



Lisbon School  
of Economics  
& Management  
Universidade de Lisboa

**MASTER**  
**MASTERS IN MANAGEMENT**

**MASTER'S FINAL WORK**  
**DISSERTATION**

**DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN LEADERS INFLUENCE EMOTIONAL  
LEADERSHIP STYLES AND EMPLOYEE BURNOUT?**

**MARA LUISA CORNELSEN**

**JANUARY - 2025**



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**PROFESSOR DOCTOR TIAGO EMANUEL RODRIGUES  
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**JANUARY - 2025**



## ERRATUM

1. On page 1 and 2, second line of first paragraph, it is written “Master’s” instead of “Master.”
2. On page 10, second line of first paragraph, it is written “However, despite growing interest, there remains a gap in understanding the direct links between EI, emotional leadership styles, and their impact on employee burnout.” Instead of “However, despite growing interest, there remains a gap in understanding the direct links between leadership EI, emotional leadership styles, and their impact on employee burnout.”
3. On page 29, first line of third paragraph it is written “When analysing the association between resonant leadership and burnout (H3), the study revealed a significant moderate negative relationship (...)” instead of “When analysing the association between resonant leadership and burnout (H3), the study revealed a significant negative relationship (...)”.
4. On page 30, first line of second paragraph, it is written “The results also support H4, proving that resonant leadership mediates the relationship between EI and burnout with a moderate effect (...)” instead of “The results also support H4, proving that resonant leadership mediates the relationship between EI and burnout (...)”.
5. On page 36, first line of third paragraph, the chapter “6.3. Sustainable Development Goals” is added.
6. On page 52, the figure of the structural model and questionnaire are added.

## GLOSSARY

AVE – Average Variance Extracted.

CR – Composite Reliability.

df – Degrees of freedom.

EI – Emotional Intelligence.

HTMT – Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio.

H1 – Hypothesis 1.

H2 – Hypothesis 2.

H3 – Hypothesis 3.

H4 – Hypothesis 4.

H5 – Hypothesis 5.

ICD – International Classification of Diseases.

IQ – Intelligence Quotient.

MBI – Maslach Burnout Inventory.

MSCEIT – Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test.

p – p-Value, Significance Level.

PLS – Partial Least Squares.

R<sup>2</sup> – R-squared.

SEM – Structural Equation Modeling.

WLEIS – Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale.

β – Beta, Standardized Regression Coefficient.

#### ABSTRACT, KEYWORDS AND JEL CODES

Emotional intelligence (EI) has become increasingly crucial in today's dynamic work environments, where effective leadership and employee well-being are key to organizational success. This dissertation provides new insights on the interrelation of EI, emotional leadership styles, and employee burnout. The study aims to explore how EI in leaders influences the application of emotional leadership styles and how these styles, in turn, impact employee burnout. Following the emotional intelligence theory by Goleman (2019), the resonant leadership theory by Boyatzis and McKee (2005), and the burnout theory by Maslach and Jackson (1981), a total of 169 participants are considered to explore a linear research model after the literature. Results show that EI has a strong positive relationship with resonant leadership styles, which in turn significantly reduce employee burnout, with resonant leadership mediating the relationship between EI and burnout. Additionally, employees under resonant leaders reported significantly lower burnout levels compared to those with dissonant leaders. The findings highlight the importance of fostering EI and resonant leadership within organizations to reduce burnout and promote employee well-being. These results contribute to the growing body of research on emotional leadership and offer practical recommendations for including EI assessments into recruiting strategies and employing leadership development programs. Future research directions are proposed to advance the study of emotional intelligence.

**KEYWORDS:** Emotional Intelligence; Emotional Leadership; Resonant Leadership; Employee Burnout; Organizational Behaviour.

**JEL CODES:** D23; M12; M21; M53; M54; O15.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical determinant of interpersonal and professional success, complementing established psychological models such as the big five personality traits, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness (American Psychological Association, 2018a; Herut et al., 2024; Okwuduba et al., 2021). While personality traits are important, EI provides deeper insights into how individuals navigate emotional and social landscapes, especially in leadership contexts (Goleman, 2019; Singh et al., 2021). In professional environments, EI is particularly significant in shaping leadership dynamics, enhancing both the relationships leaders form and the overall effectiveness of their teams (Goleman, 2019; Lee et al. 2023). Leaders who are emotionally intelligent tend to adopt leadership styles that foster empathy, collaboration, and engagement, leading to better team outcomes (Arghode et al., 2021; Goleman, 2019). In contrast to cognitive intelligence (IQ), which is often seen as a baseline for professional and leadership competency, EI is the differentiating factor in leadership effectiveness (Goleman, 2019). For instance, leaders with high EI are more adept at managing stress, motivating employees, and building cohesive teams (Goleman, 2019; Mullen et al., 2017). EI not only shapes how leaders interact with their team but also influences the emotional climate of their teams, contributing to the leadership style they employ (Momeni, 2009; Watanabe et al., 2024). Specifically, leaders who display high EI are more likely to adopt visionary, transformational, or resonant leadership styles that emphasize emotional connection, positivity, and adaptability (Goleman et al., 2002; Momeni, 2009).

One of the most pressing challenges organizations face is employee burnout, which is exacerbated by poor leadership and inadequate emotional support (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Hildenbrand et al., 2018). Burnout can have devastating effects on employee well-being and productivity (Hayes et al., 2021). The rise of burnout, particularly during the pandemic, highlights the urgent need to understand the role of EI and leadership styles in mitigating this phenomenon (Maunder et al., 2022).

Current research suggests that emotionally intelligent leaders are better equipped to prevent burnout by creating supportive and psychologically safe work environments (Bagatini et al., 2024; Goleman, 2019; Lee, 2017; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Vlachou et

al., 2016; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). However, despite growing interest, there remains a gap in understanding the direct links between EI, emotional leadership styles, and their impact on employee burnout.

Therefore, the central research question guiding this investigation is: “Does Emotional Intelligence in leaders influence emotional Leadership Styles and Employee Burnout?”. To explore these relationships, this study will use quantitative methods through an online survey that evaluates employees' perceptions of their managers' EI, leadership styles, and their own experiences of burnout. The data collected will be analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) in SmartPLS and conducting a t-test with R. This methodological approach will allow for a comprehensive analysis of how a manager's EI influences their leadership styles and, in turn, affects employee burnout.

This dissertation will proceed by first reviewing the theoretical background on EI, leadership styles, and burnout. Next, the chapter on methodology will detail the research design, sample, and measures. The results will then be presented, followed by a discussion of the implications of the findings. This work will conclude by outlining the theoretical and practical applications for leaders, organizations, and future research directions.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### *2.1. Emotional Intelligence*

Emotional intelligence was first investigated by Salovey and Mayer (1990), who defined it as a subset of social intelligence enabling individuals to monitor and manage their own and others' emotions. They proposed EI as a cognitive ability with three central components: appraising and expressing emotions, regulating emotions, and using emotions adaptively. Later, Mayer et al. (2000) expanded this model into four dimensions: perceiving and expressing emotions, assimilating emotion in thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions, thus forming the basis of the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) (Mayer et al., 2002). These dimensions highlight EI as an asset in both personal and social functioning, underpinning a range of interpersonal skills essential for effective leadership and organizational success (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Mayer et al., 2002). The measure is widely used, however, the MSCEIT was criticised by multiple authors for not confirming the four-factor structure,

proposing a three-factor structure (Fan et al., 2010; Maul, 2010; Palmer et al., 2005; Rossen et al., 2008).

While Salovey and Mayer viewed EI primarily as a cognitive ability, Petrides and Furnham (2001) proposed a trait-based model, focusing on self-perceived competencies in emotional self-awareness and interpersonal skills. Here, EI is seen as a stable characteristic, comprising dimensions like well-being, self-control, emotionality, and sociability, which together impact resilience and relationship management (Petrides, 2009).

Daniel Goleman (2019) expanded the conversation by introducing a mixed model that integrates both cognitive abilities and personality traits. His model identifies five key dimensions of EI: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 2019). For instance, self-awareness allows leaders to understand their emotions and their impact on their behaviour, while self-regulation fosters impulse control and adaptability in challenging situations (Goleman, 2019). Empathy and social skills are crucial for building and maintaining strong professional relationships (Goleman, 2019). Goleman (2019) suggests that these EI competencies enhance leaders' ability to manage their own emotional responses and interact sensitively and strategically with others, thus improving organizational dynamics.

Reuven Bar-On (2006) introduced a mixed model that aligns with Goleman's ideas, emphasizing emotional and social intelligence as crucial for coping with everyday challenges and enhancing resilience in workplace settings.

