



New Models of Educational Leadership: Forthcoming Key Traits of Top Educational Leaders for Excellence in K-12 Education

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Abstract

Future school leadership prototypes encourage the early exploration of both aspiring and skilled leaders' emotional intelligence (EI) to develop the entrepreneurial leadership capacity for this population. The mixed-methods exploratory research focuses on the top leadership in K-12 education at the holistic level by including school inspectors, head teachers, middle leaders, and members of the administration council of schools to explore EI using validated self-report measures.

This chapter integrates the transformative model of emotional intelligence (TEI) to address top leaders' variable states of leadership and emotional intelligence. The purpose of this mixed-methods exploratory research was twofold. Guided by TEI theory, the study's quantitative research questions sought to detect differences in key EI skills and 3 potential problematic measures along with 4 personality patterns among top leaders from K-12 education: school inspectors, head teachers, middle leaders, and members of the administration council of schools. Merging top leaders' participation as the key founders of EI skilled-based future leaders is recommended. Our research sheds light on the need to capture and generate evidence-based leadership practices to enhance the leadership community among educational leaders.

Key words: early leadership, top educational leaders, emotionally intelligent leaders

1. Introduction

Emerging research in leadership urges for future studies in early leadership potential may be explored and redeemed through holistic development practices (Fernald et al., 2005; Kudo et al., 2012; Mateias & Kanungo, 2025; Mateias et al., 2024; Walsh & Martin, 2023;). Positive relationships among top school leaders and their peers enhance the support for early leadership and adaptive behaviors necessary to be considered and applied during the formative stages of leader development.

First and foremost, the leadership practitioners claim that a healthy leader-follower bond endorses our students' emotional self-management and genuine direction for yielding adaptive behaviors to meet the new market demands (Mateias, et al., 2024; Hruška, et al., in press; Reyes, et al., 2012; Goleman, et al., 2004; Mateias, 2018; Nelson and Low, 2011; Downey et al., 2014; Hammer et al., 2018).

While many studies have focused on various aspects of educational leadership, there has been little research on top school leadership skills in K-12 education, including all three hierarchical levels: school inspectors, head teachers, and middle leaders. This chapter presents a new, innovative skills-based learning and human development framework of Transformative Emotional Intelligence (TEI) to enhance early top leadership in K-12 education in Romania, as a role model that could be applied in early education of both aspiring and skilled leaders worldwide.

Ground-breaking training programs have been tested and implemented beforehand this initiative, by introducing TEI learning and development with hundreds of teachers and leaders in Romania since 2013, using Zoom symposia

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D. Mara and I. D. Hunyadi (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Management and Entrepreneurial Leadership for K-12 Education Excellence (LEADK12 2026)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 1026,

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-599-7_31

and accredited training programs organized by Dr. Delia Mateiaș and the founding creators of TEI in Romania. The overarching objective was to help young and adult learners achieve success, health, and well-being in their life, career, and self-leadership to build healthy students, schools, and communities.

Participants in this study included school inspectors, head teachers, middle leaders, and members of the administration council of schools from K-12 education in Romania in a holistic learning approach to develop key essential skills in personal, emotional, relational, and life (PERL) domains to enhance their education-academic experience and preparation for a healthy life over the lifespan. The purpose of this initiative was to introduce a transformational approach to teaching EI skills and lessons with young and knowledgeable leaders worldwide.

Preliminary findings of this study were presented by the authors of this study at *The International Conference on Management and Entrepreneurial Leadership for K-12 Education Excellence*, April 23-25, 2026, under “LEAD the team!” project (referred in the Acknowledgement section).

The world we all live in has changed. Rapid, increasing reliance on artificial intelligence (AI) impacts everyone — youth, families, communities, and organizations. Numerous studies indicate that emotional intelligence (EI) - the healthy understanding, use, and expression of emotions - is an important factor in school, career, and college academic success (e.g. Mateiaș et.al., 2024).

2. Conceptual Framework

TEI is a skills-based learning system and conceptual framework with key essential, practical tools for fostering connection, sustaining well-being, and navigating change. TEI is a confluence of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills embedded in personal, emotional, and relational life domains to achieve physical, mental, and emotional health, wellness, and life success. TEI is the learned ability to think constructively and behave wisely (Nelson & Low, 2011).

New recent research advances an innovative model, *The Entrepreneurial Leadership Route (ELBM)* that proposes innovative practices in a triadic experiential learning of authentic models of leadership, emotional intelligence, and entrepreneurship (Hruška, Mateiaș., Seitz and Christ, in press). Productive and wise behaviors require abilities to attune our thoughts, emotions, and actions to communicate an understanding and respect for self and others. Learning to lead with empathy is an essential skill and prerequisite of teaching and leadership excellence. Research in teaching and learning effectiveness clearly identifies the importance of TEI lifespan skills.

