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"The role of Emotional Intelligence in shaping Quality of Leadership and Relationship Management in Military Officers. The mediating role of Work Engagement, Trust and Motivation"

Athanasios K. Makaronis

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Athanasios Makaronis

In memory of my father…

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Abstract

One of the topics that have been most lengthily researched from ancient times until now is leadership. Over the last few decades an interest in a "new element", called emotional intelligence, has been put under the microscope of researchers and especially how emotional intelligence affects our lives, our behavior etc. Furthermore, scientists have been focused on the relationship between those two aspects and their connection with other factors.

The purpose of the present thesis is firstly to explore the impact of emotional intelligence in quality of leadership and secondly if work engagement, trust and motivation have a mediating role in a leader's action in the frame of a military environment. Following, we will study how these affect conflict management among military officers. The method used to measure all the above was quantitative research in different levels of officers' hierarchy (Supervisors, subordinates, deputy commanders etc) in order to have a general picture from as many levels of the organization as possible.

The main results of this study are that emotional intelligence positively affects both leadership styles which in turn affects the way an individual resolves a conflict. Work engagement, trust and motivation play an important role in the relationship between leadership and conflict management. The results of this study firstly aim to present the relationships between variables that have been little studied in the past and secondly to be a trigger for future studies in military leadership.

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1. Introduction

In the last few years, in the geopolitical complex of the Mediterranean, an intense mobility in the part of Western Balkans has been observed, which can potentially destabilize Europe, Mediterranean and the wider region in general (Mazis, 2017). It is therefore easy to conclude that possible security-defense issues may arise. Modern Armed Forces require personnel to be educated and equipped with a variety of increased abilities, being able to cope with such a multidimensional and demanding environment, especially in terms of geostrategic issues. Therefore, leadership in military domain is a skill of utmost importance, that is necessary to be highly developed (Wong et al, 2003).

Another concept whose research grew dramatically in the 1990s is emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995). Since then, a significant amount of research has taken place, bringing to light results that changed our perspective in psychosocial aspects such as the effects of emotional intelligence at home, schools, in workplace, even in groups and society (Barsade, 2002; Barsade et al., 2003; Ciarrochi et al., 2006; Elias et al., 1997; Izard, 2002; Matthews et al. 2007). However, in real life context, only a few studies have been conducted examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership (Koh & O'Higgins, 2018). According to Ireland and Hitt, (1999) effective leaders provide a competitive advantage in organizations. As a consequence, organizations invest in improving leaders' skills, based on the idea that it will help them increase their influence on their employees or subordinates, resulting in positive outcomes through motivation, trust and work engagement. (Athanasopoulou & Dospon, 2018; Gottfredson & Auguinis, 2017; Jiang et al., 2012; Van De Voorde et al., 2012).

Moving one step further, we will introduce and try to combine the previously mentioned concepts with conflict management, while searching the mediating role of motivation, trust and work engagement (Rahim, 1983; Schaufeli et al, 2002; Huff & Keley, 2003). According to Rahim (1983) there are five conflict management styles. In the present study, two of them will be under investigation: integrating (or collaborating) style and avoiding style (Rahim, 1983; Gross & Guerrero, 2000) as it is supposed to be met in a military environment.

By taking the preceding discussion into account, as well as the limited empirical studies concerning military leadership so far (Garcia Zea et al., 2020), we are going to study the relationship among the three basic variables mentioned above. After describing the literature about emotional intelligence, leadership and conflict management we will examine the correlation of them separately, in a sample becoming from military officers. To be more precise, first of all we will measure if age and gender is related with emotional intelligence and how emotional intelligence affects the two leadership styles. Secondly, by separating the two leadership styles we explore how they are connected with the conflict management styles, while work engagement, trust and motivation act as a mediator between them.

2. Literature review

2.1.Emotional Intelligence

2.1.1. Background

According to research, intelligence alone cannot explain neither our life achievements nor our professional accomplishments. Emotions play an important role in organizational and personal success. A distinction between academic and social intelligence has been mentioned by many researchers. (Neisser, 1976, p.5). Salopek (1998) states that intelligence quotient (IQ) tends to be static, while emotional intelligence can be learned. Furthermore, Thorndike (1920) categorized intelligence in the following dimensions: a) abstract intelligence, which refers to understanding ideas, b) social intelligence, which refers to understanding people and c) mechanical intelligence, which includes understanding concrete objects. Thorndike (1920) also mentioned that social intelligence is the ability to comprehend others' behavior and motives in order to use all that information successfully in social situations. Later, Gander (1983) extended the knowledge of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Salovey and Mayer (1993) refer to social intelligence as adjusting ourselves to social situations and using our social knowledge in order to act accordingly. Also, in the early 1990s, Salovey and Mayer (1990) thought up the term "emotional intelligence".

The one who however made the topic very popular was Daniel Goleman with his book "Emotional Intelligence" which was published in 1995.

Many researchers tried to correlate intelligence with emotions. One of the first theorists that attempted to specify social intelligence, known as emotional intelligence, today, was Thorndike, who explained it as the ability to understand others and act properly in relations among people (Goleman, 1995). Thorndike (1920) also investigated social intelligence as one component of intelligence measured by the IQ score, but in the end found that it is different from other forms of intelligence. Moreover, Marlowe (1986) stated that social intelligence is the ability to understand other people and their social interactions and use this knowledge to guide others towards satisfying outcomes. Other researchers agreed that social intelligence is important for academic and career achievements (Lord et al., 1986; Wentzel, 1991). Sternberg (1985) agreed with Thorndike's outcomes and declared that social intelligence is district from academic abilities and stands as an integral part of what makes people flourish in their life. Later, Sternberg (1996) stated that traditional IQ tests assess only the analytical aspect of intelligence. On the same page, Gardner (1983) argued that conventional IQ tests measure logical-mathematical, spatial and linguistic intelligences, while his theory supports the existence of seven forms of intelligences that distinguish people. An example of these is musical intelligence that refers to one's ability of discriminate melody, tone, pitch, rhythm, and other musical symbolisms. Another intelligence is spatial intelligence, defined as the ability to think of and accurately perceive the visual qualities of the world and its dimensions (Gardner & Hatch, 1989). Interpersonal intelligence refers to the ability to make distinctions among other individuals as well as the ability to interpret their motivations, moods and intentions. Intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to access and understand the components of one's inner self such as feelings and reactions. He also emphasized that intelligences of people are expected to develop as they mature psychologically (Gardner, 1983).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) initially described emotional intelligence as the ability to observe emotions and feelings of ourselves and others, to separate from them and to use this information to influence one's actions and thinking. They then discovered that emotional information is already included in a set of conceptually related mental processes (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Thus, a few years later they created a model of emotional intelligence which consists of four dimensions which

are a) appraising, perceiving and expressing emotions, b) using emotions to facilitate thought, c) understanding and reasoning with emotions and d) managing and regulating emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Mayer & Salovey, 1997a). Mayer and Salovey (1993, p.435) defined emotional intelligence "as involving a series of mental abilities that qualifies it as a form of intelligence". Due to emotional intelligence's requirement of processing emotions, they stated that it "may have better discriminant validity from general intelligence than social intelligence" (Mayer & Salovey 1993, p. 435). As a result, it differs from social intelligence and it can be a more valid measure as a certain type of intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1993).

Goleman (1995) promoted the idea that life success doesn't rely only on high IQ scores but also on being emotionally intelligent. He separated emotional intelligence into four dimensions: a) self – motivation, described as guiding emotions in order to reach a goal, stop one's impulses and suspend gratification, b) social deftness that refers to managing others' emotions, c) knowing and managing one's own emotions and finally d) empathy, which is described as the sensitivity to others' emotional state and worries. Earlier, Rogers (1951) thought about empathy as a precondition and a gift that will help others grow emotionally. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), empathy is the ability to understand and later re-experience others' feelings.

Later, Salopek (1998) mentions in his book "*Working with Emotional Intelligence"*, that Goleman transformed his findings through his empirical data into a formula, translated in skills, that can lead individuals to success at work. Goleman (1998b) categorized these skills in technical skills, competencies that demonstrate emotional quotient (EQ) and cognitive abilities. As Goleman mentions, emotional intelligence-based competencies such as influence, self-confidence, empathy, constant improvement, teamwork and the need to get results are more a function of different parts of the brain rather than merely a skill or a cognitive ability (Salopek, 1998). Emotional competences are abilities that can be learned, are not static and are definitely an organization's highest level of responsibility (Goleman, 1998b).

According to Goleman (1995), people scoring high IQ scores may be prone to uncontrolled impulses and passions and might have a poor social life. Furthermore, IQ contributes around 20% to life success and the rest 80% lies on emotional intelligence abilities such as delay of gratification, impulse control, mood regulation, empathy and motivation. Thus, the emotional life of individuals

is not so connected with academic intelligence (Goleman, 1995). In his study, Goleman (1998b) mentioned that the best leaders of an organization have proven that emotional intelligence was much more important than IQ and technical skills. This raises the question whether there is a relationship between intelligence and emotions. At the beginning, intelligence and emotions were meant to be two contradicting concepts. Salovey and Mayer (1990) acknowledged that emotion was often discussed as disorganized interruptions of mental activity and those who were "suffering" from these emotions were seen through a negative view (Grandey, 2000; Mayer & Salovey, 1997a; Mayer et al., 1990; Mayer et al., 2000c). Even worse, most of the times they were considered mentally unstable and a therapy to control their emotions was imperative (Mayer et al., 2000c). Not many researchers in 1960 accepted that one's actions stimulated by emotions and through the guidance of one's thoughts and actions, may lead to solving problems (Mayer & Salovey, 1997a; Mayer et al., 2000c) and that "intelligence" and "emotions" may work together in total harmony (Goleman,1995). King (1999) mentioned that when someone recognizes their own emotions, understands the emotions of others and uses all this information correctly to enhance their thinking, they will probably be more intelligent.

2.1.2. Emotional Intelligence Criteria

Emotional intelligence should meet three standard criteria to qualify as an intelligence: a) conceptual, b) correlational and c) developmental (Mayer et al, 2000). The conceptual criterion is being comprised from the abilities that describe emotional intelligence (King, 1999). These abilities differentiate talents and personality traits from performance (Mayer & Salovey, 1993, 1997a; Scarr, 1989). Mayer and Salovey, as mentioned earlier, developed a model for emotional intelligence that consists of four branches (King,1999). These four branches vary between basic psychological processes and higher integrated processes (Mayer & Salovey,1997a). Beginning from the lowest levels, perceiving emotions indicates the perceptions of emotions within oneself and others, which means that an individual can understand how others feel in a certain situation. Continuing to the level of assimilating emotions**,** one can see different points of view while understanding how others may feel. At the third level of understanding emotions, an individual can recognize the difference among emotions. The final level, Managing Emotions, refers to the ability to not only recognize

but also to appreciate both pleasant and unpleasant feelings in others and oneself (Mayer & Salovey, 1997a). As far as the second criterion is concerned, correlational, emotional intelligence should be related to other intelligences (Mayer & Salovey, 1993). In the third criterion, emotional intelligence should be able to be developed (King,1999). This criterion was proved through Mayer's and Salovey's (1997a) second study in which it turned out, as predicted, that with growth from adolescence through early childhood, adults scored higher than youths (King,1999).

To summarize, in their two studies, Mayer and Salovey (1993;1997a) have proven that emotional intelligence can qualify as a type of intelligence, it shows growth from adolescence to childhood, it correlates with other intelligences and is a set of abilities.

2.1.3. Models of emotional intelligence

Studying the relevant literature, it is easy to understand that there are two competing models of emotional intelligence. The "mixed" or trait-based model, which is supported by researchers such as Goleman (1995, 1998c) and Bar-On (1997), and the ability- based model, which is endorsed by Mayer, Salovey and his colleagues (Mayer et al., 1990; Mayer & Salovey, 1997b).

2.1.3.1. "Mixed-model"

Mixed models are considered different from ability-based models because they are a mixture of personality traits and mental abilities (Mayer et al, 2000c). According to Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence includes self-control, motivation, persistence, and enthusiasm. Later, Goleman et al (2002) in their book "Primal Leadership" supports four dimensions of emotional intelligence: a) relationship management that means the ability to manage emotions of others in order to build a relationship with them, b) social awareness as the ability to understand emotions of others, being sensitive to others' feelings and concerns, and to appreciate the differences in people, c) self-management, that refers to the guiding of emotions when pursuing a goal and the delay of gratification, and last but not least, d) self-awareness as the ability to handle one self's feelings as well as observing emotions felt (Table 2).

As mentioned earlier, Bar-On's (1997) model of emotional intelligence (Table 1) has also been supported by researchers (Bar-On, 2000; Hedlund & Sternberg, 2000). He described it as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (Bar-On, 1997, p. 14) and he recognized five areas that could contribute to a successful life. These areas include a) general mood, that describes the ability to express positive emotions and stay optimistic, b) managing stress, as the ability to cope with stress and control of emotions, c) adaptability that means being flexible and adjust one's feelings when situations change, d) having interpersonal skills, meaning that one can be aware of and understand others' emotions, while e) intrapersonal functioning refers to the ability of one to understand and be aware of their ideas, emotions and feelings (Bar-On, 1997; Bar- On, 2000).