Although each model offers a distinct perspective, they converge on the critical role of EI in leadership and organizational dynamics. Salovey and Mayer's cognitive approach emphasizes analytical and adaptive emotional processing, whereas Petrides' trait model focuses on enduring personality attributes. Goleman's and Bar-On's mixed models bridge these views, suggesting that both innate traits and learned skills contribute to EI development. This integrative understanding underscores EI's multifaceted nature, particularly its role in fostering resilient leadership and constructive workplace interactions.

For this study, Goleman's mixed model provides a comprehensive framework for examining how EI influences leadership styles and employee well-being. By

incorporating dimensions such as empathy and social skills, we can explore how emotionally intelligent leaders create supportive environments that mitigate burnout (Goleman, 2019). This conceptual grounding sets the stage for subsequent discussions on emotional leadership and burnout, highlighting the interconnectedness of these constructs in organizational settings.

## *2.2. Emotional Leadership*

Emotional leadership encompasses various styles, broadly classified as resonant and dissonant (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). Resonant leadership is a positive relational leadership style that is grounded in emotional intelligence and emphasizes building strong emotional connections to foster effective workplace outcomes (Goleman et al., 2002; Cummings, 2004). It centres on leaders' behaviours and interactions, focusing on relational dynamics to achieve shared goals (Cummings et al., 2010). Goleman et al. (2002) explain that managing emotional relationships is a core leadership responsibility. Resonant leaders create positive emotional environments that motivate and empower their teams (Squires et al., 2010). This resonance involves using emotional, social, and cultural intelligence to inspire followers, helping them perform at their best (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). As resonant leaders positively influence the team well-being and organizational climate through EI, they foster trust and meaningful connections (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). They align their emotional tone with others, creating an inspiring and motivating environment (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). By leveraging EI, they effectively guide team emotions to achieve collective goals (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). In contrast, dissonant leaders often lack EI, leading to emotional disconnection from their teams (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). They are more task-oriented than focussed on the emotional well-being of subordinates, which can negatively impact team morale and performance (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005).

Transformational leadership, often associated with resonant leadership, fosters team engagement through idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Jin, 2010). This approach emphasizes emotional connection, shared vision, and trust-building, which are crucial for reducing burnout (Bass, 1985). In contrast, transactional leadership, which is associated with dissonant leadership, focuses on task completion and external rewards,

creating a more rigid, emotionally detached environment that mirrors dissonant leadership styles (Bass, 1985; Weber, 1947). This distinction highlights the potential of emotionally intelligent, resonant leadership to foster well-being and prevent burnout.

Daniel Goleman (2019) emphasizes that emotional intelligence is crucial for leadership effectiveness, surpassing IQ and technical skills. He notes that effective leadership depends not on personality but on situational context (Goleman, 2019). Goleman identifies three types of focus essential for leaders: inward (self-awareness), outward (strategy and innovation), and focus on others (empathy and relationships) (Goleman, 2019). Furthermore, Goleman (2019) defines six leadership styles: coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetter, and coaching; each suited to different situations. Effective leaders adapt their approach based on context, significantly impacting organizational climate and performance (Goleman, 2019, p.118; 123). Styles such as authoritative, affiliative, democratic, and coaching are resonant, promoting positive outcomes, while coercive and pacesetter are considered dissonant. As summarized in Table 1, Goleman's (2019) six leadership styles demonstrate the practical application of EI competencies across different organizational scenarios.

TABLE 1: EMOTIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLES (GOLEMAN, 2019)

Leadership Style	Coercive	Authoritative	Affiliative	Democratic	Pacesetter	Coaching
<b>Description</b>	Require immediate adherence ("Do what I tell you")	Inspire people to work toward a shared vision ("Join me")	Fosters harmony and emotional connections ("People are the priority")	Builds consensus through participation ("What are your thoughts?")	Establishes high standards and expects excellence ("Do as I do, now")	Fosters growth and prepares others for the future ("Give this a try")
<b>EI Competencies</b>	Achievement-oriented, proactive, disciplined	Confidence, empathy, driving change	Empathy, effective communication, relationship-building	Collaboration, clear communication, team-oriented leadership	Conscientiousness, ambition, proactive initiative	Nurturing growth, self-awareness, empathy
<b>Impact on Organizational Climate</b>	Negative (-0.26)	Positive (0.54)	Positive (0.46)	Positive (0.43)	Negative (-0.25)	Positive (0.42)
<b>Appropriate Situations</b>	Crisis management, short-term issues	Setting new direction, when team needs vision	Healing rifts, motivation, improving	When leader needs input or consensus	When team is highly competent and self-motivated,	Long-term development of employees



			communicat ion		to achieve quick results	
<b>Resonant/D issonant</b>	Dissonant	Resonant	Resonant	Resonant	Dissonant	Resonant

In this study, the focus is specifically on Goleman’s four resonant leadership styles: authoritative, affiliative, democratic, and coaching. These styles are associated with creating positive emotional climates (Goleman, 2019). The application of these styles is analyzed to examine how they relate to EI and their impact on employee burnout. By narrowing the scope to these resonant styles, the study seeks to highlight their role in shaping leadership effectiveness and well-being in the workplace.

There is scholarly consensus on the situational application of leadership styles (Hersey et al., 1996; Lewin et al., 1939), aligning with Goleman’s (2019) view that effective leadership depends on context and EI. Humphrey (2002) and Wolff et al. (2002) underscore the importance of empathy and positive emotions in leadership effectiveness, supporting Goleman’s emphasis on emotional resonance.

George (2000) highlights the essential link between EI and leadership, emphasizing that emotions shape leadership style, team dynamics, and overall effectiveness. EI enables leaders to set collective goals, value team contributions, foster trust, and build organizational identity through enthusiasm and flexibility (George, 2000). Similarly, Iszatt-White (2013) underscores the role of emotional labour in leadership, noting that managing relationships and situational emotions is crucial for sustained effectiveness. Bawafaa et al. (2015) support that the application of resonant leadership styles leads to creating empowering environments which increases job satisfaction among employees.

In summary, emotionally intelligent leaders that employ resonant styles foster trust, motivation, and positive team dynamics, enhancing overall performance (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; George, 2000; Goleman, 2019; Squires et al., 2010). In contrast, dissonant leadership styles can undermine morale and productivity (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). Goleman’s (2019) leadership styles illustrate how EI drives leadership effectiveness, while transformational leadership exemplifies the power of resonant leadership to inspire and empower teams. Ultimately, EI is crucial for sustainable leadership and organizational success (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; George, 2000; Goleman, 2019; Squires et al., 2010).

### *2.2.1. Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Leadership*

Research consistently supports the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership. Kerr et al. (2006) demonstrated this link among supervisors in a manufacturing organization, highlighting how emotional competencies enhance leadership effectiveness. Similarly, In the Indian banking sector, Lone and Lone (2018) showed that emotional competencies and emotional sensitivity are crucial for leadership effectiveness.

Mandell and Pherwani (2003) found that EI positively correlates with transformational leadership, reinforcing the critical role of EI in fostering effective, adaptive leadership, with notable differences in EI levels between male and female leaders. Singh et al. (2021) reached similar conclusions in a Bhutanese financial institution, noting that EI significantly influences both transformational and transactional leadership effectiveness. Their findings suggest that EI fully mediates the impact of transformational leadership and partially mediates transactional leadership outcomes (Singh et al., 2021). Baba et al. (2019) further confirmed the connection between EI and transformational leadership perceptions in academic settings, underscoring the universal relevance of EI across different sectors. Ugoani et al. (2015) support these findings when exploring the relationship between EI and transformational leadership and resulting in a strong positive correlation, concluding that EI is essential for leaders to build strong relationships and effectively navigate conflicts.

While the studies presented provide robust evidence supporting the relationship between EI and positive leadership styles, certain gaps remain (Kerr et al., 2006; Lone and Lone, 2018). Notably, most research emphasizes leadership effectiveness or transformational leadership rather than explicitly applying Goleman's resonant leadership framework (Baba et al., 2019; Kerr et al., 2006; Lone and Lone, 2018; Mandell and Pherwani, 2003; Singh et al., 2021). Even though transformational leadership and resonant leadership are both associated with leadership effectiveness, this gap leaves room for further exploration into how the emotional resonant leadership styles stated by Goleman impact organizational outcomes (Goleman, 2019). Furthermore, while the overall trend indicates a positive relationship between EI and leadership, it is important to acknowledge potential limitations. For instance, research often relies on self-reported

data, introducing bias (Baba et al., 2019; Bauhoff, 2011; Kerr et al., 2006; Lone and Lone, 2018; Mandell and Pherwani, 2003; Singh et al., 2021). Critically examining these nuances will not only enrich the understanding of EI's role in leadership but also highlight areas for future research and practical application.

