate environment have high levels of emotional intelligence, which has, in turn, been known to increase the psychological well-being of managers. This study focuses on the relationship between three concepts: emotional intelligence, authentic leadership and the effect on the manager's psychological well-being.

Purposive sampling was used in the study, indicating that members of a sample are chosen with a 'purpose' to represent a location or type in relation to a key criterion (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). Measuring instruments included a biographical questionnaire, Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS), Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ), and Mental Health Continuum Scale (MHCS). With the assistance of the SPSS and MPLUS program, Cronbach's alpha coefficients, product-moment correlations and Structural Equation Modelling were utilised. In the model proposed, authentic leadership as a mediator was tested, between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

Positive statistical significant relationships between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being were found, although this result was small. Furthermore, there was a small statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence, psychological well-being and authentic leadership. Authentic leadership also mediated the relationship, with a small effect, between managers' emotional intelligence, with psychological well-being as an outcome. Finally, recommendations were made for the organisation, as well as recommendations for future research in the field of authentic leadership, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

## OPSOMMING

**Onderwerp:** Die toets van 'n leierskap model onder bestuurders in 'n korporatiewe omgewing.

**Sleutelwoorde:** Leierskap, geloofwaardige leierskap; emosionele intelligensie, sielkundige welstand, bestuurders

Die effek van emosionele intelligensie op leierskap het in die afgelope dekade aansienlike belangstelling gewek. Die grootste deel van die navorsing in verband met leierskap is gebaseer op die aanname dat leiers in die korporatiewe omgewing hoë vlakke van emosionele intelligensie het, wat weer daarvoor bekend is dat dit die sielkundige welstand van bestuurders verhoog. Hierdie studie fokus in die verband tussen die drie konsepte: emosionele intelligensie, geloofwaardige leierskap en die effek op die bestuurder se sielkundige welstand.

'n Kwantitatiewe, dwarsdeursnee-opname is vir die navorsing in hierdie studie gebruik. Die steekproef het bestaan uit lae- tot hoëvlakbestuurders in Suid-Afrika, waarvan die meerderheid lae- tot middelvlakbestuurders was. 'n Doelbewuste steekproefneming is in die studie gebruik, dit dui aan dat lede van 'n steekproef geselekteer is met 'n 'doel', naamlik om 'n ligging of tipe in verhouding tot 'n sleutelkriterium te verteenwoordig (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). Meetinstrumente het 'n biografiese vraelys, die Griekse Emosionele Intelligensieskaal (Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale), Geloofwaardige Leierskapvraelys (Authentic Leadership Questionnaire), en Sielkundige Welstand (Mental Health Continuum Scale) ingesluit. Met behulp van die SPSS- en MPLUS-programme is Cronbach se alfa-koëffisiënte, produk-momentkorrelasies en Strukturele Vergelykingsmodellering (Structural Equation Modelling) gebruik. In die voorgestelde model is geloofwaardige leierskap as 'n mediator tussen emosionele intelligensie en sielkundige welstand getoets.

Positiewe statisties beduidende verhoudings tussen emosionele intelligensie en sielkundige welstand is gevind, hoewel hierdie resultaat klein was. Verder was daar 'n klein statisties beduidende verhouding tussen emosionele intelligensie, sielkundige welstand en leierskap. Geloofwaardige leierskap het ook, met 'n geringe resultaat, die leierskap gemedieer tussen bestuurders se emosionele intelligensie, met sielkundige welstand as 'n uitkoms. Laastens is aanbevelings vir die organisasie, toekomstige navorsing op die terrein van geloofwaardige leierskap, emosionele intelligensie en sielkundige welstand gemaak.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This mini-dissertation focuses on the measure of a leadership model on managers in the corporate environment. In this chapter, the research objectives and specific objective are discussed. The research design and research method are explained, and then the chapter summary and the division of chapters follow.

### **1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

#### **1.1.1 Overview of the problem**

The role of a leader in an organisation cannot be emphasised enough (Bernin, 2002). Leadership is linked to positive organisation outcomes and literature has indicated that good leadership is positively related to organisational performance (DeGroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2000; Bhatia, Carmeli, Schaubroeck, & Paz, 2013). Additionally, the right leadership style will lead to high member motivation, commitment, and innovative behaviour (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Fiol, Harris, & House, 1999), particularly in uncertain environments (House, 1977; Khan & Hira Amin, 2012). Avolio and Gardner (2005) and Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson (2008) argue that authentic leadership promotes positive subordinate attitude and behaviour contributing to an organisation's performance.

It is not what a leader does, but how he/she does it that determines effective performance of his/her team (Hogan, Hogan, & Roberts, 1996). Therefore, it is important to know the difference between leadership and management. When considering the difference between leadership and management, one should consider instances when there is leadership without management and vice versa. Leadership without management sets a course or idea that others follow, without bearing in mind how the new course is going to be achieved. Conversely, management without leadership illustrates the control of resources to maintain the current situation or ensure that actions occur in line with previous established plans (Myers, 2013).

The trait theory indicates that leaders have a different set of traits that sets them apart from other individuals. Testing the trait theory, and finding the different traits associated with leadership were most dominant in the leadership studies during the first part of the 20th century.

Studies relating to the different leadership traits have been somewhat inconsistent. Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) expressed uncertainty regarding the validity of the trait theory of leadership, causing the trait theory to be disregarded by many researchers in further research. The scepticism regarding the trait theory has been due to the numerous traits that were considered in research during the early 20th century (Khan & Hira Amin, 2012). Bass (1990) noted 43 separate traits that had been examined during previous studies. Due to the large number of traits researched and a lack of personality framework, it had become difficult to compare results across studies (Northouse, 2012). The NEO PI-R Conceptualization of Conscientiousness, for example, is particularly relevant to the Emotional Intelligence as a trait. The reason is that it encompasses aspects such as 'self-discipline', 'achievement' and 'competence,' that are theoretically linked to trait emotional intelligence in general (Costa & McCrae 1992a, 1992b). Derived from the above statement, Bass (1997) and Maritz (1995) are of the opinion that in the organisational environment it is essential that organisations encourage and implement leadership styles that enable organisations to strive towards a dynamic environment (Dubrin, 2012; Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). Therefore it is of utmost importance for the academia as well as organisations to invest in the research into Authentic leadership research as well as to understand dynamics around the concept of Authentic leadership (Khan & Hira Amin, 2012).

Authenticity in leadership styles has gained a great deal of attention in recent literature (Avolio, 2010; Caza & Jackson, 2011; Chan & Chan, 2005; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008; Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, & Schaubroeck, 2010). In essence, literature describes leaders as having the capability to effectively process information regarding their own goals, values, beliefs and feelings. It also claims that leaders have the dynamics to change their leadership behaviour in accordance with themselves, the ability to correspond their inclinations with the demands of society, and a strong personal identity (Chan & Chan, 2005). According to Gardner, Avolio and Walumbwa (2005), one of the crucial characteristics of authentic leadership is the extent to which managers should have some sort of an understanding of their own motives, values, strengths and weaknesses. Despite the fact that authenticity as a construct is at the core of the authentic leadership paradigm, while individual authenticity is representative of a necessary condition for authentic leadership behaviour, it is not sufficient in the overall context of authentic leadership, or to be regarded as an authentic leader.

Caza and Jackson (2011) indicated that authentic leadership further involves managers' motivation or choices to portray all aspects of authentic leadership, and to take into consideration how their subordinates view their leadership, for example by watching their behaviour or facial expressions (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002). Therefore, both external and internal referents should be considered when discussing authentic leadership. The external referents challenge managers' reflected self-image. The reflective self-image deals with how subordinates perceive the manager in question (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2010). Conversely, the internal referents show the manager's self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is the manager's mental status that take account their beliefs, desires and feelings (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002). Walumbwa *et al.* (2010) are of the opinion that authentic leadership designates managers to make use of both the self-knowledge and reflected self-image to improve their efficiency as leaders in the workplace.

Another element crucial to the authentic leadership paradigm is the manager and subordinate relationship (Gardner *et al.*, 2005). Krasikova, Green and LeBreton (2013) indicated that it is vital for managers to gather information about their authenticity both from other leaders and from their subordinates. According to Cooper, Scandura and Schriesheim (2005), within the information gathered, it is essential that a distinction is made between the perceptions of the leaders' characteristics by their subordinates and the self-perception of the managers' characteristics. The authentic leadership paradigm could be categorised into four distinct dimensions, as validated by Walumbwa *et al.* (2008) and later supported by Neider and Schriesheim (2011), namely: self-awareness, internalised moral perspective, balanced processing and relational transparency. Managers tend to show their true selves when they portray self-disclosure, establish openness, and inner trust with their subordinates (Gardner *et al.*, 2005). Such behaviour encourages trust within the manager and subordinate relationship, where information could be shared and true thoughts and creativity could arise, leading to better communication and employee outcomes (Kernis, 2003).

Wong and Law (2002) indicated that leadership styles alone do not influence employee outcomes; rather, the leaders' emotional intelligence levels are positively related to subordinate outcomes. Ashkanasy and Daus (2000), as well as Bass, Avolio, Jung and Berson (2003),

suggested that a leader's emotional nature is fundamental to the leadership component. Sosik and Megerian (1999) claimed that emotionally intelligent authentic leaders possess self-motivation and tend to be self-secured about their abilities to influence and control life events. Furthermore, they are of the opinion that authentic leaders with high emotional intelligence seem to have high levels of personal efficacy, and the motivation to face difficult situations with high confidence levels (Bass *et al.*, 2003). Personal efficacy is necessary for authentic leaders to attract and motivate subordinates in the working environment. In addition to personal efficacy, Lewis and Borunda (2006) indicated that positive affect of authentic leaders has been contended in literature to entice and encourage subordinates.

The leadership process is known to be intrinsically emotional in nature, as well as value laden. Therefore, according to Ashforth and Humphrey (1995), it seems impossible to separate reasoning or rational behaviour from emotion. Furthermore, they believe that leadership is a function of emotional management. Consequently, it is increasingly important to establish the link between EI and leadership to gain insight into the process of linking leadership to work group outcomes. Leaders in organisations are therefore not only judged by the knowledge and insight that they have, but by the way that they perform under pressure, and their ability to manage themselves and their emotions (Emmerling & Goleman, 2003; Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). Emmerling and Goleman (2003) claim that the difference between successful leaders and unsuccessful leaders can be ascribed to personal and emotional qualities, such as an individual's ability to express care and concern, empathy, the willingness to listen, and maintain open communication channels.

The inconsistent nature of the findings of previous studies suggests that the assessment context of leadership behaviour may have an influencing role on leadership outcome, emotional intelligence and well-being. Currently, several studies show evidence that supports the previous statement (e.g. Chatman, Caldwell, & O'Reilly, 1999; Dubrin, 2012; Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000). However, this statement has not received enough attention in leadership style literature.

The emotional intelligence of the leader and leadership style do not only influence subordinates; the psychological well-being of leaders could influence the organisation as a whole (Bernin & Theorell, 2004; Mazur & Lynch, 1989; Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). Poor psychological well-being of a leader in an organisation can, to a great extent, decrease the efficiency of the organisation by creating anxiety in their respective subordinates. Inversely, a mentally healthy leader, with effective job performance, would be in a position to inspire subordinates, by being a constructive example, which would lead to better performance within organisations. Therefore, it is vital to appreciate which factors lead to both negative and positive effects on leader well-being in organisations (Little, Simmons, & Nelson, 2007; Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). Stordeur, Vandenberghe and D'hoore (2001) found that different leadership styles are significantly related to burnout, resulting from job strain and a lack of social support. Hasselhorn, Conway, Widerszal-Bazyl, Simon, Tackenberg, Schmidt and Muller (2008) supported these findings by pointing out that social support plays an especially significant part in the psychological well-being of the leader.

