



RESEARCH PAPER

Exploring Emotional Intelligence, Remote Work Dynamics, Team Collaboration, and Adaptive Leadership for Enhanced Success in the Digital Workplace

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the relationships among emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership, highlighting their relevance in contemporary digital workplaces. As remote work became increasingly prevalent, understanding the factors contributing to effective leadership and teamwork was essential. A quantitative design was employed, with data collected from 250 remote employees through self-reported questionnaires that measured emotional intelligence, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership. The analysis utilized regression techniques. The findings revealed that emotional intelligence and team collaboration served as strong predictors of adaptive leadership, demonstrating a notable positive relationship between emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership. Higher levels of adaptive leadership corresponded with improved team performance, satisfaction, and engagement. These results indicated that enhancing emotional intelligence and fostering collaboration could significantly improve leadership effectiveness, thereby contributing to better team outcomes. However, the study had limitations, including potential biases arising from self-reported measures and concerns regarding the sample's representativeness across various industries. Future research should explore the longitudinal impacts of these relationships and consider additional contextual factors that may influence the dynamics of remote work and leadership effectiveness.

KEYWORDS Adaptive Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Effectiveness, Remote Work, Team Collaboration

Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving work environment, characterized by the increased adoption of remote work due to technological advancements and global circumstances, organizations face unprecedented challenges and opportunities (Amankwah et al., 2021). The shift from traditional office settings to virtual platforms has necessitated a reevaluation of how teams collaborate, communicate, and perform. Within this context, the role of emotional intelligence emerges as a pivotal factor that influences not only individual performance but also team dynamics and overall organizational success (Saura, 2022). Emotional intelligence defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others serves as a foundational skill that enhances interpersonal relationships and fosters effective communication among team members. Moreover, in a remote work setting where direct interactions are limited, emotional intelligence can bridge gaps, promote empathy, and build trust (Ogbu et al., 2024).

Alongside emotional intelligence, adaptive leadership has gained prominence as an essential approach to navigating the complexities of remote work dynamics. Adaptive leadership emphasizes the importance of flexibility, resilience, and responsiveness in the face of change. It encourages leaders to embrace uncertainty and to empower their teams to innovate and adapt to new challenges. As organizations strive to maintain productivity and cohesion in virtual environments, the synergy between emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership becomes increasingly relevant, providing a framework for enhancing team collaboration and achieving shared goals (Contreras, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift towards remote work, with millions of employees worldwide transitioning to virtual environments almost overnight. This sudden change highlighted the necessity for organizations to develop new strategies for maintaining team engagement, collaboration, and performance. Research indicates that teams with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate the challenges of remote work, including feelings of isolation, miscommunication, and reduced morale. Emotional intelligence enables team members to express their needs, recognize the emotional cues of others, and foster a supportive atmosphere, which is crucial in a setting where face-to-face interactions are limited (Fana, 2020).

Furthermore, existing literature suggests that adaptive leadership plays a critical role in facilitating effective teamwork in remote contexts. Leaders who embody adaptive leadership traits such as being open to feedback, promoting a culture of learning, and encouraging innovation can significantly influence team dynamics (Ahlstrom et al., 2020). By fostering a sense of psychological safety and trust, adaptive leaders empower their teams to take initiative, collaborate more effectively, and respond to challenges with agility. The intersection of emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership within the framework of remote work dynamics offers valuable insights into how organizations can optimize team performance and enhance overall success (Aroles, 2019).

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership, many organizations continue to grapple with effectively cultivating these attributes in remote work settings. The lack of in-person interactions can hinder the development of strong interpersonal relationships, resulting in misunderstandings, conflicts, and decreased productivity. Furthermore, the challenge of maintaining engagement and motivation among remote team members underscores the need for leaders who can adapt their approaches to meet the evolving needs of their teams (Dolev, 2017). This study aims to address the critical gap in understanding how emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership interact to influence team success in the context of remote work.

Literature Review

The central research question guiding this literature review is: How do emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership contribute to success in the digital workplace? As organizations increasingly transition to remote work models, understanding the interplay among these variables becomes essential for maintaining productivity and fostering a positive work environment. The relevance of this inquiry lies in its potential to inform organizational practices and leadership strategies that enhance team effectiveness in virtual settings (Snyder, 2019).

To adequately address this research question, a thorough search for relevant literature was conducted across multiple academic databases, including JSTOR, Google Scholar, and PubMed. The search employed a range of keywords related to each of the

key variables: "emotional intelligence," "remote work," "team collaboration," and "adaptive leadership." This systematic approach enabled the identification of a robust body of literature encompassing peer-reviewed articles, books, and organizational reports, providing a comprehensive foundation for the study (Cooper et al., 2018).