Recognizing these gaps and limitations highlights the need for further investigation, which this study aims to address. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: "Emotional Intelligence in leaders has a positive influence on resonant Leadership Styles."

### 2.3. *Burnout*

Burnout, a phenomenon studied since the 1970s, has evolved into a critical organizational concern (Freudenberger, 1974).

The World Health Organization (2024) defines Burnout as:

"(...) a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by three dimensions: 1) feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; 2) increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and 3) reduced professional efficacy. Burn-out refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life."

In: World Health Organization (2024).

It is categorized as an occupational phenomenon in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) but is not classified as a medical condition (World Health Organization, 2019). Similarly, the American Psychological Association (2018b) describes burnout as a state characterized by physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion, often accompanied by reduced motivation, diminished performance, and the development of negative attitudes.

Freudenberger (1974) introduced the first model of burnout progression, characterizing it as exhaustion and disillusionment from unmet expectations, progressing through phases of chronic fatigue and emotional suppression (sensitive stage), followed by apathy, cynicism, and depression (insensitive stage). He suggests that burnout often stems from an excessive drive to help others (Freudenberger, 1974).

Maslach and Jackson (1981) further refined this understanding, identifying three core dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, and developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to measure them. Emotional exhaustion reflects feelings of being overextended and depleted by one's work. Depersonalization involves a detached, impersonal response toward clients, and reduced personal accomplishment denotes a diminished sense of competence and achievement. They emphasize that burnout exists on a continuum and is especially prevalent in social professions due to high emotional demands. Burnout's impact extends beyond professional performance, affecting personal well-being through symptoms like chronic fatigue, insomnia, and relational strain. Younger employees tend to be more vulnerable due to their limited coping experience, with susceptibility decreasing with age and growing job satisfaction. Regular feedback and support can mitigate emotional exhaustion but may lose effectiveness as workload increases.

Lauderdale (1982) and Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) expanded on burnout's phases and symptoms. Lauderdale (1982) identified stages of confusion, frustration, and desperation. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) described burnout as a persistent, negative work-related state affecting motivation, behaviour, and interpersonal dynamics. Their model includes symptoms at individual, interpersonal, and institutional levels across affective, cognitive, physical, behavioural, and motivational domains, with exhaustion as the core feature (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

Furthermore, Burisch (2006) outlined a seven-phase model progressing from early engagement to severe desperation, highlighting hyperactivity, cynicism, and psychosomatic symptoms. The first phase involves early warning signs, and in the second phase, individuals experience reduced engagement with clients, colleagues, and work, accompanied by increased demands and conflicts (Burisch, 2006). The third phase is marked by depression, guilt, and aggression, including lowered self-esteem and impatience (Burisch, 2006). The fourth phase features cognitive impairments, reduced motivation, and rigid thinking (Burisch, 2006). In the fifth phase, emotional, social, and mental flattening occurs (Burisch, 2006). The sixth phase presents psychosomatic symptoms like insomnia and heart palpitations (Burisch, 2006). Finally, the "desperation" phase involves severe negativity, including hopelessness and suicidal thoughts (Burisch,

2006). The Hamburg Burnout Inventory by Burisch (2017) further refines this with ten scales for a nuanced assessment.

In summary, burnout is a complex, progressive syndrome with significant overlap with depression. Models by Freudenberger (1974), Maslach and Jackson (1981), Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), and Burisch (2006) collectively illustrate its multifaceted nature, emphasizing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment as central elements. In this study, the definition of burnout proposed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) will serve as the foundational framework due to its prominence and widespread acceptance in the academic and organizational domains. Their conceptualization of burnout is particularly well-suited for investigating workplace-related stress.

### *2.3.1. Emotional Intelligence and Burnout*

The relationship between EI and burnout has been extensively studied, revealing EI's potential as a protective factor against burnout in high-stress environments. For instance, Vlachou et al. (2016) investigated the connection between EI and burnout among healthcare professionals using the MBI and the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form. Their findings revealed a negative correlation, indicating that higher EI may serve as a protective factor against burnout (Vlachou et al., 2016). Similarly, Görgens-Ekermans and Brand (2012) studied nurses in South Africa and found that high EI was linked to lower levels of both burnout and stress, identifying high workload and work-family conflicts as significant predictors of burnout. Notably, EI moderated the relationship between stressors and burnout, suggesting its role in mitigating burnout in high-stress environments (Görgens-Ekermans & Brand, 2012). In line with this, Bagatini et al. (2024) confirmed a strong negative correlation between EI and burnout in Brazilian anaesthesiologists, while Lee (2017) showed that emotional regulation, a facet of EI, was negatively correlated with burnout among public service workers but emotional self-awareness and job satisfaction were positively correlated. Platsidou (2010) confirmed the negative relationship between EI and burnout, while investigating Greek primary special education teachers and confirming a negative relationship between EI and burnout. Further evidence comes from Szczygiel and Mikolajczak (2018), who explored the interplay between EI, negative emotions, and burnout among female nurses. Their study showed a positive relationship between

negative emotions and burnout, with EI acting as a buffering mediator that diminished the impact of negative emotions on burnout (Szczygiel & Mikolajczak, 2018). Finally, Sanchez-Gomez and Bresó (2020) found a positive correlation between EI and work performance, a negative correlation between EI and burnout, and highlighted burnout as a mediator in the relationship between EI and work performance, when investigating Spanish professionals. This reinforces the protective role of EI against burnout.

Despite these findings, most research on the relationship between EI and burnout has focused on the same individual, examining how a person's own EI influences their burnout levels (Bagatini et al., 2024; Görgens-Ekermans & Brand, 2012; Lee, 2017; Platsidou, 2010; Sanchez-Gomez and Bresó, 2020; Szczygiel & Mikolajczak, 2018; Vlachou et al., 2016). This leaves a critical gap in understanding the interpersonal dynamics of EI, particularly in leadership contexts. In this study, we address this gap by investigating the relationship between the EI of leaders and burnout experienced by their subordinates. By shifting the focus to the leader-subordinate relationship, this research aims to explore if a leader's EI acts as a protective factor, influencing not only their well-being but also that of their team members.

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions offers valuable insights for understanding how EI can influence burnout (Fredrickson, 2001). This theory proposes that positive emotions, (such as joy, interest, contentment, and love), broaden an individual's momentary thought-action repertoire, encouraging behaviours like exploration, integration, and connection (Fredrickson, 2001). These actions help build enduring personal resources, including physical, intellectual, social, and psychological assets, which individuals can rely on to navigate challenges and enhance well-being (Fredrickson, 2001). In contrast, negative emotions tend to narrow attention, triggering specific responses like fight or flight (Fredrickson, 2001). Building on this, several studies have demonstrated the applicability of the broaden-and-build theory in organizational settings. For instance, Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) highlighted how positive emotions foster resilience, enabling individuals to recover from stress more effectively, a key factor in mitigating burnout. Similarly, Cohn et al. (2009) emphasized that sustained positive emotions are linked to psychological resilience, which may protect against the cumulative effects of stress in the workplace. These findings suggest that individuals with high EI,

who are more adept at generating and maintaining positive emotions, may cultivate resilience against stress and, ultimately, reduce the risk of burnout.

Against such theoretical background and considering the tenets of the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), it is reasonable to hypothesize that EI may serve as a critical factor in reducing burnout, particularly among leaders who can model and promote EI in the workplace. Therefore, the second hypothesis of this study is proposed as follows:

H2: “Emotional intelligence in leaders has a negative influence on Employee Burnout”.

### *2.3.2. Emotional Leadership and Burnout*

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping workplace dynamics and employee well-being (Goleman, 2019). The connection between leadership styles and burnout has been widely studied, highlighting the significant influence leaders have on mitigating or exacerbating stress among employees. This section explores leadership styles and its employee outcomes, emphasizing their role in fostering positive work environments and supporting employee well-being.

Hassan and Qureshi (2019) identified that resonant leadership, driven by EI, positively impacts employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment, with job satisfaction partially mediating this relationship and continuance commitment being the most strongly predicted component. Similarly, Gaan and Shin (2022) found that resonant leadership positively influences work performance through the mediating role of psychological capital, with stronger effects observed when leaders exhibited androgynous identity traits, when investigating 104 project leaders and 527 team members of nine Indian IT companies. Bawafaa et al. (2015) revealed a positive relationship between resonant leadership and job satisfaction as well, and a mediating effect of empowering environments.