Table 1 *Bar-On's Mixed Model of emotional intelligence*

	Five Areas of Emotional Intelligence				
	Intrapersonal Skills (inner self)	**Interpersonal Skills** (people skills)	**Stress Management** (deal with stress or losing control)	**Adaptability** (recognize/respond to diverse situations)	**General Mood** (overall outlook on life; enjoy oneself and others)
Aspects of Emotional Intelligence	***Self-regard*** Respect and accept oneself as basically good	***Empathy*** Aware of, understand and appreciate feelings of others	***Stress tolerance*** Withstand adverse events and stressful situations	***Reality testing*** Assess the difference between the expected and what exists	***Optimism*** Look at the brighter side of life
	Emotional self-awareness Recognize one's feelings	***Social responsibility*** Be cooperative, contributing, and constructive member of group	***Impulse control*** Resist or delay an impulse, drive, or desire to act	***Flexibility*** Adjust one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors to changing settings	***Happiness*** Feel satisfied with one's life, enjoy life and others
	Assertiveness Express feelings, beliefs and thoughts and defend one's rights	***Interpersonal relationships*** Establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships		***Problem solving*** Identify and define problems with potential for effective solutions	
	Independence Self-directed and self-controlled				
	Self-actualization Realize one potentiality				

In general, mixed models of emotional intelligence tends to be more prevalent in non-academic environments than the ability trait models. Bar-On (1997) defined emotional intelligence as a group of non-cognitive competencies, skills and abilities that affect the way one faces and handles

environmental demands. Goleman (1995) also stated that emotional intelligence is non-cognitive in nature and involved personal traits such as optimism, empathy, and motivation.

Table 2 *Goleman's Model of emotional intelligence*

Emotional Intelligence Domains and Competencies

SELF-AWARENESS	SELF-MANAGEMENT	SOCIAL AWARENESS	RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT
Emotional self-awareness	Emotional self-control	Empathy	Influence
	Adaptability		Coach and mentor
	Achievement orientation	Organizational awareness	Conflict management
	Positive outlook		Teamwork
			Inspirational leadership

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2.1.3.2. Ability based model

According to Salovey and Mayer|(1990, p.189), emotional intelligence is "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions". They categorized emotional intelligence in three components: a) use emotions to resolve problems, b) appraise emotions of others and c) appraise and regulate one's own emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The first component involves studies that aim on how emotions facilitate communication and expression, the second component includes studying of emotional knowledge, and the third component is based on Ekman and his collaborators. who argue that there is a certain number of basic emotions across all cultures that

are universal and are reflected in the same facial expressions (Ekman, 1993; Ekman & Friesen, 1975).

In this model, emotional intelligence is considered to be a group of abilities that facilitate assimilation, perception, expression, regulating and understanding emotions, in such a way that they promote emotional and intellectual growth and differ from the traditional aspects of intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997b). Mayer and Salovey (1997b) created a four-branch model developing their 1990 definition of emotional intelligence. According to this model, perception of emotions is the ability to understand emotions not only in oneself and in others but also in objects, art etc. Furthermore, using emotions to facilitate thought is the ability to create, utilize and feel emotions in order to communicate feelings. Then, the authors claimed that emotional understanding is the ability to recognize the way emotions are being combined and progress through relationship transitions. The fourth and final branch, emotional management, was described as the ability to be open and balanced to emotions, both to oneself and to others, in order to encourage personal understanding and growth (Mayer & Salovey 1997b).

Table 3 *Mayer and Salovey's Ability – Based Model of EI*

Reflective regulation of emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth			**BRANCH 4**
Ability to stay open to feelings, pleasant and unpleasant	Ability to reflectively engage or detach from an emotion depending upon its utility	Ability to reflectively monitor emotions in self and others	Ability to manage emotion in self and others by moderating negative and positive feelings
Understanding and analysing emotions; employing emotional knowledge			**BRANCH 3**
Ability to label emotions and recognize relationships between them	Ability to interpret the meanings of emotions and relationships between them	Ability to understand complex feelings and simultaneous blends, etc.	Ability to recognize likely transitions in emotions
Emotional facilitation of thinking			**BRANCH 2**
Emotional prioritizing, directing attention to important information	Emotions are vivid and available, used as aids to judgement and memory	Emotions change the individual's perspective, encouraging consideration of multiple points of view	Emotions encourage specific problem approaches
Perception, appraisal, and expression of emotion			**BRANCH 1**
Ability to identify emotion feelings and thoughts	Ability to identify emotions in other people, through language, sound, appearance and behaviour	Ability to express emotions accurately, and to express needs related to those feelings	Ability to discriminate between accurate and inaccurate, honest dishonest expressions of feeling

The model that has been criticized a lot, despite its popularity, is the "mixed" model. Measures of emotional intelligence must evaluate abilities such as motivation and optimism and no other concepts (Mayer & Salovey, 1997b). Furthermore, mixed- model measures of emotional intelligence are correlated with personality measures (Davies et al., 1998; Newsome et al., 2000). One limitation is that they are not correlated with cognitive ability which is necessary for any intelligence. Another limitation is that they lack discriminant validity from a well-established construct of personality (Mayer et al, 2000a).

In accordance with researchers, emotionally intelligent people tend to act in emotionally balanced and rational ways due to possession of certain emotional intelligence competencies (Mayer et al., 2004; Salovey et al., 1999). These competencies can be categorized into two classes: a) social competence, that incorporates knowing and dealing with others and b) personal competencies, that

comprises understanding and managing one's self (Feist & Barron, 1996; Goleman, 1995; Mayer and Salovey, 1997b; Sternberg, 1996; Van Rooy and Viswesvaran, 2004).

Social competence is a person's ability to investigate the emotional world of others, find and use one's empathic capabilities and skills such as assertiveness, leadership, and communication, in favor of producing socially desirable and productive behavioral results for oneself and others (Rose- Krasnor, 1997). Social competence can be divided into two sub-categories: social awareness and social influence.

Social awareness is a person's competence to feel the emotional status of others while entering an emotional dialogue with the interacting partner and feel like the other person (Salovey et al., 1999). Kellet et al, 2002 assert that empathy binds people more deeply and strongly than ideologies and beliefs. Goleman (1998c) supports that empathy is a set of interpersonal skills such as leadership, teamwork and persuasion.

Social influence is a person's competence to influence others and to bring positive outcomes using interpersonal skills like communication, empowering leadership, and assertiveness. Communication refers to someone that can listen to others carefully and negotiate in a successful way, leading to the desirable outcomes. Empowering leadership is the skill of leading and motivating others in situations that contain leadership and group management. Assertiveness equips the person with the ability to establish a win-win and mutually respectful relationship among others. To sum up, social influence is a set of relationship skills used in an empathic way that mutually benefits each other by building trust and pursuing means (Salovey et al., 1999).

On the other hand, personal competence is one's ability to observe and regulate one's own internal moods and processes in such manner that emotions will not deter or disturb mind acting rationally and to the best of its intellectual capacity. It is divided into two subcategories: self-regulation and self-awareness.

Self-regulation is an individual's ability to manage and regulate one's own emotional and rational mental processes in balanced ways to make logically correct and socially acceptable decisions and judgements (Martinez, 1997; Tischler et al., 2002). Persons equipped with self-awareness are able

to sense internal emotions and feelings, “interpret” those feelings and link them with the way they think and act (Mayer & Salovey, 1993; McGarvey, 1997)

These four competencies work together to make one person emotionally intelligent. If one or more of these competencies is absent, the emotional intelligence competence of the person is reduced. Social-awareness, self-regulation and self-awareness are functions of the rational-emotional mind of the person and can be enhanced through practice in emotional intelligence techniques. On the other hand, social-influence is highly interpersonal in nature and is dependent on the attitudes and attributes of the other people involved in social interactions (Feist and Barron, 1996; Goleman, 1995; Mayer and Salovey, 1997b; Sternberg, 1996; Van Rooy and Viswesvaran, 2004).

2.1.4. Emotional intelligence gender and age

In line with Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (1999), emotional intelligence should increase with age and experience if it has to be considered as a standard intelligence. But no significant or authoritative research is available in existing literature that supports the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and age. Additionally, Bar -On (1997, p. 93), based on a correlational study between gender, age and scores on EQ-i, stated that there were “no significant differences between males and females in overall emotional intelligence”. According to the variable “age”, research suggests that intrapersonal skills generally increase with age (Bar-On, 1997, 2002; Bar-On & Handley, 1999; Bar-On & Parker, 2000, Hartup & Stevens, 1997). Labouvie-Vief, Dovoe and Bulka (1989) reported that emotional maturation is pronounced during the pre-adult years. Bretherton, Fritz, ZahnWaxler and Ridgeway (1986) suggest that the expression of emotions develops from external (such as actions and physical processes) to internal representations (such as wishes and memories)

In the present study, we consider important to examine if gender and age affect emotional intelligence in a military environment. Even though a few researchers have studied the impact of emotional intelligence in a military workplace (Zea, et al, 2020; Koh & O’Higgins, 2018), those who included the factors age and gender are much more limited. The important finding here will be if there is no significance between these variables, concluding that age and gender play a minor

role when it comes to emotionally grown individuals. Hence, given the opportunity, we study the hypotheses presented below:

Hypothesis 1a. Age has no significant relationship with emotional intelligence.

Hypothesis 1b. Gender has no significant relationship with emotional intelligence.

2.2. Leadership

2.2.1. Introduction

The connection between the workplace and emotional performance is an important part of research regarding the effectiveness and productivity of workers. Leadership is a critical part of emotional intelligence. Leadership studies have emphasized that leaders who are able to establish mutual trust and respect among group members tend to be more effective (Fleishman & Harris, 1962). A leader's effectiveness depends on the ability to solve the problems that may arise inside an organization or group (Mumford, et al, 2000). In the progression of managers, emotional intelligence is more important than intellect and other management competencies (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2003). As one climbs the rank stairs in an organization, emotional intelligence is an increasingly indicative reason for excellent performance but is in contrast to cognitive or technical skills (Goleman et al., 2002). Certain emotional intelligence competencies seem to be especially crucial for directors of organizations; "motivation, interpersonal sensitivity, intuitiveness, conscientiousness and integrity" are absolutely relevant to a director's role in "determining the company's vision, mission and values" (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2003, p. 206).

However, in this study we are focusing on military leadership. The point that makes the review of military leadership challenging, is the need to make clear what does and what does not constitute "military leadership research.'' As an alternative, we can focus on studies that use military samples to test theories that have applicability across a broad range of organizations-or what Blair and Hunt (1986) call a context-free orientation. For example, transformational leadership (which will be

explained in the next paragraphs) (Bass, 1998) may be examined within a military context as it seems to be applicable for organizations other than the military. Moreover, leadership theories have been applied to military environments, so a considerable military leadership research of this nature already exists (Csoka & Bons, 1978; Deluga, 1991; Roush & Atwater, 1992).

Furthermore, answers to questions about the generalizability of leadership theories require in-depth knowledge of military leadership. For example, most of Armed Forces are under the control of a Ministry of National Defense and consists of branches such as Army, Navy, and Air Force etc. Each branch has its own culture and its own unique aspects of leadership. As far as organizational form is concerned, the military is unquestionably traditional (e.g.Snider & Watkins, 2002; Garcia Zea, Sankar & Isna, 2020). Concerning the power across hierarchical levels, there is a clear delineation and clear prescriptions about how leaders and subordinates are supposed to interact. According to Gordon (2002), the military has both clear ‘‘surface-level structures’’ and clear ‘‘deep structures’’ defining power arrangements. Furthermore, there are deeply well-established behavioral codes that extend beyond the official work environment. Traditionally, it is an institution where hierarchy is applied to all levels, operating in an uncertain, unpredictable world and executing missions that may have very high consequences. To sum up, the military is a diverse and enormous organization that plays a key role in both the nation and the world.

In the present study we will combine military leadership with all mentioned in this literature review, trying to understand how broader leadership theories operate when applied to military samples.

2.2.2. Models of leadership

2.2.2.1. Trait or behavior model of leadership

According to the trait or behavior model of leadership, certain traits and behaviors are important in order to be a successful leader. Traits such as self-confidence, motivation to lead, honesty, emotional stability and integrity, are some characteristics of a successful leadership performance (Greenberg et al., 2000; Johns & Saks, 2001). Factors for “which soldiers are willing to sacrifice

their lives for – loyalty, team spirit, morale, trust and confidence – cannot be infused by managing" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997a, p. 59).

As stated by Mayer and Salovey (1997a) successful leadership relies on three factors: having the requisite knowledge, application of character and knowledge (through mentoring, teaching, etc.) and having strength of character (such as courage, loyalty, self-confidence, honesty etc.).