The human brain learns best in an environment high in challenge, trust, respect, empathy, and caring. TEI is key to liberating and actualizing human potential. Human potential is liberated and enhanced in a learning environment that incorporates six key characteristics, including: (a) acceptance, (b) positive regard, (c) empathy, (d) trust, (e) honesty, and (f) empowerment. Four TEI dimensions and their underlying skills provide the essential foundation for empowering learning, career success, leadership development, effective parenting, and overall quality of life.

A. Personal/Intrapersonal Skills and the Self-Knowledge Dimension

Healthy habits and skills to understand and trust the development of self-knowledge from the five basic senses (what we see, hear, touch, taste, smell) and experiential learning. TEI skills include: **Self Esteem** — to develop, trust, and build as a skill, including learning about self, liking and appreciating self, building strengths, playing educational games, and activities. Personal skills help build confidence. **Stress Management** — to develop relaxation practices to stay calm, manage stressors and pressures. **Positive Change** to build resilience to renew self, adaptability learning.

B. Emotional Skills and Self-Knowledge the Dimension

A practical dimension and approach to understanding basic emotions (anger, fear, sadness, love/happiness) and their influence on behavior, especially when emotions are strong. With a focus on the four basic emotions that are essential to know about and understand, the impact and understanding of anger, fear, sadness, love/happiness are the important topics of education and training. TEI skills include: **Assertion** to regulate and manage communication when emotions are strong. It includes the learned ability to reflect and break the habit of emotional

reactivity. **Anger Control** provides the focus to stay calm, think constructively, and to regulate and manage the emotion of anger. **Anxiety Management** provides the focus to regulate and manage the emotion of fear. **Positive Change** is a skill that purposefully demystifies change for skill improvement.

C. Relational Skills and Leadership Dimension

Knowing the importance of relationships and developing healthy, productive relationships for personal well-being, life effectiveness, and striving to achieve happiness from pre-K to beyond retirement is the focus of the Self-knowledge dimension. The principle of human interdependence is accepted as a higher-order value and guiding TEI hallmark for developing and sustaining positive relationships. Its TEI skills include: **Comfort** with social awareness to engage others with confidence and enthusiasm. **Empathy** to listen actively to understand others (reflective, nonjudgmental listening). **Decision Making** to make healthy, effective choices and decisions. **Personal Leadership** to lead oneself with intelligent self-direction and positive influence. Life is a business of growing and developing relationships (Vaillant, 2012).

D. Life/Career Skills and Self-Management Dimension

This dimension provides the drive, energy, focus for growth, motivation, and achievement in all aspects of life, from education to career to community. Achievement is central to performance and career success in work, career, and life endeavors. TEI skills include **Drive Strength** to focus on achieving meaningful goals. **Time Management** to effectively manage self and resources to complete tasks and assignments. **Commitment Ethic** to complete projects, responsibilities, and persevere with tenacity and perseverance, even when difficulties and challenges are experienced.

3. Methodology

The purpose of the QN (quantitative) portion of the study was to determine the dominant areas of emotional intelligence as measured by the Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP), and the dominant personality (life type) style to improve personal well-being and increase professional productivity. Accurate self-awareness is the first step in positive change.

A single research question (RQ) guided the QN portion of the study.

The overarching QNRQ sought to determine the extent to which the key emotional intelligence measures of the Emotional Skills Assessment Process (Nelson & Low, 1998) were in the Develop, Strengthen, and Enhance areas, which scored higher or registered a develop score. Furthermore, overarching QNRQ sought to determine the extent to which the 4-life personality style measures differently.

An initial convenience sample of 1100 participants consisted of individuals who represented top school leadership (school inspectors, headteachers, middle leaders, and members of the administrative council) during an intermediate education initiative that included transformative emotional intelligence in K-12 education Romanian. Participants were invited to complete the two measures, getting this distribution of valid completed measures: 928 respondents completed the ESAP and for 786 respondents completed the LSTI. The participants ($n = 786$) ranged in age from 25 to 67 ($\mu = 47.9$), per Table 1 and Table 2.

3.1 Instrumentation

During the education initiative reported in this study among school inspectors, head teachers, middle leaders, and members of the administration council of schools were given the opportunity to complete two validated, self-report assessments of TEI skills, the online Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP), and the Life Style Type Indicator Personality (LSTI).

A. The Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP)

The Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP), which was translated from English to Romanian and computer-administered for this study, has been widely used in the United States and exhibits good internal reliability (Cox, 2013; Nelson et al., 2003). The ESAP has also evidenced content validity with measures of healthy being (Nelson et al., 2003), relationship skills (Cox, 2013), constructive thinking (Cox & Nelson, 2008), leadership quality (Hammett et al., 2012), and transformational leadership (Hammett et al., in press). The ESAP instrument translated to Romanian and used in this study was a shortened version (Form A) consisting of 174 Likert-scored items. The three response choices for each item are "Most Like Me" = 2, "Sometimes Like Me" = 1, and "Least Like Me" =

0. The three potential problem areas are measured using 18 items each and the 10 skills areas are measured using six items each. The six items that comprise the Intrapersonal skill of Stress-Management are reverse-scored.