On the contrary, Igu et al. (2023) investigated the impact of cognitive-behavioural coaching on leadership self-efficacy and burnout and found that coaching significantly enhanced leadership self-efficacy and reduced burnout, with improvements lasting for at least three months. This reinforces the view that leadership efficacy plays a key role in mitigating burnout, aligning with the broader theme that effective leadership can buffer

against burnout (Igu et al., 2023). Supporting this, Zopiatis and Constanti (2010) examined the relationship between transformational leadership and burnout among hospitality managers in Cyprus and revealed that transformational leadership correlates positively with personal accomplishment and negatively with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, suggesting a protective effect against burnout. Conversely, passive/avoidance leadership was associated with higher burnout, suggesting that more effective leadership styles can reduce burnout levels (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). Further studies confirm the negative relationship between transformational leadership and burnout. For instance, Tian and Guo (2022) found a significant negative correlation between transformational leadership and burnout among secondary school teachers, with EI acting as a moderator in strengthening this relationship. Similarly, Green et al. (2011) found that transformational leadership was linked to lower emotional exhaustion in community mental health providers, reinforcing the idea that inspirational leadership can reduce burnout. Salem (2015) supported this as well by showing a negative association between transformational leadership, job stress, and burnout in a study of healthcare workers. Further, Green et al. (2014) demonstrated that a positive organizational climate, coupled with transformational leadership, significantly mitigated burnout among public-sector child and adolescent mental health providers, with wraparound providers experiencing less depersonalization than case managers. The notion of transformational leadership as a buffer against burnout is further substantiated by Hildenbrand et al. (2018), who found in a study of German employees in a manufacturing company that transformational leadership acts as a protective factor against burnout.

The leadership style does not only impact burnout of leaders themselves but also influences burnout experienced by their followers. Diebig et al. (2017) found that strained leaders were less likely to exhibit transformational leadership, which, in turn, reduced burnout risk among followers. Transformational leadership mediated the relationship between leader strain and follower burnout suggesting that leader well-being is critical to fostering a positive work environment and preventing burnout at multiple levels (Diebig et al., 2017). Additionally, Xu and Farris (2022) highlighted the significance of relationship-building between supervisors and employees in reducing burnout, suggesting that leadership is not just about managing tasks but fostering meaningful interpersonal connections.



While the relationship between leadership styles and burnout is well-supported, key gaps remain in the literature. Most research focusses on transformational leadership without exploring emotional and resonant leadership (Green et al., 2011; Salem 2015; Tian and Guo 2022; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). Furthermore, most literature focusses on the relationship between leadership and burnout in managers than between manager and employees (Green et al., 2011; Salem 2015; Tian and Guo 2022; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). Therefore, leadership styles are often assessed through self-reports, which may introduce bias or fail to capture their practical manifestations (Green et al., 2011; Salem 2015; Tian and Guo 2022; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). Addressing these gaps could offer deeper insights into how emotional leadership mitigates burnout and supports workplace well-being.

In summary, the evidence points to a consistent negative relationship between burnout and transformational, emotional, and resonant leadership, with those leadership styles promoting positive work environments helping to mitigate burnout, especially when leaders themselves are not experiencing burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981; Vlachou et al., 2016; Görgens-Ekermans & Brand, 2012; Szczygiel & Mikolajczak, 2018; Sanchez-Gomez & Bresó, 2020). These findings suggest that leadership styles characterized by empathy, inspiration, and emotional awareness can play a critical role in reducing burnout by fostering positive emotional experiences, as highlighted by the broaden-and-build theory.

Thus, the third hypothesis of this study is proposed as follows:

H3: “Resonant Leadership has a negative influence on Employee Burnout.”

Finally, building on these findings, the fourth and fifth hypotheses assert that:

H4: “Resonant Leadership mediates the effect between Emotional Intelligence and Burnout”

H5: “There will be differences in Employee Burnout between groups who have higher resonant leaders and groups who have higher dissonant leaders.”

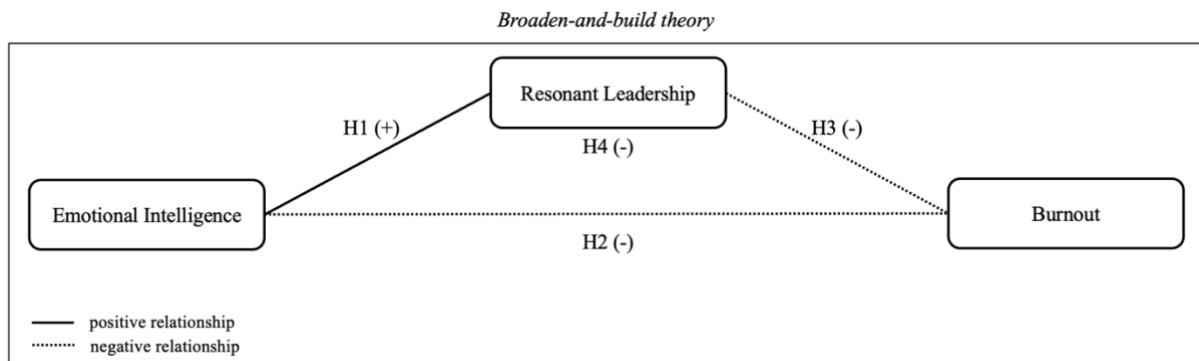


FIGURE 1 - Research Model

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Measures

The survey consisted of two sections: demographic information and standardized measures from the literature designed to address the research model. The survey began with an introduction outlining objectives, instructions, and data protection measures to ensure anonymity and ethical compliance. Participants provided informed consent before proceeding. Then, demographic details were collected.

Emotional intelligence was assessed using the peer-evaluation version of the WLEIS, which includes 16 items across four dimensions: self-emotion appraisal, others-emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion (Libbrecht et al., 2010). The scale measures managers' abilities to perceive, manage, and utilize emotions effectively, aligning with cognitive models of EI (Davies et al., 1998). Example items include “My manager has a good understanding of his/her/their own emotions” (self-emotion appraisal) and “My manager is quite capable of controlling his/her/their own emotions” (regulation of emotion) (Libbrecht et al., 2010). Responses were captured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Totally disagree, 5 = Totally agree) (Libbrecht et al., 2010). Three items (EI-UOE\_9, EI-UOE\_10, EI-UOE\_11) were eliminated due to low outer loadings (<0.5) (Hair et al., 2022). Cronbach's alpha values for the scale is 0.929, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Resonant leadership was measured using the Resonant Leadership Scale (adapted from Bawafa, 2014; Cummings et al., 2010; Ferreira, 2020), consisting of 21 items

aligned with Goleman’s model of emotional leadership. The scale assesses leadership behaviours across four styles: visionary, coaching, affiliative, and democratic (Ferreira, 2020). Example items include “My leader has a clear vision and picture of what the future of our group looks like” (visionary) and “My leader acknowledges the feelings and views of all group members” (affiliative) (Ferreira, 2020). Responses were captured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree) (Ferreira, 2020). Cronbach’s alpha for the scale is 0.953, demonstrating high reliability.

Burnout was assessed using the MBI (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). This version includes 22 items across three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment, as the involvement dimension was excluded beforehand due to its lower reliability (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Emotional exhaustion measures emotional depletion, depersonalization reflects impersonal attitudes towards coworkers, and personal accomplishment gauges feelings of work competence (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Example items include “I feel emotionally drained from my work” (emotional exhaustion) and “I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job” (personal accomplishment) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale (1 = never to 5 = always) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Eleven items (B-PA\_10, B-PA\_11, B-PA\_12, B-PA\_14, B-PA\_15, B-PA\_16, B-PA\_17, B-D\_18, B-D\_19, B-D\_21, B-D\_22) were eliminated due to low outer loadings ( $<0.5$ ) (Hair et al., 2022). The cleaned scale has demonstrated strong reliability, with Cronbach’s alpha of 0.903 across dimensions (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The MBI is widely regarded as the gold standard for burnout measurement, with high validity in predicting outcomes like stress and self-efficacy (Burisch, 2007; Lee & Ashforth, 1990).

The final section allowed participants to voluntarily provide their email address to receive a summary of the research findings, but participants could complete the survey without it. The survey concluded with a thank-you message, acknowledging their time and contributions and confirming successful submission of responses.

