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The Impact of Leadership on the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Burnout

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Master in Human Resources Management and Organizational
Consulting

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Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE – IUL)

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BUSINESS
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Department of Human Resources and Organizational
Behaviour

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Resumo

Objetivo: No contexto organizacional da atualidade, fatores como a inteligência emocional, a liderança transformacional e o burnout são relevantes na procura de bem-estar dos colaboradores, mais especificamente na perceção de desempenho e na satisfação face ao ambiente laboral. Este estudo tem como objetivo avaliar cada um destes fatores assim como a relação entre os mesmos e de que forma se influenciam no contexto laboral.

Desenho: De forma a avaliar a relação direta e indireta da inteligência emocional, liderança transformacional, burnout, satisfação no trabalho e perceção de desempenho, foi utilizado um design de estudo correlacional. Neste estudo participaram 210 indivíduos recrutados através de contactos de carácter profissional e de redes sociais profissionais. Através dos dados recolhidos e analisados através de modelação de equações estruturais, foi possível analisar os efeitos diretos e indiretos das variáveis em estudo.

Resultados e Conclusão: Após análise dos resultados é possível verificar uma relação negativa do burnout com a inteligência emocional e liderança transformacional, impactando deste modo positivamente a satisfação no trabalho e a perceção de desempenho. Contrário ao que era esperado, não foi possível comprovar um efeito direto positivo na relação entre a inteligência emocional e a satisfação no trabalho. No entanto, foi possível obter um efeito positivo indireto desta relação, tendo a mesma mitigando os efeitos do burnout. Concluiu-se ainda que a satisfação no trabalho e a perceção de performance são fortemente influenciadas pela liderança transformacional. Através dos resultados obtidos é relevante sublinhar o impacto positivo nas empresas e nos seus colaboradores ao atenuar os efeitos do burnout através da promoção da inteligência emocional e da liderança transformacional.

Palavras-chave:

Inteligência Emocional; Burnout; Satisfação no Trabalho; Perceção de Desempenho; Liderança Transformacional.

Classificação JEL:

J81 - Condições de Trabalho

O15 - Recursos Humanos, Desenvolvimento Humano, Distribuição de Rendimento, Migração

Abstract

Objective: In today's organizational context, factors such as emotional intelligence, transformational leadership and burnout are relevant in the pursuit of employee well-being, more specifically in the perception of performance and satisfaction within the work environment. This study seeks to evaluate each of these factors, as well as their relationship and how they influence each other in the workplace.

Design: In order to assess the direct and indirect relationship between emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, burnout, job satisfaction and perceived performance, a correlational study design was conducted. A total of 210 individuals were recruited through professional contacts and professional social networks. Through the data collected and analyzed using structural equation modeling, it was possible to analyze the direct and indirect effects of the variables in question.

Results and Conclusion: After analyzing the results, it is possible to verify a negative relationship between burnout and emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, which has a positive impact on job satisfaction and perceived performance. Contrary to expectations, it was not possible to confirm a direct positive effect on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. However, it was possible to obtain an indirect positive effect of this relationship, which mitigated the effects of burnout. It was also concluded that job satisfaction and perceived performance are strongly influenced by transformational leadership. Based on the results obtained, it is important to highlight the positive impact on companies and their employees by mitigating the effects of burnout through the promotion of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership.

Keywords:

Emotional Intelligence; Burnout; Work Satisfaction; Perceived Performance; Transformational Leadership.

JEL Classification System:

J81 - Working Conditions

O15 - Human Resources, Human Development, Income Distribution, Migration

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on the well-being of employees within organizational settings, as workplaces continue to evolve and become more demanding. Companies have been searching for different and effective ways to improve work environment and employee's satisfaction since these factors can positively impact organizational outcomes (Goleman, 1998). Emotional intelligence and transformational leadership have emerged as important factors in this change, playing significant roles in shaping employee well-being and influencing organizational dynamics, including burnout, job satisfaction, and performance perception.

Emotional intelligence has been recognized as an important factor in helping employees navigate the challenges of modern work environments (Goleman, 1995). Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to manage stress more effectively, build positive interpersonal relationships, and deal with the emotional demands of their jobs (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Research suggests that emotional intelligence is associated with improved job performance, increased job satisfaction, and lower levels of burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2007).

Similarly, transformational leadership, which involves inspiring and motivating employees, has been linked to creating a positive work environment that supports innovation and well-being. Transformational leaders often provide support, recognition, and guidance to their teams, contributing to higher employee morale and performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Studies have also shown that transformational leadership is associated with greater job satisfaction and lower burnout levels (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Burnout, a phenomenon increasingly recognized, represents a significant challenge for organizations as it can lead to a decline in mental and physical health, impacting negatively employees' productivity and job satisfaction. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified burnout as an occupational phenomenon, highlighting its growing impact on the global workforce (WHO, 2019).

The interplay between emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, and burnout is particularly interesting in this context. Understanding the connection between these factors can provide valuable insights into developing strategies that enhance employee well-being and organizational performance. Furthermore, exploring the indirect roles of burnout and job satisfaction can offer a deeper understanding of how emotional intelligence and transformational leadership are associated with performance outcomes.

As companies face increasing pressures to remain competitive and innovative, the role of leadership and employee well-being becomes more significant. By examining the effects of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership on burnout, job satisfaction, and performance, the goal of this research is to provide knowledge regarding organizational practices and leadership development.

Given the current organizational climate, where stress and fatigue are prevalent and where there is a high demand for effective leadership, this study seeks to provide relevant insights to help organizations foster a healthier and more productive workforce.

Chapter 2 – Theoretical context

Emotional intelligence

In today's fast-paced and increasingly competitive workplaces, the role of emotional intelligence has become increasingly significant. Mayer and Salovey (1990) have defined it as “the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions”. In other words, it is the capacity to understand and manage emotions in oneself and others, consequently elevating emotional intelligence as a significant skill that influences both personal and professional life. Traditional measures of intelligence, like IQ (Intelligence Quotient), typically assess cognitive abilities such as logical reasoning, mathematical skills, and verbal proficiency. These measures focus on a person's ability to think analytically and solve problems using cognitive processes (Sternberg, 1985). However, emotional intelligence includes a larger set of skills necessary for managing emotions and coping with social situations. It means to be aware of our own feelings and emotions as well as other’s. This results in having the ability to be empathetic with others and their situations and feelings, managing our own emotions and responses and making us able to take more informed and conscious decisions. These skills are relevant for building relationships, communicating effectively, and staying emotionally healthy (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Emotional intelligence became widely recognized in the 1990s, primarily because of Daniel Goleman's influential work (1995) when he started raising awareness for its importance, especially in the work environment. According to Goleman’s framework, emotional intelligence emphasizes five components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These components are essential for managing one's own emotions, fostering positive relationships, and navigating social complexities in the workplace.

More recently, the Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale (REIS) has provided a more focused and structured approach to understanding emotional intelligence. According to Pekaar et al. (2018), REIS “was developed to measure four dimensions of emotional intelligence, namely, self and other-focused emotion appraisal and emotion regulation”. This model divides emotional intelligence into the ability to accurately assess and regulate one's own emotions, as well as the ability to understand and manage the emotions of others. This perspective focuses on the relevance of emotional intelligence not only for personal emotional management but

also for fostering more effective interpersonal dynamics. REIS highlights the importance of understanding feelings and emotions, whether they are ours, or others. Achieving this level of comprehension will help in terms of social skills and interactions, and in responding in a constructive manner towards others.

Understanding emotional intelligence and its impact is important for many reasons. In the first place, research has demonstrated a correlation between emotional intelligence and a diverse range of positive outcomes, starting with higher performance (Côté & Miners, 2006), better mental health (Schutte et al., 2007), and improved leadership effectiveness (Barling, Slater, & Kelloway, 2000). In second place, in a world where teamwork and collaboration are fundamental, emotional intelligence facilitates effective communication and conflict resolution, thereby improving organizational harmony and productivity (Druskat & Wolff, 2001).

In addition, emotional intelligence is important in mitigating burnout which is a state of “emotional exhaustion, cynicism, or depersonalization, as well as a state of low professional efficacy, and is a product of prolonged work stress and a common worldwide health problem” (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Burnout is a predominant issue in modern workplaces, driven by factors such as high job demands, limited resources, and continuous organizational changes (Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009).

The importance of emotional intelligence goes beyond individual well-being and job performance. Employees often need to adapt to new roles which will depend not only on technical skills but also on emotional and social abilities. Being able to include leaders who present high levels of emotional intelligence will result in better outcomes for the company by having a leader that can impact positively and inspire their teams. By creating a safe space to evolve and creating a supportive environment, employees will be more motivated, will improve employee’s satisfaction towards their jobs and will reduce stress levels (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

In addition, incorporating emotional intelligence into company practices supports the trend toward comprehensive employee development, therefore contributing to employees' emotional and social skills for long-term success (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004).

Burnout

Burnout was first introduced in the 1970s by Herbert Freudenberger, who defined it as "a state of mental and physical exhaustion caused by one's professional life" (Freudenberger, 1974). It

is possible to understand its importance ever since it started to be studied. Burnout's relevance has been increasing because of its impact on employee's mental health, as well as in the organizations which can impact company's outcomes.

Burnout is now more comprehensively defined by Schaufeli, Desart, and De Witte (2020) as "a work-related state of exhaustion that occurs among employees, which is characterized by extreme tiredness, reduced ability to regulate cognitive and emotional processes, and mental distancing". This definition presents four dimensions of burnout: exhaustion, cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, and mental distancing. Exhaustion refers to the overwhelming physical and emotional fatigue caused by prolonged job demands, leaving individuals feeling drained and unable to function effectively. Cognitive impairment involves difficulties in focusing, processing information, and making decisions, impacting one's ability to engage in tasks that require mental effort. Emotional impairment reflects the difficulty in managing emotions, often leading to irritability, frustration, and a reduced ability to maintain emotional balance, which can affect relationships and work productivity. Mental distancing represents a psychological withdrawal from work, where employees feel disconnected from their tasks and lose interest in their responsibilities.