After screening the literature for relevance, quality, and recentness, a curated selection of sources emerged, highlighting the significance of emotional intelligence in leadership and team interactions. Numerous studies indicated that leaders with high emotional intelligence tend to facilitate better communication and collaboration among team members. For instance, Goleman (1998) emphasized that emotional intelligence encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills attributes that are particularly crucial in remote work settings where face-to-face interactions are limited. The literature was organized thematically to analyze the role of each variable systematically. Emotional intelligence was consistently linked to enhanced team dynamics, with findings suggesting that teams led by emotionally intelligent leaders exhibited greater cohesion and lower conflict levels. This aligns with research by Cherniss (2010), which found that emotional intelligence positively correlates with job satisfaction and overall employee well-being, both critical for team performance in a remote context.

Remote work dynamics, characterized by communication technologies and virtual collaboration tools, emerged as a significant factor influencing team productivity and engagement. Studies revealed that structured communication protocols, such as regular check-ins and virtual team-building activities, were essential for sustaining team morale and cohesiveness. Research by Naji and Naji (2020) highlighted the importance of using collaborative technologies, noting that teams that effectively utilized tools like Slack, Zoom, and project management software were more likely to meet their objectives. However, the literature also cautioned against potential pitfalls, such as "Zoom fatigue" and the challenge of maintaining work-life balance in remote settings (Sukackè, et al, 2022).

Adaptive leadership was identified as a vital approach in navigating the complexities of the digital workplace. Adaptive leaders are skilled in recognizing and responding to changing environments, which is particularly relevant in remote work scenarios characterized by rapid change. The literature indicated that adaptive leadership fosters resilience and innovation, enabling teams to pivot effectively in response to challenges. This leadership style is essential for cultivating a culture that embraces flexibility and continuous improvement, allowing organizations to thrive in uncertain times (Charalampous, 2019).

A synthesis of the findings highlighted the interconnectedness of emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, and adaptive leadership in promoting team collaboration and success. Emotional intelligence enhances the effectiveness of remote work dynamics by improving communication and collaboration, while adaptive leadership strategies create an environment that supports innovation and resilience. However, several gaps were identified in the existing literature, particularly concerning the contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of these variables. Few studies have explored how cultural differences impact the application of emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership in diverse organizational settings. Additionally, there is a lack of longitudinal research examining how these dynamics evolve over time in remote work environments (Wittmer, 2022).

In crafting this literature review, the analysis emphasized the necessity of integrating these concepts to develop a holistic understanding of success in the digital

workplace. The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) model, which posits that emotional intelligence is a foundational element for interpersonal effectiveness. This model is particularly relevant for organizations seeking to enhance team collaboration and performance in virtual settings. The primary research questions emerging from this literature review are: How does emotional intelligence impact team collaboration in remote work settings? What role do remote work dynamics play in shaping team performance? How can adaptive leadership enhance organizational success in a digital environment? These questions will guide the subsequent research, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the factors that drive success in remote work and offering valuable insights for organizational leaders and practitioners navigating this evolving landscape (Heldens, 2020). By investigating these interrelated aspects, this study aims to fill existing gaps in the literature, providing actionable recommendations for organizations striving to enhance their effectiveness in a digital context. Through a comprehensive examination of emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership, the research aspires to inform best practices and foster a culture of success in the modern workplace (Baptista et al., 2020).

Hypothesis

- HI. Higher levels of emotional intelligence among team members are positively correlated with improved team collaboration in remote work settings.
- HI. Effective remote work dynamics, characterized by clear communication and a supportive technology environment, significantly enhance team collaboration and productivity.
- HI. Adaptive leadership positively influences team performance by fostering a culture of flexibility and responsiveness, particularly in remote work environments.
- HI. There is a significant interaction effect between emotional intelligence and adaptive leadership on team collaboration, suggesting that leaders with high emotional intelligence are more effective in facilitating teamwork in remote settings.

Material and Methods

The research utilized a mixed-methods approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership. This design facilitated the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a robust analysis of the research questions.

Research Approach

The study adopted a sequential explanatory design, where quantitative data collection and analysis were conducted first, followed by qualitative methods. This approach provided a foundation of statistical insights that informed subsequent interviews and focus groups, enriching the understanding of the underlying themes.

Population and Sample

The population targeted in this study comprised employees working in various sectors that had transitioned to remote work environments. A sample of 300 participants was recruited through purposive sampling, focusing on individuals in leadership and team roles. The sample included diverse demographics regarding age, gender, and

professional background, ensuring representation across different organizational contexts.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection involved two main phases. The quantitative phase included the distribution of an online survey that assessed participants' emotional intelligence, perceived effectiveness of remote work dynamics, levels of team collaboration, and adaptive leadership qualities. The survey utilized validated scales to measure these variables, ensuring reliability and validity. The qualitative phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with 30 selected participants, providing deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions related to the key variables.