Hasselhorn *et al.* (2008) added that research should focus on indirect relationships between employee health and leadership. Additionally, an analysis is needed to illustrate the extent to which supervisors influence the social support, demands and control known to have an effect on leadership health. Well-being promotion has seemed to increase organisational productivity and profitability (Keyes, Hysom, & Lupo, 2000; Spector, 1997; Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). Keyes, Hysom and Lupo (2000) accordingly argue that productivity probably endorses employees' feelings of well-being.

### **1.1.2 Literature review**

#### **Leadership**

In order to provide clarity and further motivation for problem statement, a short literature review is provided to emphasise the need to test a model relating to authentic leadership, emotional intelligence and well-being.

Authentic leadership is hypothesised to be the theoretical underpinning for all the forms of positive leadership theories to date (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang 2005; May, Chan, Hodges, & Avolio 2003; Rego, Sousa, Marques, & e Cunha,

2012). According to Shamir and Eilam (2005), and Walumbwa *et al.* (2010), authentic leadership could differ amongst managers in the working environment, and could take the form of either authentic transformational or authentic transactional. Therefore, management authenticity indicates the degree to which managers are both conscious of and display clarity and openness towards their respective subordinates.

According to Walumbwa *et al.* (2008, 2010), managers normally achieve clarity and openness towards their followers by accepting input and sharing information with their subordinates, as well as being self-assured enough to share their personal values, motives and beliefs. Consequently, they allow subordinates to assess their manager's behaviour in the working environment. Sparrowe's view (2005) was the opposite. He partitioned authentic leadership's self-ascribed views, by signifying the importance of the role of multiple sources in the assessment of a manager's authenticity. Parallel to the previous statement, Harvey, Martinko and Gardner (2006) and Goffee and Jones (2006) maintained that authenticity must be accredited to managers by their subordinates, thus indicating that managers alone could not assess themselves as authentic in nature, but could only be labelled as such by their subordinates' description of them in their working environment (Ilies *et al.*, 2005).

According to Ilies *et al.* (2005) and Goffee and Jones (2006), this can be ascribed to the relational orientation of the authentic leadership construct. Accordingly, authenticity is defined in a way that can only be perceived by others, assessing the expressions of the managers' characteristics and their behaviour (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008, 2010; Rego, *et al.*, 2012). The behaviour portrayed by an authentic manager plays an important role in apparent supportive work settings and in how such settings are perceived. Management behaviour that is categorised by confidence, trust, feedback and recognition, enhances the overall subordinate and manager well-being (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012, Cherniss, 1995; Ilies *et al.*, 2005).

According to Judge and Piccolo (2004), various studies have found that leadership behaviour influences leaders' well-being. Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill and Stride (2004) examined the conceptualisation of leaders' behaviour and the effects of their behaviour on context-free psychological health and job-related affective well-being. In doing so, it became apparent that

high-quality leadership behaviour had a statistically significant influence on the overall workplace well-being (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012). Similarly, a study conducted by Gilbreath and Benson (2004) examined the consequences of managerial behaviour for employee well-being (conceptualised as psychiatric disturbance) by making use of structures versus managerial consideration as a managerial behaviour conceptualisation. The results of the study indicated that positive supervisory behaviour, such as thorough communication, employee empowerment, consideration for employee well-being and organisation, had a statistically significant influence on the employees' health (Gilbreath & Benson, 2004).

One of the most predominant areas of leadership research in recent years has been the effect of emotions in the workplace (Rego, *et al.*, 2012). According to Mayer, Salovey, Caruso and Sitarenios (2001), the study of emotions in the workplace is referred to as a study of emotional intelligence. They defined emotional intelligence as a person's capability to monitor their particular feelings and emotions, and those of others, to be able to discriminate between them, and to use the information to guide their actions and thinking. Additionally, Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2001) summarised the concept of emotional intelligence by indicating that leaders tend to have varying abilities to recognise, process and draw conclusions about emotional intelligence. Therefore, different leaders tend to react differently to the same emotional stimuli.

### **Emotional intelligence**

Emotional intelligence as a construct has of late developed into one of the most researched positive areas of psychology in the field of psychology (e.g. Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008; Murphy, 2006). Law, Wong and Song (2004) indicated that, together with the interest in emotional intelligence research, organisations have seemed to find great use for emotional intelligence with regard to their recruitment, selection and developmental decisions. Although Landy (2005) questioned the validity of the emotional intelligence construct, different researchers have indicated that emotional intelligence could be a valuable predictor of leadership together with job performance (e.g. Bar-On, 1997; Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Mayer & Salovey, 2007; Whitman, Van Rooy, & Viswesvaran (2010); Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2007). Researchers such as Bass and Riggio (2006) are of the opinion that the most fundamental component of leadership is emotion or the affect process of the leaders.

Additionally, Ashkanasy and Daus (2002) indicated that leadership is fundamentally a purpose of emotion management.

Recent research has begun to study the relationship between leadership and emotional intelligence. Such research has discovered that the emotional intelligence of a leader is significantly related to particular organisational outcomes, such as productivity and leadership effectiveness (Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, & Boyle, 2006). Additionally, an empirical study found that a leader's emotional intelligence levels are positively related to subordinate outcomes (Wong & Law, 2002). Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found significant results when studying the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership theories, whereas Afzalur Rahim and Psenicka (2005) found a relationship between emotional intelligence and strategic leadership levels. However, emotional intelligence and leadership relationships vary considerably in the different studies. Kobe, Reiter-Palmon and Rickers (2001) found small significant results, while researchers Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found obvious significant results illustrating the emotional intelligence and leadership connection. The inconsistent nature of the relationships described in the various studies might be ascribed to sampling errors in the studies themselves (Hunter, Schmidt, & Le, 2006). Furthermore, the inconsistent nature of the findings could be the product of foggy existing theoretical rationales, as described by Locke (2005) and Landy (2005).

### **Psychological well-being**

Based on the evidence linking emotional intelligence to leadership theories regarding authentic leadership, it becomes increasingly important to know the effect of emotional intelligence and authentic leadership on leaders' psychological well-being. Currently, there has been an increase in the interest in psychological well-being, both in literature and in organisational context (Westerhof & Keyes, 2010). Keyes (2002) and Westerhof and Keyes (2010) indicated that the concept of mental health as only being the presence of the negative (undesirable states such as anxiety) is a misperception. Rather, the inclusion of the concept of psychological well-being, known as the presence of the positive, should be included and focused on in future studies. Psychological well-being, could furthermore be described as a broad construct that includes indicators such as life purpose, personal growth, positive emotion, life satisfaction, happiness, and optimism. Psychometric studies need to be conducted to ensure that proper and validated

questionnaires are available to assess employees' and leaders' psychological well-being, rather than their pathology.

Keyes (2002) maintained that positive mental health comprises emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The World Health Organisation (2005) defined positive mental health similarly to that of Keyes (2002), by distinguishing between feelings of well-being, effective private functioning, and effective social functioning.

Emotional well-being is referred to as a collection of symptoms that reflects either absence or presence of positive feelings in life. In the Mental Health Continuum Scale, Short Format (MCS-SF), emotional well-being is a particular subjective well-being dimension, and is known to include insights of self-confessed interest in life, contentment and satisfaction with life, and with an equilibrium of positive to negative affect (Kessler, Andrews, Mroczek, Ustun, & Wittchen, 1998; Keyes, 2002). Subjective well-being, on the other hand, is referred to as individuals' evaluations and perceptions of their own lives in terms of their psychological and social functioning (Bass, 1990; Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994; Hughes & Holland, 1994). In the MHC-SF, social well-being is determined by five constellations, namely 1) social contribution: if the leader has had something important to contribute to society, 2) social integration: noting if the leaders belonged to a community (like a social group, or their neighbourhood), 3) social actualisation: determining if society is becoming a better place for the leader, 4) social acceptance: referring to leaders' ability to determine if people are good and 5) social coherence: determining if the way society works makes sense to the leader in question (Kessler, *et al.*, 1998; Keyes, 2002).

Finally, on the MHC-SF, psychological well-being is determined by the following factors: 1) self-acceptance, indicating the degree to which the leaders like their personalities, 2) environmental mastery, determining if the leader is good at managing responsibilities in everyday life, 3) positive relations with others, determining if the leader has warm and trusting relations with others, 4) personal growth, determining if the leader is challenged and has the possibility to grow in the immediate environment, 5) autonomy, finding if the leader is

confident to think or express own ideas or opinions, and finally 6) purpose in life, determining if the leader has a sense of direction or meaning in life (Keyes, 2002; 2003).

The Bar-On's model of emotional intelligence indicates that emotional intelligence entails components of effective emotional and social functioning that might be found to lead to higher levels of psychological well-being (Bar-On, 2005). Therefore, if leaders have higher levels of emotional intelligence, it could lead to greater cognitive functioning, behavioural functioning, physical health and mental health (Moore & Keyes, 2003). The mental health continuum scale (MHC-SF) measures these components by means of a self-rating questionnaire, together with the overall levels of positive mental health. In addition, this constellation tends to correspond with distinctive cognitive, as well as social functioning.

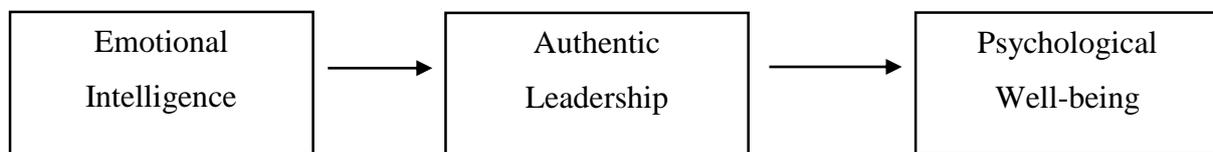
The reaction of the subordinate to incompetent leadership has been found to include turnover, insubordination, industrial sabotage and malingering (Bass, 1990; Hogan *et al.*, 1994; Hughes & Holland, 1994). Regarding the effect of personality on leadership, leadership has, in a number of studies, been referred to as a possible source of stress to the subordinate in the workplace (Jonsson, *et al.*, 2003; McVicar, 2003), although the extent of the stress caused by the leadership and leadership style varies significantly. Leadership styles have explained a mere 9% of the variance in emotional exhaustion (Stordeur, D'hoore, & Vandenberghe, 2001) and transformational leadership style explained 2% of the variance with regard to coping with organisational change, although this statistic did not represent a statistically significant value (Gordick, 2002).

In the next section, the researcher considers whether the effects of emotional intelligence are varied in terms of the leader's psychological well-being. The authentic leadership will be measured against the work-related health of the leader, based on the multi-dimensional model of Keyes (1998) in the corporate environment. Based on the discussion, the following research hypotheses could be formulated:

- There is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.

- There is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Authentic Leadership for managers in South Africa.
- There is a positive relationship between Authentic Leadership and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.
- Authentic Leadership mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.

These relationships are visualised in the structural model of this study, and presented in Figure 1.



*Figure 1.* A hypothesised model for authentic leadership mediating the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of success of managers.

## **1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1 General research objective**

Following the review and the above problem statement, this study's general objective aims to test authentic leadership as a mediator between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of managers in South Africa.