Burnout is often followed by additional effects such as a depressed mood and physical complaints, which further influence an individual's well-being and job performance. The World Health Organization (WHO) highlighted the growing relevance of burnout in the modern workforce and recognized it as an occupational phenomenon in its International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) (WHO, 2019). The organizational and its ever-evolving context, has been adding pressure towards employees to perform, giving the increase in the demands regarding the tasks inherent to their jobs, sometimes affecting employees' work-life balance creating a welcoming environment for burnout. Factors such as technological advancements, the expectation of constant availability, and the challenges of remote work, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, have contributed to the rise of burnout (Kniffin et al., 2021). These dynamics often leave employees feeling isolated, overwhelmed, and disconnected, consequently intensifying burnout.

The consequences of burnout are serious for both individuals and organizations. For employees, burnout can lead to physical and mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, cardiovascular diseases, and a weakened immune system (Melamed et al., 2006). From an organizational perspective, burnout results in decreased productivity, increased absenteeism,

higher turnover rates, and reduced employee engagement (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Therefore, managing burnout is essential for maintaining a healthy and productive workforce.

Organizations can reduce burnout by promoting work-life balance, offering supportive resources, and fostering a positive work culture (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). On an individual level, emotional intelligence is an important factor in preventing and managing burnout, as it involves the ability to recognize and manage emotions, helping employees cope with stress and avoid burnout (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Work satisfaction and its relation to burnout

Work satisfaction, often referred to as job satisfaction, is a significant aspect of organizational psychology and it influences employee well-being and performance. It includes employees' attitudes and feelings toward their jobs, including workload, autonomy, recognition, and interpersonal relationships (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction, as suggested by Hackman and Oldham (1976), occurs when individuals evaluate different aspects of their jobs. Their satisfaction levels impact their overall job experience and psychological well-being. Job satisfaction is associated with positive outcomes such as increased job performance, lower turnover intentions, and greater organizational commitment (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

Burnout, on the other hand, is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001). It typically results from prolonged workplace stressors and can have detrimental effects on both individuals and organizations (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Previous research has shown a negative relationship between job satisfaction and burnout. Employees with higher job satisfaction tend to experience lower levels of burnout, as satisfaction acts as a barrier against the negative impacts of stress and job demands (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Taris, 2006). For instance, when employees feel valued, rewarded, and supported in their roles, they are less likely to experience emotional exhaustion or disengagement. By enhancing job satisfaction through various strategies, such as improving work conditions, providing meaningful work tasks, and fostering positive interpersonal relationships, organizations can potentially reduce burnout levels and promote employee well-being (Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

Perceived performance and its relationship with burnout

Perceived performance is the subjective analysis that an individual does towards their productivity upon their job. It is the ability to understand how effectively you meet job expectations and accomplish work-related goals through self-evaluation. Perceived performance is important as it directly impacts employees' motivation, self-esteem, and overall job satisfaction (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Perceived performance is often linked to the theory of self-efficacy, proposed by Bandura (1977), implying that people's confidence in their ability to succeed in particular tasks affects the way they act, their persistence, and resilience. High perceived performance can enhance self-efficacy, leading to greater job satisfaction and lower stress levels (Judge & Bono, 2001). Prolonged exposure to occupational stressors can result in burnout, manifested by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001). When employees perceive their performance to be inadequate, it can intensify feelings of inefficacy and contribute to the burnout cycle (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Research has consistently shown a reciprocal relationship between perceived performance and burnout. Low perceived performance can lead to increased stress levels and burnout, while high levels of burnout can negatively impact an individual's perception of their performance (Taris, 2006). For instance, a study by Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke (2004) found that employees who reported high levels of burnout also tended to rate their job performance lower compared to their less stressed colleagues. This means that perceived performance is a significant factor influencing burnout. Recognizing and enhancing factors that contribute to positive self-assessment of performance can lead to lower burnout levels and a more productive workforce.

Relationship between work satisfaction, perceived performance, and burnout

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, proposed by Demerouti et al. (2001), provides a theoretical framework to understand how work environment factors influence employee well-being and performance. According to the JD-R model, job demands (e.g., workload, time pressure) and job resources (e.g., support, feedback) have significant effects on job satisfaction, perceived performance, and burnout. The JD-R model suggests that high job satisfaction, characterized by positive feelings toward one's job, can mitigate burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Perceived performance, the self-assessment of one's job effectiveness, is influenced by

both job demands and resources. When employees perceive their performance to be high, they experience higher job satisfaction and lower burnout levels (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources theory (1989) suggests that individuals struggle to obtain, retain, and protect their resources. Burnout occurs when these resources are threatened or diminished. Job satisfaction and perceived performance can be seen as valuable resources that employees seek to maintain. When employees feel satisfied with their jobs and perceive their performance positively, they are less likely to experience burnout.

Research has consistently shown a reciprocal relationship between perceived performance and burnout. Low perceived performance can lead to increased stress and burnout, while high levels of burnout can negatively impact an individual's perception of their performance (Taris, 2006). For instance, a study by Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke (2004) found that employees who reported high levels of burnout also tended to rate their job performance lower compared to their less stressed colleagues. Furthermore, several studies have investigated the relationships between work satisfaction, perceived performance, and burnout, revealing a complex and interconnected dynamic, consistently showing that higher job satisfaction is associated with lower levels of burnout. For example, Lee and Ashforth (1996) found that job satisfaction significantly predicted burnout dimensions, particularly emotional exhaustion. Perceived performance has also been linked to burnout. Employees who perceive their performance as low are more likely to experience burnout, particularly feelings of inefficacy and reduced personal accomplishment (Taris, 2006). Studies that examine all three variables together often find that job satisfaction and perceived performance influence burnout levels. For instance, Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke (2004) found that job satisfaction influenced the relationship between job demands and resources and burnout, while perceived performance acted as a moderator.

Understanding the relationships between work satisfaction, perceived performance, and burnout can help organizations design effective interventions to enhance employee well-being and performance. By improving job conditions, providing recognition, and fostering a positive work culture, organizations can increase job satisfaction and reduce burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Additionally, providing regular feedback, setting realistic goals, and offering development opportunities can enhance employees' perceptions of their performance, thereby reducing burnout (London, 2003). Implementing comprehensive programs that address both job satisfaction and perceived performance can create a collaborative effect in reducing burnout and promoting a healthier, more productive workforce (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

In conclusion, work satisfaction, perceived performance, and burnout are interrelated variables that significantly impact employee well-being and organizational outcomes. By understanding and addressing these relationships, organizations can develop more effective strategies to prevent burnout and enhance overall employee satisfaction and performance.

Relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout

Understanding the complexity of the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout is relevant in developing effective strategies to attenuate burnout and enhance employee well-being. Emotional intelligence, which includes the competence to recognize, understand, manage, and effectively use emotions, is essential in how individuals cope with stress and workplace demands. On the other hand, burnout is a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion resulting from prolonged and excessive stress.

Mayer and Salovey's (1997) conceptualized emotional intelligence into a four-branch model being one of the most influential. This model includes perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Perceiving emotions involves the capacity to accurately recognize and interpret emotions in both oneself and others. Using emotions to facilitate thought involves using emotions to enhance cognitive processes and problem-solving. Understanding emotions enables comprehension of emotional language and the complex relationships among emotions. Managing emotions involves regulating emotions in oneself and others to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

Studies demonstrate that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more capable of handling stress, maintaining positive interpersonal relationships, and managing their emotions effectively, which are all relevant factors in preventing burnout (Goleman, 1995). The relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout has been examined in many studies, revealing a negative correlation between the two variables. For instance, a meta-analysis by Schutte et al. (2007) found that higher levels of emotional intelligence were associated with lower levels of burnout across various occupational groups. This relationship can be attributed to the ability of emotionally intelligent individuals to manage stress effectively, pursue social support, and maintain an optimistic perspective despite the challenging work conditions.

One relevant mechanism through which emotional intelligence influences burnout is emotion regulation. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are more skilled at regulating their emotions, which helps them cope with work-related stressors more effectively. In return, it reduces the likelihood of experiencing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced

personal accomplishment that characterizes burnout (Cherniss, 2001). Moreover, emotional intelligence is linked to better social relationships at work, which can serve as a defense against burnout. High emotional intelligence individuals are more likely to engage in supportive interactions with colleagues, receive social support, and create a positive work environment. These social resources are significant in mitigating the effects of job stress and preventing burnout (Lopes et al., 2006).

Being aware of the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout significantly impacts organizational practices and interventions. By fostering the development of emotional intelligence in employees, organizations can enhance their ability to cope with stress and reduce burnout. This can be achieved through training programs focused on developing emotional intelligence skills, such as emotion regulation, empathy, and social skills (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). In addition, leaders with higher emotional intelligence levels tend to create an environment that supports employees by promoting their well-being and therefore reduce burnout. Leaders with high emotional intelligence are more capable of understanding and responding to the emotional needs of their employees, providing effective support, and fostering a positive organizational culture (George, 2000).

Leadership styles and their differences

The type of leadership employed in a company can impact the performance and satisfaction of their employees, as well as an impact in its strategy and dynamic, influencing organizational outcomes. Leadership involves guiding and motivating individuals toward achieving common goals and includes different behaviors, skills, and styles that can significantly impact an organization's effectiveness and its employees' experience.

Leadership is commonly defined as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives” (Northouse, 2018). This definition highlights the leader’s role in setting direction and fostering a supportive environment that enables others to perform effectively. Leaders are not just visionaries but also facilitators who can create conditions that help their team members to thrive.