2.2.2.2. Contingency-based model

In this type of model, successful leaders flourish through environmental factors. This is the principle that contingency or situational theories of leadership are based on (Johns & Saks, 2001). Certain situations may encourage these leaders to rise. Factors may come out within an organization or an industry, or even a more general, historical, economic and social circumstances and can be the cause to a leader's emergence (Bass,1985). Donohue and Wong (1994) highlighted some conditions that can lead to the development of effective leaders. For example, when an organizational culture is being attacked (e.g. when subordinates are disillusioned or during an acute crisis), the correct management of that situation from the leaders may lead to their growth.

2.2.3. Transformational leadership

One type of leader that will concern us is the transformational leader. The transformational leadership theory is the most renowned theory of leadership (Barling et al., 2000; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1998; Bass &Avolio, 1994; Judge & Bono, 2000; Northouse, 1997). This type of leaders is also known as visionary and inspirational leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Conger & Kanungo, 1994; Den Hartog et al., 1997; Northouse, 1997). The first who introduced the concept of transformational leadership was Burns (1978). He referred to it as a process involving the leader engaging their followers by augmenting their motivation and promoting their connection to the organization (Burns, 1978).

Later in 1985, Bass explained that the way leaders motivate their followers is by raising their level of awareness, clarifying the importance of organization's goals and by engaging them to surpass their own self-interests for the interests of the organization or the team (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership theory also suggests that between the leader and their followers, there is an emotional attachment in which followers tend to identify themselves with a transformational leader going beyond to call of dty in order to achieve the mission of the organization (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1998; Yammarino & Bass, 1990). Additionally, transformational leaders stimulate their followers to align their values, motives and beliefs with the vision of the organization (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978).

To sum up, transformational leaders are considered to be highly effective agents, concerned about the well-being of their employees and exhibit these characteristics: inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation individualized consideration and idealized influence (Bass, 1990). As a result, transformational leaders affect important individual and organizational outcomes such as business unit performance (Bass, 1985; Howell & Avolio, 1993), organizational commitment (Barling, et al., 1996), employee satisfaction with leadership (Hater & Bass, 1988) and employee performance (Bass, 1985; Howell & Avolio, 1993) and is considered to be a highly effective style of leadership.

2.2.4. Passive avoidant leadership

All the research noted above explains how important an active and effective leader behavior is in an organization. A very few studies have examined the impact of an ineffective or passive leadership on workplace. (Kelloway et al., 2006)

More than a few authors have mentioned the link between poor quality leadership and negative results (Kellerman, 2004; Kelloway et al., 2005) including reduced commitment and satisfaction (Tepper, 2000), negative outcomes (Kellerman, 2004; Kelloway et al., 2005), stress (Offerman & Helman, 1996) and reprisal (Townsend et al., 2000).

According to (Kellerman, 2004; Kelloway, et al, 2005), the research emphasis on effective leadership ignores the reality that people in leadership roles may not display the characteristics associated with active and effective leadership and require a closer examination of the outcomes that are related with poor leadership.

Poor leadership can be divided in two categories; a) passive or ineffective leadership, in which leaders lack positive leadership skills and cannot reach the desired results (Kellerman, 2004; Kelloway, et al, 2005), and b) abusive (Kellerman, 2004) or unethical (Kelloway, et al, 2005) leaders, who are excessively aggressive or punitive and may disobey commonly accepted codes of conduct.

Den Hartog,Van Muijen, and Koopman(1997) stated that passive leadership is the most frequently compared type of leadership with the active forms of leadership. The meaning of passive leadership that is being adhered in this study includes elements from laissez-faire and management-by-exception styles, as mentioned by Bass and Avolio (1990). Leaders who enact management-by-exception style usually fail to intervene until problems are brought to light or become serious enough to require their attention (Bass, 1990). Furthermore, laissez – faire leaders stay away from decision making and the responsibilities of leadership in general (Bass, 1990; Hater and Bass, 1988). These forms of passive leadership are considered to be ineffective approaches. For example, Howel and Avolio (1993) found that management-by-exception is negatively related to business unit performance. Similarly, Skogstad, et al. (2007) found that laissez-faire leaders contribute to bullying and distress in the workplace via role conflict, increased conflicts among employees, and role vagueness.

2.2.5. Emotional intelligence and leadership

Greenberg et al.(2000), Johns and Saks (2001) define leadership as the process of influencing others to orient them in order to achieve goals. Bird (1940) in an attempt to investigate “trait theory” of leadership noted that intelligence was a characteristic that appeared in most of the studies and leaders were found to be more intelligent than their followers. Similarly, Bass (1990) stated that leaders get higher intelligence scores than followers but not significantly very high. Hoyle and

Oates (1998) in their study, mention that appears to be a quality in the emotional realm that separates ineffective from effective leaders. According to King (1999) emotional intelligence may positively affect effective leadership. The definition that Salovey and Mayer (1990) gave about emotional intelligence inherently relates to the interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences discussed by Gardner (1983).

Bass (1990) mentioned that interpersonal skills are important in leadership. They enable a person to empathize with another's feelings or identify and accurately report one's feelings in order to avoid isolation and to achieve cooperation (King, 1999). Goleman (1998c) rightly points out that emotional competencies can be learned by any worker at any career stage. Moreover, understanding the intentions of the members of a group, comprehending issues and suiting a message to an audience are essential to good communication (Wright & Taylor (1994). Goleman (1998) and Salopek (1998) explained communication -the sending of a clear and convincing message – as a part of interpersonal skills of utmost importance. Finally, McDowelle and Bell (1998) claimed interpersonal and communication skills are essential parts not only of emotional intelligence but also of leadership.

To continue, according to Goleman (1998b) empathy is the most easily recognized and effective interpersonal skill that enables one to consider other's feelings (Goleman, 1998a). Empathy permits emotionally intelligent managers to understand the distress the employees are undergoing by placing themselves in employees' position (Abraham,1999). Levison (1992) argues that empathy enables leaders to be sensitive to what is being said, avoid hurt and humiliation by analyzing its impact on the receiver. Leaders who display empathy, understanding and acceptance of the followers easily earn followers' trust (Greenleaf (1977).

As far as communicating effectively is concerned, Kanter (1983) stated that it is often mentioned by researchers as an integral link to effective leadership and interpersonal skills. As Abraham (1999) states, it includes the ability to criticize intelligently so that the information can be shared among employees to boost their performance.

The ability to work and function within a team is another component of interpersonal skills (McDowelle & Bell, 1997) that helps inspire others and build strong relationships with them (Kouzes &Posner, 1987). According to Salopek (1998) teaming is the ability to produce group synergy while pursuing collective goals. Moreover, this ability to build working relationships with many people and function as a negotiator, mediator and networker is important to succeed as a leader (Cherniss, 1998). As a result, an effective leader involves team members in decision making, they share power and information with their stuff encouraging autonomy (Conger & Kanungo, 1988b; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Larson & LaFasto, 1989; Nadler & Tushman, 1990; Sashkin, 1990).

As mentioned, interpersonal skills refer to interactions among people while intrapersonal skills describe the feelings and actions within a person (Gardner, 1983). The skill that is the key for successful leaders is emotional control (McGarvey,1997). Furthermore, Bocchino (1999) stated that intrapersonal intelligence is the sense of self-awareness that enables us to observe ourselves, our behaviors and emotions, and to be aware of the information we receive as a result of that observation. So, an intuitive leader shows intrapersonal aspects of emotional intelligence. Self-regulation, self-awareness, and motivation to succeed are included among them. An effective leader has motivation, and highly motivated people remain optimistic even in hard times (Goleman, 1998b). Self-regulation and self- awareness enable persons to experience positive affect within themselves and others and to contribute to their wellbeing. Consequently, "the emotionally intelligent person is often a pleasure to be around and leaves others feeling better" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 201).

In an attempt to compare emotional intelligence abilities to leadership traits, we could say that emotionally intelligent people tend to manage their own emotions and emotions of others by regulating the expression of negative emotions while enhancing the expression of positive ones (Mayer & Salovey, 1997a). Leaders possessing this ability, to manage their emotions effectively are able to exercise self-control in difficult situations and as a consequence to earn the respect and trust of followers (Barling et al., 2000; Megerian & Sosik, 1996). Effective leaders also possess the ability to distinguish between genuine and "fake" emotions as far as to recognize real and expressed emotions (George, 2000).

For this study, and taking into consideration the previous paragraphs, we aim to explore how emotional intelligence affects these two opposite types of leadership. We expect that emotional intelligence will enhance transformational leadership by affecting it positively while on the contrary, we suppose that emotional intelligence will have a negative correlation with passive /avoidant leadership, thus diminishing the "passive" behavior of the leader. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 2. Emotional intelligence will be positively correlated with transformational leadership

Hypothesis 3. Emotional intelligence will be negatively correlated with passive/avoidant leadership

2.3. Conflict management

According to literature, most definitions agree that conflict is a process that involves two or more groups (Fink, 1968). "It is a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party" (Wall & Callister, 1195, p.517).

An important indicator that demonstrates a manager's ability to cope with conflict is emotional intelligence. People who lack emotional intelligence and specifically empathy are expected to be the causes of a conflict than the managers (Goleman, 1995; Stuller, 1998).The importance of conflict management has been acknowledged in different scientific fields such as organizational behavior, communication and psychology and it is considered as a pervasive phenomenon that spreads through a variety of organizational processes and results (Deutsch 1990; Greenhalgh, 1987; Pondy, 1967; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Putnam & Poole 1987; Robey et al., 1989; Thomas, 1976, 1992b; Wall & Callister, 1995). Poor communication (Fanz & Roby, 1984), frustration and low morale (Glasser, 1981), hostility and jealousy are some of the results that conflict may lead to (Smith & McKeen, 1992).

Within organizations, individuals who can handle conflict efficiently are recognized as skilled communicators and competent leaders. On the other hand, those who manage conflict ineffectively

may have difficulties in reaching the goals of an organization (Mathur & Sayeed, 1983; Nicoreta, 1995), solving problems (Hall, 1986) or even maintain positive relationships and cohesiveness (Canary, et al., 1995; Coser, 1956). Additionally, individuals that have trouble managing conflict are also likely to be disappointed with their job (Infante & Gorden, 1985a, 1985b, 1991; Infante, et al, 1993). Conflicts in organizations may occur between two individuals, within a group and work team, or between groups or teams (De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997). Also, it is associated with organizational goals, values, and norms or related to structural aspects of organizations such as decentralization, heterogeneity or ambiguity of tasks (Van de Vliert, 1998).

As far as conflict in groups is concerned, this is generally avoided and suppressed because of the possible negative consequences, and people seek to preserve consistency, stability and harmony within the organization (De Dreu & Van de Vliert 1997, Nadler & Tushman, 1999). These two types of conflict have been argued to have a negative effect on group identity, development and function by researchers (Jones, 1993; De Dreu, 1997). Organizations need to develop the processes, cultures, and behaviors capable of accommodating and resolving conflicts in such a way that it will be beneficial for all individuals (Nadler and Tushman, 1999)

Concerning teams**,** a successful management in conflict resolution expands a team's life span and is an important mechanism by which teams can overcome early inactivity. When managing conflict in a successful way, teams improve cohesion at given tasks and shape a stronger team identity (Gershick, 1989).

2.3.1. Interpersonal conflict and conflict resolution

Conflict literature is immense and has been reviewed to provide a framework and a general context of interpersonal conflict (Pondy 1967; Pruitt & Rubin 1986; Putnam & Poole 1987; Thomas 1976, 1992b; Wall & Callister 1995). Based on review, it can be contended that the interpersonal conflict literature shares a general structure, and we can observe interpersonal conflict as a rotation sequence. "As with any social process, there are causes; also, there is a core process, which has results or effects. These effects feedback to affect the causes" (Wall & Callister, 1995, p. 516).

Depending on the ways that conflict, as a term, has been used, it seems that a great variety of levels exist. (Deutsch, 1990; Thomas, 1992a). As per Thomas (1992a), there are two broad uses of the term. The first one refers to conflicts happening between different organizations, groups, individuals, or other social units, while the second one refers to response tendencies within an individual, like behavioral conflict, where a person should choose whether or not to act in a particular way. In this study we will focus on the first use, in interpersonal conflict. Consequently, interpersonal conflict is a phenomenon that occurs between individuals experiencing negative emotional reactions in obvious disagreements while interferences block the accomplishment of their goals (Amason, 1996; Jehn,1995; Pinkley, 1990; Pondy, 1967; Thomas, 1992a, 1992b; Wall & Callister, 1995). Once persons involved in any task disagree and act solely with their own interests in mind, their actions are likely to interfere with other parties' interests or goals (Robey et al., 1989) in the form of foot dragging (Newman & Sabherwal, 1989), political maneuvering, or a proliferation of technical rules, norms, and regulations (Franz & Robey, 1984).

Conflict resolution is not only a mechanism for dealing with difficult disagreements within an existing social system, but also as an approach that can facilitate constructive social change in the direction of a responsive and equitable system (Fisher, 2000).