### **1.2.2 Specific objectives**

- To conceptualise leadership, Authentic Leadership, Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being according to literature.
- To assess the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Authentic Leadership and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.
- To determine if Authentic Leadership mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.

- To make recommendations for future research and for practise.

### **1.3 RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method consists of a literature review and an empirical study. The results gathered are presented in the form of a research article.

#### **1.3.1 Phase 1: Literature review**

In Phase 1, a complete review of leadership, authentic leadership, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being are conducted. Articles relevant to the study and that have been published between 1999 and 2014 will be obtained through computer-based searches services, such as GoogleScholar, Ebscohost and SABINET as well as library searches of text books, dissertations and thesis. The journals used in the research are listed below:

- Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology,
- Journal of Managerial Psychology,
- Journal of Positive Psychology,
- South African Journal of Psychology,
- Review of General Psychology,
- Journal of Applied Psychology,
- Journal of Organizational Behaviour,
- Social Indicators Research,
- Management Dynamics,
- South African Journal of Industrial Psychology,
- Administrative Science Quarterly,
- American Psychologist,
- Personality and Individual Differences,
- Google scholar,

- Books

### **1.3.2 Phase 2: Empirical study**

The empirical study consists of the research design, participants, measuring battery, and the statistical analysis. These are outlined below.

#### **1.3.2.1 Research design**

The study is quantitative. Research that is quantitative in nature is a form of conclusive research involving large representative samples and data collection procedures that are structured (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Additionally, a cross-sectional research approach is utilised. A cross-sectional method examines numerous groups of people at one point in time (Salkind, 2009). This approach is ideal for the study owing to cost and time effectiveness. The study is both descriptive and exploratory, since the objectives are supported by existing theory, although little is known about the relationship between leadership, emotional intelligence and well-being of managers in South Africa.

#### **1.3.2.2 Research participants and procedure**

For the purpose of this study, a purposive sample ( $N=249$ ) is extracted from the corporate environment in South Africa. All participants selected occupy managerial positions in various organisations at the time of the data collection. The focus of the study is on managers in a corporate environment, due to the literacy levels required and the testing of the leadership model on management in corporate organisations. Additionally, it is important that the participants in the study have a good command of the English language, regardless of the race or creed of the participant, because the measuring battery is only available in English.

Contact is made with the managing teams and the HR of the organisations involved in the study. After the explanation of the purpose of the research to the management and HR teams, permission is gained to conduct the research. The HR executive has a direct relationship with the organisation's management. This relationship is utilised to obtain the data from the

managers via an internet link. The purpose of the research is illustrated by means of a letter emailed to the participants, with the link attached. Participation in the study is voluntary; and participants' confidentiality and anonymity are emphasised.

### **1.3.2.3 Measuring instruments**

For this study, a biographical questionnaire, Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ), Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GREEK), and Psychological Well-being are used as instruments.

*Biographical Questionnaire.* A biographical questionnaire are used to determine the biographical characteristics of the participants working in the corporate environment in South Africa. Included is the following information: year of birth, gender, home language, race, level of education, household status (marital and parental status), number of years working in the organisation and current position (management level).

*Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ).* According to the developers, Avolio, Gardner and Walumbwa (2007), the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) is a theory-driven leadership survey instrument designed to measure the components that have been conceptualised as comprising authentic leadership. Authentic leadership is self-assessed by the managers using the authentic leadership questionnaire. The ALQ is composed of 16 items: 4 subscales, namely: awareness (4 items, e.g. 'seek feedback to improve my interactions with others';  $\alpha = 0.81$ ); relational transparency (5 items, e.g. 'admit mistakes when they are made';  $\alpha = .75$ ); balanced processing (3 items, e.g. 'solicit views that challenge my deeply held position';  $\alpha = 0.60$ ) and, finally, internalised moral perspective (4 items, e.g. 'make decisions based on my core values';  $\alpha = 0.74$ ). ( $\alpha = 0.76$ ) that participants used to answer the question 'As a leader, I...' using a 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*frequently if not always*) Likert-type scale.

*Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS).* Used for the measurement of emotional intelligence in managers, the GEIS is a 52-item questionnaire that measures four basic emotional skills. Additionally, it makes use of a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 5

(1= Strongly Disagree and 5= Strongly Agree). The four emotional skills that are measured are: 1) expression and recognition of emotions; 2) control of emotions; 3) use of emotions to facilitate thinking; and 4) caring and empathy. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient reported by the GEIS is between 0.80 and 0.92 (Mayer & Salovey, 2007). Tsaousis (2008) implemented a test-retest of the GEIS over a four-week period and found a temporal reliability of the GEIS with correlation coefficients of 0.79 and 0.91.

*Mental Health Continuum Scale (MHCS)*. The MHCS is the third questionnaire in the survey. The purpose of the MHCS has been to assess the psychological wellbeing of the managers in question. It contains an 18-items form developed by Ryff (1989; 2003) and Ryff and Keyes (1995) that has been divided into 6 scales. The six scales are each represented by three items each: 'self-acceptance' ('I like most parts of my personality'), 'positive relations' with others ('People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others'), 'personal growth' ('For me, life has been a continual process of learning, changing, and growth'), 'purpose in life' ('Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them'), 'environmental mastery' ('In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live') and 'autonomy' ('I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus'). The reliability values of the component amount to 0.81, found in a 1992 study of Dutch respondents in the corporate environment, for Psychological Well-being, indicating an acceptable statistical testing level for this component (Keyes, 2003; 2004; Lamers *et al*, 2011) complete details in text.

#### **1.3.2.4 Statistical analysis**

Correlations and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) methods, as implemented by the MPLUS 7.11 programme, are utilised (Muthén & Muthén, 2013). The frequency statistics in the study are used to determine participants' biographical information via the IBM SPSS programme. Descriptive statistics involving testing assumptions are utilised. They provide the researcher with a summary of the data collected (Pallant, 2005). The main purpose of the descriptive statistics would be to provide the researcher with insight into the collective, logical picture of the information received from the study's participants (Struwig & Stead, 2001). According to Pallant (2005), the descriptive statistics would illustrate the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, as well as the alpha coefficient (to assess the reliability). Marascuilo

and Serlin (1988) indicated that the mean in the study would represent the sum of the observations made, which would be divided by the number of measured observations that will establish the group average. Struwig and Stead (2001) explained that the standard deviation in the study would represent the measures and the deviating scores for the mean, together with the averages and the deviations. Additionally, they added the skewness and kurtosis as indicative of how the scores are distributed in the study.

With MPLUS, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is conducted in order to control the construct validity of the instruments. CFA is known as a theory-driven confirmatory technique. The exploration development is driven by the theoretical relationships amongst the observed and unobserved variables (Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, & King, 2006). Alpha coefficients are determined to assess the internal consistency of the scales. The internal consistency of the domain reliability is defined as the degree to which items in a subscale are inter-correlated, thus measuring the same construct (Mokkink *et al*, 2013). Covariance matrix as an input type was used. In addition, a correlation matrix for the latent variables was included for the discussion. Product-moment correlations will be conducted to determine the relationships between the scales (Steyn & Swanepoel, 2008). Cut-off points of 0.30 (medium effect) and 0.50 (large effect) are implemented as the baseline for the practical significance of the correlation coefficients (Cohen, 1989). Confidence interval levels used for statistical significance are fixed at a value of 95% ( $p \leq 0, 05$ ).

The hypothesised structural model is tested statistically in order to determine the extent to which it proved to be consistent with the secondary data. The following fit indices are used: Chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ), which is the test of absolute fit of the model; goodness-of-fit indices, such as Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) are reported in this study. The goodness-of-fit was tested empirically, with the data of the sample group. Various goodness-of-fit indices are used in order to determine a possible correspondence between the observed and implied covariance matrices. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), several fit indices have to be used to assess the fit of a CFA model. This is especially applicable to an absolute closed fit index (RMSEA.). Two distinct incremental close fit indices were therefore selected, namely TLI and CIF.

According to Hu and Bentler (1999), both the TLI and the CIF have found support in research, by virtue of being more accurate and stable than other indices.

With the use of MPLUS, the mediating effect of the leadership between emotional intelligence and health is used to determine structural equation modelling (SEM; Muthén & Muthén, 2010). Rucker, Preacher, Tormala and Petty (2011) indicated that the focus of the mediating analysis should be shifted towards the significant and the magnitude of indirect effects. According to Rucker *et al.* (2011), the indirect effect denotes the amount of mediation, while equalling the reduction of the effect of the initial variable on the outcome. The estimates did not go through zero, which indicates a significant mediation effect (Rucker *et al.*, 2011). Bootstrapping (re-sampling) is used in the mediation. 10,000 samples (retests) had been used. According to Hayes (2009), the bootstrapping should be at least 100 draws. Bias-corrected confidence intervals of 95% were also reported (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Furthermore, the categorical estimator, WLSMV, was also used for the bootstrapping analyses, and  $\kappa^2$  (kappa-squared) values are calculated to aid in creating a foundation from which to convert the magnitude of the mediating effect sizes (De Beer, Pienaar, & Rothmann 2013; Preacher & Kelley, 2011).

### **1.3.2.5 Ethical consideration**

It is essential for the success of this project to conduct research that is fair and ethical. Issues such as voluntary participation, informed consent, protection from harm, confidentiality and the maintenance of privacy are taken into account (Salkind, 2009). The research proposal was submitted to the North-West University's research board for review before starting with the project. Additionally, the various organisations are adequately informed of the purpose of the research and the use of their employees as participants in this study.

## **1.4 Chapter division**

The chapters in this mini-dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Research article

## Chapter 3: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

### **1.5 Chapter summary**

Chapter 1 discusses the theory regarding measurement instruments, arguing that they should be equivalent and unbiased when used in cross-cultural studies. Emotional intelligence as an industrial psychology concept has grown tremendously over the past decade and the advantages that it poses have been recognised. There is, however, one issue not mentioned and sufficiently studied. That is the extent to which authentic leadership could be the mediating instrument between emotional intelligence and the health of managers within South Africa.

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## **TESTING A LEADERSHIP MODEL AMONG MANAGERS IN A CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT**

### **Abstract**

**Orientation:** Leadership is a multifaceted phenomenon, which has been researched in depth, together with emotional intelligence as an industrial psychology concept. There is, however, one issue not mentioned and sufficient studies to show that this is the extent to which authentic leadership could have a mediating effect on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of managers within South Africa.

**Research purpose:** The main purpose of this research is to test whether authentic leadership is a mediator between emotional intelligence and the well-being among managers within the South African context.

**Motivation for the study:** Investigating the effect of leadership on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of managers in the workplace, could provide new insights on the way that managers are managed in the organisational context. Additionally, as a study on the effect of leadership on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being is a newly researched concept in the South African context, the information could be of value for organisations.

**Research design, approach and method:** A quantitative research design was used in this cross-sectional study. A purposive sampling procedure of employees from low to middle management level were drawn from various corporate companies in South Africa ( $N = 249$ ). The main focus was on the low to middle level managers, who made up the bulk of the sample. Measuring instruments used in the study were the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ), Mental Health Continuum Scale (MHCS) and the Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS). The MPLUS program was utilised to test the mediation effect of authentic leadership on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

**Main findings:** A positive relationship between authentic leadership and its antecedent and outcome was found. More specifically, authentic leadership mediated (small effect) the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

**Practical/Managerial implications:** Managers in the corporate environment in South Africa should be aware of the effect of their level of emotional intelligence on their leadership styles. Additionally, the managers should be conscious of what effect emotional intelligence and the leadership style that they adopt could have on their overall psychological well-being.