Over the years, many leadership styles have been identified, each with unique characteristics and implications. These styles can be categorized into several types, each with distinct attributes and effects on organizational outcomes. These styles include laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership, among others. Laissez-faire leadership is

marked by minimal guidance given to their teams while giving them the opportunity to independently make decisions. While this hands-off approach can promote an environment for teams to be creative and independent, it may also result in lack of direction and increased stress if employees are not sufficiently self-motivated or lack clarity about their roles (Skogstad et al., 2007). Transactional leadership focuses on the exchanges between leaders and employees. This type of leader motivates their teams through rewards and punishments, promoting performance and productivity. Although this type of leadership can effectively achieve short-term goals and maintain routine work processes, it may not be efficient in long-term commitment, including innovation since its employees feel less creative under this management style (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership is distinguished by its emphasis on encouraging and motivating teams to achieve exceptional outcomes and both personal and professional growth, promoting a supportive work environment where leaders are better equipped to understand and manage their teams' emotions and feelings as well as their own. Leaders with higher levels of emotional intelligence have shown how to enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall well-being, making it particularly relevant in today's dynamic and complex organizational environments (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

As a result of the complexity of the work environment, transformational leadership has emerged as a positive and relevant influence. Transformational leaders thrive in navigating the challenges of modern workplaces by fostering a culture of collaboration, adaptability, and continuous improvement. Transformational leadership significantly influences employee motivation and job satisfaction by fostering a supportive environment, providing a strategy that aligns organizational goals with personal values. This alignment helps to mitigate feelings of burnout and disengagement, which are prevalent in high-pressure work environments (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Moreover, transformational leadership supports the development of emotional intelligence, which is important for managing stress and maintaining well-being. By encouraging self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation, transformational leaders can help employees manage emotional challenges and contribute to a more resilient and engaged workforce (Goleman, 1998). Nowadays, it is important that leaders have the ability to thrive in a fast-paced work environment, marked by change and innovation. Transformational leaders are skilled at creating a vision for the future, inspiring their teams to embrace change, and leading them through periods of uncertainty. This ability to foster a forward-thinking and adaptable organizational culture is essential for maintaining competitiveness and achieving long-term success in a rapidly evolving market (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The relationship

between emotional intelligence and burnout can be influenced by transformational leaders in fostering a supportive and dynamic work culture, contributing to a more resilient and high-performing workforce.

Transformational leadership and its impact on the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout

Transformational leadership has emerged as an interesting concept in organizational studies, particularly its impact on employee well-being and performance. This leadership style is characterized by its ability to inspire and motivate employees, fostering an environment that encourages personal and professional growth. As such, transformational leadership is uniquely positioned to influence the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout, two significant factors in contemporary workplace dynamics.

As defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively in oneself and others. High levels of emotional intelligence have been associated with better stress management, improved interpersonal relationships, and enhanced overall well-being (Goleman, 1995). On the other hand, burnout is a state of chronic physical and emotional exhaustion often resulting from prolonged stress and lack of job satisfaction in the workplace context (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). The interplay between emotional intelligence and burnout is relevant, as employees with higher emotional intelligence are generally better equipped to manage stressors, reducing the likelihood of experiencing burnout.

Transformational leadership can significantly influence this relationship by fostering a supportive and motivating work environment, creating a sense of purpose and commitment among employees. Leaders who exhibit these characteristics inherent to emotional intelligence are more capable of preventing burnout within their teams by promoting emotional awareness and regulation (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leadership also includes communicating a compelling vision that motivates and energizes employees. Transformational leaders use positive reinforcement and enthusiasm to inspire their teams, which can enhance employees' motivation and job satisfaction. This motivational approach helps to protect against the adverse effects of stress and burnout, as employees feel more engaged and connected to their work (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Furthermore, transformational leadership encourages employees to think creatively and challenge the status quo by fostering an environment where innovation and problem-solving are encouraged, which can lead to

increased job satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment. By promoting a culture of intellectual engagement, these leaders help employees develop coping strategies and resilience, reducing the risk of burnout (Bass, 1985). Moreover, transformational leadership involves leaders paying attention to their teams' needs for achievement and growth and will act as mentors and coaches, providing support and recognition. This model enhances employees' emotional intelligence through self-awareness and emotional regulation, relevant for managing stress and avoiding burnout (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Empirical studies have supported the positive impact of transformational leadership on reducing burnout and enhancing emotional intelligence. For instance, a study by Sivanathan and Fekken (2002) found that transformational leadership was significantly related to lower burnout levels and job satisfaction. Similarly, research by Cummings et al. (2010) demonstrated that transformational leadership behaviors were associated with improved emotional intelligence among nursing staff, leading to better stress management and reduced burnout. In the present organizational context, characterized by rapid change and increasing complexity, transformational leadership offers a sustainable solution to the challenges presented by burnout and the need for high emotional intelligence. By fostering a supportive and motivating environment, transformational leaders can enhance employees' emotional capabilities and mitigate burnout's adverse effects. Adopting transformational leadership practices can foster resilient, emotionally intelligent, and high-performing teams.

Integrating emotional intelligence and transformational leadership within the Job Demands-Resources Model: implications for employee well-being

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, developed by Demerouti et al. (2001), serves as a foundational framework for understanding how job demands and resources interact to influence employee well-being and performance. This model suggests that all jobs are characterized by specific demands and resources, and the balance between these factors plays a crucial role in determining whether employees experience stress or are motivated. Job demands refer to aspects of the job that require repeated effort, such as workload, emotional strain, and time pressure, which, if prolonged, can lead to burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). On the other hand, job resources, such as leadership support and opportunities for personal growth, help to reduce the impact of these demands, fostering well-being and improving employee outcomes.

Burnout, in the JD-R model, occurs when job demands outweigh the available job resources. High job demands, such as emotional strain and workload, reduce employees'

energy, leading to physical and emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and a diminished sense of accomplishment. However, the availability of job resources can reduce the impact of these demands. Job resources not only help employees manage stress but also promote engagement and motivation by providing support, feedback, and opportunities for development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). This balance between demands and resources determines the extent to which employees experience burnout or well-being.

In the context of the current study, emotional intelligence acts as a personal resource that helps employees manage emotional and interpersonal job demands. According to Mayer & Salovey (1997), emotional intelligence refers to a person's ability to understand and manage their own emotions as well as in others. Research shows that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more skilled at managing workplace stress, which lowers the likelihood of burnout (Pekaar, Bakker, van der Linden, & Born, 2018). Emotional intelligence also plays an important role in fostering interpersonal relationships and creating a positive work environment, which in turn enhances job satisfaction and performance (Wong & Law, 2002).

On the other hand, transformational leadership operates as a relevant organizational resource within the JD-R framework. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by offering vision, encouragement, and individualized support, which fosters a positive and engaging work environment (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This type of leadership has been shown to reduce burnout through the creation of an environment where employees feel valued and supported, helping them navigate job demands more effectively (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Moreover, transformational leadership enhances job satisfaction, as it promotes a sense of purpose and fulfilment among employees (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Transformational leaders not only help reduce stress but also empower employees, resulting in higher levels of performance and well-being.

In this study, burnout is expected to directly and indirectly affect emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and performance. According to the JD-R model, when job demands are high and job resources are insufficient, burnout is more likely to occur, leading to negative outcomes such as reduced job satisfaction and performance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). However, personal resources such as emotional intelligence and organizational resources like transformational leadership can attenuate the effects of job demands, reducing burnout and enhancing employee outcomes. For example, employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more skilled to handle job stressors, and transformational leaders are

able to mitigate burnout effects by creating a supportive environment, contributing to employees and organizational greater well-being and performance.

Additionally, the JD-R model provides a valuable insight for understanding how both personal and organizational resources interact with job demands to influence outcomes such as job satisfaction and performance. Employees with high levels of emotional intelligence are less likely to experience burnout and are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, which ultimately improves their performance (Pekaar et al., 2018). Similarly, transformational leaders who create supportive environments, help in preventing burnout, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and better employee performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Hypothesis

The present model (Figure 2.1: Graphic representation of the investigation model) involves the relationship of the variables Emotional intelligence (EI), Transformational leadership (TL), Burnout (B), Job Satisfaction (JS), and Performance (P).

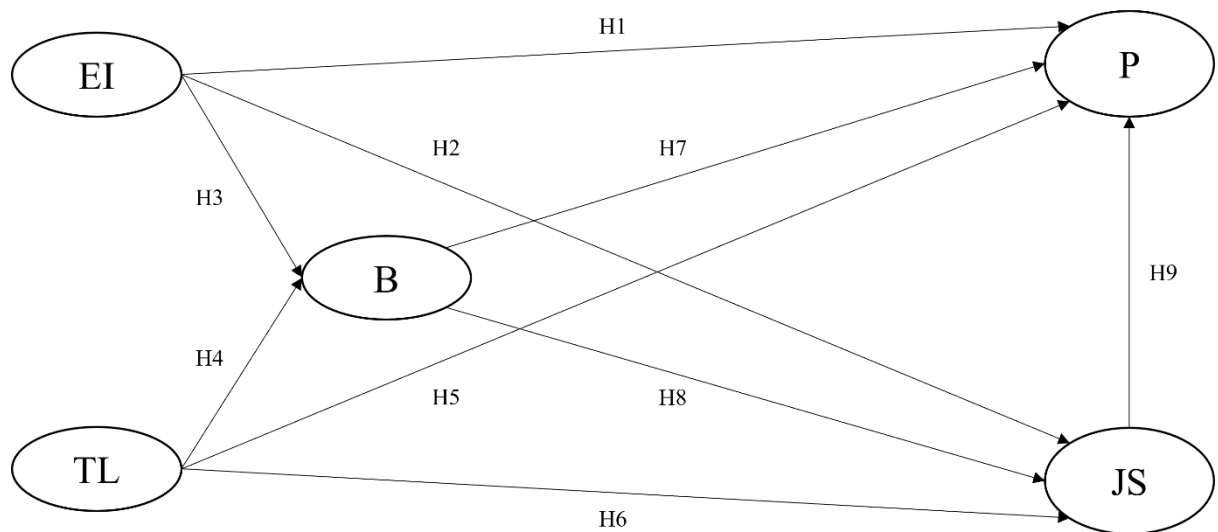


Figure 2.1: Graphic representation of the investigation model

Based on the model, fifteen hypotheses were proposed, including nine direct and six indirect relationships among variables.