2.3.2. Conflict management styles

So far, research on evaluating interpersonal conflict has been categorized into two groups. The first group of studies directly evaluated the level of interpersonal conflict (Amason, 1996; Barki & Hartwick, 1994b; Brown & Day, 1981; Etgar, 1979; Habib, 1987; Jehn, 1995; Robey et al., 1989), while the second one assessed the different styles of conflict management (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Kilmann & Thomas, 1977; Putnam & Wilson, 1982; Rahim, 1983). In this study we will focus on the first group of studies concerning the different styles of conflict management and how they are affected from other variables mentioned throughout this essay. Within the conflict domain, researchers have acknowledged several conflict management styles and their role in management and resolution of conflicts (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Salovey et al., 1999; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Putnam & Poole, 1987; Thomas, 1976, 1992b; Wall & Callister, 1995).

Rahim's (1985, 1986; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979) research has identified five conflict management styles used in organizations: a) Integrating or in some papers collaborating, b) dominating or competing, c) avoiding, d) compromising and finally e) obliging. A variety of organizational variables such as job satisfaction, organizational climate, work engagement, gender and education (Lee, 1990; Posner, 1986; Rahim, 1990) are connected with these styles (Rahim, 1985, 1986; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979).

Rahim's model gives emphasis on specific behaviors that occur in a conflict, such as using authority or interpersonal influence (dominating style), giving in to the needs and desires of the partner (obliging style), trying to avoid disagreement (avoiding style), proposing a "middle ground" solution (compromising style) or trying to find solutions that are satisfactory to both parties (integrating style) (Gross &Guerrero, 2000).

For the needs of the present study, two out of the five conflict management styles (integrating and avoiding) were measured due to the hypothesis that these two are meant to be met in a military environment.

As stated by Gross and Guerrero (2000), the integrating (or collaborating) style emphasizes in solving problems in a collaborative way. Individuals with this style do not hesitate to face conflict directly and try to find creative solutions by focusing not only on their own needs but on the needs of others as well. Hocker and Wilmot (1998) states that the communication of the individuals possessing this style focuses on a successful resolution that will keep the relationship intact for a future interaction.

In accordance with the competence model (Figure 1), an individual who meets the expectations of the other person and still achieves their desired objectives, engages in an optimal response to conflict (Spitzberg et al., 1994). Thus, the integrating style is believed to be both effective and appropriate in managing conflicts. This style of conflict management is considered to be competent because it provides each disputant with access to the other person's perceptions and goals in such a way that the solution will meet the needs and goals of both parties (Tutzauer & Roloff, 1988).

The second style, avoiding, arises as Hocker & Wilmot (1998) state, when people psychologically or physically withdraw themselves from a conflict scene or episode by being indirect and evasive,

denying the conflict, making irrelevant remarks, or changing and avoiding topics as a way to evade the conflict at hand. Interacting with persons that have adopted this style of conflict management seems to be frustrating. One individual needs to talk and solve the problems that have arisen while the other hesitates to interact, leaving this issue to stew creating a "chilling effect", with the controversialists becoming cold and withdrawn (Roloff & Cloven, 1990). Researchers observed that a conflict sequence named "demand-withdraw interaction pattern" exists and happens when one person wants to engage in conflict while the other one avoids to response (Gottman & Levenson, 1988). The escalation of this interaction pattern is most of the times inevitable, with conflict participants increasing their demands for discussion as they become more desperate to face the problem while avoiders become more stubborn in their efforts to move away from the discussion. This pattern is considered a highly incompetent form of dyadic communication (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Gottman & Levenson, 1988). Studies have shown that the avoiding style is negatively correlated with perceptions of effectiveness, relational satisfaction, and general competence (Canary & Spitzberg, 1987; 1989; 1990; Sillars, 1980), although on some occasions, avoidance may be appropriate (e.g., when an issue cannot be resolved to either of the disputants' satisfaction, and continuing to discuss the problem might make matters worse).

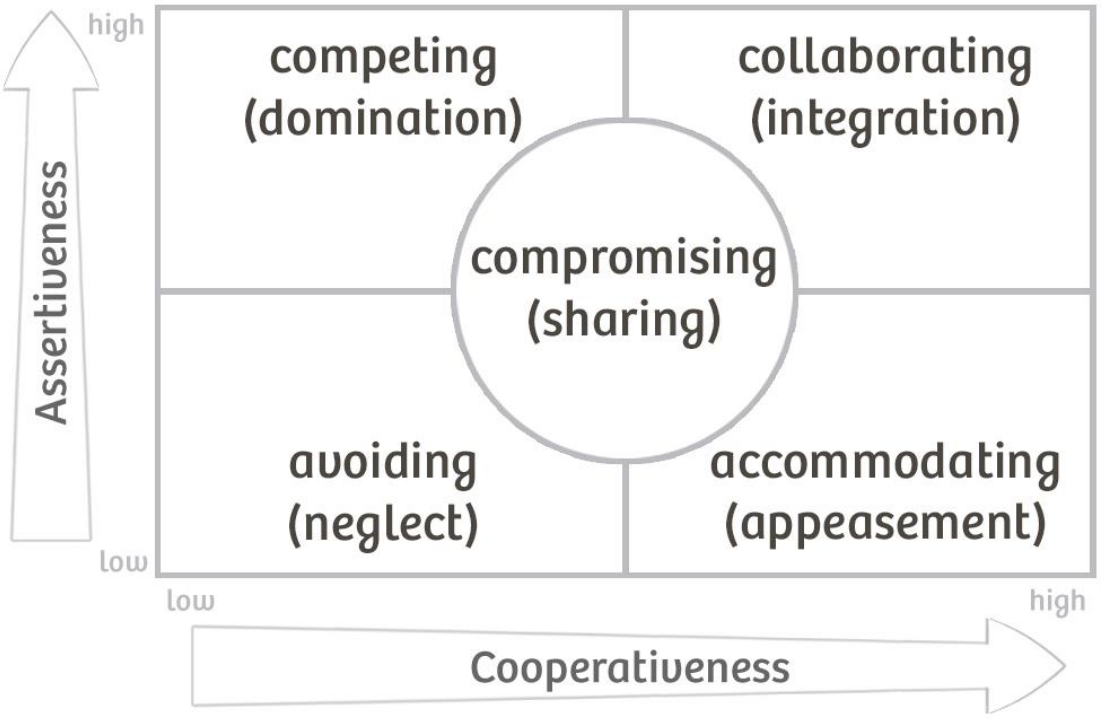

Figure 1 *Rahim's Competence Mode*

2.3.3. Leadership and conflict management

Managing effectively and successfully an organization depends on the integration of employees forming its culture, and who may vary in hierarchy, personality and have different backgrounds. The existence of personal emotional tensions among them is one dimension of organizational culture. (Bryant, 2003). How leaders respond to problems, resolve conflicts and crisis or reward and punish the members of an organization, shapes organization's culture (Downing, 1997). The way leaders tend to set up their conflict resolution strategies enhance effective teamwork. Additionally, a leader's orientation towards a constructive employee relationship has a positive correlation with trust and a negative correlation with conflict (Bass & Avolio,1994; Ekvall, 1966). An effective leader influences individuals and groups, directs them and has the ability to motivate them while in conflict in order to work together towards their shared goal. They are responsible for boosting mutual support, have the ability to defuse tensions, harmonize misunderstandings and

handle efficiently an aggressive behavior among the individuals or groups (O'Hearn & Woodlti, 1987, Fisher, 2000).

As conflict management, we could refer to all these measures taken by either or both parties to deal with a conflict situation. According to Adler and Towne (1990), three are the possible approaches to cope with a conflict: a) negotiate to reach an agreement, b) use force and your authority to make changes or c) accept the status quo (e.g stop arguing and accept living with the problem). These three types of approach have respectively as a result, a) a Win-Win situation, in which both parties gain from the conflict resolution, b) a Lose-Lose situation where both parties lose and c) a Win-Lose situation where one of the parties gains at the cost of the other. The theoretical framework of this study is based upon Rahim's (1983) work with the conflict management styles mentioned earlier. It is important to state that a successful conflict management removes frustration and lead to higher effectiveness and trust (Van de Vliert, 1998). Studying the relationship between leadership and conflict management we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4. Passive/avoidant leadership will be positively correlated with avoiding style of conflict management.

Hypothesis 5. Transformational leadership will be positively correlated with collaborating style of conflict management.

2.4. Trust, work engagement and motivation

2.4.1. Trust

Throughout this study, trust, work engagement and motivation have been mentioned many times to support the connection between emotional intelligence leadership and conflict management. It is considered right though to describe these three variables separately in terms of definition, previous research, and the possible mediation role they might play in the current study.

To begin, as far as trust is concerned, Rousseau et al (1998, p.395) gave the following definition: "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive

expectations of the intentions or behavior of another". Mayer et al. (1995) claim that trust is defined as the willingness of a party (also called trustor) to be vulnerable to another party's actions (also called trustee) based on the expectation that the trustee will act in a particular way which is important to the trustor, regardless the ability to monitor that other party. Partner's trustworthiness and the behavioral intention to act on the expectations mentioned earlier, must both be present for trust to exist (Moorman et al. 1993).

Another definition of trust that must be given and is about to be measured in this study is internal trust. As Shockley -Zalaback et al. (2000) support, internal trust is the climate of trust within an organization which is described as positive expectations that individuals have about the behaviors and intentions of organizational members, based on organizational experiences, relationships and roles.

Regarding the importance of trust in leadership, it is worth mentioning that it has been recognized by researchers for at least six decades, with early studies in books (e.g., Argyris, 1962; Likert, 1967; McGregor, 1967) and articles (e.g., Mellinger, 1956; Read, 1962). In this period of time, trust that individuals show in their leaders has been an important concept in applied psychology. For example, transformational leaders build trust in their followers (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Moreover, an employee's perception that a leader has the reputation of promoting trust might be important for leader effectiveness (Bass, 1990; Hogan et al., 1994).

Scholars have offered different explanations about the procedures that trust forms. For instance, there is one perspective that focuses on the nature of the leader-follower, meaning how the follower understands the nature of leadership. Researchers have used this perspective to describe how trust, in the pre-mentioned relationship, causes citizenship behavior (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994). Another perspective focuses on the leader's character and the way it affects a follower's sense of vulnerability in a hierarchical relationship (e.g., Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). In line with this perspective, concerns about trust and a leader's character are vital because leader's authority through their decision may have a significant impact on the achievement of a follower's goal (e.g promotions, work assignments, annual leaves, etc). This perspective suggests that followers try to draw suppositions about the leader's characteristics such as dependability, fairness, and integrity

and that these suppositions have consequences for work behavior and attitudes. Research using this perspective, includes models of trust based on characteristics of the trustee (Mayer et al., 1995), perceptions of supervisor characteristics (Cunningham & MacGregor, 2000; Oldham, 1975), and forms of leader behavior (Jones et l., 1975). Hence, by taking into account that trust will have a mediating role between the two leadership styles and the related conflict management styles, the following hypotheses are going to be measured:

Hypothesis 6a. Trust positively mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management

Hypothesis 6b. Trust negatively mediates the relationship between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style of conflict management

2.4.2. Work engagement

Over the last two decades, research has shown that the use of Human Resources Management (HRM) is associated with employee outcomes (Jiang et al., 2012; Van De Voorde et al., 2012). One of the outcomes that will concern us in the present study is work engagement and how it is affected by the under-study leadership styles.

Work engagement reflects a fulfilling, positive and motivational state of work-related wellbeing (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Engaged employees show high levels of enthusiasm and energy about their work (Schaufeli et al., 2002) and in turn have a better performance (Halbesleben, 2010; Christian et al., 2011). The concept here is that an effective HRM is expected to influence employee's' level of task related job resources (Boxall & Macky, 2009; Snape & Redman, 2010) thus facilitate work engagement. On the other hand, several researchers have proposed that there is the risk that HRM can result in increased job demands, as employees will have to work harder under grater pressure and therefore their work engagement might be reduced (Kroon et al., 2009; Wood et al., 2012; Jensen et al., 2013).

One of the core components that is related with work engagement and is going to be measured in our model is vigor. (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). As Schaufeli et al. (2002) argue, vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience at work, the willingness to give effort in one's own work and persistence even when facing difficulties. Vigor is considered opposite of the two burnout dimensions of burnout and cynicism (Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006).

Connecting work engagement with leadership, leaders can influence employee work engagement, not only through changing work conditions but also through inspiring, strengthening and connecting their employees (Schaufeli, 2015). In longitudinal studies, several positive leadership styles have been linked with work engagement (Biggs et al., 2014; Chughtai et al., 2014; Fletcher, 2016; Li & Liao, 2014; Mehmood et al., 2016). The most popular and well-researched positive leadership style to date is transformational leadership (Gardner et al., 2010). This style finds its theoretical basis in the full range model of leadership, which also includes laissez-faire or passive leadership, and is comprised of four behavioral dimensions, among which, motivation (Avolio et al., 1999) and especially public service motivation (PSM) that will be analyzed below. Work engagement is supposed to play an important role as a mediator in the correlation between leadership styles and conflict management and that is exactly our expectation. Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 7a. Work engagement positively mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management.