B. The Life Style Type Indicator (LSTI)

The second measure, the Life Style Type Indicator Personality (LSTI) provided new research evidence for top leaders of a Fortune 500 corporation (Nelson et al., 2014). The models measure four key personality types: (1) Believer, (2) Creator, (3) Achiever, and (4) Supporter. Research findings reveal significant correlations with several of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator measures (Nelson et al., 2014), that assure the construct validity.

In 2013, Darwin Nelson created the Life Style Type Indicator®, a positive measure of Transformative Emotional Intelligence (TEI), in response to the Myers-BriggsType Indicator® (MBTI). The MBTI is a popular instrument that was created by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers in 1961. The instrument is based on Car Jung's (1921) theory of four personality traits measured as dichotomies of (a) Extraversion (E) versus Introversion (I), (b) Sensing (S) versus Intuition (N), (c) Thinking (T) versus Feeling (F), and (d) Judging (J) versus Perception (P). A key tenant of TEI is that it is research-derived, person-centered, skills-based (i.e., behaviorally anchored), and relationship focused. Therefore, the LSTI provides a fundamentally different way of looking at and measuring personality compared to the MBTI. As Nelson observed in 2014 about the MBTI and its dichotomous approach to measure, "A person scoring high in extroversion, for example, should naturally score low in introversion. In practice, however, people often score in relative balance on the dichotomies, and so it may be helpful to think of them as continuums" (Nelson et al., 2014, p. 67). Rather than using dichotomies, the LSTI uses 60 items in a forced-choice fashion that "measures personality type along four ways of learning and being ... (a) Believer, (b) Achiever, (c) Creator, and (d) Supporter" (Nelson et al., p. 68). The article from 2014 provides an in-depth description of the LSTI and how to use it as a reflective learning process to help participants engage in the five-step emotional learning system to:

- (a) reflectively think about and understand yourself and others (personality types) (b) develop a new way to think about human emotions, (c) create a personal view of healthy personality and wellness (d) indicate your present level of satisfaction with your current life style, and (3) learn a daily process of constructive thinking, relaxation, and action goal setting that will improve your productivity, achievement, and level of personal well-being. (p. 68)

The referenced article was written during a visit to India when Nelson and Hammett facilitated a series of leadership development workshops for Hindustan Petroleum Corporation executives ($N = 93$) using the Emotional Skills Assessment Process® (ESAP), the other article using in the current study as well, and the LSTI. As a result, significant correlations were reported between the LSTI and MBTI measures.

3.2 Sample

An initial convenience sample of top school leadership, i.e. school inspectors, headteachers, middle leaders, and members of administrative council ($N=1100$) was recruited for the "LEAD the team!" project (referred in the Acknowledgement section).

The participants attended online training for 8 hours (in teams), organized in two sessions, i.e. 4h/session, and were guided to complete online the two measures that included TEI. Notably that many submitted scales were incomplete (potential technical errors that occurred during online completion, incomplete answers, etc.).

At the first appeal, the distribution of valid completed measures is as follows: 928 respondents completed the ESAP and 786 respondents completed the LSTI. The participants ($n = 786$) ranged in age from 25 to 67 ($\mu = 47.9$), per Table 1 and 2.

Descriptive Statistics for LSTI					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	776	1	2	1,85	,35
Age	778	25	67	47,90	7,03
Valid N (listwise)	776				

Table 1. Participant Groups by Gender for LSTI

Descriptive Statistics for ESAP					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	928	1,00	2,00	1,82	,38
Age	928	17,00	67,00	47,68	7,400
Valid N (listwise)	928				

Table 2. Participant Groups by Gender for ESAP

4. Data Collection and Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 3.0) was used to examine the differences among the scales on the ten self-reported ESAP skills and three potential problem areas, along with four life style type indicator personality.

4.1 Results and data Analysis

A. The Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP)

Statistics												
		Age	ASSERTION	COMFORT	EMPATHY	DECISION MAKING	LEADERSHIP	DRIVE STRENGTH	TIME MANAGEMENT	COMMITMENT ETHIC	SELF-ESTEEM	STRESS MANAGEMENT
N	Valid	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		47,6864	13,2392	10,3836	10,5905	7,7198	,0000	9,8976	9,9192	10,1099	10,5959	8,9752
Std. Deviation		7,40053	2,77663	1,50849	1,52307	1,74080	,00000	1,66416	1,85648	1,53731	1,70267	2,64400
Skewness		-,664	-,504	-,172	-,1473	-,614		-,873	-,1023	-,737	-,1339	-,946
Std. Error of Skewness		,080	,080	,080	,080	,080	,080	,080	,080	,080	,080	,080
Kurtosis		,889	-,025	1,580	2,313	,175		,514	,995	,475	1,413	,493
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,160	,160	,160	,160	,160	,160	,160	,160	,160	,160	,160
CV		15,519	20,973	14,528	14,381	22,550	,000	16,814	18,716	15,206	16,069	29,459

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

We set out to investigate the normality of the data distribution of the studied variables and in this regard, we calculated the descriptive statistical values. We can see from the table that the values of the Skewness and Kurtosis parameters, for the most part, respect the conditions of normality, with some small tolerable exceptions. Regarding the representativeness of the mean for the targeted variables, from the analysis of the coefficient of variation (CV) we observe that at the level of all variables its value is less than 30%, so we can say that the values of the means are representative for the data strings.