H1: Emotional intelligence is positively related to performance.

Hypothesis 1 posits that higher levels of emotional intelligence among employees are positively related to their perceptions of performance in the workplace. Emotional intelligence

enhances interpersonal interactions and decision-making (Peekar, et al., 2018). Therefore, it is anticipated that emotional intelligence will positively influence individual performance perceptions.

H2: Emotional intelligence is positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 posits that higher levels of emotional intelligence in employees are positively associated with their job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence allows individuals to manage interpersonal relationships and emotional challenges effectively, which contributes to a more positive work experience (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

H3: Emotional intelligence is negatively related to burnout.

Hypothesis 3 suggests that higher levels of emotional intelligence are expected to be associated with lower levels of burnout. By helping individuals to manage their own emotions, emotional intelligence has been shown to reduce the likelihood of emotional exhaustion, one of burnout's components (Mikolajczak et al., 2007). Therefore, it is anticipated that employees with high emotional intelligence will experience lower levels of burnout compared to those with lower emotional intelligence levels.

H4: Transformational leadership is negatively related to burnout.

Hypothesis 4 posits that transformational leadership is negatively related to burnout, suggesting that employees under transformational leaders are expected to experience lower levels of burnout. Transformational leaders provide support and motivation, fostering a work environment that reduces stress and prevents burnout (Bass & Riggio, 2005). As a result, it is expected that transformational leadership will be associated with decreased burnout among employees.

H5: Transformational leadership is positively related to performance.

Hypothesis 5 posits that transformational leadership positively influences employee performance. This leadership style facilitates the creation of a supportive environment while providing a strategy that aligns and enhances both individual and collective performance and motivation (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Therefore, it is anticipated that transformational leadership will lead to higher employee performance levels.

H6: Transformational leadership is positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6 suggests that transformational leadership is positively associated with job satisfaction. Studies done prior to this investigation have demonstrated the positive effects that transformational leaders can bring by creating a supportive and motivating work environment, resulting in higher employees' satisfaction towards their job (Bass & Riggio, 2005). Therefore, it is expected that employees who work under transformational leaders will report higher job satisfaction.

H7: Burnout is negatively related to performance.

Hypothesis 7 posits that burnout is negatively related to employee performance. Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion and reduced engagement, typically leads to a decrease in work productivity and effectiveness (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Therefore, it is anticipated that higher levels of burnout will be associated with lower levels of employee performance.

H7.1: Emotional intelligence has an indirect relationship with perceptions of performance via burnout.

Hypothesis 7.1 suggests that the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance is positive and significant, while indirect via burnout, which means that employees with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage workplace stress, reducing the likelihood of burnout, which in turn enhances their performance (Mikolajczak et al., 2007). Therefore, it is anticipated that emotional intelligence will positively influence performance indirectly by reducing burnout.

H7.2: Emotional intelligence has an indirect relationship with job satisfaction via burnout.

Hypothesis 7.2 posits that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction is positive and significant through the indirect burnout pathway. Emotional intelligence helps individuals better manage emotional stress and workplace challenges, decreasing the likelihood of burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2007). Reduced burnout levels are expected to enhance job satisfaction, as individuals experience less emotional exhaustion and are more satisfied with their work environment (Kong & Zhao, 2013). Therefore, it is expected that higher emotional intelligence will lead to lower burnout, resulting in increased job satisfaction.

H7.3: Transformational leadership has an indirect relationship with perceptions of performance via burnout.

Hypothesis 7.3 proposes that an positive and significant, yet indirect relationship between transformational leadership and perceived performance exists, and it takes place via burnout. Transformational leaders foster supportive environments that reduce burnout, allowing employees to better perform at their jobs (Bass & Riggio, 2005). Therefore, it is expected that transformational leadership will positively affect performance through its impact on reducing burnout.

H7.4: Transformational leadership has an indirect relationship with job satisfaction via burnout.

Hypothesis 7.4 posits that the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction is positive and significant, indirectly through burnout. By offering motivation, support, and inspiration, transformational leaders can help reduce burnout levels, which enhances job satisfaction (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). As a result, it is anticipated that transformational leadership will positively influence job satisfaction indirectly by reducing burnout.

H8: Burnout is negatively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 8 suggests that burnout is significantly negative related to job satisfaction. Employees experiencing high levels of burnout tend to feel emotionally drained and disengaged from their work, leading to lower levels of job satisfaction (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Therefore, it is expected that higher burnout levels will be associated with lower job satisfaction.

H9: Job satisfaction is positively related to performance.

Hypothesis 9 posits that job satisfaction is positively significant related to performance. Research indicates that satisfied employees are more engaged and motivated, leading to better job performance (Judge et al., 2001). Therefore, it is anticipated that higher levels of job satisfaction will positively influence individual performance.

H9.1: Emotional intelligence has an indirect relationship with perceptions of performance via job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 9.1 suggests that exists a significant positive indirect relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived performance via job satisfaction. Employees with high emotional intelligence are likely to experience higher job satisfaction, which in turn enhances their performance (Wong & Law, 2002). Therefore, it is expected that emotional intelligence will have an indirect positive effect on performance through job satisfaction.

H9.2: Transformational leadership has an indirect relationship with perceptions of performance via job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 9.2 posits that the relationship between transformational leadership and perceived performance is significantly positive and indirect through job satisfaction. Transformational leaders have more skills in creating an environment where job satisfaction and performance levels are enhanced (Judge & Piccolo, 2004), anticipating the fact that transformational leadership will positively influence performance indirectly through its impact on job satisfaction.

Chapter 3 – Method

This study aims to investigate leadership's impact on the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout. An online questionnaire was developed using the LimeSurvey platform and presented in Portuguese to gather the necessary data.

The questionnaire link was distributed to individuals identified as part of the target population. This involved reaching out to various contacts through LinkedIn, asking them to respond to the questionnaire themselves and share it with others within their circle who also met the criteria for the target population. The survey began with a digital informed consent form for all participants. The survey focused on emotional intelligence and reached individuals at different hierarchical levels, including directors, team leaders, coordinators, and managers from national and multinational companies.

To put the hypotheses to the test, data collection took place during the period spanning from May to August 2022. All participants were guaranteed that their data would be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. Only after they read and understood this assurance and subsequently consented to participate in the study, it was granted access to respond to the questionnaire.

Sampling

This study employed non-probabilistic sampling (convenience sampling), driven by subjective participant selection criteria, specifically, a convenience sampling approach, where participants willingly chose to be part of this study. It also employed a snowball technique, where those who participated in the questionnaire, extended to their network and so on. Based on the predefined criteria, the participants in this study include individuals of both male and female genders, aged 18 and above, living in Portugal, and engaged in either full-time or part-time employment.

The anticipated sample contained employees from technology, telecommunications, and consulting firms. A significant portion was expected to hold higher education qualifications, with many potentially having postgraduate degrees. The age range was expected to fall between 30 and 50 years. The prevailing profile was envisioned to align with the conventional office-based professional, often characterized as consultants and senior technicians—a category frequently referred to as "salary workers".

Procedure

For this study, a questionnaire was administered using the LimeSurvey platform (LimeSurvey GmbH, 2020) and distributed to the target population. Participants were recruited through LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram.

The ethical approval was obtained from the relevant ethics committee before any data collection, resulting in a positive assessment (process 54/2022). Participants were given an informed consent form, which they were required to read before proceeding with the questionnaire. They were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time and that, upon completion, they would receive an automatic report summarizing their responses and comparing them to the overall results (using percentiles, without inferential analysis).

A pilot study was conducted with 15 participants to ensure the platform's proper functionality and the items' clarity.

Constructs and Measurements

The questionnaire for this study was composed of several psychometric instruments, all of which were applied in Portuguese. Before deepening into the questionnaire, sociodemographic and professional questions were made, including age, workplace location, marital status, number of children, academic level, and occupational group. Each instrument was selected to comprehensively assess the constructs central to the investigation of the impact of leadership on the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout and their influence on job satisfaction and performance.

Global Transformational Leadership Scale (GTLS)

Transformational leadership is assessed using the GTLS (Carless et al., 2000), analyzing one dimension in this scale which is transformational leadership and presents out of the box thinking aspects and individualized consideration, specific of this type of leadership and includes items such as "Communicates a clear and positive vision of the future", "Encourages thinking about problems in new ways," and "Treats staff as individuals, supporting and encouraging their development". Responses are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 ("Rarely or never") to 5 ("Very frequently or always"), providing insights into the frequency and intensity of these leadership behaviors.

Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale (REIS)

The Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale (REIS) captures various sides of emotional intelligence, namely four dimensions, such as self- and other-focused emotion appraisal and emotion regulation, and a second-order latent variable, which is emotional intelligence (Pekaar et al., 2018). For instance, the item "I am aware of my own emotions" measures self-awareness, while "I can control my emotions in a healthy way" assesses self-management. Social awareness is evaluated through items like "I understand the emotions of people around me." These statements are responded to a 7-point scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 7 ("Strongly agree"), allowing participants to reflect on their emotional competencies across different contexts (Brackett & Mayer, 2003).

Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT-12)

Burnout is measured using the BAT-12 (Sinval et al., 2022), which includes specific items to assess various symptoms in four different dimensions: exhaustion, mental distance, cognitive impairment, and emotional impairment, and a second-order latent variable, burnout. "I feel mentally exhausted from my work" addresses emotional exhaustion, and "I have become more cynical about the potential impact of my work" captures a sense of cynicism. Another aspect, reduced professional efficacy, is measured by items such as "I feel less capable at work than I used to." (Schaufeli et al., 2020). Each item is rated from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always"). The BAT-12 has demonstrated strong psychometric properties across various countries, further supporting its validity and reliability in diverse cultural contexts (de Beer et al., 2020).