**Contributions/value-add:** This study provides insight into emotional intelligence and leadership studies across different management levels in the corporate environment, and the influence on managerial well-being.

**Keywords:** Leadership, authentic leadership, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being, leaders, managers

An organisation's success is determined largely by the quality of its leaders. Leadership is a multifaceted phenomenon, which has been researched in depth (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Kuoppala, Lamminpää, Liira, & Vainio, 2008; Lagan, 2007; Stone, Russell, & Patterson 2004, Toor & Ofori, 2009; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008; 2010). Additionally, various definitions of the concept of leadership have been presented in recent years. According to relevant literature (Fleenor, McCauley, & Brutus, 1997; Hamel, 2012; Kempster, Higgs, & Wuerz, 2014), it is important to distinguish between a “manager” and a “leader” in the workplace. Managers tend to manage ordinary tasks, such as distribution of roles and responsibilities, and to ensure the supply of resources required to achieve organisational goals. Leaders tend to be more concerned with the spiritual aspect of work, such as inspiring followers who intensely trust in them. They possess a dormant power in organisations (Squires, 2004; Silva, 2014). In addition, leaders tend to be more future-orientated and develop and improve essential strategies to inspire change in order to achieve that vision. Managers do the opposite: they make use of steps to create timetables in order to achieve desired results to satisfy the vision as set by the leader (Carlson, 1996; Clifford, 2012).

For leaders to be successful in driving the vision of an organisation, high self-awareness and self-management levels are necessary (Hamel, 2012). Therefore, a greater awareness of the leaders' personalities is needed to recognise their behaviour predilections when dealing with important matters, decision-making and choosing where to focus their energy (Kempster, Higgs, & Wuerz, 2014). Authentic leadership as a new paradigm is perceived as an important aspect both in research and in industry, based on an authentic leader's ability to improve employee well-being and increase subordinate retention (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005, Kuoppala *et al.*..., 2008, Lagan, 2007; Toor, & Ofori, 2009). Additionally, researchers such as Blake, Mills and Guerrero (2012) further conducted research that focused on the impact of authentic leadership on subordinate working environment, as well as the overall organisational performance. According to various researchers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011), authentic leadership is regarded as a core construct on which many other leadership theories are grounded. The main concept of the authentic leadership theory is founded on positive attributes that focus managers' attention on effective organisational aspects that increase positive attributes and enhance immediate subordinates' psychological well-being on a daily basis (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009).

Furthermore, the importance of emotions in leadership literature has questioned whether emotional intelligence as a trait, measured as a set of abilities, together with personality, could possibly provide further insight into the transformation between outstanding and below-par levels of leadership performance (Herbst & Maree, 2008). Emotional intelligence is known as the ability to perceive, appraise and express emotions accurately and adaptively. Moreover, it includes the ability to comprehend one's emotions, together with the ability to access and generate feelings, in order to enable adaptive action, cognitive activities and the ability to regulate emotions in yourself and others (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). Coinciding with the effects of authentic leadership on leaders' emotional intelligence, is the effect of managers' leadership style on their psychological well-being. Westerhof and Keyes (2010) indicated that there has been an increased interest in the psychological well-being of management in the working environment. Currently, it serves the purpose of fulfilling a paradigm shift from focusing on the negative in the manager to concentrating on the manager's positive aspects. Well-being can be defined as a state of health, such as illness, that is specified when a particular set of symptoms, at a specific level, is present for a particular duration. Additionally, this constellation has to correspond with distinctive cognitive as well as social functioning. Emotional well-being is referred to as a collection of symptoms that reflects either absence or presence of positive feelings in life (Bass, 1990; Hogan, Curphy & Hogan, 1994; Hughes & Holland, 1994).

Research has shown the advantages of an authentic leadership style (Hamel, 2002; Kempster, Higgs, & Wuerz, 2014), emotional intelligence (Herbst & Maree, 2008; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000), as well as heightened psychological well-being (Bass, 1990; Hogan *et al.*, 1994; Hughes & Holland, 1994) for managers and leaders in the workplace. Additionally, researchers such as Fredricson (2003) and Sy, Co'te' and Saavedra (2005), have started to propose links between the three constructs, although there has still been a tendency in the literature to focus on the negative aspects, such as mood, and psychological ill health. Therefore it is important to assess the presence of the positive, between the three constructs, and analyse such results under managers in the South African context.

## **Leadership**

Research in the past has provided various definitions on the concept of leadership. The Trait Approach up to the late 1940s indicated that leadership skill is inherent (Bryman, 1999).

Therefore, people were selected for leadership roles, based on a set of traits that they possessed in the workplace, such as intelligence, appearance and language ability (Slater, Bolman, Crow, Goldring, & Thurston, 1994). In the latter part of the 1940s to the 1960s, the Behavioural Approach became the leading leadership effectiveness approach, indicating that leadership is more concerned with leader behaviour. Conversely, the Contingency Approach, suggested that efficient leadership is reliant on the condition of the organisation, and became prevalent in the late 1960s to the early 1980s. The Contingency Approach proposed that a particular style of leadership is more fitting for a particular situation. More recent approaches to leadership rather tend to place emphasis on vision and charisma, a term used by sociologist Max Weber to label leaders who can lead, but who do not hold “a sanctioned office” (English, 2006). During the latter part of the 1970s, the notion of transactional and transformational leadership arose. Transactional leadership presumes that the connotation between managers and employees is grounded on negotiating, whereas transformational leadership presumes that the relationship between the manager and the subordinates is of communal trust and presented by four distinct factors, namely, charisma, inspiration, individual consideration and intellectual stimulation.

### **Authentic leadership**

Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) initially added to the concept of transformational leadership, indicating that authenticity is a further extension of a transformational leader. Additionally, they are of the opinion that an authentic leader is perceived in the workplace as a “moral agent”, who has the ability to empower their subordinates to take actions that are moral, noble and legitimate. Authentic leadership is a fairly new premise that has received a great deal of attention in research lately (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005, Kuoppala *et al.*, 2008, Lagan, 2007; Toor & Ofori, 2009). According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), authentic leadership is associated with transformational leadership, although authentic leaders have added resources at their “core” such as confidence, hope, optimism and high levels of resilience. Woodward (2009) indicated that the affect of such a leader would add not only to the communication of organisations, but also to the constituency of their subordinates in the workplace. Walumbwa *et al.* (2008) defined authentic leadership as ‘a pattern of leader behaviours that draws upon, and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, to foster positive

self-development.’ They are of the opinion that the authentic leaders added resources that could be contagious in an organisation and that will add to the organisation’s verifiable and sustainable performances (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008, p. 94). Kernis (2003) initially theorised three core elements of authentic leadership: unbiased processing, relational authenticity, and authentic behaviour. Even though his theory was adapted by some researchers (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005), the unbiased processing dimension was challenged by other researchers (Fiske & Taylor, 2013; Tice, Ettinger, Ensrud, & Wallace, 2003), by means of indicating that leaders seem to be inherently biased in their information processing. Therefore, the academic community seems to agree that authentic leadership encompasses the following dimensions: balanced processing, internalised moral perspective, relational transparency, and self-awareness (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Additionally, further research across various multicultural samples, show acceptable reliability (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Walumbwa *et al.* (2008). Therefore, the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire developed by Walumbwa *et al.* (2008), will be used in this study, to take into consideration all the validated constructs of the authentic leadership theory, namely balanced processing and relational transparency.

The concept of balanced processing refers to the manner in which authentic leaders practice self-regulation. They achieve this by making use of unbiased collections and interpretations of both positive and negative self-related information (Gardner *et al.* 2005). According to Stajkovic and Luthans (1998), such information is used to align their values and intentions. Added to this process is the leader’s ability to constantly do self-assessments on both a conscious and subconscious level, in which they evaluate and control their behaviours (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub 1989; Stets & Burke, 2000; Weick, 1993). This statement suggests that the behaviour of a leader is intrinsically driven, and inherently authentic (Ryan & Deci 2000; 2001).

According to Ilies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang, (2005) and Gardner *et al.* (2011), both the authentic relational orientation and relational transparency constructs both refer to the authentic leader’s desire for open, truthful, self-disclosing and trusting relationships. Such relationships include the admission of both the negative and positive aspects of the self. Consequently, authentic leadership tend to be more focused on the content of the message of their leadership,

rather than the symbolic action or persuasive language that is promoted in the transformational leadership (Bass, 2000; Bono & Judge, 2004). Therefore Gardner *et al.* (2011) is of the opinion that authentic leaders tend to present an honest self to their subordinates and create trusting sustainable relationships.

A study by Kerr, *et al.* (2006) was conducted to examine the relationship between leadership and emotional intelligence. Such research indicates that the emotional intelligence of a leader is significantly related to particular organisational outcomes, such as productivity and leadership effectiveness (Kerr *et al.*, 2006). Additionally, an empirical study found that a leader's emotional intelligence levels relate positively to subordinate outcomes (Wong & Law, 2002).

### **Emotional intelligence**

One of the most predominant areas of leadership research in recent years (Ashkanasy, Hartel, & Zerbe, 2000; Byrne, Dominick, Smither, & Reilly, 2007; Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000) has been the effect of emotions in the workplace. According to Mayer and Salovey (1993), the study of emotions in the workplace is referred to as emotional intelligence. They defined emotional intelligence as one's ability to monitor their own and others' feelings and emotions, to be able to discriminate between them, as well as to make use of the information to guide their actions and thinking. Additionally, Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2008) summarised the concept of emotional intelligence by indicating that leaders tend to have varying abilities to recognise, process and draw conclusions regarding emotional intelligence. Therefore, leaders tend to react differently to the same emotional stimuli.

Law, Wong, and Song (2004) indicated that together with the interest in emotional intelligence research, organisations have seemed to find great use for emotional intelligence about their recruitment, selection and developmental decisions. Although Landy (2005) questioned the validity of the EI construct, other researchers (e.g., Bar-On, 1997; Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004; Whitman, Van Rooy, & Viswesvaran, 2010) have found evidence that EI could be a major predictor of both job performance as well as leadership in the organisation. Researchers such as Bass and Bass

(2009) are of the opinion that the most important constituent of leadership is emotion or affect process of the leaders. Additionally, Ashkanasy and Tse (2000) indicated that leadership is fundamentally a purpose of emotion management.

Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found significant results when studying the connection between emotional intelligence and leadership theories, including the transformational leadership theory, whereas Afzalur Rahim and Psenicka (2005) found a relationship between emotional intelligence and strategic leadership levels. However, the relationships between emotional intelligence and leadership vary considerably in the different studies. Kobe, Reiter-Palmon, and Rickers (2001) found small significant results, while researchers Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found large significant results for the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership. The inconsistent nature of the relationships described in the various studies might be designated to sampling errors in the studies itself (Hunter & Schmidt, 2006). Furthermore, the inconsistent nature of the findings could be the product of foggy existing theoretical rationales as described by Locke (2005) and Landy (2005). The inconsistency in the findings could be found in the summary below:

Bold claims have been made between the relationship of emotional intelligence and leadership, by indicating that 90% of leadership is determined by the emotional intelligence of the leader (Kemper, 1999). In this particular study, the Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS) will be used to assess the manager's levels of emotional intelligence. Botma (2009), developed the GEIS and indicated that the GEIS is a promising measure of emotional intelligence among various cultural groups. Various researchers provided evidence (Tsaousis, 2008; Tsaousis & Nikolaou, 2005; Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2004) regarding different psychometric properties of the GEIS that supports its viability to measure emotional intelligence (Tsaousis, 2008; Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2004).