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ASSERTION	Male	167	13,3473	2,91843	,22583
	Female	761	13,2155	2,74597	,09954
COMFORT	Male	167	10,5150	1,56335	,12098
	Female	761	10,3548	1,49570	,05422
EMPATHY	Male	167	10,2335	1,83981	,14237
	Female	761	10,6689	1,43387	,05198
DECISION MAKING	Male	167	7,6946	1,82589	,14129
	Female	761	7,7254	1,72276	,06245
DRIVE STRENGTH	Male	167	9,7904	1,67488	,12961
	Female	761	9,9212	1,66199	,06025
TIME MANAGEMENT	Male	167	9,7006	1,96817	,15230
	Female	761	9,9671	1,82893	,06630
COMMITMENT ETHIC	Male	167	9,9581	1,61824	,12522
	Female	761	10,1432	1,51804	,05503
SELF-ESTEEM	Male	167	10,3593	1,87315	,14495
	Female	761	10,6478	1,65975	,06017
STRESS MANAGEMENT	Male	167	9,2096	2,37921	,18411
	Female	761	8,9238	2,69736	,09778
AGGRESSION	Male	167	4,1916	3,22441	,24951
	Female	761	4,0066	3,22469	,11690
DEFERENCE	Male	167	5,9401	3,45138	,26708
	Female	761	6,5401	3,59660	,13038
CHANGE ORIENTATION	Male	167	2,8623	2,51002	,19423
	Female	761	2,9987	2,28006	,08265

Table 4. Group statistics

Homogeneity of Variance Test

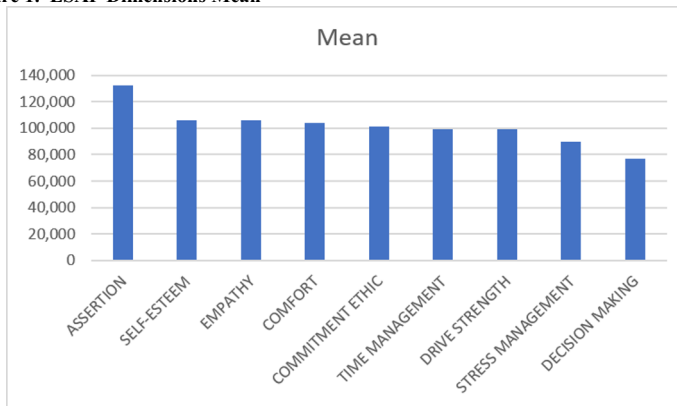
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
ASSERTION	Equal variances assumed	,916	,339
COMFORT	Equal variances assumed	,074	,786
EMPATHY	Equal variances assumed	19,345	<,001
DECISION MAKING	Equal variances assumed	,268	,605
DRIVE STRENGTH	Equal variances assumed	,694	,405
TIME MANAGEMENT	Equal variances assumed	2,471	,116
COMMITMENT ETHIC	Equal variances assumed	,089	,765
SELF-ESTEEM	Equal variances assumed	2,821	,093
STRESS MANAGEMENT	Equal variances assumed	3,009	,083
AGGRESSION	Equal variances assumed	,511	,475
DEFERENCE	Equal variances assumed	1,455	,228
CHANGE ORIENTATION	Equal variances assumed	1,808	,179