TABLE 4: OUTER LOADINGS

Items	Burnout	Emotional Intelligence	Resonant Leadership
B-D_20	0.659		
B-EE_1	0.799		
B-EE_2	0.706		

B-EE_3	0.797	
B-EE_4	0.609	
B-EE_5	0.799	
B-EE_6	0.802	
B-EE_7	0.662	
B-EE_8	0.582	
B-EE_9	0.828	
B-PA_13	0.563	
EI-OEA_5	0.688	
EI-OEA_6	0.768	
EI-OEA_7	0.786	
EI-OEA_8	0.835	
EI-ROE_13	0.742	
EI-ROE_14	0.771	
EI-ROE_15	0.626	
EI-ROE_16	0.821	
EI-SEA_1	0.779	
EI-SEA_2	0.801	
EI-SEA_3	0.763	
EI-SEA_4	0.642	
EI-UOE_12	0.537	
L-AFF_11		0.771
L-AFF_12		0.829
L-AFF_13		0.749
L-AFF_14		0.693
L-AFF_15		0.705
L-AFF_16		0.780
L-COA_10		0.596
L-COA_7		0.794
L-COA_8		0.714
L-COA_9		0.699
L-DEM_17		0.700
L-DEM_18		0.691
L-DEM_19		0.727
L-DEM_20		0.718
L-DEM_21		0.629
L-VIS_1		0.654
L-VIS_2		0.695

L-VIS_3	0.719
L-VIS_4	0.746
L-VIS_5	0.706
L-VIS_6	0.763

TABLE 5: CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Scale	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Burnout	0.903	0.920	0.919	0.513
Emotional Intelligence	0.929	0.935	0.940	0.548
Resonant Leadership	0.953	0.955	0.957	0.518

TABLE 6: DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

Scale	Burnout	Emotional Intelligence	Resonant Leadership
Burnout			
Emotional Intelligence	0.421		
Resonant Leadership	0.462	0.862	

Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) – Matrix

### 3.2. Research Design

This study adopts a positivist philosophy, as it focuses on testing hypotheses and examining quantifiable relationships between EI, resonant leadership, and burnout (Saunders et al., 2019). The research question is: “Does Emotional Intelligence in leaders influence emotional Leadership Styles and Employee Burnout?” and is investigated with five hypotheses.

A deductive approach is employed, as the study seeks to test established theories and validate specific hypotheses drawn from existing literature (Saunders et al., 2019). Utilizing a mono-method quantitative approach, data was collected through an online survey distributed via Qualtrics and shared across multiple social networks, using a snowball method (Saunders et al., 2019). The survey remained accessible from November 28, 2024, to December 15, 2024, for a duration of two and a half weeks. A non-probability sampling technique was used, leveraging the researcher’s personal and professional

network. Furthermore, the study follows a cross-sectional design, capturing participant perceptions at a single point in time. Validated instruments were used for the measurement, including the WLEIS to assess EI, the Resonant Leadership Scale for leadership styles, and the MBI for burnout levels. All scales used five-point Likert items, ensuring consistency across measures. The data was analyzed using a combination of statistical methods, namely SEM with SmartPLS for hypothesis testing (H1 to H4), and a t-test in R to explore group differences in burnout levels (H5). Ethical considerations were carefully addressed, with informed consent obtained from all participants and data anonymized to ensure confidentiality.

For the analysis, first, an Excel file was extracted from Qualtrics to clean the data and imported to SmartPLS. To clean the data, incomplete answers or having answered more than 95% items of one scale with the same value were excluded (Saunders et al., 2019). After the reassessment, reverse-coded items are recoded. Demographic statistics were analyzed first. Then, the collected data was analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach, a statistical technique that models theoretical relationships between variables using regression equations (Cheah et al., 2023). This method is particularly suitable for deductive research with smaller sample sizes, when a lack of normality is given, and with exploratory objectives, as it accommodates complex models while maintaining robust analytical standards (Hair et al., 2022).

The first analysis was conducted using the SmartPLS PLS-SEM algorithm to validate initial model assumptions and ensure the quality of the research model through reflective measurement criteria. After excluding all 14 items with outer loadings lower than 0.5, high convergent validity was achieved for all constructs, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70, composite reliability (CR) values above 0.70, and average variance extracted (AVE) scores exceeding 0.5 (Hair et al., 2022). Items measuring EI displayed loadings ranging from 0.537 to 0.835. Items assessing resonant leadership showed loadings ranging from 0.596 to 0.829. Similarly, items evaluating burnout exhibited loadings ranging from 0.563 to 0.828. Table 4 (see appendix) presents the outer model loadings for all included items, confirming their contribution to their respective constructs. The model's discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), with values ranging between 0.421 and 0.862, all below the recommended cut-off of 0.90 for conceptually distinct measures (Hair et al., 2022).

Following the evaluation of the research model's quality, a PLS analysis was performed using the bootstrapping algorithm in SmartPLS software, running a 5000 subsamples comparison, to test the first four research hypotheses and estimate the significance of path coefficients (Hair et al., 2022). To test the fourth hypothesis for mediation effects, indirect effects during the bootstrapping procedure are tested. The predictive accuracy of the model was assessed through coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ ), interpreted as weak ( $<0.25$ ), moderate ( $0.50$ ), or substantial ( $>0.75$ ), depending on the strength of the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables, but should be above  $0.30$ , which represents the proportion of variance in the exogenous variables that is explained by the endogenous variables (Hair et al., 2022).

To test the fifth hypothesis and compare burnout among groups with dissonant and resonant leaders, a t-test was conducted with R.

### 3.3. Sample

The sample was selected using non-probability sampling, primarily through the researcher's social network, with a focus on German workers (Saunders et al., 2019). The target population for this study consists of employees currently working under a manager. If participants do not have a manager now, they are instructed to reflect on their most recent managerial experience. A total of 245 individuals participated in the survey. Out of these, 183 participants fully completed the survey, while 62 provided incomplete responses. Following data cleaning, 14 further responses were excluded due to having answered more than 95% items of one scale with the same value. Consequently, the final analyzed sample consists of 169 valid responses. The demographic data is displayed in Table 2.

TABLE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE SAMPLE

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	107	63
	Male	62	37
	Non-binary	0	0
	Prefer not to disclose	0	0
Age (years)	18-24	54	32
	25-30	53	31
	31-36	15	9
	37-42	5	3
	43-48	7	4
	49-54	7	4
	55-61	17	10
	62+	11	7

Primary Occupation	Employed	102	60
	Student	38	22
	Other (e.g. self-employment or freelance work)	5	3
	None	24	14
Work Experience (years)	< 1	14	8
	1-3	55	33
	4-6	37	22
	7-10	14	8
	11-15	9	5
	16-20	4	2
	More than 20 years	36	21

#### 4. RESULTS

##### *4.1. Measurement Model*

To ensure the quality of the measurement model, reliability and validity were assessed. Cronbach's alpha and CR values for all constructs were above the recommended threshold of 0.70. AVE values were above 0.50. For the HTMT ratio, all values are below the recommended cutoff of 0.90. The final outer loadings for the measurement model ranged from 0.537 to 0.835. The values are presented in Appendix A.

##### *4.2. Structural Model*

The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, t-values, and p-values derived from bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples. Results show that EI in leaders has a path coefficient of 0.820, a t-value of 35.791, and a p-value of 0.000 (H1). The relationship between EI and employee burnout was indicated by a path coefficient of -0.128, a t-value of 1.022, and a p-value of 0.307 (H2). Resonant leadership and employee burnout show a path coefficient of -0.347, a t-value of 2.792, and a p-value of 0.005 (H3). Additionally, the mediation analysis of leadership on EI and burnout revealed an indirect path coefficient of -0.285, a t-value of 2.717, and a p-value of 0.007 (H4). The results of the structural model are displayed in table 3.

The  $R^2$  values for the endogenous variables indicate a moderate effect of EI on resonant leadership ( $R^2 = 0.673$ ) and a weak effect on burnout ( $R^2 = 0.210$ ) (Hair et al., 2022). Predictive relevance, assessed using the PLSpredict module, showed that the majority of prediction summary results were above zero, supporting the sufficiency of the model's predictive capability (Hair et al., 2022).



When performing the t-test, participants were divided into two groups based on their leaders' resonant leadership scores (H5). A cutoff point was established using the average resonant leadership score across all respondents. Group 1 included participants whose leaders scored below average (dissonant leaders), while Group 2 included participants whose leaders scored above average (resonant leaders). The cutoffs took place considering central tendencies measures (Iacobucci et al., 2014). The t-test compared the mean burnout levels between the two groups. While the mean of burnout for Group 1 (dissonant leaders) is 2.573, the mean of burnout for Group 2 (resonant leaders) is 2.213. The t-test revealed  $t(df) = 4.476$  and  $p = 0.000$ .