A study (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002) argued that that features of emotional intelligence such as empathy, self-confidence, and self-awareness are the essential foundations of visionary or transformational leadership. On the contrary, researchers Brown and Moshavi (2005), have found sub-standard results, when testing intelligence and personality models in

the expectation of extraordinary leadership, while attempting to determine if emotional intelligence is the elusive “X” factor when predicting successful leadership. Although there has been an increase in the research on how emotional intelligence affects leadership in the workplace, there have been some issues regarding the measurement of the emotional intelligence (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000; Petrides & Furnham, 2003). According to Jonker and Vosloo (2008), emotional intelligence has advantages for the workplace, although there is limited literature on what and on whom emotional intelligence has to be measured in the workplace. Additional problems found about the measurement of emotional intelligence are the questionable levels of consistency of the measure. Other problems regarding the measurement of emotional intelligence include questionable levels of internal consistency equivalence issues when measuring the same constructs across different groups (Van de Vijver, 2011), the stability of the instrument (Keele & Bell, 2008; Petrides & Furnham, 2003), and lastly the item bias when measuring across groups (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). Therefore, it is increasingly important to standardise the GEIS in the South African context, and provide a valid and reliable norm, that would remove cultural bias in the GEIS measurement (Van de Vijver, 2011).

### **Psychological well-being**

Based on the evidence linking emotional intelligence to leadership theories regarding authentic leadership styles, it becomes increasingly important to know the effect of emotional intelligence and authentic leadership on leader’s psychological well-being. Currently, there has been an increase in the interest of psychological well-being, both in literature and in organisational context (Gershon *et al.*, 2009; Westerhof & Keyes, 2010). Keyes (2002) and Westerhof and Keyes (2010) indicated that the concept of mental health as only being the presence of the negative (undesirable states such as anxiety) is a misperception. Rather, the inclusion of the concept of psychological well-being, known as the presence of the positive, should be included and focused on in future studies. The reason for the previous statement is that the ALQ assesses authentic leadership, and is known to be the most consistently correlated with job satisfaction at an individual-level of exploration (Warshawsky, Havens, & Knafl, 2011). Therefore, it seems that the perception of an appropriate and understanding leadership can have an effect on manager’s well-being.

The following section describes authentic leadership components. The components relate to personal characteristics that have been associated with leadership or well-being in prevailing theoretical models. Examples of such models are positive self-concept, personal integrity, and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, links between the variables of the leader's well-being will be explained.

### **Self-Awareness**

According to May, Chan, Hodges, and Avolio (2003) awareness, a component of authenticity, indicates a person's trust in or awareness of personal characteristics, feelings, motives values and cognitions. Self-awareness thus includes knowledge of oneself intrinsic opposing self-aspects and how the contradictions influence the individual's behaviours and cognitions (May *et al.*, 2003). Judge, Locke, Durham, and Kluger (1998), indicated that an individual's authentic self is foretold by the positive self-concept. Individuals with a positive self-concept tend to have a higher self-worth, or higher self-esteem. They tend to be more emotionally stable, and believe that they are in control of their lives. In recent research (Goldman & Kernis, 2002), authentic leadership was found to be positively and significantly related to self-esteem and self-awareness. These characteristics were coupled with being aware of one's strengths and weaknesses while understanding emotions and personality. Understanding one's emotions is an emotional intelligence component of. George, Larson, Koenig, and McCullough (2000) proposed that emotional intelligence contributes to effective leadership (see also Caruso, Mayer, & Salovey, 1993), and linked emotional intelligence to the essential elements of effective authentic leadership.

### **Authentic behaviour**

Authentic people do seem to have a particular set of behavioural skills (Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Kernis, 2003). Behaviour as a component of authenticity indicates that such individuals will act or behave in accordance with their true self. This could take the form of behaviour in connection with the person's values, beliefs and preferences (Kernis, 2003; Wang *et al.*, 2012). There could however be instances where the expression of the true self could result in the projecting of a powerful image of the true self, this could require the monitoring of certain behaviours for the purpose of self-presentation. This could indicate that authentic leaders might

become sensitive between their specific fit in the required environment as well as to be aware of the possible consequences of their behaviour (Kernis, 2003).

The reaction of the subordinate to incompetent leadership has been found to include turnover, disobedience, industrial sabotage and malingering (Bass & Bass, 2009; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Regarding the effect of personality on leadership, leadership has been found to be a large source of stress for subordinates in the workplace (McVicar, Munn-Giddings, & Seebohm, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2010), although the extent of the stress caused by the leadership and leadership style varies significantly. Leadership styles have explained a mere 9% of the variance in emotional exhaustion (Stordeur, D'hoore, & Vandenberghe, 2001) and transformational leadership style explained 2% of the inconsistency with regard to dealing with organisational change, although this was not a statistically significant value (Wang *et al.*, 2012).

### **Emotional contagion**

Finally, it seems as if generally, leaders' and their respective subordinate's emotions and moods converge by means of a process known as emotional contagion (Hatfield & Cacioppo, 1994). According to Friedman, Prince, Riggio and DeMatteo (1980) emotional contagion has been found to be stronger in leaders that have a higher charismatic personality score than other leaders. Moreover, a leader's positive emotions could be a great advantage to the organisation, with regard to the changed management processes. This could be ascribed to the way in which positive emotions seem to be contagious, and to the fact that each individual's positive emotions can resonate through other employees or subordinates in the organisational context (Fredricson, 2003). In support of this statement Sy, Co'te' and Saavedra (2005), found that there is a definite link between the mood of the leader and their direct subordinates. Additionally the research also suggested that the positivity of leaders' affective states (mood) had been associated with greater coordination between leaders and subordinates.

### **Mediation role of authentic leadership between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being**

It is of both theoretical and practical interest to investigate whether the leadership styles lead to the wellness and success of leaders via mediating the relationship between emotional

intelligent leadership and the well-being of leaders in the South African corporate environment. Variables such as authentic leadership could be regarded as a mediator “to the extent that it accounts for the relation between the predictor and the criterion” (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1176).

Although research on the effects of leadership styles has been abundant, very little attention has been paid to the process according to which leadership styles regulate leader’s emotional intelligence and health, which ultimately leads to better organisational outcomes, such as job satisfaction and higher retention (Keiningham & Vavra, 2001). Evidence suggests that there is a relationship between leadership effects and emotional intelligence of managers (Bass, 2000, Chernyshenko, Stark & Drasgow, 2011; Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, & Finch, 1997; McCrae & Costa, 1985; Zaccaro, 2012). Furthermore, research has been conducted on the effects of leadership styles on their management psychological well-being, and found that there is to a certain extent a relationship (Magnus, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1985; McVicar, Munn-Giddings Seebohm, 2013; Stordeur *et al.*, 2001). Therefore, based on the evidence, this study hypothesises that authentic leadership would mediate the relationship between South African managers’ emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

### **Design of the present study**

#### Proposed hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses were proposed:

- H<sub>1a</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.
- H<sub>1b</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Authentic leadership for managers in South Africa.
- H<sub>1c</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between Authentic Leadership and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.
- H<sub>1d</sub>:** Authentic Leadership mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **Research approach**

A quantitative approach was used for the purpose of the current study. A quantitative approach indicates that the researcher makes use of strategies such as surveys to collecting data by means of encoded instruments (Jackson, Van de Vijver, & Fouché, 2014). Additionally, a cross-sectional design was adopted in the study. A cross-sectional design is a popular research design that involves selecting one or many samples from the population at a certain point in time (Salkind, 2009). Such an approach posed various advantages for instance time and economic significance. This design was used in the assessment of the relationships between the variables in the population (Salkind, 2009).

## **Research method**

### **Research participants**

For the purpose of this study, a purposive sampling procedure of employees from low to top management level was drawn from a nationalised company, specializing in the corporate environment in South Africa ( $N = 249$ ). Purposive sampling indicates that the participants of the sample are selected with a 'purpose' to characterise a location or type in relationship to a key criterion (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). The sample group varied in terms of gender, race, language, marital status, parental status, management level (low-level to top-level) and department. The participants should have a good command of the English language in order to complete the questionnaire in a successful manner.

Table 1 presents some of the demographic characteristics of the participants.

**TABLE 1:** Characteristics of the Participants ( $N=249$ )

| Item                | Category             | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender              | Male                 | 163       | 65.5       |
|                     | Female               | 86        | 34.5       |
| Ethnicity           | African              | 160       | 64.3       |
|                     | White                | 56        | 22.5       |
|                     | Coloured             | 25        | 10.0       |
|                     | Indian               | 7         | 2.8        |
|                     | Other                | 1         | .4         |
|                     | Language             | African   | 141        |
|                     | Western Germanic     | 108       | 43.0       |
| Qualification Level | Grade 10             | 3         | 1.2        |
|                     | Grade 12             | 11        | 4.4        |
|                     | Post-Matric (Tech)   | 48        | 19         |
|                     | University Degree    | 111       | 44.6       |
|                     | Post Graduate Degree | 32        | 12.9       |
| Job Level           | Low-level Management | 121       | 48.6       |
|                     | Middle Management    | 103       | 41.4       |
|                     | Senior Management    | 25        | 10.0       |

The average age of the participants was 36.45 years ( $SD = 9.89$ ). According to Table 1, there had been an uneven representation of gender between males (65.5%) and females (34.5%). The sample group consisted of various ethnicities. Africans made up 64.3% of the population. White participants amounted to 22.5% of the population, Coloured 10.0%, Indian 2.8% and other 0.4% of the sample population. Additionally, 57% of the sample spoke African or indigenous languages, whereas 43% of the individuals in the sample reported either Afrikaans or English (Western Germanic) as their home language. In terms of the qualification level of the participants, 5.6% had a Grade 12 qualification or lower, 73% had a technikon or technical diploma, 44.6% had a university degree and finally 12.9% had a postgraduate degree. In addition, 48.6% of the population fell within the Low-level management category, 41.4% fall within the Middle management and 10% of the sample population fall in the Senior Management category.

## Measuring battery

Instruments that were utilised for this study were a biographical questionnaire, Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ), Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GREEK), and Mental Health Continuum Scale (MHCS).

*Biographical Questionnaire.* A biographical questionnaire was used to determine the biographical characteristics of the participants working in the corporate environment in South Africa. Included was information of the following nature: year of birth, gender, home language, race, level of education, household status (marital and parental status), years working in the organisation and current position (management level).

*Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ).* Developed by Avolio, Gardner and Walumbwa (2007). According to Avolio, Gardner and Walumbwa (2007), the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) is a theory-driven leadership survey instrument designed to measure the components that have been conceptualised as comprising authentic leadership. Authentic leadership was self-assessed by the managers using the authentic leadership questionnaire. The ALQ is composed of 16 items and 4 subscales, namely awareness (4 items, e.g. "seek feedback to improve my interactions with others";  $a = .81$ ); relational transparency (5 items, e.g. "admit mistakes when they are made";  $a = .75$ ); balanced processing (3 items, e.g. "solicit views that challenge my deeply held position";  $a = .60$ ) and finally internalised moral perspective (4 items, e.g. "make decisions based on my core values";  $a = .74$ ), ( $a = .76$ ) that participants used to answer the question "As a leader, I..." using a 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*frequently if not always*) Likert-type scale.

*Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS).* The GEIS is a self-report measure and is based on the theoretical framework proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997). It consists of 52 items measuring four basic emotional skills: Expression and Recognition of Emotions, Control of Emotions, Use of Emotions for Facilitating Thinking, and Caring and Empathy. Responses to all items are made on a 5-point, Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Extensive research evidence regarding the psychometric properties of the GEIS supports its feasibility to measure trait emotional intelligence in the Greek population (Tsaousis, 2008;

Tsaousis & Nikolaou, 2005; Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2004). The alpha reliabilities of GEIS sub-scales in the current study ranged from .79 to .92 (adults sample) and from .75 to .87 (teenage sample).

*Mental Health Continuum Scale* (MHCS) Psychological well-being was the third questionnaire in the survey. It contains 18-items form of Ryff's (1989; 2001) and Ryff and Keyes' (1995) that have been divided into 6 scales. The 6 scales are each represented by three items: 'self-acceptance' ('I like most parts of my personality'), 'positive relations' with others ('People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others'), 'personal growth' ('For me, life has been a continual process of learning, changing, and growth'), 'purpose in life' ('Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them'), 'environmental mastery' ('In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live') and 'autonomy' ('I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus' The reliability values of the component, found in a 1992 study of Dutch respondents on Psychological Well-being in the corporate environment, amount to 0.81, indicating an acceptable statistic testing level for this component (Keyes, 2003;2004; Lamers *et al*, 2011).

### **Research procedure**

After permission has been obtained from the organisation's management, a letter requesting participation was e-mailed to the different participants. The letter explained the objectives and importance of the study. The questionnaire was sent to participants in different departments via an electronic link. The total number of links emailed amounted to 571. The participants completed the questionnaires electronically. The time frame to complete the questionnaire was about two hours; therefore, the participants were given four weeks to complete the questionnaires.

A week prior to the due date for completion of the questionnaires, participants were reminded to complete them. This will mark the end of the data collection phase of the research script, after which data analysis was performed. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the confidentiality and anonymity of participants was emphasised.

## **Statistical analysis**

Frequency statistics and alpha reliability coefficients were generated using IBM SPSS (Pallant, 2013). According to Pallant, (2013), frequency is the number of occurrences of a repeating event per unit time. It is also referred to as temporal frequency, which emphasizes the contrast to spatial frequency and angular frequency. Furthermore, structural equation modelling methods were implemented with MPLUS 7.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015). Due to the large number of parameters to be estimated compared with the sample size, item parcelling methods were used in order to decrease the number of parameters for more accurate results (it was especially done with Authentic Leadership and Emotional Intelligence). Important considerations when implementing parcelling methods are to ensure that the factor structure of the constructs are known and that the items are unidimensional when parcelling, i.e. reversed items should point in the same direction as the regular items (Bandalos, 2002; Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). Specifically, parcels were created for the four components of Emotional Intelligence for estimating a latent variable. In addition, the six individual components of Psychological Well-being were individually parcelled as outcome variables for the model. Authentic leadership was estimated as a latent variable by all of its 16 items (see Figure 1).

To determine the fit of the estimated model, the following indices were considered: Comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), and the squared root mean residual (SRMR). Acceptable values for the CFI and TLI are 0.90 and above, the RMSEA 0.08 and below, and SRMR 0.08 and below (Van de Schoot, Lugtig, & Hox, 2012). The effect sizes for correlations were considered as follows: medium practical effect (0.30-0.49), and for a large effect (0.50 and above) (Cohen, 1989). Regressions were added to the model (see Figure 1), and statistical significance was set at the 95% level, i.e.  $p < 0.05$ . In order to investigate the mediation possibilities of AL between EI and the components of well-being, bootstrap resampling (10 000 redraws) was used in conjunction with the MODEL INDIRECT function in MPLUS - this also gives 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effect(s) (Rucker, Preacher, Tormala, & Petty, 2011).

## Results

### Reliability

In terms of the reliability analyses, it was shown that all of the total constructs had acceptable alpha coefficients: Emotional Intelligence ( $\alpha = 0.79$ ), Authentic Leadership ( $\alpha = 0.92$ ), and Psychological Well-being ( $\alpha = 0.71$ ). As mentioned in the Statistical Analysis sub-section, parcelling was done on all the constructs in order to determine the alpha coefficients. After construct validity and internal consistency were determined, product-moment correlations were employed on the scales. Parcelling was conducted on Emotional Intelligence and Authentic leadership as total second-order constructs in order to determine their relationships with each other, and the six factors of Psychological Well-being. It was determined that all the relationships were statistical significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). The practical significant values may be viewed in Table 2.

### Correlation matrix

Table 2 below presents the correlation matrix between the variables.

Table 2

*Correlation matrix for the variables*

| Variables                      | 1     | 2    | 3     | 4     | 5    | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|---|---|---|
| 1. Emotional intelligence (EI) | 1.00  |      |       |       |      |   |   |   |
| 2. Authentic leadership (AL)   | 0.20  | 1.00 |       |       |      |   |   |   |
| 3. Autonomy                    | 0.24  | 0.16 | 1.00  |       |      |   |   |   |
| 4. Environmental mastery       | 0.34* | 0.17 | 0.25  | 1.00  |      |   |   |   |
| 5. Personal growth             | 0.40* | 0.29 | 0.32* | 0.39* | 1.00 |   |   |   |

|                              |       |      |       |       |       |       |      |      |
|------------------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| <b>6. Positive relations</b> | 0.27  | 0.18 | 0.35* | 0.41* | 0.38* | 1.00  |      |      |
| <b>7. Purpose in life</b>    | 0.26  | 0.08 | 0.11  | 0.27  | 0.20  | 0.26  | 1.00 |      |
| <b>8. Self-acceptance</b>    | 0.32* | 0.20 | 0.31* | 0.35* | 0.38* | 0.38* | 0.16 | 1.00 |

Notes: \* = (0.30) medium practical significance; \*\* = (0.50) large practical significance

From Table 2, it is evident that the largest positive, practically significant relationship for Emotional intelligence is its relationship with Personal Growth ( $r = 0.40$ ). Secondly, Emotional intelligence showed medium practically significant correlation with Environmental Mastery ( $r = 0.34$ ). Finally, the Emotional Intelligence and Self-acceptance relationship was significantly positively correlated with a medium effect ( $r = 0.32$ ). Authentic leadership was positively, significantly related to all the constructs tested, although there were no practical significant results of a medium or large effect. The correlations for authentic leadership range from ( $r = 0.16$  to  $r = 0.29$ ) for the constructs. On the different psychological well-being constructs, a distinction was made between Autonomy, Environmental master, Personal growth, Positive relations, Purpose in life as well as Self-acceptance. It seemed most of the constructs were inter-correlated (which will be discussed in the next paragraph).

The largest correlation found between these constructs was Positive relations with others and Environmental mastery (Firstly -  $r = 0.41$ ; medium effect. Secondly - Personal Growth and Environmental Mastery similar medium practical significant ( $r = 0.39$ ; medium effect). Self-acceptance had the same medium practically significant correlation with Personal growth and Positive relations with others ( $r = 0.38$ ). Furthermore, there had been a significant correlation between Personal growth and Positive relations with others ( $r = 0.38$ ). Environmental Mastery had the same medium practically significant correlation with Positive Relationships with others and Self-Acceptance ( $r = 0.35$ ). The relationships between Self-Acceptance and Personal Growth and Autonomy were significantly positively correlated with a medium effect ( $r = 0.32$ ). As can be seen from Table 2, all the variables had positive correlations with each other. Authentic leadership and Emotional intelligence were positively correlated, although no practical effect was evident in this sample.

## Model fit

Fit refers to the ability of a model to reproduce the data (Schweizer, 2015). The results of the structural equation modelling process revealed the following fit indices for the model: CFI (0.95), TLI (0.94), RMSEA (0.04), and SRMR (0.05). Therefore, values were found to be above the set cut-off points and considered acceptable.

In terms of the regression results, Table 3 provides the standardised estimates.

Table 3

### *Standardised regression results*

| <b>Structural path</b>                     | <b>B</b> | <b>S.E.</b> | <b><i>p</i></b> | <b>Result</b>   |
|--|----------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>EI → AL</b>                             | 0.20     | 0.08        | 0.011           | Significant     |
| <b>EI → Autonomy</b>                       | 0.21     | 0.07        | 0.003           | Significant     |
| <b>EI → Environmental mastery</b>          | 0.32     | 0.07        | 0.001           | Significant     |
| <b>EI → Personal growth</b>                | 0.35     | 0.07        | 0.001           | Significant     |
| <b>EI → Positive relations with others</b> | 0.24     | 0.07        | 0.001           | Significant     |
| <b>EI → Purpose in life</b>                | 0.26     | 0.07        | 0.001           | Significant     |
| <b>EI → Self-acceptance</b>                | 0.29     | 0.07        | 0.001           | Significant     |
| <b>AL → Autonomy</b>                       | 0.12     | 0.07        | 0.070           | Not significant |
| <b>AL → Environmental mastery</b>          | 0.11     | 0.07        | 0.102           | Not significant |
| <b>AL → Personal growth</b>                | 0.22     | 0.06        | 0.001           | Significant     |
| <b>AL → Positive relations with others</b> | 0.13     | 0.07        | 0.041           | Significant     |
| <b>AL → Purpose in life</b>                | 0.03     | 0.07        | 0.652           | Not significant |
| <b>AL → Self-acceptance</b>                | 0.14     | 0.07        | 0.031           | Significant     |

*Notes:*  $\beta$  = Beta coefficient; S.E. = Standard error; *p* = Two-tailed statistical significance

Table 3 shows the regression results of the research model. As can be seen, emotional intelligence showed statistically significant regressions to authentic leadership and all the

components of PW. The largest relationships for emotional intelligence was to Personal growth ( $\beta = 0.35$ ; S.E. = 0.07;  $p < 0.001$ ) and Environmental mastery ( $\beta = 0.32$ ; S.E. = 0.07;  $p < 0.001$ ). The regression from emotional intelligence to authentic leadership was also found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.20$ ; S.E. = 0.08;  $p < 0.011$ ). The relationships of authentic leadership to Autonomy, Environmental mastery, and Purpose in life were all non-significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, there were statistically significant relationships of authentic leadership to: Personal growth ( $\beta = 0.22$ ; S.E. = 0.06;  $p < 0.001$ ), Positive relations with others ( $\beta = 0.13$ ; S.E. = 0.07;  $p < 0.041$ ), and Self-acceptance ( $\beta = 0.14$ ; S.E. = 0.07;  $p < 0.031$ ).

### Mediation results

Table 4 below provides the results of the indirect effects of EI through AL to PW.

Table 4

*Mediating effects of authentic leadership between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being*

| Indirect effect                                 | Estimate | Lower | Upper | <i>p</i> |
|---|----------|-------|-------|----------|
| <b>EI → AL → Personal growth</b>                | 0.04     | 0.01  | 0.08  | 0.020*   |
| <b>EI → AL → Positive relations with others</b> | 0.03     | -0.01 | 0.06  | 0.100    |
| <b>EI → AL → Self-acceptance</b>                | 0.03     | -0.01 | 0.06  | 0.090    |

Notes: \* =  $p < 0.001$ ; Lower and Upper = 95% confidence intervals

Based on the significant regression results, three indirect effects could be investigated (see Table 4). This indicated that the other three indirect effects for Autonomy, Environmental Mastery and Purpose in life did not have adequate indirect effects, meaning that authentic leadership does not mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and these constructs. The results of the bootstrapping showed that there was only one significant indirect effect for authentic leadership as mediator, and that is in the relationship between emotional intelligence and Personal growth (0.04; 95% CI[0.01, 0.08]). The remaining two indirect effects both crossed zero and therefore had *p*-values above 0.05. However, the significant indirect effect is quite small and should be interpreted as such.