Short Index of Job Satisfaction (SIJS)

The SIJS (Sinval & Marôco, 2020) was used to study one dimension, job satisfaction. Examples of items include "I feel quite satisfied with my current job," which indicates overall job contentment, and "I find my job to be very pleasant," which measures emotional reactions to job conditions. Participants rate their agreement on a scale from 1 ("Totally false") to 5 ("Totally true"), offering a spectrum of satisfaction levels from different job aspects (Wanous et al., 1997).

Health and Performance Questionnaire – World Health Organization

In this study, the Health and Performance Questionnaire (HPQ) (Kessler et al., 2003) analyzed one dimension: performance. The participants filled out the questionnaire according to their self-perceptions on different fronts. "How would you rate your performance compared to your peers?" offers a comparative perspective, while "Rate your usual performance over the past year" seeks a long-term assessment. Immediate performance is measured with "How do you rate your recent performance in the last month?" These items are scaled from 0 ("Worst possible performance") to 10 ("Best possible performance"), providing a range for individuals to self-assess their performance effectiveness and consistency (Conway & Huffcutt, 1997).

Data Analysis

The statistical analysis for this study was conducted using the programming language R (R Core Team, 2022) through the integrated development environment RStudio (RStudio Team, 2022), with an $\alpha = .05$. Descriptive statistics were calculated using the *skimr* (McNamara et al., 2021), *PerformanceAnalytics* (Peterson & Carl, 2020), and *Table1* (Rich, 2021) packages. These analyses provided an overview of the sample in terms of variables such as gender, age, administrative region, marital status, number of children, educational background, seniority in the current company, and occupational group.

The dimensionality of the psychometric instruments and the structural model were evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and full structural equation modelling. This analysis was carried out using the *lavaan* package (Rosseel, 2012) with the WLSMV estimator.

Model fit was assessed using a combination of goodness-of-fit indices: the Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), $\chi^2_{(df)}$ (chi-square), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). The scaled versions of these indices were used to ensure accuracy. Model fit was deemed adequate when NFI, CFI, and TLI values exceeded .95, and RMSEA and SRMR values were less than .08 (Marôco, 2021). All paths (direct, indirect, and total effects) were reported with 95% confidence intervals. Cronbach's ordinal α was calculated to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the first-order constructs. These estimates were derived using the *semTools* package (Jorgensen et al., 2021).

Chapter 4 – Results

The participant pool for this study includes 210 individuals residing and working in Portugal. Among them, 208 responded to the demographic inquiries. The sample exhibits diversity, including 101 female participants, ages ranging from 21 to 60, and a mean age of 37.2, alongside with 107 male participants, covering ages from 19 to 73, and displaying a mean age of 35.3. This diversity is visually represented in “Table 4.1: Sociodemographic characteristics by gender”, showcasing the distribution of participants' ages across gender and age groups.

Table 4.1: Sociodemographic characteristics by gender

	Female (<i>n</i> = 101)	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)
Age (years)		
Mean (SD)	37.2 (12.5)	35.3 (13.9)
Median [Min, Max]	37.0 [21.0, 60.0]	28.0 [19.0, 73.0]

In terms of the participants' workplace locations and as shown below in Table 4.2, which correspond to various administrative regions, a substantial majority are situated in the capital city, Lisboa, accounting for 82.21% of the total, followed by Setúbal (5.77%), Évora (4.33%), Porto (2.88%), Leiria (1.92%), Faro (1.44%), Santarém (0.96%) and Açores (0.48%).

Table 4.2: Regions corresponding to the participants' housing by gender

Administrative Region	<i>n</i>	%
Açores	1	0.48
Évora	9	4.33
Faro	3	1.44
Leiria	4	1.92

Lisboa	171	82.21
Porto	6	2.88
Santarém	2	0.96
Setúbal	12	5.77

Among the female participants included in this study, approximately 43.6% are either married or cohabiting with their partners, an equal percentage of 43.6% have not been married, and the remaining respondents are either divorced or separated (11.9% and 1.0%, respectively). None of the female participants identified as widowed. Regarding male participants, 57.9% have not been married, while 34.6% are currently married. The remaining male participants are either divorced or widowed (5.6% and 1.9%, respectively), with no individuals indicating separation as their marital status (as seen in “Table 4.3: Marital status of the sample by gender”).

Table 4.3: Marital status of the sample by gender

	Female (<i>n</i> = 101)	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)
Marital status		
Married or Cohabiting	44 (43.6%)	37 (34.6%)
Divorced	12 (11.9%)	6 (5.6%)
Separated	1 (1.0%)	0 (0%)
Never Married	44 (43.6%)	62 (57.9%)
Widowed	0 (0%)	2 (1.9%)

Examining the number of children, as illustrated below in Table 4.4, the predominant trend among women and men is not having children, with proportions of 55.4% and 65.4%, respectively. Approximately 20.8% of women report having one child, while 19.8% have two children. A small fraction, constituting 4.0%, indicate having three children, while none report having more than three. For men, 15.0% have two children, 10.3% have one child, and the

remaining 9.4% are equally distributed - 4.7% have three children, and an equivalent of 4.7% have four or more children.

Table 4.4: Number of children per participant by gender

	Female (<i>n</i> = 101)	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)
N° of children		
None	56 (55.4%)	70 (65.4%)
One	21 (20.8%)	11 (10.3%)
Two	20 (19.8%)	16 (15.0%)
Three	4 (4.0%)	5 (4.7%)
Four or more	0 (0%)	5 (4.7%)

Examining the participants' educational background, as presented in “Table 4.5: Academic Level by gender”, the main tendency among both women and men is possessing a bachelor's degree, 48.5% and 34.6%, respectively. Concerning women, 26.7% hold a high school diploma, vocational education, or lower qualification. Additionally, 14.9% have obtained a master's degree, 5.9% have pursued but not completed their undergraduate degree, 4.0% possess a post-graduation degree, and none have achieved a Ph.D. Among men, 29.9% hold a high school diploma, vocational education, or lower qualification, while 16.8% have not yet finished their bachelor's degree. Furthermore, 15.9% hold a master's degree, and no participants have reached the Ph.D. level.

Table 4.5: Academic Level by gender

	Female (<i>n</i> = 101)	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)
Academic level		
High school, vocational education or lower	27 (26.7%)	32 (29.9%)
Unfinished graduation	6 (5.9%)	18 (16.8%)

	Female (<i>n</i> = 101)	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)
Graduation	49 (48.5%)	37 (34.6%)
Post-graduation (not master neither Ph. D.)	4 (4.0%)	3 (2.8%)
Master	15 (14.9%)	17 (15.9%)
Ph. D.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Within this sample, and as showed in Table 4.6, female participants have, on average, a seniority in the company of almost seven years within their respective companies. Notably, the longest-serving female participant holds a remarkable organizational seniority of thirty-three years. Conversely, male participants, on average, have a tenure of six years within their current companies, with the highest seniority spanning forty years within the same organization.

Table 4.6: Seniority in the current organization in years by gender

	Female (<i>n</i> = 101)	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)
Seniority in the current organization (years)		
Mean (SD)	6.97 (9.17)	6.35 (9.91)
Median [Min, Max]	2.00 [0, 33.0]	1.00 [0, 40.0]

The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) was used in this study to understand the diversity of occupations. ISCO-08 is a framework developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) that categorizes occupations across industries and countries. It allows researchers to compare occupations accurately and consistently. ISCO-08 classifies occupations into major groups, sub-groups, and detailed occupations, each with a unique code. This hierarchical structure allows for both broad categorization and precise identification of occupations. By using ISCO-08, we can systematically categorize and interpret the occupational profiles of the participants, helping in identifying trends, disparities, and distributions across different occupational categories.

ISCO-08 is structured into 10 major groups, and they include workers who plan and coordinate organization activities, which are the Managers (1), occupations such as science,

law and healthcare where is needed advanced expertise in these fields, are denominated Professionals (2). It also includes workers with specialized knowledge and skills in technical, scientific, and practical tasks, the Technicians and Associate Professionals (3), it also incorporates Clerical Support Workers (4) who provide administrative support. This list also includes Service and Sales Workers (5) which represent occupations involved in providing services to clients and customers, and Skilled Agricultural, Forestry, and Fishery Workers (6) skilled workers in agricultural, forestry, and fishery tasks. Craft and Related Trades Workers (7) are skilled workers who perform manual or craft-related tasks, such as carpentry, plumbing, and electrical work, and Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers (8) are workers who operate machinery and equipment. To finalize this list, there's workers who represent routine and basic tasks that require limited skills, and the last, Armed Forces (10) that are workers involved in armed forces and military operations.

Table 4.7: Occupational group (ISCO-08) by gender

	Female (<i>n</i> = 101)	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)
Occupational group (ISCO-08)		
Armed Forces Occupations	0 (0%)	5 (4.7%)
Clerical Support Workers	39 (38.6%)	8 (7.5%)
Craft and Related Trades Workers	0 (0%)	6 (5.6%)
Elementary Occupations	4 (4.0%)	0 (0%)
Managers	15 (14.9%)	21 (19.6%)
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	0 (0%)	3 (2.8%)
Professionals	22 (21.8%)	24 (22.4%)
Services and Sales Workers	9 (8.9%)	8 (7.5%)
Technicians and Associate Professionals	12 (11.9%)	32 (29.9%)

To conclude the analysis of our sample, as illustrated above in “Table 4.7: Occupational group (ISCO-08) by gender”, the predominant roles among female workers are presented in the category Clerical Support Workers, accounting for 38.6% of the female sample. This is

followed by Professionals at 21.8%, Managers at 14.9%, and Technicians and Associate Professionals at 11.9%. Services and Sales Workers cover 8.9% of the female group, and Elementary Occupations comprise 4.0%. Armed forces occupations, craft and related trades workers, or plant and machine operators and assemblers are not represented within this group. In terms of male collaborators, the majority engage in activities classified as Technicians and Associate Professionals, constituting 29.9% of the male sample, Professionals account for 22.4%, Managers for 19.6%, and both Services and Sales Workers and Clerical Support Workers represent 7.5%. Craft and Related Trades Workers include 5.6% of the male group, while armed forces occupations contribute 4.7%. Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers represent 2.8%, with no instances of Elementary Occupations observed.