## 5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter interprets the results of the study considering the research hypotheses and existing literature, highlighting theoretical and practical implications

When examining the connection between EI and resonant leadership styles (H1), the findings show a strong and significant positive relationship ( $\beta = 0.820$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), supporting the hypothesis. This result aligns with the works of Boyatzis et al. (2005) and Goleman (2019), who highlight EI as critical for fostering empathy, building relationships, and driving collaborative leadership. Moreover, the strong effect size further substantiates the premise that EI is a fundamental enabler of resonant leadership, emphasizing the transformative power of emotionally intelligent behaviours in leadership development programs (Goleman, 2019). Recent studies also point to the role of EI in enhancing leaders' capacity to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics and adapt to rapidly changing organizational environments (Juniarti et al., 2024; Lone and Lone, 2018; Ugoani et al., 2015).

Regarding the relationship between EI and burnout (H2), the findings revealed no significant negative relationship ( $\beta = -0.128$ ,  $p = 0.307$ ), contrary to the hypothesis and similar prior studies (Bagatini et al., 2024; Görgens-Ekermans & Brand, 2012; Lee, 2017; Platsidou, 2010; Sanchez-Gomez and Bresó, 2020; Szczygiel & Mikolajczak, 2018; Vlachou et al., 2016). This inconsistency might be attributed to contextual factors, such as the prevailing organizational culture, varying workload intensities, and employees' personal resilience (Cici & Özdemir, 2024; Kok et al., 2024; Rushton et al., 2015). For example, organizations with high-pressure environments or limited support structures

could neutralize the protective effects of EI on burnout (Kok et al., 2024). Alternatively, EI's influence might be more nuanced, requiring mediators such as job satisfaction or coping strategies to exert its full impact on burnout (Cao et al., 2022; Schoepssa et al., 2021). Furthermore, the results might differ if the relationship between the two variables were tested within the same individual, rather than between a manager and an employee, as is commonly done in most literature (Bagatini et al., 2024; Görgens-Ekermans & Brand, 2012; Lee, 2017; Platsidou, 2010; Sanchez-Gomez and Bresó, 2020; Szczygiel & Mikolajczak, 2018; Vlachou et al., 2016).

When analysing the association between resonant leadership and burnout (H3), the study revealed a significant moderate negative relationship ( $\beta = -0.347$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ), supporting the hypothesis. This aligns with prior findings from Bawafaa et al. (2015), Diebig et al. (2017), and Hassan and Qureshi (2019), which suggest that resonant leaders foster a supportive and stress-reducing work environment. Resonant leadership leverages emotional contagion theories, where leaders' positive emotional states can permeate teams, buffering employees from stress and exhaustion (Fredrickson, 2001; Goleman, 2019). Additionally, recent research highlights the role of resonant leaders in promoting psychological safety, which enhances job satisfaction and reduces burnout risks (Hassan and Qureshi, 2019; Ralston, 2016). This finding underscores the need for leadership development initiatives to prioritize emotional awareness and empathetic communication to mitigate burnout effectively.

The results also support H4, proving that resonant leadership mediates the relationship between EI and burnout with a moderate effect ( $\beta = -0.285$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ). This underscores that EI's impact on burnout operates primarily through resonant leadership styles rather than directly, noting that EI has a significant positive relationship with resonant leadership (H1) but no significant negative relationship with burnout (H2). Leaders with high EI are better equipped to adopt resonant leadership behaviours, such as inspiring employees, addressing emotional needs, and fostering a sense of belonging, which, in turn, reduces burnout (Gaan and Shin, 2022). These findings echo the conclusions of Hassan and Qureshi (2019) and extend them by demonstrating the indirect pathways through which leadership styles influence employee well-being. Future research could explore additional mediators, such as team cohesion or job autonomy, to deepen the understanding of these dynamics.

Finally, the comparison of resonant and dissonant leaders revealed significant differences in burnout levels among employees ( $t(df) = 4.476, p = 0.000$ ), supporting H5. Employees under resonant leaders reported significantly lower burnout, which aligns with prior research highlighting the detrimental effects of dissonant leadership styles (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). Dissonant leaders, who often exhibit emotionally detached or authoritarian behaviours, can exacerbate stress and decrease job satisfaction, leading to higher burnout levels (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). Conversely, resonant leaders build trust, inspire collaboration, and create emotionally safe environments, which serve as buffers against stress and exhaustion (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). These findings reinforce the importance of cultivating resonant leadership behaviours in managers to promote employee well-being and sustainable organizational performance.

TABLE 3: RESULTS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL AND RELATED HYPOTHESES

Relationship (assumed direction)	Hypothesis	Beta	T-test	P-value	Decision
EI and resonant leadership (positive)	H1	0.820	35.791	0.000	supported
EI and employee burnout (negative)	H2	-0.128	1.022	0.307	not supported
Resonant leadership and employee burnout (negative)	H3	-0.347	2.792	0.005	supported
Mediation of resonant leadership on EI and employee burnout (negative)	H4	-0.285	2.717	0.007	supported

The answer to the research question, “Does Emotional Intelligence in leaders influence emotional Leadership Styles and Employee Burnout?”, is yes, EI does influence the application of emotional leadership styles positively and has a negative relationship with employee burnout when it is mediated by emotional leadership styles.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

### *6.1. Theoretical Contributions*

This study contributes to the academic discourse by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between EI, resonant leadership, and employee burnout. It reinforces the relevance of Goleman's (2019) model, highlighting EI as a foundational element for fostering resonant leadership styles. By integrating burnout into the construct and demonstrating the mediating role of resonant leadership between EI and burnout, the study extends the theory proposed by Goleman et al. (2001), emphasizing leadership style as a key mechanism through which EI impacts employee well-being. Moreover, the findings align with Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, which posits that leaders with high EI foster positive emotional experiences that build enduring personal resources, thereby mitigating employee burnout. Additionally, the results validate the application of the resonant leadership construct in organizational contexts, offering a robust framework for further academic investigation into its effectiveness in reducing burnout and enhancing workplace engagement.

### *6.2. Practical Contributions*

This study provides actionable insights for organizations seeking to enhance employee well-being and reduce burnout. These contributions outline specific, evidence-based recommendations that organizations can implement to foster a supportive workplace culture. What specific actions can organizations take to reduce burnout based on the findings of this study?

Organizations should prioritize the recruitment of emotionally intelligent leaders, as EI is a foundational skill for fostering resonant leadership, which, in turn, reduces employee burnout. To achieve this, companies can integrate EI assessments into the hiring process through structured behavioural interviews, validated psychometric tests, or situational judgment exercises that evaluate candidates' emotional and social competencies. For example, tools like the WLEIS or the MSCEIT have been widely used in organizational settings (Libbrecht et al., 2010; Mayer et al., 2002). Furthermore, recruitment processes could include real-world simulations, such as role-playing exercises where candidates demonstrate conflict resolution, empathy, or team-building skills, to assess their capacity for resonant leadership. Additionally, the leadership style

may be assessed as well, using a self-evaluation questionnaire, like the Resonant Leadership Scale (Bawafa, 2014; Cummings et al., 2010; Ferreira, 2020). Those psychometric tests may be integrated into the recruitment process in online assessments before doing the first interview. Examples for structured behavioural interview questions that go beyond measuring the variables and offer valuable insights into the applicant's typical behaviour are "Can you describe a situation where you resolved a conflict within a team? How did you handle it?" or "Tell me about a time when you had to navigate a highly emotional workplace situation. What was your approach?".

Furthermore, organizations must invest in comprehensive leadership development programs to cultivate EI and resonant leadership skills (Igu et al., 2023). These programs should go beyond traditional management training by focusing on emotional literacy, empathy, active listening, and relationship management. Starting with theoretical sessions on foundational EI concepts, relationship management, and leadership styles and continuing with practical sessions with interactive workshops, role-playing scenarios, and experiential learning modules can help leaders internalize these competencies (Goleman, 2019). For instance, programs based on Goleman's EI framework or Boyatzis's Intentional Change Theory have been shown to improve leadership effectiveness and emotional competence (Boyatzis, 2019; Goleman, 2019). Regular coaching and mentorship from experienced resonant leaders can also enhance participants' ability to apply these skills in real-world settings. Incorporating digital tools, such as mobile apps or online platforms, that offer EI exercises, feedback, and progress tracking could make training more accessible and measurable. Organizations might also consider conducting post-training evaluations to assess the behavioural changes in leaders and their impact on team dynamics and employee well-being.