Table 5. Homogeneity of Variance Test

Independent Samples Test									
t-test for Equality of Means									
		t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
ASSERTION	Equal variances assumed	,555	926	,289	,579	,13180	,23736	-,33402	,59762
	Equal variances not assumed	,534	234,830	,297	,594	,13180	,24680	-,35442	,61802
COMFORT	Equal variances assumed	1,243	926	,107	,214	,16017	,12887	-,09273	,41308
	Equal variances not assumed	1,208	237,294	,114	,228	,16017	,13257	-,10099	,42134
EMPATHY	Equal variances assumed	-3,363	926	<,001	<,001	-,43532	,12943	-,68934	-,18131
	Equal variances not assumed	-2,872	212,378	,002	,004	-,43532	,15156	-,73408	-,13657
DECISION MAKING	Equal variances assumed	-,207	926	,418	,836	-,03075	,14883	-,32284	,26134
	Equal variances not assumed	-,199	235,233	,421	,842	-,03075	,15448	-,33509	,27359
DRIVE STRENGTH	Equal variances assumed	-,919	926	,179	,358	-,13074	,14222	-,40985	,14837
	Equal variances not assumed	-,915	243,012	,181	,361	-,13074	,14292	-,41227	,15079
TIME MANAGEMENT	Equal variances assumed	-1,682	926	,046	,093	-,26655	,15848	-,57758	,04448
	Equal variances not assumed	-1,605	233,046	,055	,110	-,26655	,16611	-,59381	,06071
COMMITMENT ETHIC	Equal variances assumed	-1,410	926	,079	,159	-,18515	,13130	-,44282	,07252
	Equal variances not assumed	-1,354	234,395	,089	,177	-,18515	,13678	-,45463	,08433
SELF-ESTEEM	Equal variances assumed	-1,986	926	,024	,047	-,28855	,14527	-,57364	-,00346
	Equal variances not assumed	-1,839	226,660	,034	,067	-,28855	,15694	-,59780	,02070
STRESS MANAGEMENT	Equal variances assumed	1,265	926	,103	,206	,28580	,22586	-,15747	,72906
	Equal variances not assumed	1,371	268,191	,086	,172	,28580	,20846	-,12464	,69623
AGGRESSION	Equal variances assumed	,672	926	,251	,502	,18505	,27555	-,35573	,72583
	Equal variances not assumed	,672	244,296	,251	,502	,18505	,27554	-,35769	,72778
DEFERENCE	Equal variances assumed	-1,966	926	,025	,050	-,59996	,30515	-1,19883	-,00109
	Equal variances not assumed	-2,019	251,425	,022	,045	-,59996	,29720	-1,18528	-,01464
CHANGE ORIENTATION	Equal variances assumed	-,687	926	,246	,492	-,13641	,19850	-,52598	,25316
	Equal variances not assumed	-,646	229,915	,259	,519	-,13641	,21109	-,55232	,27950

Table 6. Independent Sample test

Figure 1. ESAP Dimensions Mean



We aimed to determine whether there are significant gender data differentials across all ESAP dimensions and found the following:

- in terms of **empathy** there is a significant difference between genders ($t=-2.872$, $p=0.004$), with female characters showing a significantly higher level of value of this variable ($M=10.66$).

In general, the literature puts forward related evidence that females score higher than male (Argyle, 1990; Hargie, Saunders, & Dickson, 1995).

- in terms of **self-esteem** there is a significant difference between genders ($t=-1.986$, $p=0.047$), with female characters showing a significantly higher level of value of this variable ($M=10.64$).

Petrides and Furnham's research (2000) put forward new evidence on gender differences in measured and self-estimated emotional intelligence, that show significant difference on the "social skills", with females scoring higher than males.

- There is a tendency towards significance for **time management**, favorable to female leaders ($M = 9.96$; $t = -1.662$ $p = 0.093$).

In this regard, a study sampled 528 students from the National University of Modern Languages - Islamabad Bond's Time Management Questionnaire concluded that female students are better in time management skills as compared to the male students, notably without any statistical differences regarding perceived control of time (Sultana & Shakur, 2022).

- In terms of **deference**, there is a significant difference between genders ($t=-1.966$, $p=0.050$), with female characters showing a significantly higher level of value of this variable ($M=6.54$).

Correlations											
		Age	ASSERTION	COMFORT	EMPATHY	DECISION MAKING	DRIVE STRENGTH	TIME MANAGEMENT	COMMITMENT ETHIC	SELF-ESTEEM	STRESS MANAGEMENT
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	,098**	,053	,025	,086**	,062	,033	-,063	,025	,070*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,003	,103	,444	,009	,060	,314	,056	,451	,034
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
ASSERTION	Pearson Correlation	,098**	1	,310***	,138***	,266***	,244***	,231***	,246***	,211***	,047
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003		< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	,153
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
COMFORT	Pearson Correlation	,053	,310***	1	,398***	,388***	,368***	,339***	,374***	,430***	,167***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,103	< ,001		< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
EMPATHY	Pearson Correlation	,025	,138***	,398***	1	,283***	,332***	,242***	,315***	,318***	,065*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,444	< ,001	< ,001		< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	,049
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
DECISION MAKING	Pearson Correlation	,086**	,266***	,388***	,283***	1	,397***	,449***	,469***	,439***	,147***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,009	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001		< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
DRIVE STRENGTH	Pearson Correlation	,062	,244***	,368***	,332***	,397***	1	,563***	,429***	,527***	,192***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,060	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001		< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
TIME MANAGEMENT	Pearson Correlation	,033	,231***	,339***	,242***	,449***	,563***	1	,453***	,469***	,173***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,314	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001		< ,001	< ,001	< ,001
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
COMMITMENT ETHIC	Pearson Correlation	-,063	,246***	,374***	,315***	,469***	,429***	,453***	1	,523***	,094**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,056	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001		< ,001	,004
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
SELF-ESTEEM	Pearson Correlation	,025	,211***	,430***	,318***	,439***	,527***	,469***	,523***	1	,250***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,451	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001		< ,001
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928
STRESS MANAGEMENT	Pearson Correlation	,070*	,047	,167***	,065*	,147***	,192***	,173***	,094**	,250***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,034	,153	< ,001	,049	< ,001	< ,001	< ,001	,004	< ,001	
	N	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928	928

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 7. Ranking of the average obtained at each ESAP dimension

Overall, findings showed significant correlations among the majority of ESAP skills. Age correlates with Assertion, Decision Making, and Stress Management. This feature could be considered for future training to adapt the training goals with these key skills to equip our future young leaders. Among multiple correlations among the ESAP skills, we can notice that Assertion significantly correlated with Comfort, Empathy, Decision Making, Drive Strength, Time Management, Commitment Ethic and Self Esteem. Moreover, Empathy significantly correlated with all the ESAP skills, including Stress Management. Remarkably is that our top leaders display good skills of Stress Management, for almost all EI areas.