Measurement model

Distributional Properties of the Items

In general, all items from the psychometric instruments used in this study (presented below in Table 4.8) did not show severe violations of univariate normality (i.e., $|sk| \leq 3$; $|ku| \leq 7$).

Regarding the items from the REIS, an acceptable distribution was observed for all items, with the maximum possible range of responses obtained for each item (i.e., from 1 to 7). Item 11 had the highest mean ($M = 5.76$; $SD = 1.19$), while Item 16 had the lowest ($M = 4.55$; $SD = 1.57$). For the BAT-12, the items exhibited good sensitivity. Specifically, all items achieved the maximum possible range in the response scale (i.e., from 1 to 5), indicating a good spread of responses. For the GTL, similar acceptable distribution characteristics were noted, with all items showing high psychometric sensitivity and appropriate response distributions. In the case of the SIJS, the items displayed the full range of the response scale (i.e., from 1 to 5), with an acceptable distribution. The HPQ items also covered the full range of possible responses (i.e., from 0 to 10), showing good distributional properties.

Table 4.8: Items distribution

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>P</i> ₂₅	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>P</i> ₇₅	<i>Max</i>	Histogram	<i>SEM</i>	<i>CV</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>sk</i>	<i>ku</i>
REIS													
Item 1	5.10	1.53	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.10	0.30	7	-0.45	-0.68

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>P</i> ₂₅	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>P</i> ₇₅	<i>Max</i>	Histogram	<i>SEM</i>	<i>CV</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>sk</i>	<i>ku</i>
Item 2	5.40	1.40	1	4.00	6	7.00	7		0.09	0.26	6	-0.66	-0.30
Item 3	5.65	1.31	1	5.00	6	7.00	7		0.09	0.23	7	-0.90	0.33
Item 4	5.51	1.38	1	5.00	6	7.00	7		0.09	0.25	6	-0.93	0.38
Item 5	5.56	1.26	1	5.00	6	7.00	7		0.09	0.23	6	-0.82	0.51
Item 6	5.01	1.56	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.11	0.31	6	-0.49	-0.59
Item 7	5.75	1.28	1	5.00	6	7.00	7		0.09	0.22	7	-1.00	0.59
Item 8	5.18	1.34	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.26	5	-0.49	-0.07
Item 9	4.93	1.35	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.27	5	-0.43	-0.24
Item 10	4.84	1.35	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.28	5	-0.51	0.06
Item 11	5.76	1.19	1	5.00	6	7.00	7		0.08	0.21	6	-1.06	1.21
Item 12	5.17	1.27	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.24	5	-0.57	0.36
Item 13	4.90	1.31	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.27	5	-0.28	-0.03
Item 14	5.19	1.27	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.24	5	-0.52	0.17
Item 15	4.93	1.47	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.10	0.30	6	-0.42	-0.50
Item 16	4.55	1.57	1	3.00	5	6.00	7		0.11	0.35	5	-0.25	-0.68
Item 17	4.61	1.52	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.10	0.33	5	-0.24	-0.61
Item 18	4.99	1.58	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.11	0.32	5	-0.53	-0.43
Item 19	4.77	1.69	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.11	0.36	5	-0.51	-0.49

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>P</i> ₂₅	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>P</i> ₇₅	<i>Max</i>	Histogram	<i>SEM</i>	<i>CV</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>sk</i>	<i>ku</i>
Item 20	4.00	1.92	1	3.00	4	6.00	7		0.13	0.48	4	-0.05	-1.11
Item 21	4.79	1.48	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.10	0.31	4	-0.36	-0.41
Item 22	4.68	1.37	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.29	5	-0.39	0.05
Item 23	4.48	1.43	1	4.00	5	5.00	7		0.10	0.32	5	-0.39	-0.11
Item 24	4.59	1.38	1	4.00	5	5.75	7		0.09	0.30	5	-0.40	-0.12
Item 25	4.47	1.45	1	4.00	5	5.00	7		0.10	0.32	4	-0.32	-0.21
Item 26	4.85	1.36	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.28	5	-0.37	-0.07
Item 27	4.55	1.52	1	4.00	5	5.75	7		0.10	0.33	5	-0.39	-0.24
Item 28	5.12	1.37	1	4.00	5	6.00	7		0.09	0.27	5	-0.49	-0.01
BAT-12													
Item 1	2.85	0.86	1	2.00	3	3.00	5		0.06	0.30	3	0.17	-0.04
Item 2	2.81	0.83	1	2.00	3	3.00	5		0.05	0.30	3	0.05	-0.30
Item 3	2.48	0.91	1	2.00	2	3.00	5		0.06	0.37	2	0.36	-0.14
Item 4	2.54	0.92	1	2.00	2	3.00	5		0.06	0.36	2	0.50	0.17
Item 5	2.28	0.90	1	2.00	2	3.00	5		0.06	0.39	2	0.46	-0.15
Item 6	1.93	0.96	1	1.00	2	2.50	5		0.06	0.50	1	0.88	0.24
Item 7	2.37	0.82	1	2.00	2	3.00	5		0.05	0.35	2	0.41	0.17
Item 8	2.38	0.76	1	2.00	2	3.00	5		0.05	0.32	2	0.33	0.16
Item 9	2.20	0.79	1	2.00	2	3.00	5		0.05	0.36	2	0.66	0.86

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>P</i> ₂₅	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>P</i> ₇₅	<i>Max</i>	Histogram	<i>SEM</i>	<i>CV</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>sk</i>	<i>ku</i>
Item 10	1.93	0.76	1	1.00	2	2.00	4		0.05	0.39	2	0.54	0.03
Item 11	1.72	0.81	1	1.00	2	2.00	4		0.05	0.47	1	0.91	0.07
Item 12	1.94	0.80	1	1.00	2	2.00	5		0.05	0.41	2	0.67	0.41
GTLS													
Item 1	3.59	1.11	1	3.00	4	4.00	5		0.07	0.31	4	-0.61	-0.23
Item 2	3.97	1.10	1	3.00	4	5.00	5		0.07	0.28	5	-0.99	0.27
Item 3	3.63	1.15	1	3.00	4	5.00	5		0.08	0.32	4	-0.57	-0.47
Item 4	3.80	1.17	1	3.00	4	5.00	5		0.08	0.31	5	-0.86	0.01
Item 5	3.56	1.19	1	3.00	4	4.00	5		0.08	0.34	4	-0.65	-0.40
Item 6	3.79	1.10	1	3.00	4	5.00	5		0.07	0.29	4	-0.83	0.09
Item 7	3.67	1.17	1	3.00	4	5.00	5		0.08	0.32	4	-0.74	-0.22
SIJS													
Item 1	3.63	1.10	1	3.00	4	4.00	5		0.07	0.30	4	-0.67	-0.20
Item 2	3.47	1.09	1	3.00	4	4.00	5		0.07	0.31	4	-0.38	-0.61
Item 3	3.51	1.14	1	3.00	4	4.00	5		0.08	0.32	4	-0.60	-0.45
Item 4	3.40	1.16	1	3.00	4	4.00	5		0.08	0.34	4	-0.40	-0.61
Item 5	4.26	1.07	1	4.00	5	5.00	5		0.07	0.25	5	-1.52	1.66
HPQ (Performance)													
Item 1	6.80	1.91	0	5.25	7	8.00	10		0.13	0.28	8	-0.79	0.50

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>P</i> ₂₅	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>P</i> ₇₅	<i>Max</i>	Histogram	<i>SEM</i>	<i>CV</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>sk</i>	<i>ku</i>
Item 2	7.85	1.49	3	7.00	8	9.00	10		0.10	0.19	8	-0.70	0.35
Item 3	7.70	1.67	0	7.00	8	9.00	10		0.11	0.22	9	-0.96	1.61

Dimensionality

The global measurement model, where all instruments are tested together with direct relationships (only correlations between latent variables), showed an acceptable global fit to the data ($\chi^2_{(1411)} = 2309.262$, $p < .001$, $NFI = .890$, $CFI = .954$, $TLI = .951$, $SRMR = .082$, $RMSEA = .055$, $P(RMSEA \leq .05) = .019$, 90% CI [.051; .059]). All items from all instruments demonstrated acceptable factor loadings (i.e., $\lambda_i \geq .500$). Only one modification was added to the original measurement model in terms of residual correlations among REIS' items 8 and 9 ($r = .403$; $p < .001$).

Reliability: Internal Consistency

All first-order latent factors provided satisfactory validity evidence regarding the reliability of the scores (in terms of internal consistency): $\alpha_{sfea} = .95$; $\alpha_{ofea} = .95$; $\alpha_{sfer} = .89$; $\alpha_{ofer} = .95$; $\alpha_{tl} = .96$; $\alpha_{ex} = .85$; $\alpha_{md} = .73$; $\alpha_{ci} = .82$; $\alpha_{ei} = .85$; $\alpha_{js} = .93$; $\alpha_p = .79$.

Table 4.9: Shared and Latent correlations between Burnout, Job Satisfaction, Transformational leadership, Emotional Intelligence and Performance

	Burnout	Job Satisfaction	Transformational leadership	Emotional Intelligence	Performance
Burnout		-.80	-.46	-.46	-.61
Job Satisfaction	.64		.63	.25	.46
Transformational leadership	.22	.40		.33	.38
Emotional Intelligence	.21	.06	.11		.43
Performance	.38	.21	.15	.19	

Note —the lower triangle contains the shared variance; the upper triangle contains the latent correlations.