Hypothesis 7b. Work engagement negatively mediates the relationship between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style of conflict management.

2.4.3. Motivation

Cultivating work motivation is important because it has been connected with performance and job satisfaction. (Andersen et al., 2014; Bellé, 2013). Additionally, Hondeghem and Perry, (2009, p.6), give us the definition of public service motivation (PSM) as "an individual's orientation to delivering service to people with the purpose of doing good for others and society". PSM has both

autonomous and extrinsic characteristics. In case of public service motivated activities, these are based on the expected external outcome of the activity and may involve efforts directed at tasks that are not considered as inherently interesting. Nevertheless, the expected result is not directed at the person performing the activity (Jehnsen et al, 2016). On the contrary, these tasks are likely performed because "the activities are necessary for the ultimate delivery of service or because not performing the tasks would be unthinkable for people like themselves" (Houston, 2011, p. 763). In accordance with Houston (2011), PSM energizes employees to make efforts towards enjoyable and interesting tasks, and additionally helps explain why employees put more effort into tasks for which there is neither monetary reward nor are seen as inherently enjoyable.

Especially, concerning transformational leadership, it is gradually recognized as an important priority of public service motivation, and it seems to be one of the most promising ways to increase performance if not for all, then at least for some types of public organizations (Rainey, 2009; Vandenabeele, 2014; Van Wart, 2013; Wright et al, 2011). In accordance with transformational leadership literature, transformational leaders guide and inspire the efforts of employees by creating a vision that raises employee's awareness and lead them to understand the importance of organizational values, the mission and outcomes (Wright et al, 2011). Consequently, the central idea in the theory of transformational leadership is to strongly emphasize the role of a collective vision, meaning an idealized set of goals that the organization hopes to achieve in the future (Carton et al, 2014). The way transformational leadership has been linked to PSM, in that "the more engaging, attractive and worthwhile the mission is to people, the more the agency will be able to attract support from those people and motivate them to perform well in the agency" (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999, p. 16).

Taking into consideration all mentioned before, the motivation variable we are going to study orients in the public sector since military is a part of it. Therefore, a term of public services could be understood as "services ordered and/or (partly) financed by government" (Kjeldsen, 2012, p. 18). A person's decision to join the military is complex and may be motivated by a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. These motivators might include money for education, gainful employment in the absence of other options, and/or a desire to serve one's country (Taylor et al, 2013). According to Moskos (1986) the new, all volunteer force would evolve from a military

driven by institutional values (e.g civic duty or factors associated with military service) to one based on self- interested motivations such as wage and benefits. It would be an omission not to be reported in the differences the ones that might arise across services, across job specialties (Burland & Lundquist, 2011) and among sexes (Eighmey, 2006). Mastroianni (2006) noted that army officers, compared to flight qualified Air Force officers, might have fewer occupational motivators because Air Force pilots may have different and more beneficial opportunities in civil aviation while the attractive civilian opportunities for soldiering are less. On the same wavelength, Stahl et al (1980) noticed that marine officers are less motivated than their peers from other services. They attribute this to marines placing special emphasis on their role as combat soldiers.

Taylor et al, (2013, p.147) note that "the sense of duty and desire to give back that drive the normative dimension of public service motivation can be sated by the professional ethics of duty and honor of country in the normative context". This context is related to the needs that drive the dimension of public service motivation in military (Swedberg, 1988; Shields, 1993). Taking into consideration the preceding discussion, we expect that motivation will have a positive mediation between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management, as motivation is one of the main characteristics of a transformational leader. The opposite effect is expected from the correlation between passive/avoidant leader and avoiding style of conflict management. Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 8a. Motivation positively mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management.

Hypothesis 8b. Motivation negatively mediates the relationship between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style of conflict management.

2.5. Proposed model

To investigate the correlations and the mediating roles among the variables mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, we constructed a proposed model as shown in Figure 2.

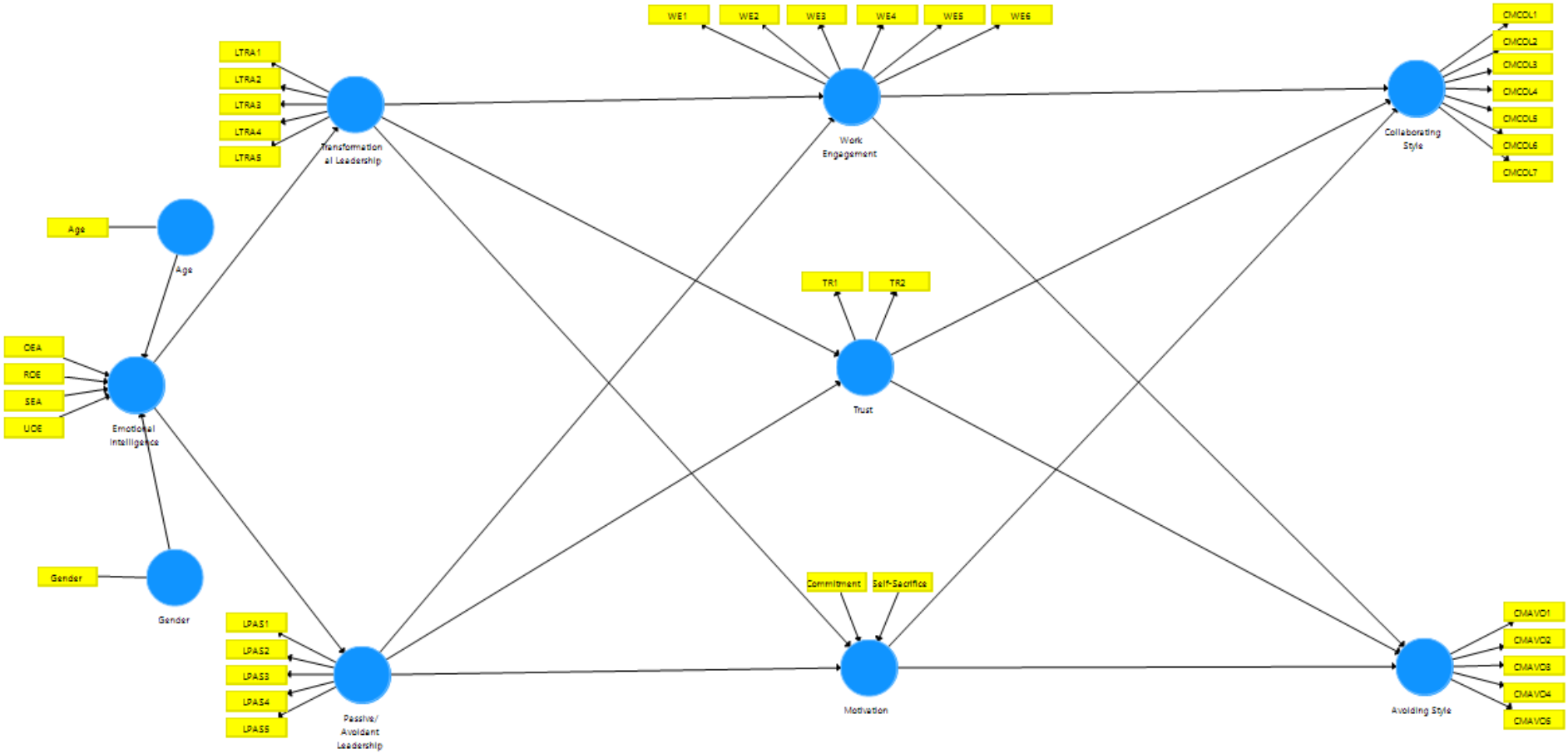

Figure 2 *The proposed model*

3. Methods

3.1. Procedure and sample

To test the hypotheses and to measure the variables mentioned above, we designed a quantitative multi-level study instead of a qualitative one. A total of 100 participants responded in the present study. All of them were military staff officers with 78% of whom being male. The questionnaire was distributed electronically and used specific forms that allowed the participants to complete and submit it, also electronically. The study was completely anonymous, and no personal data were stored during the collection process in order for the participants to respond to the questions as sincerely as possible. Additionally, it was ensured that the completion of the questionnaires was completely voluntary. Finally, neither was the participants' performance affected, nor did they deviate from their duties during the above procedure.

After the collection of the sample, data were exported in a suitable format for statistical analysis which applies in accordance with Partial Least Squares (PLS) structural equation modelling (SEM) using SmartPLS 3. Given the advantages of SEM that permits a simultaneous test of the causal relationships among multiple variables in a model and offers techniques to correct measurement errors that are potential problems in behavioral research (Orlitzky & Frenkel, 2005), we use SEM to examine the hypothesized model.

There are two different kinds of measurement models. The first one is the reflective model, which measures the effect of the variables on the indicator. These indicators can be switched and substituted without any compunctions. The other model is the formative one, which cannot change or substitute the indicators without compunction. The pre-mentioned indicators are cause indicators and influence the construct, while there is only a small correlation between them (Fuchs, 2011).

The use of SmartPLS as a method is accepted by many researchers (Ringle & Sinkovics, 2009; Shackman, 2013) and is considered as a second generation of SEM (Fuchs, 2011; Chin, 2010). The advantage of this technique lies in the smaller sample size and the lack of distributional assumptions (Fuchs, 2011; Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2012). Other SEMs need more than 200 samples. For example, Shackman and other authors identified studies with samples between 51 and 274

using PLS method (Ringle et al., 2012; Shackman, 2013; Hair et al, 2013; Ringle & Sinkovics, 2009; Fuchs, 2011). Additionally, SmartPLS requires no distributional assumptions, while other SEM assumes a normal distribution of data (Ringle et al., 2012; Shackman, 2013; Ringle & Sinkovics, 2009) and that means more flexibility. The advantageousness of PLS- SEM is that it can be used for explanatory research because covariance methods cannot give valid or reliable results or it is not possible to use these methods for explanatory research (Hair et al., 2012). Finally, with SmartPLS we can use reflective and formative scales. Both can be tested with this software, and it provides the opportunity to use a model with reflective and formative elements effortlessly (Shackman, 2013).

In sequence, the first step is to observe the convergent validities obtained by the observations of the average variance extracted (AVE). The values should be greater than 0.50 (AVE>0.50) (Henseler et al, 2009). When AVE>0.50, the model meets a satisfactory result (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The second step is to examine the internal consistency of the model by observing two indices, Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and the composite reliability (CR). CA and CR values are accepted if they are greater than 0.70 (Hair et al, 2021). The next step is to evaluate the discriminant validity (DV) of the SEM. It can be evaluated by using cross-loading of indicator, Fornell & Lacker criterion and Heterotrait -Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation. Executing PLS Algorithm in the Weighting Scheme Factor, we can examine these three criteria.

In first method, observing the cross-loadings, the factor loading indicators have to be higher than all loadings of other constructs with the condition that the cut-off value of factor loading is higher than 0.70 (Hair et al. 2011; 2021)

The second method, the Fornell-Lacker criterion, compares the square root of the AVE with the correlation of latent constructs (Hair et al.2021). A latent construct should explain better the variance of its own indicator rather than the variance of other latent constructs. Thus, the square root of each construct's AVE should have a greater value than the correlations with other latent constructs (Hair et al., 2021).

The third measure for discriminant validity is heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation. Henseler et al. (2015) proposed this method because of its superior performance by means of Monte Carlo simulation study. HTMT values close to 1 indicate a lack of discriminant validity. Using the

HTMT as a criterion involves comparing it to a predefined threshold. If the value of the HTMT is higher than this threshold, one can conclude that there is a lack of discriminant validity. Kline, (2011) and Henseler (2015) suggest a threshold of 0.85 is adequate. In our study, we will present the HTMT ratio of correlations with the suggested threshold of 0.85 due to the reasons mentioned in the previous paragraphs.

Having achieved the discriminant validity, the adjustments of the measuring models have been completed and now we begin to analyze the structural model. Regarding the significance of the relations between the variables of the proposed model, we used the bootstrapping module.

In order to investigate all hypotheses, to examine if there is mediation between variables and since the volume of data is large, we followed the suggestion of Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) and proceeded with a two-step analytical approach in order to export the averages of the variables and combine them with the demographic data of the survey. In the following paragraphs we are going to present these measurements and the results of the survey.

3.2. Measures

As described meticulously in the previous paragraphs, we have followed the steps mentioned for the confirmation of the inner consistency of the proposed model. Initially, we ran a series of Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFAs) to examine the structure and its internal reliability. All factors were allowed to correlate. Table 4 shows the construct reliability and validity with the respective values of Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability and AVE while Table 5 shows the HTMT ratio using the respective method to achieve discriminant validity of the measures. All participants responded to a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (totally agree) to 5 (totally disagree), unless indicated otherwise.

3.2.1. Control Variables

The demographic variables were of individual-level including age, gender, education (e.g. Master's Degree, PhD etc), years of service and rank. The analysis showed that from the above-mentioned demographic variables, none of them had any effect on the proposed model. We excluded them from the analysis with the exception of age and gender that are presented for the purpose of constructing and supporting hypotheses 1a and 1b. Therefore, the results are presented with the rest of the demographic variables being omitted.