To reinforce resonant leadership behaviours, organizations should embed leadership KPIs into performance appraisal systems. For example, leaders can be evaluated on financial, customer, operational, employee, environmental and social responsibility, project, and marketing KPIs, but especially focussing on employee-related KPIs in this context (Marr, 2012). Among others, employee-related KPIs include employee engagement, team retention rates, and productivity (Marr, 2012). A specific KPI example may be the percentage improvement in team retention or engagement scores over a year. Furthermore, feedback from 360-degree evaluations that specifically measure resonant

behaviours, such as active listening, empathy, and collaboration may be collected (Goleman, 2019). Clear and measurable criteria will encourage leaders to prioritize these behaviours in their day-to-day interactions. Additionally, companies can implement regular anonymous employee surveys to monitor team well-being and burnout levels, linking these metrics to leadership performance. By recognizing leaders whose teams consistently report high engagement and low burnout, organizations can align leadership behaviours with organizational goals and values.

Creating a reward system for resonant leaders is another critical step (Armstrong, 2010; Ghorbani et al., 2013). Leaders who demonstrate consistent and effective resonant behaviours should be recognized through bonuses, promotions, or flexible working conditions (Meirinhos et al., 2023). Bonuses may be linked to specific achievements, e.g., increasing team retention by 20%. Recognition programs, such as “Leader of the Month” or “Empathy in Leadership Awards,” can further reinforce these behaviours across the organization. Public recognition during company events or leadership retreats can also motivate other leaders to adopt similar approaches.

While leadership development is vital, systemic organizational factors that contribute to burnout, such as excessive workloads, unrealistic performance expectations, and inadequate resources, must also be addressed (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Organizations should conduct regular workload analyses to ensure tasks are equitably distributed and establish clear, achievable performance goals for employees. Using kanban boards in project management softwares like Asana helps to monitor workload and may support the management for conducting a workload impact assessment (Asana, Inc., 2024). Implementing flexible work arrangements, offering robust mental health support programs, and creating dedicated spaces for employee feedback can help alleviate burnout (Shifrin & Michel, 2021). A mental health initiative could be an anonymous mental health survey for assessing the status quo, followed by offering mental health first aid training, or therapy access as part of employee benefits, if necessary. Moreover, leadership development initiatives must be integrated into a broader organizational strategy that prioritizes psychological safety and employee well-being. For example, fostering cross-departmental collaboration and creating opportunities for team bonding can strengthen the emotional connections between leaders and employees. Organizations

may control specific metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs, in example a reduction in sick days.

Finally, organizations must adopt a holistic approach that combines all named aspects by starting with EI and leadership assessment during recruitment processes, conducting leadership training workshops quarterly, including KPIs for leadership behaviours into performance reviews, periodically collecting employee feedback on leadership and well-being, implementing rewards as incentive for performance improvement, and monitoring workload impact. The strategies may be tested in pilot programs on smaller teams before scaling. By embedding EI and resonant leadership into their culture, organizations can not only reduce burnout but also improve employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall productivity. These efforts will result in a workplace environment where leaders and employees alike can thrive, ultimately driving long-term success.

Beyond organizational improvements that address structural, cultural, and human resource challenges, the follow-up question is: What specific actions can managers take to reduce burnout based on the findings of this study?

Managers should actively develop strong, empathetic relationships with their team members (Cummings et al., 2010; Goleman, 2019; Lone and Lone, 2018). Regular one-on-one meetings provide an opportunity to listen to employees' concerns, offer guidance, and build trust. By using active listening techniques, such as paraphrasing and summarizing employees' statements, managers can demonstrate that they value their team's perspectives (Cummings et al., 2010). They may use frameworks like the GROW model (goal, reality, options, way forward) during these conversations to help employees articulate challenges and explore solutions collaboratively (Brown & Grant, 2010; Whitmore, 2002).

Not only managers may be rewarded for outstanding leadership performance, but also team members should be recognized for outstanding work performance. Consistent recognition and positive reinforcement can bolster morale and reduce burnout by making employees feel valued for their efforts (Armstrong, 2010; Ghorbani et al., 2013). During weekly check-ins, managers should acknowledge accomplishments, such as completing a challenging project or supporting a colleague effectively, celebrating both individual and team achievements.

Referring to workload impact assessment, managers play a critical role in setting the tone for work-life balance within their teams. Encouraging employees to take regular breaks, use their vacation days, and avoid overworking can significantly reduce stress and prevent burnout. They should idealize their influence by modelling these behaviours themselves to reinforce their importance by establishing clear boundaries, such as no emails after working hours or designated “focus time” blocks where employees are not disturbed (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Jin, 2010). A “no-meeting Friday” policy could be introduced to allow employees uninterrupted time to focus on their tasks or decompress.

Moreover, managers should create opportunities for professional and personal growth, enabling employees to feel motivated and engaged in their roles (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Squires et al., 2010). Offering skill-building workshops, mentoring programs, or cross-departmental projects can help employees develop and find renewed purpose in their work. Therefore, they may collaborate with team members to identify their career goals and design development plans tailored to their aspirations.

To specifically prevent burnout, managers should regularly assess the well-being of their team and take proactive steps to address signs of stress or burnout. They may implement stress audits to evaluate workloads, deadlines, and resource availability. Tools like employee surveys, mood trackers, or informal check-ins can help identify issues early. If multiple team members report feeling overwhelmed, one may consider revising project timelines or hiring temporary support to alleviate pressure. Overall, managers must foster an environment where employees feel safe to express their thoughts, ask for help, and take calculated risks without fear of judgment or repercussions (Goleman, 2019). Psychological safety is essential for maintaining high team morale and preventing burnout. Managers should encourage open dialogue by holding regular team forums where employees can share feedback or suggestions anonymously.

To sum everything up, managers should model resonant leadership by demonstrating emotional intelligence in their interactions. This involves being self-aware, empathetic, and adaptable in responding to team dynamics (Goleman, 2019; Petrides and Furnham, 2001; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). By implementing these recommendations, managers can take meaningful steps to reduce burnout within their teams, fostering a resilient and



engaged workforce. These practical actions complement organizational strategies, ensuring a comprehensive approach to employee well-being.

### *6.3. Sustainable Development Goals*

This study contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being, and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth (*The 17 Goals*, n.d.). By highlighting the crucial role of emotionally intelligent and resonant leadership in reducing employee burnout, the research emphasizes the importance of fostering psychologically healthy work environments. Promoting employee well-being not only enhances individual health and job satisfaction (Goal 3), but also supports sustainable organizational performance, engagement, and productivity (Goal 8). Thus, the study underscores how investing in emotionally intelligent leadership can create healthier, more resilient, and more productive workplaces.

### *6.4. Summary*

This study examined how EI in leaders influences resonant leadership styles and employee burnout, with a focus on the mediating role of resonant leadership. The research aimed to contribute to the understanding of leadership's emotional dimensions and their impact on employee well-being.

The findings confirm that EI strongly predicts resonant leadership, which in turn significantly reduces employee burnout. While EI did not show a direct effect on burnout, its impact is mediated by resonant leadership. Additionally, employees under resonant leaders reported significantly lower burnout levels compared to those with dissonant leaders, emphasizing the importance of emotionally supportive leadership styles.

Future research could adopt longitudinal designs to explore causal relationships between these variables over time and expand the study to diverse cultural settings to enhance generalizability and cross-cultural understanding of leadership dynamics.

## 7. LIMITATIONS

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between EI, resonant leadership, and employee burnout, several limitations must be acknowledged. The study's cross-sectional design limits causal inferences, as it identifies correlations without

establishing the direction of effects. Future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to capture dynamic interactions over time.

Furthermore, the non-probabilistic sampling method affects generalizability, as participants from a personal social and professional network may introduce biases, such as over-representing those with strong opinions. A probabilistic sampling approach would enhance representativeness. The predominantly distribution among Germans restricts cultural applicability, as leadership and burnout perceptions vary by cultural context. Future studies should include diverse, international samples to explore cross-cultural differences.

Lastly, other factors like organizational culture, job demands, and personal resilience could also influence burnout (Cici & Özdemir, 2024; Kok et al., 2024; Rushton et al., 2015). Future research should examine these dimensions for a more comprehensive understanding.

By addressing these limitations, future research can build on the insights of this study to further enhance our understanding of the intricate relationships between EI, leadership, and employee well-being.