Structural model

The structural model, which establishes the direct and indirect relationships between the constructs, presented an acceptable global fit to the data ($\chi^2(1410) = 2309.526$; $p < .001$; $NFI = .890$; $CFI = .954$; $TLI = .951$; $SRMR = .082$; $RMSEA = .055$; $P(RMSEA \leq .05) = .018$; 90% CI [.051; .059]).

Table 4.10 presents the direct, indirect, and total effects of the tested structural model. The explained variance of the endogenous variables was large for job satisfaction ($r^2 = .754$) and moderate for performance ($r^2 = .417$), indicating that the model explains a relevant portion of the variance in these variables.

Table 4.10: Structural model's regression coefficients.

Path	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>z</i>	β	<i>p</i>	90% CI
Direct effects						
Burnout <- Emotional Intelligence	-0.367	0.081	-4.553	-0.342	< .001	]-0.525; -0.209[
Burnout <- Transformational leadership	-0.248	0.056	-4.415	-0.350	< .001	]-0.358; -0.138[
Job Satisfaction <- Emotional Intelligence	-0.320	0.101	-3.159	-0.198	.002	]-0.519; -0.122[

Path	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>z</i>	β	<i>p</i>	90% CI
Direct effects						
Job Satisfaction <- Transformational leadership	0.390	0.052	7.543	0.366	< .001	] 0.289; 0.492[
Job Satisfaction <- Burnout	-1.083	0.119	-9.119	-0.718	< .001	] -1.316; -0.850[
Performance <- Job Satisfaction	-0.073	0.095	-0.769	-0.132	.442	] -0.259; 0.113[
Performance <- Emotional Intelligence	0.137	0.085	1.614	0.154	.107	] -0.029; 0.304[
Performance <- Transformational leadership	0.087	0.050	1.726	0.147	.084	] -0.012; 0.185[
Performance <- Burnout	-0.483	0.154	-3.126	-0.579	.002	] -0.785; -0.180[
Indirect effects						
JS<-B<-EI	0.397	0.096	4.134	0.245	< .001	] 0.209; 0.586[
JS<-B<-TL	0.269	0.054	4.948	0.252	< .001	] 0.162; 0.375[
P<-B<-EI	0.177	0.069	2.566	0.198	.010	] 0.042; 0.312[
P<-B<-TL	0.120	0.047	2.553	0.203	.011	] 0.028; 0.212[
P<-JS<-B	0.079	0.106	0.747	0.095	.455	] -0.129; 0.287[
Total effects						
JS<-EI + (JS<-B<-EI)	0.077	0.088	0.876	0.048	.381	] -0.095; 0.250[
JS<-TL + (JS<-B<-TL)	0.659	0.053	12.325	0.617	< .001	] 0.554; 0.764[
P<-EI + (P<-B<-EI)	0.315	0.069	4.540	0.352	< .001	] 0.179; 0.450[
P<-TL + (P<-B<-TL)	0.206	0.079	2.595	0.350	.009	] 0.051; 0.362[
P<-B + (P<-JS<-B)	-0.404	0.077	-5.223	-0.484	< .001	] -0.555; -0.252[
<i>Note.</i> JS – Job Satisfaction; B – Burnout; EI – Emotional Intelligence; TL – Transformational leadership; P – Performance						

The direct effect in the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.154$, $p = .107$), indicating that H1 was not supported directly. However, the total effect, including indirect effects through burnout, was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.352$, $p < .001$), supporting H1 in the overall context. The relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction was unexpectedly negative and significant ($\beta = -$

0.198, $p = .002$), contrary to H2. The total effect of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction, including indirect effects through burnout, was not significant ($\beta = 0.048$, $p = .381$), indicating that H2 was not supported overall. The direct effect of emotional intelligence on burnout was significant and negative ($\beta = -0.342$, $p < .001$), supporting H3. Similarly, the direct effect of transformational leadership on burnout was significant and negative ($\beta = -0.350$, $p < .001$), confirming H4. Transformational leadership was also found to have a positive and significant direct effect on performance ($\beta = 0.147$, $p = .084$), but this was not statistically significant, so H5 was not supported directly. However, the total effect of transformational leadership on performance, including indirect effects through burnout, was significant ($\beta = 0.350$, $p = .009$), supporting H5 in the overall context.

Transformational leadership had a significant and positive direct effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.366$, $p < .001$), confirming H6. The relationship between burnout and performance was significant and negative ($\beta = -0.579$, $p = .002$), supporting H7. Burnout also significantly influenced indirectly the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance ($\beta = 0.198$, $p = .010$) and between transformational leadership and performance ($\beta = 0.203$, $p = .011$), confirming H7.1 and H7.3, respectively. Burnout also indirectly impacted the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < .001$), as well as between transformational leadership and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.252$, $p < .001$), supporting H7.2 and H7.4. The direct relationship between burnout and job satisfaction was negative and significant ($\beta = -0.718$, $p < .001$), confirming H8. The direct relationship between job satisfaction and performance was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.132$, $p = .442$), indicating that H9 was not supported. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between burnout and performance ($\beta = 0.095$, $p = .455$) was also not significant, leading to H9.1 not being supported. On the other hand, the indirect effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between transformational leadership and performance was significant ($\beta = 0.350$, $p = .009$), leading to H9.2 being the last hypothesis supported.

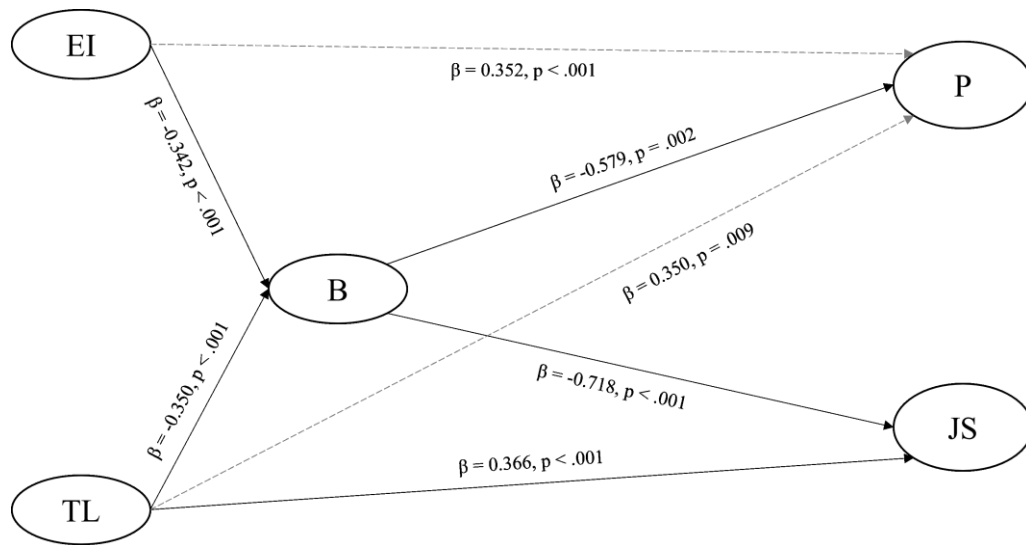


Figure 4.1: Diagram of the structural model (JS – Job Satisfaction; B – Burnout; EI – Emotional intelligence; TL – Transformational leadership; P – Performance)

Chapter 5 – Discussion

In general, the results obtained in this study showed the importance of adopting a leadership style that improves employee well-being levels, in this case transformational leadership, which proved to be significant in the perception that employees have of their performance, as well as how they feel about their job. In addition, emotional intelligence proved to be important in managing conflicts with others by identifying and managing their own feelings and reactions, as well as those of others. However, contrary to expectations, the same significance was not found in the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.

Emotional intelligence faces an important role, not only in organizations, but also in people's personal lives due to its ability to create relationships with others, the ability to understand and manage one's own feelings as well as those of others, leading individuals to be more empathetic and to communicate effectively. This concept leads to being more aware of ourselves and our surroundings, making it easier to navigate complex situations, especially in the workplace (Goleman, 1995). This suggests that emotional intelligence may influence performance indirectly by helping individuals manage stress and emotional challenges at work, confirming hypothesis 1, suggesting that there is a significance in the relationship between emotional intelligence and performance (H1) when considering the total effect, including the indirect path through burnout. Although previous studies have indicated that emotional intelligence is associated with better performance outcomes (Miao et al., 2018), this study demonstrates that its influence on performance may be more complex, particularly when considering how emotional intelligence mitigates the negative effects of burnout. The JD-R model supports this finding by indicating that personal resources, such as emotional intelligence, can act as a defense against job demands, thereby improving performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In this context, emotional intelligence does not directly enhance performance but contributes to employees' ability to cope with stress, which indirectly fosters better performance.

Contrary to expectations, the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction (H2) was not supported. While this is surprising, it is important to consider that job satisfaction can be influenced by various factors, not all of which are directly related to emotional intelligence. For instance, organizational culture, job characteristics, and external influences might play a more significant role in shaping job satisfaction than emotional intelligence alone (Sinval et al., 2020). However, the significant indirect relationship through

burnout (H7.2) indicates that emotional intelligence still contributes to job satisfaction by helping individuals manage workplace stress. This finding aligns with previous studies from Mérida-López & Extremera (2020) for example, in which they suggest that emotional intelligence's positive effects on job satisfaction is possible and significant by its ability to mitigate burnout. Therefore, while emotional intelligence may not have a direct effect on job satisfaction, it seems to play a role in reducing burnout, which can enhance satisfaction levels.

The significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout (H3) highlights the potential protective role of emotional intelligence in reducing emotional exhaustion and mental distancing. This is consistent with the findings of Sarrionandia & Mikolajczak (2020), who suggest that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to cope with stressful situations by regulating their emotions and maintaining interpersonal relationships at work. Within the JD-R framework, emotional intelligence can be viewed as a personal resource that helps manage the emotional and cognitive demands of work, potentially reducing the likelihood of burnout and better employee well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). By focusing on emotional regulation and interpersonal skills, organizations can develop emotional intelligence training programs to support employee well-being and reduce burnout.