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical software, employing descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, and regression techniques to identify relationships among the variables. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved coding the interview transcripts and identifying recurring themes that aligned with the research questions. This dual analysis approach enriched the overall findings and allowed for triangulation of results.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they understood the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained by assigning unique identifiers and securely storing data. Additionally, ethical approval was sought and granted from the institutional review board prior to the commencement of data collection.

Results and Discussion

The study aimed to explore the relationships among emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership. The results are presented through detailed tables that highlight demographic data, correlations, regression analyses, and interaction effects.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
18-24	80	26.7
25-34	120	40.0
35-50	100	33.3
Gender		
Male	120	40.0
Female	150	50.0
Non-Binary	30	10.0
Socioeconomic Status		
Low	100	33.3
Middle	150	50.0
High	50	16.7

Table 1 The demographic data indicated a diverse sample of participants. Among the age groups, the majority fell within the 25-34 range (40.0%), followed by those aged

35-50 (33.3%) and 18-24 (26.7%). Gender distribution revealed that females represented the largest group at 50.0%, while males accounted for 40.0% and non-binary individuals comprised 10.0%. In terms of socioeconomic status, the sample was predominantly middle class (50.0%), with low socioeconomic status participants at 33.3% and high socioeconomic status participants at 16.7%. This distribution suggests a balanced representation across key demographic variables, which enhances the generalizability of the study's findings.

Table 2
Correlation Matrix among Variables

Variable	Emotional Intelligence	Remote Work Dynamics	Team Collaboration	Adaptive Leadership
Emotional Intelligence	-			
Remote Work Dynamics	0.45*	-		
Team Collaboration	0.50 *	0.55 *	-	
Adaptive Leadership	0.60 ***	0.40 *	0.65*	-

The correlation matrix indicated significant relationships in table 2 among the variables. Emotional intelligence was positively correlated with adaptive leadership ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.1$), team collaboration ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.1$), and remote work dynamics ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are likely to excel in adaptive leadership and collaboration, especially in remote settings. Remote work dynamics also correlated positively with team collaboration ($r = 0.55$, $p < 0.1$), emphasizing the role of effective remote practices in enhancing teamwork. Overall, these findings highlight the interconnectedness of emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership.

Table 3
Regression Analysis Summary

Predictor Variable	B (Standard Error)	β (Beta)	p-value	Confidence Interval (95%)
Emotional Intelligence	0.25 (0.05)	0.35	< 0.001	[0.15, 0.35]
Remote Work Dynamics	0.15 (0.04)	0.20	< 0.01	[0.07, 0.23]
Team Collaboration	0.30 (0.06)	0.40	< 0.001	[0.18, 0.42]
Adaptive Leadership	0.20 (0.05)	0.25	< 0.01	[0.10, 0.30]

The regression analysis results in Table 3 demonstrated that emotional intelligence and team collaboration are significant predictors of success in the digital workplace. Emotional intelligence exhibited a standardized beta coefficient of 0.35 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a strong positive influence on success. This suggests that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to thrive in a digital work environment. Similarly, team collaboration emerged as a significant predictor with a beta of 0.40 ($p < 0.001$), reinforcing the idea that effective teamwork is crucial for achieving positive outcomes in remote settings. The confidence intervals for both predictors ([0.15, 0.35] for emotional intelligence and [0.18, 0.42] for team collaboration) further validate the reliability of these estimates, underscoring their importance in enhancing workplace success.

Table 4
Impact of Adaptive Leadership on Team Performance

Adaptive Leadership Level	Team Performance (M, SD)	Satisfaction Level (M, SD)	Employee Engagement (M, SD)
Low	55.0 (10.0)	2.5 (0.8)	3.0 (0.9)
Moderate	70.0 (8.5)	3.5 (0.6)	4.0 (0.7)
High	85.0 (7.0)	4.5 (0.5)	1.0 (0.6)

The results presented in Table 4 indicated a clear trend: higher levels of adaptive leadership correspond with increased team performance, satisfaction, and employee engagement scores. Teams led by individuals exhibiting high adaptive leadership qualities achieved significantly higher performance scores ($M = 85.0, SD = 7.0$) compared to those with low leadership ($M = 55.0, SD = 10.0$). This suggests that adaptive leadership plays a critical role in enhancing team dynamics and overall effectiveness in remote work contexts. The data supports the notion that effective leadership not only fosters better performance but also cultivates higher levels of satisfaction and engagement among team members.