Figure 2 below presents the standardized model results as estimated by MPLUS.

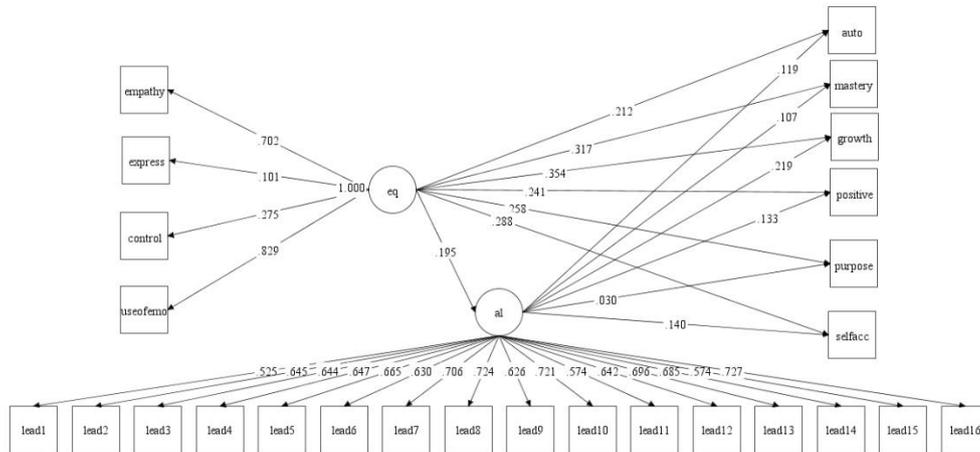


Figure 2. The structural model.

## DISCUSSION

### Outline of results

The main objective of the study was to determine whether authentic leadership plays a mediating role in the relationship of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Authentic leadership consisted of 16 items, which served as the basis for the mediation effect between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being. Research in the South African context on leadership as a mediator between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being has been limited, especially in the field of management and industrial psychology. Therefore, the present study will add to existing literature that investigates the positive side of leadership theories in South Africa (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Gordick, 2002; Magnus, Diener, Fujita, & Pavot, 1993; McVicar, Munn-Giddings Seebom, 2013; Stordeur, D'hoore & Vandenberghe, 2001).

*Hypothesis 1a:* There is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa was supported. The results indicated a positive practical significant relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being constructs (Emotional Intelligence and Personal Growth 0.40; Environmental Mastery 0.34 and Self-Acceptance 0.32) for managers in South Africa. This may imply that

leaders with higher levels of emotional intelligence may be more likely to have higher levels of psychological well-being and health. In support of this finding of the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Environmental Mastery (0.34), the Bar-On's model of emotional intelligence indicates that emotional intelligence entails components of effective emotional and social functioning that may be found to lead to higher levels of psychological well-being (Bar-On, 2000). Therefore, it is possible that leaders who are known to have higher emotional intelligence levels could contribute to the organisation by means of higher levels of cognitive functioning. That could lead to better decision-making and behavioural functioning that could lead to the leaders being excellent mentors for subordinates. Moreover, leaders with high emotional intelligence should in theory make better decisions about their physical health, and have better mental health than leaders that do not possess high levels of emotional intelligence (Moore & Keys, 2003).

*Hypothesis 1b*, that there is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Authentic Leadership for managers in South Africa, was supported. There was a small, positive correlation (0.20) between emotional intelligence and authentic leadership for managers in South Africa. The results may indicate that emotionally intelligent leaders do seem to influence, with success, their colleagues and subordinates; are able to manage stressful or conflict in the organisation; and uplift overall job performance in a work environment (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005). These results are consistent with the findings of Lopes, Grewal, Kadis, Gall, and Salovey (2006b), who found, to a small degree, that emotionally intelligent managers receive better ratings from their subordinates for leadership potential, interpersonal facilitation and stress tolerance than those with low levels of emotional intelligence.

*Hypothesis 1c*: there is a positive relationship between Leadership and Psychological Well-being for managers in South Africa was supported. The results indicate that there were small to medium, positive correlations between authentic leaders and their personal well-being factors. Authentic leaders seem to be sensitive to their fit between expressing their true self and the environment. Additionally, authentic leaders might be aware of the potential repercussions of their personal behaviour (Kernis, 2003). Based on the results, it seems that leaders provided a low statistical significant correlation (0.101) for the expression of oneself on the Emotional Intelligence scale. Consequently, it seems to appear that leaders are aware and think of their

specific fit in an organisation. According to Kernis (2003), authenticity is not reflected as an impulse to be one's true self, rather it could be regarded as a leader's free and natural manifestation of essential feelings, motives and dispositions. Therefore, it may seem as if authentic leaders possibly do not have clear implications of the expression of emotions and the relationships with subordinates in the working environment, owing to situational demands. The results of the study indicate that there is a medium statistical significance between self-acceptance and positive relations (0.38). In order to gain more insight into the relevance of self-acceptance and positive emotions regarding authentic leadership, it would be important to determine the psychological processes and to establish constructs that could be linked to self-acceptance and behaviour towards subordinates in the working environment. It is known, for example, that individual differences in characteristic inclinations seem to control expressive behaviour through active efforts to seem suitable across different circumstances that are reflected in the leader's self-acceptance (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Snyder & DeBono, 1987).

According to Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2008), when individuals are emotionally intelligent they seem to have a particular skill set. The skills of an emotionally intelligent leader should consequently be able to assist such a leader to deal successfully with unpleasant emotions; furthermore, the skills should have the ability to assist in the promotion of pleasant emotions in order to enhance both personal growth and well-being for the leader. The results have indicated that there is a positive, statistically significant correlation (0.40) between Emotional Intelligence and the personal growth of the leader that renders the finding of Gangestad and Snyder (2000) true.

The Authentic Leadership Model was tested on the MPLUS statistics program. The model fit was regarded as adequate, confirming Hypothesis 1d. Hypothesis 1d proposed that authentic leadership mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of managers in the South African area. Even though this was a small to medium statistical significant result, resulting in authentic leadership as a partial mediation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, it indicates that the authentic leadership style that managers employ has an effect on their psychological well-being. Accordingly, leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence and authentic leadership will be more valuable regarding their decision-making, greater mental and physical health and mentoring subordinates in the organisation. The results of the small effect indicate that this is not a very strong mediation

process. Hence, it could be assumed that authentic leadership is not the only aspect that contributes to the leader's psychological well-being, and further research in this field would be required. Other studies have found contradicting results regarding the effect of size of leadership as a mediating factor (Stordeur, D'hoore & Vandenberghe, 2001; Wang *et al.*, 2012; McVicar, Munn-Giddings & Seebohm, 2013).

*Hypothesis 1d* stated that leadership mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of managers in the South Africa area. The results showed that authentic leadership is not a strong mediator between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being factors. This implies that authentic leadership is not necessarily required in the relationship between emotional intelligence and the psychological well-being constructs. Therefore, it could be assumed that leaders in the corporate environment do not need to be authentic in nature, to be able to experience psychological well-being. Previous research also seemed to confirm small mediating effects between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being factors (Stordeur, D'hoore & Vandenberghe, 2001; McVicar, Munn-Giddings & Seebohm, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2012).

### **Practical implications**

The results found in the study have provided further insight into the understanding of the effect of authentic leadership on the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of managers in South Africa. For example, there are medium practical significant results indicating that higher emotional intelligence on behalf of management will lead to authentic leadership, which will have a positive outcome on the overall health of the manager. Consequently, organisations could benefit from the information, by means of adapting the recruitment and selection programs to include both Emotional Intelligence and Authentic Leadership instruments, which will lead to a psychologically healthier work force. Additionally, knowing the effect of authentic leadership on both Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being, could assist in the development and implementation of soft skills programs, to promote a more efficient workforce and better decision-making in organisations.

## **Recommendation and limitations**

The study has not been without its limitations. Firstly, a cross-sectional approach that was implemented, indicates that it is difficult to determine the causality of the gathered results (Oosthuizen, Mundackal, & Wright 2014). Consequently, no unpremeditated interference could be found among the various variables, indicating that the study could not report on causal relationships between the variables (Oosthuizen, Mundackal, & Wright (2014). Owing to the nature of the research, it was impossible to report on longitudinal findings. Secondly, the survey used for the data gathering could be regarded as a self-report, signifying that the information gathered from the participants could be inaccurate, compared with the answers provided by a completely objective participant. Thirdly, the population used for the study could be regarded as a limitation in itself. Only managers in a corporate environment were used for the purpose of the study, indicating that the information could not be generalised to the public at large or managers in smaller organisations. The fourth and final limitation that must be mentioned is that the GEIS has been developed recently, and has only been used once before in a study in South Africa. That, however, was not a validation study. Consequently, this newly developed scale still requires standardisation in future studies.

Moreover, there are also recommendations that could be suggested for institutes and future research. Firstly, researchers such as Bass (2002) and Kerr, *et al.* (2006) are of the opinion that the most fundamental component of leadership is emotion or the affect process of the leaders. Researchers such as Kerr, *et al.* (2006), Groves, McEnrue and Shen (2008) and Langhorn (2004) have indicated that the high levels of Emotional Intelligence in management could lead to increased management performance, improved human resource practices and leadership development in team settings. Although few studies have focused on the effect of Emotional Intelligence on the leadership in organisations, there is evidence that Emotional Intelligence as a trait does add to the efficiency of management in a corporate environment (Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Murphy, 2010). Secondly, managers in the corporate environment within South Africa should be aware that managers' high Emotional Intelligence levels could benefit their subordinates. Understanding the possible influence of Emotional Intelligence on the subordinates could lead to greater job satisfaction and productivity in the workplace (Earley & Peterson, 2004). Thirdly, managers on all levels in the organisation

should take into account the effect of Emotional Intelligence on their leadership style, and capitalise on the information by recognising the strengths and weaknesses of Emotional Intelligence, and invest time in developing levels of Emotional Intelligence in the workplace. Finally, the study showed that the GEIS could be viewed as an appropriate manager Emotional Intelligence measuring instrument in the corporate environment; and can be used in assessment centres to aid management with processes, such as recruitment and selection for managerial positions in South Africa.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the results indicate a small but definite relationship between emotional intelligence, authentic leadership and psychological well-being. Furthermore the results confirmed a small authentic leadership mediating effect on the emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of managers in the South Africa area. Accordingly, by studying the effect of leadership on managers' psychological well-being in the workplace, new insights could be gained on how managers are managed in the South African organisational context.

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## CHAPTER 3

### CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to draw conclusions from the research article that formed the core part of the study. Conclusions are drawn in accordance with the research objectives formulated in the preceding chapters. As can be viewed in Chapter 1 and 2, hypotheses were tested, and discussed in Chapter 2. For the purpose of the conclusions for this chapter, the research objectives as formulated in Chapter 1 will be used as format to summate the results of this study. The limitations of this specific study will also be discussed, and then recommendations will be made for future research.