Transformational leaders are able to create an environment in which employees feel safe and confident to evolve, motivated by their superiors. This leadership style also promotes the development of each person's emotional intelligence, resulting in a self-aware, empathetic workforce capable of effectively regulating their feelings, developing more resilient employees who are more satisfied with their work (Goleman, 1998). Transformational leadership was found to have a significant positive relationship with burnout, suggesting that leaders who inspire and motivate their employees can create a more positive and supportive work environment. This aligns with the findings of Judge and Piccolo (2004), who highlight that transformational leaders reduce stress by providing a sense of direction, encouragement, and recognition, which helps employees feel more secure and valued in their roles. The JD-R model suggests that leadership acts as an organizational resource that can act as a shield towards job demands and prevent burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In this way, leaders mitigate the negative effects of burnout such as exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of interest in their work (Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993), confirming hypothesis 4 that suggested the existence of a significant and negative relationship between transformational leadership and burnout.

This finding reinforces the importance of leadership development programs in organizations, particularly those that focus on transformational behaviors to promote employee well-being.

The relationship between transformational leadership and performance (H5) was not directly significant, but the total effect, including indirect paths through burnout, was positive. This suggests that transformational leaders may influence performance indirectly by creating a supportive work environment in which employees are more engaged and productive, reducing the possibility of burnout. Recent studies by Montano et al., (2017) have found that transformational leaders are known to inspire employees by setting clear goals and fostering a sense of purpose, which can improve performance. According to the JD-R model, leadership support can serve as a job resource that enhances motivation and performance by reducing job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). While transformational leadership does not have a direct impact on performance, it does have an indirect impact due to its ability to create a positive work environment in which employees are more likely to better perform, reduce burnout levels, in which improve the team's engagement.

The leader's role is an important variable, as it will impact the company's outcomes (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Not only by defining the company's strategy, but also in the satisfaction and performance of their teams by creating an environment that supports their teams, more specifically their needs and how they feel in the work environment (Nothouse, 2018). When analyzing the results obtained in terms of transformational leadership, it is possible to confirm the positive and significant direct effect on the satisfaction obtained by workers regarding their job, confirming hypothesis 6. By focusing on individual development and recognizing employee contributions, transformational leaders may help employees feel more satisfied with their jobs. This suggests that organizations aiming to improve job satisfaction can benefit from encouraging transformational leadership behaviors among their leaders.

Emotional intelligence and transformational leadership perceptions had a statistically positive significant indirect effect on performance perceptions via burnout (H7.1 and H7.3). This suggests that both emotional intelligence and transformational leadership influence performance by reducing burnout. This finding promotes the importance of addressing burnout as an important factor that affects performance outcomes. Employees with higher emotional intelligence or who perceive their leaders as transformational may experience less burnout, which in turn is associated with better performance and greater job satisfaction. This aligns with the JD-R model's emphasis on the importance of personal and organizational resources in mitigating job demands and promoting positive outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). These

findings suggest that interventions focused at reducing burnout, such as emotional intelligence training or leadership development programs, may have beneficial effects on performance and job satisfaction.

Emotional intelligence and transformational leadership perceptions had a statistically positive significant indirect effect on job satisfaction via burnout (H7.2 and H7.4). This indicates that the positive effects of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership on job satisfaction can vary according to the ability to reduce burnout. Employees with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage stress, which enhances their job satisfaction by preventing the emotional exhaustion associated with burnout. Similarly, transformational leaders create a work environment that reduces burnout, leading to greater job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the JD-R model, which suggests that reducing job demands and increasing resources, such as leadership support and emotional intelligence, are important in improving job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

The negative relationship between burnout and job satisfaction (H8) supports the existing literature suggesting that employees who experience high levels of burnout are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs (Schaufeli et al., 2020). Burnout leads to emotional exhaustion, disengagement, and reduced work performance, which may negatively affect how employees perceive their jobs. This finding highlights the importance of addressing burnout in organizational interventions to improve employee satisfaction. Organizations should focus on providing support and resources to reduce job demands and prevent burnout, which in turn will enhance job satisfaction.

Contrary to expectations, the direct relationship between job satisfaction and performance (H9) was not supported as well as the indirect hypotheses involving job satisfaction (H9.1 and H9.2). This challenges the assumption that higher job satisfaction always leads to better performance, as suggested by Judge et al. (2001). It is possible that individual differences, job characteristics, or external pressures may influence this relationship.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. One of the primary limitations of this research lies in its cross-sectional design. This design captures a small part of the relationships between emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, burnout, job satisfaction, and performance at a single point in time. While cross-sectional studies are useful for identifying associations, they do not allow for causal inferences

or an understanding of how these relationships may develop or change over time. For example, it remains unclear if emotional intelligence and transformational leadership consistently predict lower burnout or if there might be fluctuation periods depending on external organizational pressures or individual circumstances. It would be interesting for future studies to track how variables like burnout evolve and how they interact with leadership and emotional factors over extended periods to provide clearer insights into the potential causal relationships.

Participants tend to respond to questionnaires in ways they find will be more socially acceptable or favorable, this being one other limitation since the responses rely on self-reported data, creating the possibility of being biased. This limitation is common in studies that measure subjective constructs such as emotional intelligence and burnout, where individuals may unintentionally overestimate or underestimate their emotional capabilities or stress levels (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In addition, the reliance on self-assessment for performance may not fully capture the objective measures of job performance, as individuals may perceive their own effectiveness differently than their supervisors or colleagues. To avoid this issue, it would be beneficial to incorporate multiple sources of data. For example, including work metrics such as annual performance reviews, peer assessments or objective performance metrics (such as task completion rates or customer satisfaction scores) could provide a more completed view of employee performance and reduce the potential biases inherent in self-reports (Conway & Lance, 2010).

This study employed a convenience sampling method that may result in a sample that does not adequately represent the diversity of experiences in different industries, job roles, or organizational cultures. In this case, the majority of participants were professionals from specific sectors, and their experiences with emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, and burnout may not reflect those of others in different industries, such as manufacturing, healthcare, or education, where job demands, and leadership styles may differ (Baruch & Holtom, 2008). Future studies should consider employing random sampling methods or stratified sampling techniques to ensure a more representative sample. To get more in-depth knowledge of how emotional intelligence and leadership influence outcomes in different organizational contexts and could reveal whether certain industries or job types are more susceptible to the effects of burnout.

Another limitation of this study is its focus on a specific cultural and organizational context, namely, employees working in Portugal. While the findings contribute to the understanding of workplace dynamics in this context, cultural differences may influence the

results to other regions. For example, cultural factors such as collectivism versus individualism, and communication styles can influence leadership practices and how employees perceive and respond to emotional intelligence and burnout (Hofstede, 2001). In countries where hierarchical structures are stricter, or where emotional expression in the workplace is less valued, the impact of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership on burnout and job satisfaction may differ. Therefore, future research could extend these findings by examining the role of emotional intelligence and leadership in diverse cultural settings, allowing for a comparative analysis of how cultural factors moderate these relationships.

Research has shown that organizational culture, employer branding, and the overall work environment can significantly influence employee well-being and performance (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). For instance, the availability of organizational support systems, such as mental health programs, flexible work programs, and professional development opportunities, can help decrease the negative effects of burnout and enhance job satisfaction and performance. These factors may interact with emotional intelligence and leadership styles to create a more comprehensive framework for understanding employee outcomes, meaning it would be relevant to, in the future incorporate broader organizational variables to provide a more holistic view of workplace well-being and performance.

Lastly, the study's focus on emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, burnout, job satisfaction, and performance represent only part of the complex interplay of factors influencing workplace well-being. Future research could explore additional variables that might influence these relationships. For example, individual differences such as personality traits, coping mechanisms, or resilience could influence how employees respond to leadership and emotional challenges (John & Srivastava, 1999). Additionally, exploring the role of job characteristics, such as task variety, autonomy, and role clarity, could provide further insights into how different job conditions affect the relationships between emotional intelligence, leadership, and employee outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the complex relationships between emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, burnout, job satisfaction, and performance in organizational settings. Emotional intelligence emerged as a significant factor in managing burnout, highlighting its relevance in helping individuals cope with emotional demands in the workplace. One relevant finding was the fact that the direct relationship between emotional

intelligence and job satisfaction was not significant as expected. However, this relationship improves significantly indirectly by reducing burnout. This suggests that emotional intelligence, by aiding employees in handling stress, contributes to creating a more supportive work environment. Given this, organizations can apply these insights by developing emotional intelligence training programs aimed at improving self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation among employees and leaders. These programs could not only reduce the negative effects of burnout but also foster greater job satisfaction and collaboration between teams.

Similarly, transformational leadership was found to be relevant in reducing burnout and promoting job satisfaction. Leaders who engage in transformational behaviors, such as providing motivation, support, and a clear vision, create work environments where employees feel valued and motivated. Even though the direct link between transformational leadership and performance was not as evident as expected, this study still suggests that transformational leaders can positively influence performance indirectly by first reducing burnout and creating a more engaging work environment. Organizations could enhance leadership programs by emphasizing transformational leadership training skills, which in turn could improve employee engagement and well-being.

Burnout proved to be a central indirect factor in this study, connecting emotional intelligence and transformational leadership with both job satisfaction and performance, which makes study burnout in an organizational context relevant in enhancing employee outcomes. In practical terms, organizations could introduce strategies such as flexible work options, mental health resources, and proactive stress management check-ins to help employees manage burnout, leading to healthier work environments, with more motivated and satisfied employees.

Moreover, integrating emotional intelligence and transformational leadership into performance management systems could further improve organizational outcomes. Leaders who provide support and constructive feedback can better help employees manage stress and stay engaged, reducing the risk of burnout. Developing leadership practices to the specific needs of employees can enhance both individual well-being and overall productivity, as supported by the findings in this study.

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