B. The Life Style Type Indicator (LSTI)

LSTI Descriptive Results

A large group of the Romanian participants ($N = 778$) completed the LSTI. All identified as either female ($n = 663$) or male ($n = 113$), and their average age was 48 years. The average scores in each category were as follows: Believer ($\bar{x} = 42$), Creator ($\bar{x} = 33$), Performer ($\bar{x} = 38$), and Supporter ($\bar{x} = 39$). The largest group of respondents by category was Believer ($n = 414$) and the smallest was Creator ($n = 28$). The Supporter ($n = 200$) and Performer ($n = 136$) fell in between the smallest and largest groups. While we were not able to pair the LSTI and ESAP respondents for the current study, Table 1 presents the correlation statistics from the 2014 article, and we would expect similar results if correlations were able to be run for the current study.

LSTI® Life Style Type and MBTI® Personality Type Correlations

LSTI®	Extrov	Introv	Sensing	Intuition	Thinking	Feeling	Judging	Perceive
Believer	-.32**	.34**	.043	-.04	-.13	.17	.02	-.03
Creator	.26*	-.28**	-.30**	.31**	-.03	.05	-.26*	.28*
Achiever	.33**	-.33**	.08	-.06	.33**	-.34**	.19	-.18
Supporter	-.21*	.20	.14	-.17	-.14	.15	-.03	.02

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

Table 8 LSTI and MBTI Personality Type Correlations

		Statistics				
		Age	BELIVER	CREATOR	ACHIVER	SUPPORTER
N	Valid	778	778	778	778	778
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		47,90	41,80	33,24	36,19	38,78
Std. Deviation		7,035	4,537	4,330	5,012	5,769
Skewness		-,593	-,032	,312	,186	-,314
Std. Error of Skewness		,088	,088	,088	,088	,088
Kurtosis		,440	,661	,275	-,161	,586
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,175	,175	,175	,175	,175
CV		14,685	10,855	13,025	13,849	14,876

Table 9. LSTI Descriptive Statistics

We set out to investigate the normality of the data distribution of the studied variables and in this regard, we calculated the descriptive statistical values. We can see from the table that the values of the Skewness and Kurtosis parameters, in their vast majority, comply with the conditions of normality. Regarding the representativeness of the mean for the targeted variables, from the analysis of the coefficient of variation (CV) we observe that at the level of all variables its value is less than 30%, so we can say that the values of the means are representative for our data.

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
BELIVER	Male	113	43,18	4,872	,458
	Female	663	41,57	4,446	,173
CREATOR	Male	113	33,97	4,401	,414
	Female	663	33,12	4,315	,168
ACHIVER	Male	113	35,45	4,862	,457
	Female	663	36,30	5,026	,195
SUPPORTER	Male	113	37,40	5,578	,525
	Female	663	39,03	5,767	,224

Table 10. Group statistics

Homogeneity of Variance Test

Levene's Test for Equality of
Variances

		F	Sig.
BELIVER	Equal variances assumed	,148	,701
CREATOR	Equal variances assumed	,059	,808
ACHIVER	Equal variances assumed	,507	,477
SUPPORTER	Equal variances assumed	,984	,321

Table 11. Homogeneity of Variance Test

Independent Samples Test									
		t-test for Equality of Means							
		t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
BELIVER	Equal variances assumed	3,504	774	<,001	<,001	1,608	,459	,707	2,509
	Equal variances not assumed	3,284	145,551	<,001	,001	1,608	,490	,640	2,576
CREATOR	Equal variances assumed	1,947	774	,026	,052	,857	,440	-,007	1,722
	Equal variances not assumed	1,920	151,022	,028	,057	,857	,447	-,025	1,740
ACHIVER	Equal variances assumed	-1,667	774	,048	,096	-,849	,509	-1,848	,151
	Equal variances not assumed	-1,707	155,622	,045	,090	-,849	,497	-1,831	,134
SUPPORTER	Equal variances assumed	-2,793	774	,003	,005	-1,632	,584	-2,779	-,485
	Equal variances not assumed	-2,860	155,653	,002	,005	-1,632	,571	-2,759	-,505

Table 12. Independent Samples Test

We aimed to determine if there are significant gender differences in all LSTI dimensions and we found the following:

-regarding the **Believer** typology, there is a significant difference between genders ($t=3.504$, $p<0.001$), with males showing a significantly higher level of the value of this variable ($M=43.18$).