#### 3.1 CONCLUSION

*The first objective of this study was to conceptualise leadership, authentic leadership, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being via a literature study.*

In order to achieve this objective, an extensive literature search was conducted to gain insight and explain the constructs in the study. Authentic leadership is a fairly new premise that has lately received a great deal of attention in research. According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), authentic leadership is associated with transformational leadership, although authentic leaders have added resources at their “core” such as confidence, hope, optimism and high levels of resilience. They claim that authentic leaders’ added resources could be contagious in an organisation, which will add to the organisation’s verifiable and sustainable performances. Woodward (2009) indicated that the affect of such a leader would add not only to the communication of organisations, but also to the constituency of their subordinates in the workplace. Additionally, the academic community seems to agree that authentic leadership encompasses the following dimensions: balanced processing, internalised moral perspective, relational transparency, and self-awareness (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009).

One of the most predominant areas of leadership research in recent years has been the effect of emotions in the workplace. Emotional intelligence as a construct has become, in recent years, one of the dominant research topics in positive psychology (e.g. Mayer & Salovey, 1993;

Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008). Emotional intelligence could be regarded as the study of emotions in the workplace.

This constellation has to correspond with both distinctive cognitive and social functioning. Emotional well-being is referred to as a collection of symptoms that reflects either absence or presence of positive feelings in life, whereas Subjective well-being is referred to as an individual's evaluations and perceptions of their own lives in terms of their psychological and social functioning (Bass, 2000; Bass, & Bass, 2009; Wang *et al.*, 2010).

Current research has begun to examine the relationship between leadership and emotional intelligence. Such research indicates that the Emotional Intelligence of a leader is significantly related to particular organisational outcomes, such as productivity and leadership effectiveness (Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, & Boyle (2006). Additionally, an empirical study found that a leader's EI levels are positively related to subordinate outcomes (Wong & Law, 2002). Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found significant results when studying the connection between EI and leadership theories, including the transformational leadership theory, whereas Afzalur Rahim and Psenicka (2005) found a relationship between EI and strategic leadership levels. However, the relationships between EI and leadership vary considerably in the different studies. Kobe, Reiter-Palmon, & Rickers (2001) found small significant results, while researchers Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found obvious significant results for the relationship between EI and leadership. The inconsistent nature of the relationships described in the various studies may be designated to sampling errors in the studies themselves (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). Furthermore, the inconsistent nature of the findings could be the product of foggy existing theoretical rationales, as described by Locke (2005) and Landy (2005). Trait Emotional Intelligence or emotional self-efficacy refers to a collection of behavioural dispositions and self-perceptions concerning an individual's ability to recognise, process, and utilise emotion-laden information (Petrides & Furnham 2003, 2006). It incorporates various dispositions from the personality sphere, such as impulsivity, empathy and assertiveness. Additionally, Thorndike (1920) included different fundamentals of social intelligence and personal intelligence. Together, these two elements form self-perceived abilities. Trait Emotional Intelligence is measured by means of self-report questionnaires and relates to the realm of personality.

Subordinates' reaction to incompetent leadership has been found to include turnover, disobedience, industrial sabotage and malingering (Bass & Bass, 2009; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Regarding the effect of personality on leadership, leadership has been found to be a large source of stress for subordinates in the workplace (Wang *et al.*, 2010; McVicar, Munn-Giddings Seebohm, 2013), although the extent of the stress caused by the leadership and leadership style varies significantly. Leadership styles have explained a mere 9% of the variance in emotional exhaustion (Stordeur, D'hoore & Vandenberghe, 2001) and transformational leadership style explained 2% of the inconsistency with regard to dealing with organisational change, although this was not a statistically significant value (Wang *et al.*, 2010).

***The second objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between authentic leadership, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among managers.***

In order to satisfy this objective, the correlations between the various variables were calculated in MPLUS. From the results, it became evident that there is a small positive correlation (0.20) between emotional intelligence and authentic leadership for leaders in South Africa. Accordingly, it indicates that leaders in the corporate environment have an influence (even though small) on their subordinates (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005). Moreover, the results support previous research (Lopes, Grewal, Kadis, Gall & Salovey, 2006) that indicates that emotional intelligent leaders could have greater leadership potential, psychological well-being (Sy, Côté & Saavedra, 2005), interpersonal facilitation and stress tolerance than those with low levels of emotional intelligence (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005). Authentic leadership did not show a clear link with psychological well-being, while emotional intelligence did show a link with Personal Growth, Environmental Mastery and Self-acceptance.

***The fourth objective of the study was to investigate if authentic leadership is a mediator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being for managers.***

The fourth objective was, as stated above, to determine the mediating effect of authentic leadership between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being on leaders in the corporate environment. By using a regression on the research model, Emotional Intelligence had statistically significant regressions to AL and all the components of PW, thus confirming

previous research (Stordeur, D'hoore & Vandenberghe, 2001;McVicar, Munn-Giddings Seebohm, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2010). The results show that authentic leadership does mediate to a small degree the relationship between emotional intelligence and personal well-being in managers. The most significant largest relationships for Emotional Intelligence were to Personal growth ( $\beta = 0.35$ ; S.E. = 0.07;  $p < 0.001$ ) and Environmental mastery ( $\beta = 0.32$ ; S.E. = 0.07;  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that authentic leaders may find that they have more control over their environment and that they are able to manipulate it. What is more, it appears that leaders attach importance to their specific fit in an organisation and spend time thinking about it. According to Kernis (2003), authenticity is not reflected as an impulse to be one's true self. Rather, it could be regarded as a leader's free and natural manifestation of essential feelings, motives and dispositions. The regression from Emotional Intelligence to Authentic Leadership was found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.20$ ; S.E. = 0.08;  $p < 0.011$ ), supporting previous research findings (Stordeur, D'hoore & Vandenberghe, 2001; Wang *et al.*, 2010; McVicar, Munn-Giddings Seebohm, 2013). This regression indicates that leaders who display more emotional intelligence have been found to have a more authentic nature.

Based on the significant regression results, three indirect effects could be investigated (see Table 4). The results of the bootstrapping showed that there was only one significant indirect effect for Authentic Leadership as mediator, and that is in the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Personal growth as a factor in the psychological well-being variable (0.04; 95% CI[0.01, 0.08]. The implication of this result is that leaders with authentic natures may experience higher levels of emotional well-being and satisfying personal growth in dealing with subordinates in a corporate environment, with job satisfaction as the outcome (Kerr, *et al.*, 2005).

***The final objective of the study was to make recommendations for future research and for practice.***

All the limitations arising from the present study were highlighted and described in the research paper (Chapter 2). Based on the findings of the studies, various recommendations were made for future research. The findings would be applicable not only to the field of Industrial Psychology as a whole, but also to the corporate environment with a view to future research. All recommendations and limitations are dealt with in the following sections.

### 3.2 LIMITATIONS

The present research study was not without its limitations. The first limitation of the study was that a cross-sectional research design was used, with the result that data was gathered at a single point of time, which meant that no causal results could be derived from the variable in question (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport, 2011). Consequently, it will be necessary to use longitudinal research designs to ensure that there is a validation of the hypothesis for causal results.

The financial implications of the study necessitated the use of self-reporting questionnaires for data collection. According to Olwage (2012), the researcher, by making use of self-report measures, is able to obtain information on particular constructs in a practical, meaningful and cost effective way. Such a method could be regarded as a limitation because of the possibility of unreliable variances. What is more, use of a single data collection method could give participants in the study the opportunity to falsify their information, thus rendering the statistics insignificant (Olwage, 2012; Oosthuizen, 2014).

All participants selected occupy managerial positions in various organisations at the time of the data collection. The focus of the study is on managers in a corporate environment, due to the literacy levels required and the testing of the leadership model on management in corporate organisations. Additionally, it is important that the participants in the study have a good command of the English language, regardless of the race or creed of the participant, because the measuring battery is only available in English.

In addition, participants in the study could be regarded as a limitation to the study too. Only managers in a corporate environment were requested to participate in the study. Consequently, information could not be generalised to include the public at large, or managers in smaller organisations. Furthermore, the study was conducted only in English, which was the second or third language of more than half of the participants in the study. Accordingly, there was a possibility of achieving insignificant results owing to misinterpretation of the questions (De Vos, *et al.*, 2011). Roberts, Zeidner and Matthews (2001) claimed that different cultures

express and experience emotions differently, and that will have an impact on their management style in the corporate environment.

Furthermore, the findings of the study could not be generalised to include occupations or industries outside of South Africa, thus rendering the study only valid in one specific country. The implication is therefore that further research across a variety of industries may be necessary to generalise the findings to a larger South African population.

The fifth and final limitation that must be mentioned is that the GEIS has only recently been developed, and has only been used once before in a study in South Africa. That was not a validation study, however; therefore this newly developed scale still needs standardisation to be appropriate for future studies within the South African context.

In conclusion, notwithstanding the limitations mentioned, the findings supported, to a certain degree, the proposed hypotheses. Even though certain limitations have been acknowledged, the findings of the study could provide great insight into management in the corporate environment for future studies.

### **3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **3.3.1 Recommendations for future research**

Research findings on the Emotional Intelligence support the perception that emotions are purposeful when the information they deliver is attended to by means of accurate interpretation; managed in an effective manner; and is integrated into the behaviours and thinking of management.

Further research on the effect of Emotional Intelligence and authentic leadership on managerial psychological health in a longitudinal study would yield more reliable results for organisations' leadership teams. Longitudinal research designs are highly recommended in order to address issues of causality. Such research could be used to exploit direct relationships, reversed relationships, indirect effects, while noting the possible consequences of the results.

Additionally, the sample of the present study was homogeneous to a certain extent. This can be ascribed to the similarity of the occupational and demographic variable in the population.

Value can be gained from collecting data for a more heterogeneous sample, in different unionised industries, as it may deliver results and insights that differ from or are similar to the current study. In addition, important information can be gathered by exploring additional work-related resources, such as employee autonomy, colleague and supervisory support, and by using external resources such as personal support from the home environment.

When taking into account that there are 11 official languages in the South African population, and the research was only conducted in one language namely English, it is highly recommended that further research be conducted on the validation and translation of all three the instruments in the present study (Ghorbani, Bing, Watson, Davidson & Mack, 2002; Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001;). The reason for the validation into other languages, is due to the fact that the different cultures/ language groups in South Africa express and experience emotions differently, and might have an effect on the results in future studies (Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001).

### **3.3.2 Recommendations for practice**

Emotion is the fundamental component of leader affect (Bass, 2002). Previous research had been conducted on how various levels of emotional intelligence influence various organisational outcomes (Groves, McEnrue, & Shen, 2008; Kerr *et al.*, 2006; Langhorn, 2004). Currently lacking in the organisational setting is research on how emotional intelligence affects the leadership styles and the well-being of such leaders. Additionally, varied research on the extent to which leadership is affected by emotional intelligence is available in literature (Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Mayer & Salovey, 1993). Therefore, the corporate environment should be aware of the effect of emotional intelligence on leadership styles, personal strengths and weaknesses and the development of future leaders in the workplace. Moreover, the effect of emotional intelligent leaders on their direct subordinates could have significant consequences for organisations. Corporate managers in the South African environment should be aware of the advantages of high levels of Emotional Intelligence for their subordinates. Better insight

into the possible influence of emotional intelligence on subordinates could create greater job satisfaction and higher productivity in the workplace (Earley & Peterson, 2004).

To conclude, the study showed that the instruments used can be viewed as an appropriate measuring instrument of emotional intelligence, leadership styles and the psychological well-being of leaders in the corporate environment and can be used in assessment centres to aid management with such processes as recruitment and selection for managerial positions in South Africa.

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