3.2.2. Construct reliability and validity

3.2.2.1. Emotional intelligence

The WLEIS is a psychometric measure developed by Wong and Law (2002). Some of the questions included are: "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time" to rate emotional self-awareness, or "I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior" to rate the ability to assess others' emotions. Previous studies have confirmed that the WLEIS has an acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.869) (Wong et al., 2003)

From the existing measures of emotional intelligence, we chose to use the Wong and Law (2002) items mostly due to the fact that it is more suitable for the specific military working environment and because of its limited-sized items.

3.2.2.2. Leadership

Next, to measure transformational leadership we used the items derived from Careless (2000). The researcher created a questionnaire to include all of the seven leader behaviors based on the ones described above. These are: a) communicates a clear and positive vision of the future, b) treats staff as individuals, supports and encourages their development, c) gives encouragement and recognition to staff, d) fosters trust, involvement and co-operation among team members, e) encourages

thinking about problems in new ways and questions assumptions, f) is clear about his/her values and practices what he/she preaches, and g) instills pride and respect in others and inspires by being highly competent. The name given to all these items was Global and Cronbach's alpha was 0.964.

Passive/avoidant leadership items were adopted from Barling and Frone (2016) and include the below items concerning the supervisor: a) tends to be unavailable when staff need help with a problem, b) waits until things have gone wrong before taking action, c) delays taking action until problems become serious, d) avoids making decisions; and e) avoids getting involved when important issues arise. Cronbach's alpha was 0.939.

3.2.2.3. Conflict management

In the present study we used the Rahim Organizational Conflict Instrument (ROCI-II) due to its reliability and validity among others (Gross & Guerrero, 2000). We measured, as noted in the previous chapters, the two styles of conflict management: collaborating (Cronbach's alpha =0.930) and avoiding style (Cronbach's alpha =0.845).

3.2.2.4. Trust

Trust items were adopted from Huff and Kelley (2003). In their study, propensity to trust is based on questions measuring trust towards various exchange partners in a variety of business contexts. Items included, "There is a very high level of trust throughout this organization" and "In this organization subordinates have a great deal of trust for supervisors" (Cronbach's alpha = 0.836).

3.2.2.5. Work engagement

Work engagement was assessed with the Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES) (Schaufeli, et al., 2002): We measured Vigor which includes 6 items. Some example items are: ''At my job, I

feel strong and vigorous'' and ''At my work, I feel bursting with energy". Cronbach's alpha was 0.919.

3.2.2.6. Motivation

Public service motivation was measured using items that have proven valid and reliable (Cronbach's alpha was 0.889 for commitment and 0.919 for self-sacrifice) in existing studies (Andersen et al., 2014; Wright et al., 2013). This operationalization is consistent with the common conceptualization of public service motivation as resting on affective, normative, and instrumental motives for public service delivery (Perry & Wise, 1990). Sample items included "I believe in putting duty before self." and "It is important for me to contribute to the common good".

Table 4 *Values of Cronbach α, Composite Reliability and AVE of the Study Variables*

Study Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Avoiding Style	**0.845**	0.892	**0.625**
Collaborating Style	**0.930**	0.944	**0.706**
Commitment (Motivation)	**0.889**	0.932	**0.820**
OEA (Emotional Intelligence)	**0.880**	0.918	**0.739**
Passive/Anoidant Leader	**0.939**	0.954	**0.807**
ROE (Emotional Intelligence)	**0.894**	0.927	**0.760**
SEA (Emotional Intelligence)	**0.846**	0.897	**0.688**
Self-Sacrifice (Motivation)	**0.919**	0.949	**0.860**
Transformational Leader	**0.964**	0.972	**0.875**
Trust	**0.836**	0.924	**0.859**
UOE (Emotional Intelligence)	**0.854**	0.901	**0.695**
Work Engagement	**0.919**	0.937	**0.714**

3.2.3. Discriminant validity

To evaluate the discriminant validity of the SEM, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation was used. As Table 5 shows, the results of that measure and in combination with Table 4, the expectations of the inner consistency are met, and the model is reliable for further statistical analyses. It is mentioned that all HTMT values were below 0.85.

Table 5 *Heterotrait – Monotrait Ratio*

Study Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Age														
2. Avoiding Style	Yes													
3. Collaborating Style	Yes	Yes												
4. Commitment	Yes	Yes	Yes											
5. Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes										
6. OEA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes									
7. Passive/Avoidant Leader	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes								
8. ROE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes							
9. SEA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
10. Self-Sacrifice	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
11. Transformational Leader	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
12. Trust	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
13.UOE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
14. Work Engagement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Note: "Yes" Means that HTMT<0.85

4. Analysis and Results

4.1. Analytical Strategy

Taking into consideration that the proposed model (Figure 2) has a lot of correlations within the variables and for better understanding of the analysis of the projected hypothesis, we have separated the model into smaller parts, grouping the variables in the most efficient way possible. Hence, in the following paragraphs we will examine each hypothesis separately with its respective model and we will summarize the results into three cumulative tables (Table 6, 7 and 8).

4.1.1. Emotional intelligence, leadership styles, gender and age

Firstly, hypothesis 1a and hypothesis 1b proposed that age and gender are not related with emotional intelligence. In Figure 3 and Table 6 the results showed that the relationship between both age and gender with emotional intelligence is not significant (P values >0.015 and t-statistics <1.96), thus both hypotheses are supported.

Transformational leadership and passive/avoidant leadership were hypothesized to be positively and negatively, respectively, related to emotional intelligence. According to the relationship between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence, table 6 shows that indeed there is a positive correlation (O=0.580, p<0.001 and t-statistics >1.96). On the contrary, passive/avoidant leadership is negatively related to emotional intelligence (O=0 -0.30, p-values<0.01 and t-statistics>1.96). Again, both hypotheses 2 and 3 are supported.

Table 6 *Path coefficients for age, gender and the two leadership styles*

Corresponding Paths	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Hypotheses Support
Age -> Emotional Intelligence	**0.120^{ns}**	**0.990**	**0.322**	**H1a supported**
Gender -> Emotional Intelligence	**0.009^{ns}**	**0.058**	**0.954**	**H1b Supported**
Emotional Intelligence -> Transformational Leadership	**0.580*****	**7.827**	**0.000**	**H2 Supported**
Emotional Intelligence -> Passive/Avoidant Leadership	**-0.301****	**2.956**	**0.003**	**H3 Supported**
Passive/Avoidant Leadership -> Avoiding Style	**0.334*****	**3.046**	**0.002**	**H4 Supported**
Transformational Leadership -> Collaborating Style	**0.496*****	**5.271**	**0.000**	**H5 Supported**

Note: *indicates significant paths: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ns (not significant).

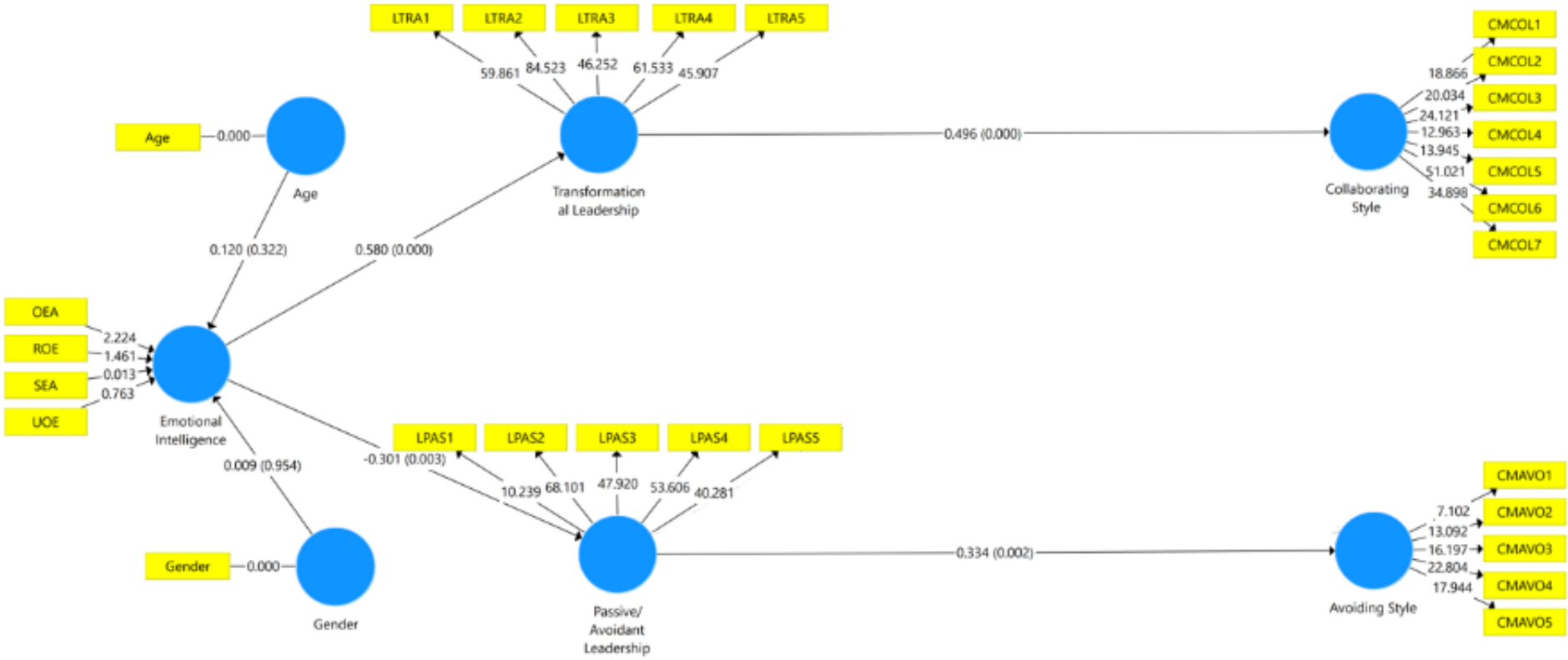

Figure 3 *Model of emotional intelligence, gender, age and leadership styles (with path-coefficients and p-values)*

4.1.2. Leadership and conflict management

Examining hypotheses 4 and 5, it is proposed that passive/avoidant leadership will be positively correlated with the avoiding style of conflict management while transformational leadership will be positively related with the collaborating style of conflict management. As stated in the previous hypotheses, Figure. 2 and Table 6 shows the relationship among these variables. Indeed passive/avoidant leadership is positively correlated with avoiding style of conflict management ($O=0.334$, $p<0.001$ and t-statistics $=3.202$) and similarly transformational leadership is positively correlated with collaborating style of conflict management ($O= 0.496$, $p<0.001$ and t-statistics= 5.148). As a result, hypotheses 4 and 5 are supported.

4.2. Mediation Analyses

4.2.1. Transformational leadership and the mediators

Hypotheses 6a, 7a and 8a proposed that trust, work engagement, and motivation will positively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management. The bootstrap results (2000 Samples) confirmed that in the case of the first mediator, trust, even though the relationship between transformational leadership and collaborating style is not significant, when trust mediates that relationship, we have a full mediation ($O=0.331$, $p<0.5$ and t-statistics=2.513). Moreover, studying work engagement as mediator, the direct correlation between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management shows that there is no significance between them but when work engagement mediates, there is high significance between these variables ($O= 0.353$, $p<0.001$ and t-statistics=4.375). Consequently, we have a full mediation. In the case of the final mediator, motivation, there is a positive correlation between transformational leadership and collaborating style ($O= 0.229$, $p<0.05$, t-statistics $=2.038$). Additionally, studying the specific indirect effects motivation mediates the relationship between the pre-mentioned variables ($O=0.184$, $p<0.10$ and $t=2.857$), thus we have a partial mediation. Hence, hypotheses 6a, 7a and 8a are supported. Figure 4 below depicts all the relationships that were analyzed previously, while Table 7 summarizes the pre-mentioned results.