Table 5
Interaction Effects of Emotional Intelligence and Team Collaboration on Adaptive Leadership

Interaction Variable	B (Standard Error)	β (Beta)	p-value
Emotional Intelligence Team Collaboration	0.22 (0.06)	0.30	< 0.01

The results in Table 5 demonstrated a significant interaction effect between emotional intelligence and team collaboration on adaptive leadership. The coefficient ($B = 0.22, SE = 0.06$) indicates a positive relationship, with a standardized beta ($\beta = 0.30$) reflecting a moderate effect size. The p-value (< 0.01) confirms that this interaction is statistically significant. This suggests that as emotional intelligence and team collaboration increase, they positively influence adaptive leadership capabilities. Consequently, fostering both emotional intelligence and collaboration within teams can enhance leadership effectiveness, which is crucial for success in dynamic work environments.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrated significant correlations between emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership. Specifically, emotional intelligence emerged as a strong predictor of success, reflected in a standardized beta coefficient of 0.35 ($p < 0.001$). This finding indicated that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence were notably better equipped to navigate the complexities inherent in remote work environments, facilitating effective communication and fostering a collaborative atmosphere among team members. Furthermore, team collaboration also exhibited a substantial influence on adaptive leadership, with a beta coefficient of 0.40 ($p < 0.001$). The interaction effects illustrated in Table 5 revealed a compelling trend: as emotional intelligence and team collaboration increased, the capabilities of adaptive leadership were also enhanced. This highlighted a synergistic relationship where the combination of these factors created a more resilient and effective leadership style.

These findings align closely with previous research that emphasized the crucial role of emotional intelligence in effective leadership. Numerous studies have established that leaders possessing high emotional intelligence are typically more adept at managing teams, resolving conflicts, and promoting a cohesive work environment. The current research extended these findings by confirming that both emotional intelligence and team collaboration significantly impacted adaptive leadership, particularly within the context of remote work settings. This convergence of findings provided further evidence supporting the notion that emotional intelligence is not only beneficial but essential for successful team dynamics and leadership effectiveness in today's increasingly digital landscape.

Conclusion

In summary, this research provided significant insights into the intricate relationships among emotional intelligence, remote work dynamics, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership. The study found that emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in enhancing leadership effectiveness, especially in remote work environments where traditional face-to-face interactions are limited. The substantial correlations and predictive power identified in the results affirm the importance of fostering emotional intelligence not only among leaders but also across teams. By enhancing emotional intelligence, organizations can create a more harmonious and productive work environment, conducive to open communication and collaboration. Moreover, the findings emphasized that team collaboration is integral to adaptive leadership. As remote work becomes increasingly prevalent, leaders must cultivate a collaborative culture that encourages teamwork and shared goals. The positive impact of collaboration on adaptive leadership underscores the necessity for organizations to invest in strategies that promote cooperative practices, ensuring that teams can respond effectively to challenges and changes. The implications of these findings extend beyond individual organizations; they suggest a shift in how businesses approach leadership development and team dynamics. By integrating training programs focused on emotional intelligence and collaboration into organizational practices, companies can not only enhance their leadership capacity but also improve overall employee satisfaction and engagement. This investment in human capital is crucial for navigating the complexities of the digital landscape, where adaptability and resilience are key to success. Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of adaptive leadership in the context of remote work. Leaders who exhibit adaptability are better equipped to manage their teams' diverse needs and to respond to rapidly changing circumstances. This adaptability not only fosters a supportive work environment but also drives innovation and performance. In light of these findings, organizations should prioritize the development of emotional intelligence and collaborative practices in their leadership training programs. Additionally, creating an organizational culture that values adaptability can significantly enhance the effectiveness of teams, particularly in remote settings. Overall, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the interdependencies between emotional intelligence, team collaboration, and adaptive leadership. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, particularly in varied contexts and across different industries. By doing so, we can further understand how to cultivate effective leadership in an ever-evolving work environment, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for organizations and their employees. In conclusion, as the workplace continues to evolve with technological advancements and shifting dynamics, the importance of emotional intelligence, collaboration, and adaptive leadership cannot be overstated. Organizations that embrace these elements are likely to thrive in the competitive landscape, fostering environments where employees feel valued, engaged, and empowered to contribute their best work. By investing in these areas, businesses not only enhance their operational effectiveness but also pave the way for sustainable success in the future.

Recommendations

To enhance leadership effectiveness in remote work environments, organizations should prioritize the development of emotional intelligence and team collaboration through targeted training programs. These programs should focus on equipping leaders and team members with skills to navigate the complexities of remote interactions, fostering effective communication and conflict resolution. Additionally, creating a culture that values adaptability is essential; organizations can implement practices that encourage feedback and

shared decision-making, promoting a collaborative atmosphere. Regular workshops and team-building activities can reinforce these skills, helping to establish strong interpersonal connections among team members. Furthermore, organizations should assess and refine their leadership development initiatives to ensure they align with the evolving demands of the digital workplace. By investing in these strategies, businesses will not only improve adaptive leadership capabilities but also enhance overall employee satisfaction and engagement, ultimately driving performance and innovation in an increasingly competitive landscape.

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