--regarding **Supporter typology**, there is a significant difference between genders ($t=-2.793$, $p=0.005$), with females showing a significantly higher level of the value of this variable ($M=39.03$). Previous research (e.g. Argyle, 1990; Hargie, Saunders, & Dickson, 1995)

For instance, previous research findings (Argyle, 1990; Hargie, Saunders, & Dickson, 1995) confirmed that gender had a significant effect on interpersonal social skills, which are closely related to key dimensions of emotional intelligence with females scoring higher on perceptiveness, empathy, and adaptability than males.

- There is a tendency towards significance for **Creator**, favorable to male leaders ($M=33.97$; $t= 1.947$ $p=0.052$).

- There is a tendency towards significance for **Achiever**, favorable to female leaders ($M=36.30$; $t= -1.667$ $p=0.096$).

Figure 2. Ranking of averages obtained for each personality type

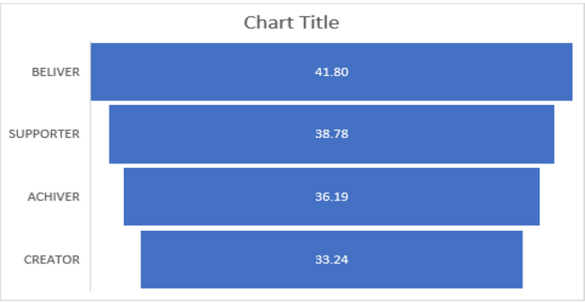
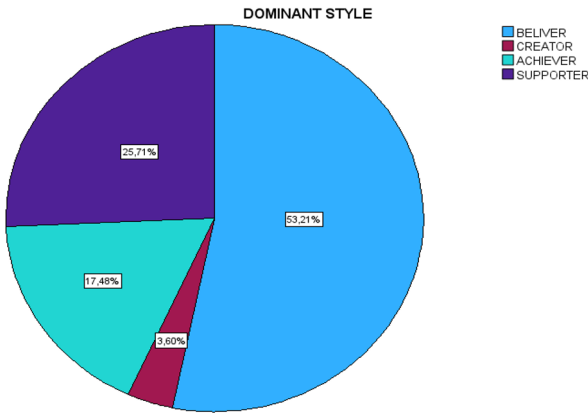


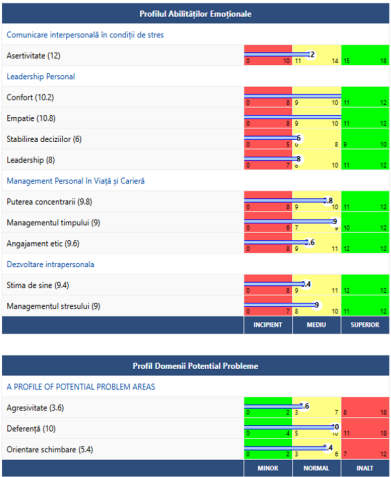
Figure 3. Dominant personality typology



Furthermore, Figure 2 and Figure 3 provide further evidence for this hierarchy, by ranking of averages obtained for each personality type and generating the percentage, **Believer** typology leading pyramid, followed by the **Supporter** and then Achiever. Creator typology becomes a personal development goal for our leaders. These findings emphasize small difference between the average of personality type, stressing a good self-awareness of leaders in adapting their personality style to the school environment.

5. Implications

Generating individual Profiles of LSTI and ESAP puts forward emerging teacher data with practical description related to health growth and development and share the four lifestyle types in TEI learning according to most selected healthy lifestyle type to least selected lifestyle type. The same approach for development an emerging K-12 leader, teacher profile showing all ESAP scales and scores with descriptive data. Those two profiles could resonate and create a growing interest in developing healthy teachers with skill sets and competencies of TEI to add to their teaching excellence toolkit. These early data have serious and positive implications for a caring teacher training/education model as well as the essential knowledge and skills to develop teachers, K-12 leaders, families, and most importantly young and future entrepreneurial leaders in communities everywhere (e.g. Tabel 13).



Tabel 13. Example of ESAP profile (in Romanian, all the ESAP dimensions were already described)

This study affirms previous research recommendations that leaders, teachers, students, and other populations will benefit from the early inclusion of TEI curricula for their balanced personal and professional development. The current study provides new emerging evidence for the need to integrate early education leadership for our educational leaders by integrating an innovative skills-based learning and human development framework of TEI to embrace a holistic learning approach with a focus on developing key personal, emotional, relational, life (PERL) skills. The results suggested the value of purposeful inclusion of a more balanced curriculum with emotional skills and academic learning to enhance instruction at every level of education.

5.1 Limitations

Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the data has been collected using an online platform, thus it occurred several errors during the completion (speed of internet, lack of previous experience in completing similar measures, etc.). Thus, we needed to cancel the incomplete questioners. Second, the completion of the models assumes a degree of understanding and autonomy that our participants might not be familiar with it currently, given the novelty of the current study. Future research should priorities longitudinal implementation studies in diverse national contexts, comparative analysis of EI and leadership skills effectiveness across developmental stages in K-12 settings.