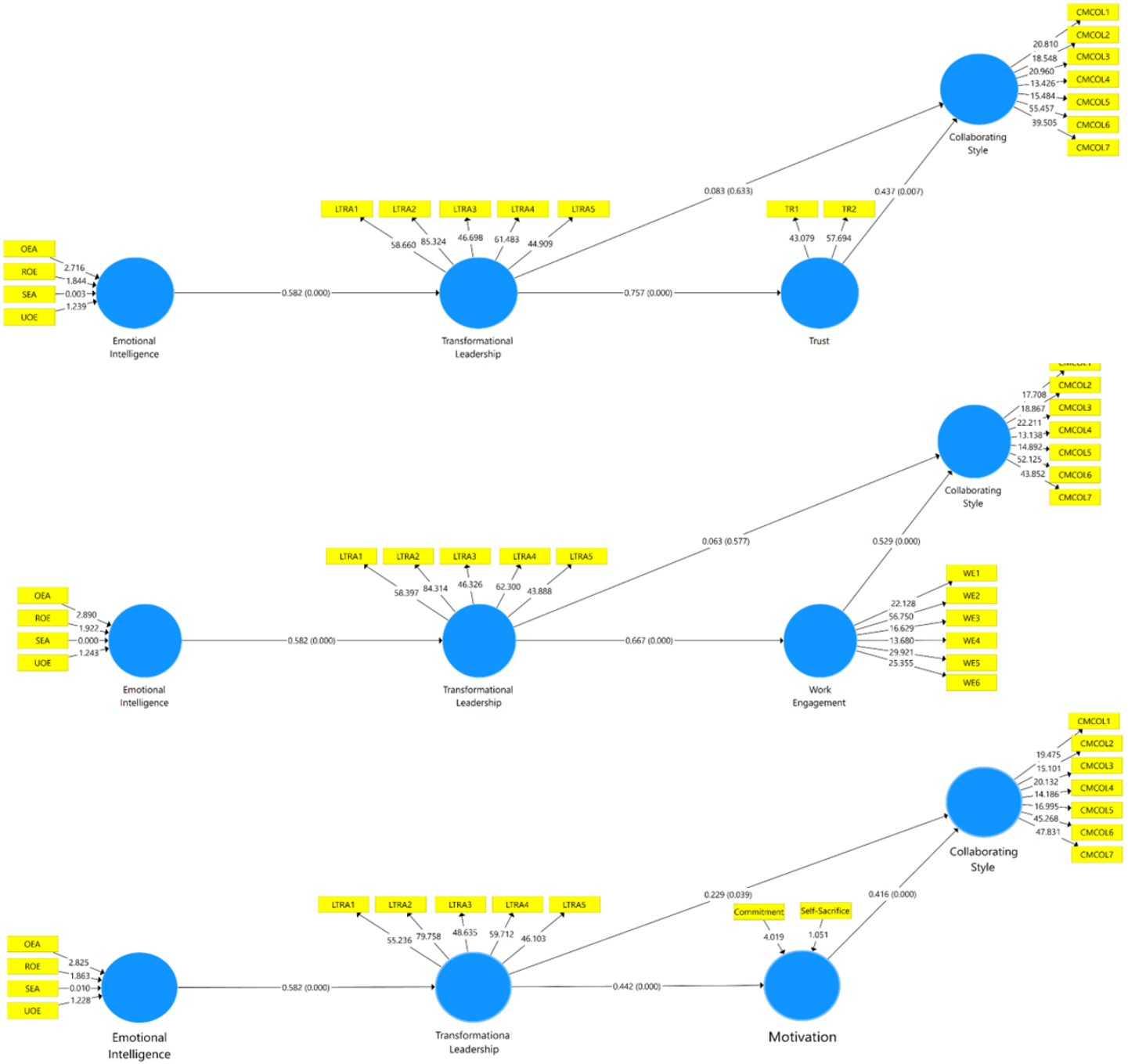

Figure 4 *Proposed model of transformational leadership related with mediators (with path-coefficients and p-values*

Table 7 *Results of the hypothesized mediation model (Transformational Leadership)*

Independent Variable	Mediator	Dependent Variable	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Hypotheses Support
Transformational Leadership	⟶	Collaborating Style	**0.083^{ns}**	0.477	**0.633**	**H6a Supported**
Transformational Leadership	Trust	Collaborating Style	**0.331***	2.483	**0.013**	
Transformational Leadership	⟶	Collaborating Style	**0.063^{ns}**	0.558	**0.577**	**H7a Supported**
Transformational Leadership	Work Engagement	Collaborating Style	**0.353*****	4.248	**0.000**	
Transformational Leadership	⟶	Collaborating Style	**0.229***	2.045	**0.041**	**H8a Supported**
Transformational Leadership	Motivation	Collaborating Style	**0.184****	2.830	**0.005**	

Note: *indicates significant paths: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ns (not significant).

4.2.2. Passive/Avoidant Leadership and the mediators

Trust, work engagement, and motivation were hypothesized to negatively mediate the relationship between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style of conflict management. We will examine that correlation one by one, as far as the mediators are concerned. Proceeding with, trust, the correlation between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style is not significant whereas trust negatively mediates the relationship between the pre-mentioned variables (O= -0.155, p<0.05 and t-statistics=2.463). Therefore, hypothesis 6b is supported. Secondly, work engagement negatively mediates the relationship between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style of conflict management (O= -0.118, p<0.50 and t-statistics 2.151), while the correlation between the independent and dependent variables in not significant. Thus, hypothesis 7b is supported.

Finally, neither the correlation between passive/avoidant leadership with the avoiding style of conflict management, nor the motivation as a mediator between them were significant. As a result, hypothesis 8b is rejected. To conclude, the bootstrap results supported full mediation for hypothesis 6b and 7b, while hypothesis 8b is rejected. All the results are presented in figure 5 on the next page, whereas Table 8 summarizes the results of this part of the study.

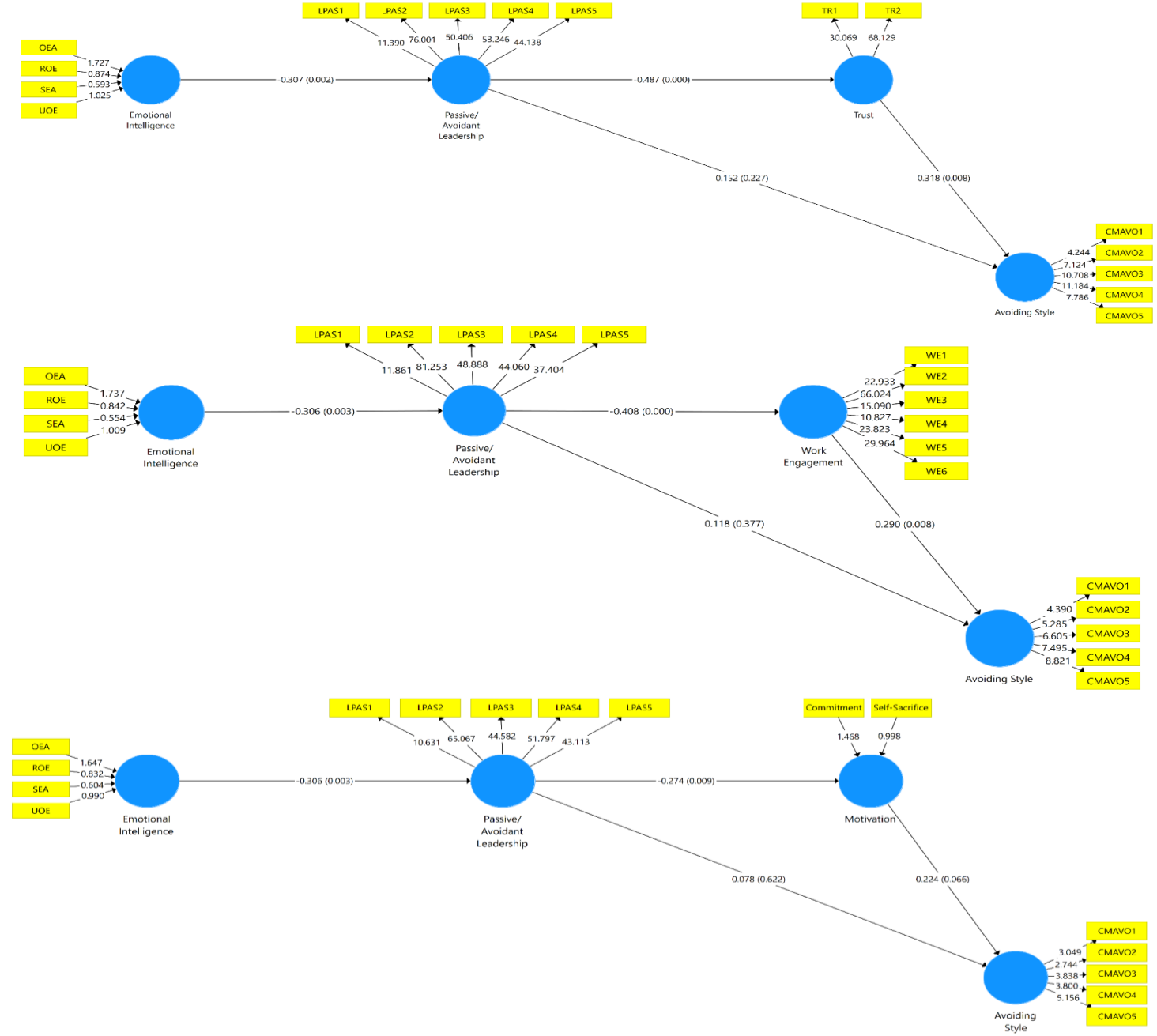

Figure 5 *Proposed model of passive/avoidant leadership related with mediators (with path-coefficients and p-values)*

Table 8 *Results of the hypothesized mediation model (Passive/Avoidant Leadership)*

Independent Variable	Mediator	Dependent Variable	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Hypotheses Support
Passive/Avoidant Leadership	⟶	Avoiding Style	**0.152^{ns}**	1.207	**0.227**	
Passive/Avoidant Leadership	Trust	Avoiding Style	**-0.155***	2.413	**0.016**	**H6b Supported**
Passive/Avoidant Leadership	⟶	Avoiding Style	**0.118^{ns}**	0.883	**0.377**	
Passive/Avoidant Leadership	Work Engagement	Avoiding Style	**-0.118***	2.173	**0.030**	**H7b Supported**
Passive/Avoidant Leadership	⟶	Avoiding Style	**0.078^{ns}**	0.493	**0.622**	
Passive/Avoidant Leadership	Motivation	Avoiding Style	**-0.061^{ns}**	1.425	**0.154**	**H8b Rejected**

Note: *indicates significant paths: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ns (not significant).

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Theoretical Implications

The purpose of this study was to develop a measure and provide evidence concerning the effects of emotional intelligence in two different leadership styles and the correlation among these leadership styles with the collaborating and avoiding styles of conflict management in a specific number of military officers. Additionally, we examined if the work engagement, trust and motivation variables mediate the relationship between leadership and conflict management. Finally, we sought to address whether age and gender can have an effect on the levels of emotional intelligence. Combining all the above-mentioned, the present study was intended to contribute to various aspects of human resources management literature.

First of all, concerning military organizations, there is a limited number of research that has taken place in the past and especially research examining the correlation of all variables included in the present study. Military organizations are considered as highly organized institutions where hierarchy is applied at all levels. Additionally, contrary to many organizations, it is considered to be a "restricted" organization which yet provides a high quality of leaders (Wong et al, 2003). We could support that this study furthers the field of emotional intelligence, conflict management, leadership in general and military leadership in particular, while it contributes to leadership literature by understanding emotional intelligence in relation to military leadership.

Moreover, this study could be a trigger for researchers to examine the pre-mentioned relationships within organizations other than military, or to combine them with other practices of human resources such as HPWS that might have even more positive outcomes (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020). Many organizations suffer from intragroup conflict that may lead to turn-over intentions, thus reducing group performance (DeChurch & Marks, 2001). Future research might be fruitful in the scope of mitigating or eliminating the negative results of a poor leadership and relationship management in such organizations. In the following paragraphs we will discuss these relationships separately.

Regarding the correlation between emotional intelligence and age and gender, the results showed that age cannot predict the level of emotional intelligence of an individual and that is in accordance

with Mayer et al. (1999) who stated that emotional intelligence should increase with age but there is no significant research that supports the linkage between them. The same results were found about the link between gender and emotional intelligence. Gender has no influence on the level of emotional intelligence of an individual. This is also in agreement with Bar-On (1997) who conducted a research based on EQ-i. Other studies however indicated that females scored higher than males on specific tests of emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 1999; Mayer & Geher, 1996). According to Barret,et al. (2000), women show more complexity and articulate their emotional experience more than men. Nevertheless, when women do not use their emotional abilities and do not act as democratic leaders but instead, as autocratic leaders, they are more likely to be perceived negatively in the leadership role when compared to men (Eagly, et al, 1992). Petrides and Furnham (2000) suggested that women more often underestimate their emotional intelligence level, whereas men overestimate. In our study though, as mentioned earlier, no connection was identified among age, gender and emotional intelligence and that could be useful especially in a dynamic and changing military environment when it comes to diversity, promotions or even leader selection.

Another objective of this study was to determine the relationship among emotional intelligence and the two different leadership styles. We found interesting that emotional intelligence has almost equal but opposite effects in these styles. The results indicated a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership while in case of passive/avoidant leadership, emotional intelligence negatively affected these kinds of leaders. Emotionally intelligent individuals tend to be aware of their emotions (Mayer and Salovey, 1997a). Additionally, leaders with heightened emotional intelligence are prone to be more effective in inspiring others (Roush & Atwater, 1992; Atwater & Yammarino, 1997; Yammarino & Bass, 1990; Fleenor & McCauley, 1996; Sosik & Dworakivsky, 1998). Transformational leaders are constantly rated as being more efficient leaders than other styles, while they have been constantly linked with greater organizational performance and success (Lowe et al, 1996). As a result, in our study, emotional intelligence enhances transformational leadership thus making individuals “read” other people’s emotions more accurately, which ultimately means that they tend to be more effective in interpersonal interactions with their colleagues (Mayer et al., 2000b).