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## APPENDICES

## A. STRUCTURAL MODEL

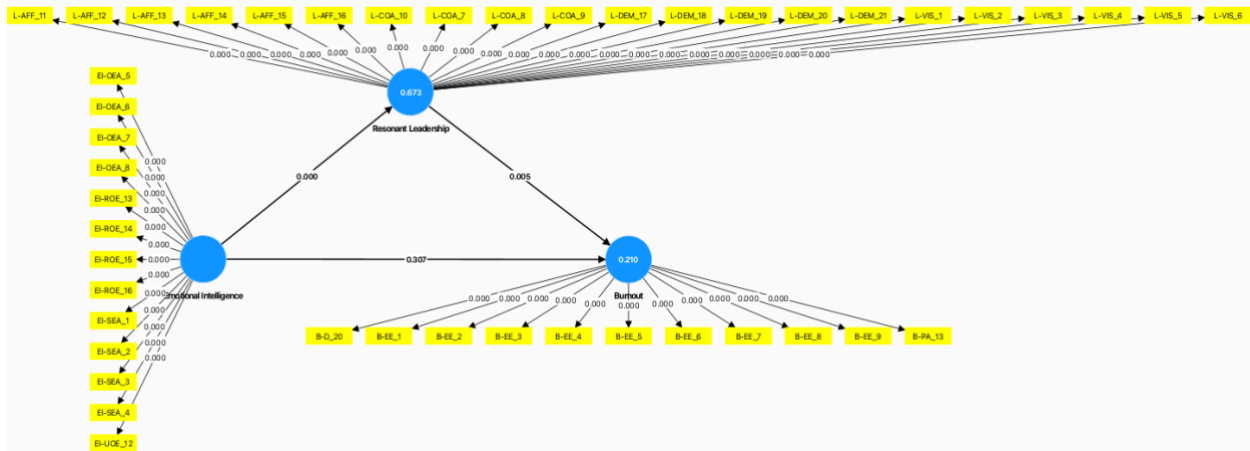


FIGURE 2: Structural Model

## B. QUESTIONNAIRE

## Introduction + Data

## Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Styles and experiencing Burnout

*A survey as part of the master thesis in Management at ISEG – Lisbon School of Economics & Management, University of Lisbon, Portugal.*

Dear participants,

Thank you for your interest in participating in my survey on the topic “Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Styles, and Employee Outcomes.”

This survey is required to finish my master’s thesis, exploring the role of emotional styles of leadership and their influence on employees.

*Participation Instructions*

The survey is entirely **anonymous**, and all collected data will be treated with strict confidentiality, used exclusively for research purposes.

Please answer the following questions based on your intuition. There are no right or wrong answers. If you find yourself unsure between two or more options, please select the one you feel most inclined towards.

*Estimated time to complete the survey: 8 minutes*

Thank you very much for your support!

Best regards,

Mara Cornelsen

*For any questions, feel free to contact me via [mara.cornelsen@aln.iseg.ulisboa.pt](mailto:mara.cornelsen@aln.iseg.ulisboa.pt). This project is supervised by Professor Tiago Emanuel Rodrigues Gonçalves.*

### **Data Protection Information**

Participation in this survey is **voluntary** and can be discontinued at any time without providing a reason. The data collected will be **pseudonymized**, meaning your identity will not be traceable. All data will be treated as **confidential** and used **exclusively for research purposes**. No third parties will have access to your data. The data processing for this survey is conducted in accordance with the data protection regulations of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The data will only be used for the purposes described on the cover page of the questionnaire.

You have the right to withdraw consent, access, rectify, or erase your data, and restrict or object to its processing in accordance with GDPR. For any inquiries or if you wish to exercise these rights, please contact [mara.cornelsen@aln.iseg.ulisboa.pt](mailto:mara.cornelsen@aln.iseg.ulisboa.pt).

By selecting "Yes," you agree to participate in the survey.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### **Personal Information**

Dear participants,

Before we begin, I would like to ask you for a few *details about yourself*.

#### **Which gender do you identify with?**

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say

#### **How old are you?**

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-30
- ☐ 31-36
- ☐ 37-42
- ☐ 43-48
- ☐ 49-54
- ☐ 55-61
- ☐ 62+

#### **Are you currently employed?**

- ☐ Yes



- How many hours do you work per week? \_\_\_\_\_ hours

☐ No

**What is your current main occupation?**

☐ Employed

☐ Student

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**How much work experience do you have?**

☐ Less than 1 year

☐ 1-3 years

☐ 4-6 years

☐ 7-10 years

☐ 11-15 years

☐ 16-20 years

☐ More than 20 years

**For how long do you work in your current job? (What is your seniority level?)**

☐ Less than 1 year

☐ 1-3 years

☐ 4-6 years

☐ 7-10 years

☐ 11-15 years

☐ More than 15 years

**For how long do you work under your current manager (or last, if you don't have one at the moment)?**

☐ Less than 1 year

☐ 1-3 years

☐ 4-6 years

☐ 7-10 years

☐ 11-15 years

☐ More than 15 years

**How do you rate your English language proficiency?**

☐ Native-level fluency (C2)

☐ Very good (C1)

☐ Good (B2)

☐ Moderate (B1)

- o Poor (A2)
- o Very poor (A1)

(Here is a more detailed definition of the language levels:

C2 = Near-native fluency (proficient language use)

C1 = Fluent to business-level (proficient language use)

B2 = Fluent (independent language use)

B1 = Good language skills (independent language use)

A2 = Intermediate/basic skills (elementary language use)

A1 = Beginner/basic skills (elementary language use))

### **Emotional Intelligence of your manager**

The following section presents several affirmations/sentences about leaders in organizations. How do they reflect your work reality with your current manager (or your last, if you don't have one at the moment)?

(Consider the following scale where 1 = Totally disagree and 5 = Totally agree)

My Manager ...

	1 = Totally disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither agree or disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Totally agree
Has a good sense of why he/she/they have certain feelings most of the time					
Has good understanding of his/her/their own emotions					
Really understands what he/she/they feel/s					
Always knows whether or not he/she/they is/are happy					
Always knows his/her/their friends' emotions from their behavior					
Is a good observer of others' emotions					
Is sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others					

Has good understanding of the emotions of people around him/her/them					
Always sets goals for himself/herself/themselves and then tries his/her best to achieve them					
Always tells himself/herself/themselves he/she/they is/are a competent person					
Is a self-motivated person					
He/she/they would always encourage himself/herself/themselves to try his/her/their best					
Is able to control his/her/their temper and handle difficulties rationally					
Is quite capable of controlling his/her/their own emotions					
He/she /they can always calm down quickly when he/she/they is/are very angry					
Has good control of his/her/their own emotions					

### Leadership

The following section presents several affirmations/sentences about leaders in organizations. How do they reflect your work reality with your current manager (or your last, if you don't have one at the moment)?

(Consider the following scale where 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree)

	1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither agree or disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly agree
My leader has a clear vision and picture of what the future of our group looks like					

My leader communicates his/her/their vision to the group					
My leader's actions align with his/her/their vision for the group					
My leader is open to discuss and willing to provide information to the group regarding his/her/their vision					
My leader helps me understand how I contribute to achieving the groups' shared vision					
My leader inspired me to work toward reaching our groups future goals					
My leader works together with others to identify and investigate their goals and values					
My leader helps individuals to expand their range of skills and abilities					
My leader gives timely and constructive feedback					
My leader gives challenging tasks while providing the necessary resources to successfully complete it					
My leader motivates cooperation within the group					

My leader creates a work environment that I want to be part of					
My leader acknowledges the feelings and views of all group members					
My leader places high value on building relationships with followers and peers					
My leader works towards creating and maintaining peace and harmony within our group					
My leader strengthens connections between individuals and groups					
My leader encourages group members to share their opinions and perspectives					
My leader values all group members inputs and opinions					
My leader values the knowledge of the group					
My leader draws upon the knowledge of the group during decision making					
My leader knows how to build buy-in from key people					

**Burnout**

	1 = Never	2 = Rarely	3 = Sometimes	4 = Often	5 = Always
I feel emotionally drained from my work					
I feel used up at the end of the workday					
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job					
Working with people all day is really a strain for me					
I feel burned out from my work					
I feel frustrated by my job					
I feel I'm working too hard on my job					
Working with people directly puts too much stress on me					
I feel like I'm at the end of my rope					
I can easily understand how my coworkers feel about things					
I deal very effectively with the problems of my coworkers					
I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work					
I feel very energetic					

I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my coworkers					
I feel exhilarated after working closely with my coworkers					
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job					
In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly					
I feel I treat some coworkers as if they were impersonal 'objects'					
I've become more callous toward people since I took this job					
I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally					
I don't really care what happens to some coworkers					
I feel coworkers blame me for some of their problems					

### Final Section

If you are interested in a summary of the findings after this research, please enter your email here.  
Otherwise, continue to finish the survey.

\_\_\_\_\_

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Your response has been recorded.