5.2. Overall implications

This study highlights that the essential importance of TEI skills has emerged as a new, innovative curriculum with promise for demystifying change and helping leaders develop positive social-emotional skills over the life span. Based on over five decades of research, education experience, and training in business and leadership, TEI is an emerging theory of emotional intelligence that includes leaders and followers as active, enthusiastic participants in the learning and development process.

Beside hands-on findings that enable our top leaders to have a knowledgeable understanding of their leadership and emotional intelligence skills, based on pioneering evidence-based strategy, this pioneering training approach further includes a post-completion intervention. Each participant has a state-of-the-art opportunity to reflect on their strengths and set up their personal development goals. More precisely, each model, LSTI and ESAP, integrates a specific post-completion plan that guides the participants to engender their personal development objectives along with specific development strategies.

Post-completion of the measures, the participants applied/converted their results, drowned from their personal ESAP and LSTI profiles, into a personal action plan. The uniqueness of the ESAP and LSTI measures besides the model and construct validity, reliability, reflects a post-completion practical approach to convert a profile data into a practical personal development plan. Each model integrates a post-completion plan that helps participants understand their strengths and set up personal development objectives along with specific development strategies, and can easily be used to create a tailored action plan. One of the major gaps in action plans related to self-development and improvement is the lack of a process to maintain consistency and accountability (Adriaanse & Broeke, 2022). One tool designed by Nelson and Low (2011) to help participants reflect on, capture, and align cognitive, emotion, and behavior in an actionable, measurable way is the Emotional Learning System (ELS). To increase the likelihood of achieving professional and personal goals, the action plan can also be used in conjunction with the ELS as a way to have continuous practice with concrete personal real-life experiences to help facilitate and track growth and development.

6. Conclusions

This emerging data collection with K-12 top leaders, teachers, and all who develop and facilitate teacher training and student learning for accountability results with the education experience. This study is needed and genuine baseline studies to integrate, weave, and balance learning outcomes for both academic success and healthy life experience with intelligent life management with academic, social, emotional, behavior grounding skills for the classroom and the boardroom of life.

With the research base of TEI and emerging, comprehensive ground-breaking practical education research that acknowledges the influence of understanding and building self-knowledge of social, emotional, life skills through the stages of life and the skills that matter in developing how we think with constructive thinking + critical thinking, healthy skills-based learning pathways to healthy personal growth and development, and empower learners to achieve intelligent self-direction and personal excellence. A dual system of learning of high academic standards balanced with high personal standards of excellence hold immense promise of improving the lives of young students, caring teachers, families, and communities.

K-12 leaders for the present and the future hold the keys to unlocking human potential with health, success, growth, and resilience. This pilot research involving large numbers of K-12 leaders, highly qualified teachers in Romania provide bench-mark data with positive assessment early results with the healthy lifestyle and innovative approach of the Life Style Type Indicator (LSTI) and Emotional Intelligence Skills Assessment Process (ESAP).

Moreover, leaders advocate for new practices in a triadic experiential learning of authentic models of leadership, emotional intelligence, and entrepreneurship (Hruška et al., in press). Future hands-on studies should examine the dynamic relationships among these key constructs to generate needed evidence-based practices for both training and educational practices for educational leaders.

Transformative Emotional Intelligence (TEI) learning and development was created and developed upon a strong research history and empowering learning framework to improve education at all levels to build healthy, successful, and empowered teachers, learners, families in K-12 leadership globally. The emphasis of TEI teaching and learning excellence extends to a balanced skills building model with focus on the cognitive, academic

development of learners at all levels of education and affective development for achievement of academic knowledge and skills and personal-emotional-relationship-life skills to become and be a responsible, contributing person in their own life.

Recommendations For Future Research

We agree and recommend collaborations with accredited scholars to integrate TEI with other measures of social-emotional learning and leadership through longitudinal studies to enhance early evidence-based leadership development and drive results from a human-centered, holistic perspective. Such efforts will also strengthen the international community of researchers and practitioners who are interested in cultivating early, more authentic and responsible leadership.

Acknowledgments

This research has been conducted under the “LEAD the team!” project, funded by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) – Pillar VI: Policies for the new generation, Component C15: Education, Reform 7: Governance of the pre-university education system and professionalization of management, Investment 18: Training and mentoring program for school managers and inspectors (ID_13), the Financing Contract no. 9375/02.04.2025, beneficiary the University of Sibiu (ULBS), Romania.

Dr. Delia Elena Mateiaș, Visiting Professor at the ICUB – The Research Institute of The University of Bucharest (contract no. 636/03.02.2026), and President of the Transformational Leadership NGO (Asociația Transformational Leadership), Romania, has been initiating and coordinating this complex study.

Above all, we acknowledged the invaluable support of the Emotional Intelligence Training and Research Institute (EITRI) to integrate the TEI model for our best development of educational leaders in Romania.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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