Contrary to the previous statement, the negative correlation between emotional intelligence and passive/avoidant leadership means that the more “emotionally intelligent” a leader is, the less likely it is for them to be passive/avoidant. This might progressively lead in switching to other leadership

styles, more inspiring than passive/avoidant, and new strategies that might bring about more positive outcomes. Such leadership styles, that have not been analyzed in the present study but are referred extensively in the existing literature, are e.g. the charismatic (Shamir et al., 1998), the goal oriented and the involving leaders (Hersey & Blanchad, 1969; 1993; Bass & Avolio, 1996; Goffe & Jones, 2000; Higgs & Rowland, 2003). As Mayer and Salovey (1997a) suggest, emotionally intelligent people tend to manage their negative emotions while enhancing the expression of the positive ones.

Another objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between leadership styles and conflict management styles. Our assumptions were both confirmed leading us in the hypothesized and expected results. Transformational leadership is positively connected with collaborating style of conflict management. As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs of literature review, this style of conflict management focuses on problem solving using collaborative methods and communication skills to find a solution (Hocker & Wilmot, 1998), and it is considered to be a direct and cooperative style of conflict management (Blake & Mouton, 1964). These characteristics could not be more fitting with transformational leaders, who are generally considered to be highly effective individuals, concerned about the wellbeing of their employees and who are characterized by their motivational methods, great communication skills and idealized influence (Bass, 1990).

Contrarywise, based on Kahn et al (1964), passive/avoidant leaders tend to lack guidance to their subordinates and sharing information. That could heighten role ambiguity and increase the likelihood of subordinates experiencing conflicts because passive leaders would be inactive in delegating tasks and managing interpersonal processes. For example, Hauge, et al. (2007) found that passive/avoidant leaders were related with role ambiguity and conflict generation. Consequently, passive avoidant leadership matches with the avoiding style of conflict management, in which individuals have a tendency to be indirect and uncooperative, while trying to avoid dealing with a conflict (Hocker & Wilmot, 1998).

To conclude, matching the results of the first two objectives and combining them with the military environment, we could support that emotional intelligence enhances transformational leadership while decreasing passive/avoidant leadership style, making individuals even more effective, not only as leaders, but also as peers, subordinates etc. Emotional intelligence might also reduce and sometimes even eliminate harmful and stressful behaviors among colleagues, reducing conflicts as

a consequence. As emotional intelligence increases, a passive/avoidant leader might evolve into other styles of leadership, even transformational, which might subsequently lead to a shift of conflict management style into a more collaborative way.

On the second part of this study, we proposed that work engagement, trust and motivation will mediate, positively or negatively, the two leadership styles and the two conflict management styles.

Commencing with work engagement, the importance of this variable is revealed as we had a full mediation between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management. That means that without work engagement we couldn't reach our desired outcome, the collaborative way of managing conflicts. There is a relation between positive leadership styles and work engagement which can be defined as "persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004, p.295). Several longitudinal studies have shown that positive leadership styles act as an antecedent of work engagement, for example authentic leadership (Mehmood et al, 2016) and transformational leadership (Salanova et al., 2011). Hence, the results suggest that transformational leadership affects collaborating style of conflict management in an indirect way through increased work engagement. The same results but in opposite way surfaced in the relationship between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style of conflict management. Work engagement fully mediates between the variable but in a negative way. Thus, we conclude that work engagement acts as a mean to prevent a passive leader being low in both effectiveness and appropriateness using methods that lead to avoiding or withdraw a conflict (Papa & Canary, 1995; Hocker & Wilmot, 1998)

Examining trust as a mediator, we have the same results as in work engagement. Trust fully mediates both the relationship transformational leadership with collaborating style of conflict management and passive/avoidant leadership with avoiding style, with the difference of negative mediation in the second case. Trust in leaders is significantly related to individual outcomes such as job performance, turnover intentions, job satisfaction and commitment to leader's decision. (Davis et al., 2000; Deluga, 1995; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004; Robinson, 1996; Simons &McLean Parks, 2002; Yang &Mossholder, 2010; Zhu et al., 2013). Additionally, if there is trust in the leader, personal motives and individual doubts can be suspended (Dirks, 2000), while acceptance to leader's motivational influence (Sweeny et al, 2009) or following directives and

taking risks may occur (Collins &Jacobs, 2002). However, some researchers argue that excessive trust can be disadvantageous, leading to exploitation (Deutch, 1958; Granovetter, 1985; Kramer, 1999; Langfred, 2004). If trust does not exist between leaders and subordinates, this can lead to high levels of monitoring and vigilance (Bromiley & Cummings, 1995; Langfred, 2004; Malhotra & Murnighan, 2002; McEvily et al., 2003). As far as military is concerned, lack of trust among military leaders and followers could eventually lead to subordinates refusing to follow orders, putting themselves and others at great risk (Lapidot et al, 2007). Trust in military leaders can be further explained by the person-situation interaction model developed by Endler and Magnusson (1976). They emphasize cognitive factors as the most important determinant of behavior in the interaction between the individual and the situation, although they also recognize the importance of emotional factors.

Finally, examining motivation as a mediator, we found that there is no significance between passive/avoidant leadership and avoiding style of conflict management. On the other hand, motivation partially affects the relationship between transformational leadership and collaborating style of conflict management. We could assume that transformational leadership affects collaborating style of conflict management in both direct and indirect way through motivation. This relationship comes in accordance with other studies (e.g. Wright et al., 2011; Rainney & Steinburger, 1999) who suggest that leaders will be able to motivate people to perform better when the mission is perceived worthwhile, especially in organizations characterized by strong service and community-oriented visions. In military workplace, individuals' motivation for their tasks appears to have a relationship with transformational leadership and collaborating conflict management style. Individuals motivated by internal self-concept emphasize accomplishing tasks and they tend to be achievement-oriented, self-motivated, and task-oriented (Barrick & Mount, 1993). Moreover, they perceive tasks as group-based responsibilities, and work toward accomplishing them with high perseverance, impulse control and strong determination (Moberg, 2001). Utley, et al. (1989) researched dispositional antecedents for conflict management and found relationships between need for achievement and use of collaborating style.

To conclude, leaders inside a military environment could find the results of this study as a useful "tool". Inspiring leaders are more effective (Wright et al, 2011) especially when it comes to difficult situations that might arise during missions.

5.2. Practical implications

Except from the theoretical extensions of this study, a practical view is also important. The findings suggest that emotional intelligence could be beneficial to the already highly effective military leaders. For example, in senior military officers, being more emotionally intelligent might increase awareness for a healthy mentoring relationship at work. This is because, as proven in the present study, emotional intelligence enhances both transformational and passive/avoidant leadership which goes in line with Mayer and Salovey (1997a) who stated that emotionally intelligent individuals tend not only to enhance the expression of positive emotions, but also to regulate the expression of negative ones.

Additionally, increasing motivation and work engagement may result in knowing which attributes contribute to trust, so that leaders can later work on developing these attributes (Brandebo et al., 2013) that will eventually provide an even better relationship management among military personnel. This could potentially reduce stress that would consequently lead to better solutions as far as conflict management is concerned. Resolving conflict fruitfully means that through a possibly "negative" situation, positive outcomes will finally emerge.

As mentioned in the theoretical implications section, emotional intelligence has a positive impact in both leadership styles. The better the leader one is, the more effective they will be concerning military leadership in general. Especially when it comes to enhancing trust, work engagement and motivation, it is suggested that these will produce more positive results (Bro et al., 2016; Brandebo et al, 2013). The pre-mentioned statement could greatly benefit military organizations if emotional intelligence training is incorporated into their curriculum. This is compliant with the research supporting that organizations should invest in emotional intelligence training of a leader as it may be beneficial for both the leader and the organization (Barling et al, 2000). This training could benefit all military personnel, from the low-ranking officers to senior ones who will be equipped with the appropriate skills for even more effective leadership.

The military will always be a fertile ground for researchers, as leaders and military members in general, abound and view both quantitative and qualitative assessments as a routine. By investigating relationships among emotional intelligence, leadership, conflict management and the mediation role of work engagement, trust and motivation provided some interesting outcomes. The

SEM allowed multiple relationships to be tested simultaneously. Nevertheless, due to the complexity of the model, the number of variables included and other limitations that will be referred below, interpretation and generalization of the results ought to be cautionary.

5.3. Limitations and suggestions for future research

To begin, one limitation of the study was the potential for single-source bias. The sample was limited to a segment of military officers who belong to different units. This may result in common method variance (CMV). Even though it is generally assumed that CMV can inflate construct relations relative to the true population effect, CMV can lead to deflated construct relations as well (Siemsen, et al., 2010). In order to minimize CMV, such as consistency biases, and demand characteristics, in the present study we incorporated suggested procedural remedies as follows (Podsakoff et al., 2012): a) confidentiality of responses, such as anonymity and location, b) no other data collection, such as emails, phone numbers etc., except for the demographics, and c) the measures and items were selected and developed to minimize the cognitive demands of the survey. Additionally, the percentage of the sample is quite small, relatively with the whole amount of military personnel, thus again a note of caution is required before any conclusive generalizations can be produced from our results.

A second limitation, for example between leadership and motivation is what researchers call, social desirably bias. Leaders feel induced to present their behavior as more active and "socially desirable" than it actually is (Meier & O'Toole, 2012). Existing studies revealed that employees' reports of leadership behavior are more strongly related to objective representation of performance measures than leaders' reports. The reason for this could be that leader behavior must be perceived by the employees to have an effect on their effort and, therefore, on their performance (Jacobsen & Andersen, 2015).

A third limitation is that there was no distinction between leaders, supervisors or subordinates, as potentially and during a specific period of time, roles in workplace can be interchangeable. For example, when a supervisor may be absent for a short time due to personal issues, the next in hierarchy will shoulder his duties and become supervisor for that period of time and consequently act differently around his subordinates. Hence, e.g as Rahim suggests in his work in conflict

management (Rahim, 1985, 1986; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979) that there may be important differences in how conflict styles are perceived based on whether the controversialists are peers, supervisors or subordinates. As such, we cannot extrapolate our finding beyond this sample. In future research, grouping individuals with the same roles or in case of interchangeable roles, to specify it at the beginning of the questionnaire, may result in even more interesting outcomes between variables. Moving a step further, the difference in culture between branches could possibly lead to different outcomes so it is recommended that future research should explore the relationships mentioned in the present study separately, within more specific military groups such as the Army, Navy, Air Force etc.

A different limitation concerning emotional intelligence is that the outcomes deriving from the WLEIS (Wong et al, 2002) questionnaire were based in the ability-based model (Mayer & Salovey, 1997a). For example, Bar-On's (1997) mixed model, uses EQ-i as a measurement tool. According to some authors, EQ-i is not much more of a measure of personality (Livingstone & Day, 2005; Newsome et al., 2000). As a result, a future exploration using psychometric properties of emotional intelligence and how it affects leaders may lead to different outcomes. Barling et al, (2000) state that accurate measurement of emotional intelligence may prove advantageous for the selection and training of military leaders. Other research has suggested that emotional intelligence may be used in organizations to select effective leaders (George, 2000; Kobe et al., 2001). It is advisable for future research to empirically examine the mixed-model (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman et al, 2002) of emotional intelligence measures in relation to effective leadership behaviors, specifically in a military context.

Concerning emotional intelligence and military leadership, the issue of training leaders to enhance their emotional intelligence surfaces. The ambiguity of construct validity of emotional intelligence makes it difficult to determine a starting point at which a leader needs development and that is an issue that should be examined in the future. Furthermore, specific methods for the training to enhance emotional intelligence in leaders, especially in a military context should be investigated and applied.

Another related issue involves examining how much emotional intelligence is too much. According to Sosik and Dworakivsky, (1998) leaders who are characterized of having very high levels of emotional management may use these abilities for their own self-interests (e.g manipulating

followers through emotional regulation for their own personal benefit). This question should also be addressed in future research.

One more limitation is about conflict management. Questionnaire measures of conflict are likely to be biased due to participants' trend to answer in a socially desirable way. Additionally, conflict data are often dyadic in nature (studying both sides of conflict simultaneously) and in that case researchers have to deal with a methodological problem with the dependency of the data and guaranteeing anonymity (Van de Vliert, 1998; Kenny, 1996). Conflict research in general, needs careful introduction, application and reporting to participants. In future research, in questionnaires, instead of using word "conflict", it might be helpful to emphasize that one wants to examine correlates of collaboration and interpersonal relationships.

Reaching the end of this study, it is worth saying that today's military is an interesting blend of tradition and change. Newly applied technologies affect information spreading, change strategies, leadership methods and even more the relationships among the members of a military organization. Especially leadership remains inextricably intertwined with the military at every level. There is hierarchy and commands that are expected to be followed and respected undoubtedly, especially in phases such as crisis or warfare. Collaboration among members of a team and mutual trust is crucial and of utmost importance in order to achieve the goal, ergo the accomplishment of the mission.

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