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**Impact of transformational leadership and
emotional intelligence of the leaders on
organizational innovation through subordinates'
innovative work behavior**

Aviation Business perspective

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ABSTRACT:

This study examines the influence of transformational leadership on organizational innovation through subordinates' innovative work behavior and the role of leaders' emotional intelligence. In today's competitive, fast changing and complex business environment, organizations face continuous changes, pressure to solve environmental and societal issues and at the same time enhance organizational productivity and profitability in order to compete with other organizations on the market. Moreover, this thesis examines the topic from the aviation perspective as the field is under continuous transformation and the organizations operating on the field are pressured to generate innovative ways to meet sustainability and environmental requirements but on the other hand are strictly controlled by the safety and risk management which can influence on the innovative work behavior.

However, Prior studies on this topic have shown positive correlation between transformational leadership and organizational innovation as transformational leadership has been identified as a leadership style which tend to motivate and inspire employees, and the emotional competences of the leader has been research to support the effect of TL on subordinates. Prior literature focuses moderators, causalities and impacts of TL on organizational innovations and therefore some gaps remain in the literature. This study examines the relationship between transformational leadership (TL), Emotional intelligence (EI) and subordinates' innovative work behavior (IWB). Based on the prior literature and the aim of this study, this thesis includes conceptual research model. Qualitative research method was chosen to be most appropriate research method to gain insights from the leaders' perspective on how they perceive emotional intelligence and how TL and EI influence on their subordinates' innovative work behavior.

Four manager/leaders from the aviation field were interviewed and the interview data was analyzed by using thematic analyzing method. The results of this study indicate that transformational leadership has positive influence on organizational innovation which is aligned with the prior literature. Moreover, the result of this study showcases that transformational leadership shapes work environment and work culture for subordinates to feel trusted, encouraged and motivated to use IWB which can lead to new organizational innovations. The role of emotional intelligence of the leaders was found to help leaders to understand individual needs especially during change period and therefore could be utilized in the future when leaning towards a more individualistic leadership approach which was found to be effective way to fill subordinates' needs for guarantee the ability for their IWB.

KEYWORDS: Transformational leadership, Emotional intelligence, Innovation, Organizational innovation, Innovative work behavior

VAASAN YLIOPISTO**Johtamisen yksikkö**

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TIIVISTELMÄ:

Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee muutosjohtajuuden vaikutusta organisaation innovaatioon alaisten innovatiivisen työkäyttäytymisen kautta sekä johtajien tunneälyn roolia tässä yhteydessä. Nykyisessä kilpailullisessa, nopeasti muuttuvassa ja monimutkaisessa liiketoimintaympäristössä organisaatiot kohtaavat jatkuvaa muutosta, paineita ratkaista ympäristöön ja yhteiskuntaan liittyviä kysymyksiä sekä samalla parantaa organisaation tuottavuutta ja kannattavuutta kilpaillakseen muiden organisaatioiden kanssa markkinoilla. Tarkemmin, tämä tutkielma käsittelee aiheita ilmailualan näkökulmasta. Ilmailuala on jatkuvassa muutoksessa sekä alalla toimivat organisaatiot kokevat painetta kehittää innovatiivisia tapoja täyttää yhteiskunnalliset sekä lakisääteiset kestävyys- ja ympäristövaatimukset, mutta toisaalta ilmailualalla operoivien organisaatioita valvotaan tiukasti turvallisuus- ja riskienhallinnan osalta, mikä voi vaikuttaa innovatiiviseen työkäyttäytymiseen ja siihen, miten muutosjohtajuus toimii tässä kontekstissa.

Aiemmat tutkimukset tästä aiheesta ovat osoittaneet positiivisen korrelaation muutosjohtajuuden ja organisaation innovaation välillä, sillä muutosjohtajuus on tunnustettu johtamistyyli, joka motivoi ja inspiroi työntekijöitä. Johtajan emotionaalisten kyvykkyyksien on todettu tukevan muutosjohtajuuden vaikutusta alaisten työskentelyyn. Aiempi kirjallisuus keskittyy muutosjohtajuuden moderaattoreihin, kausaaliteetteihin ja vaikutuksiin organisaation innovaatioihin. Näin ollen kirjallisuudessa on edelleen löydettävissä aukkoja, joita ei olla vielä tutkittu. Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee muutosjohtajuuden, tunneälyn ja alaisten innovatiivisen työkäyttäytymisen välistä suhdetta. Aiemman kirjallisuuden ja tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteiden pohjalta tämä tutkielma sisältää käsitteellisen tutkimusmallin. Laadullinen tutkimusmenetelmä valittiin sopivimmaksi menetelmäksi, jotta havainnoitaisiin johtajien näkökulmasta sitä, kuinka he kokevat tunneälyn vaikutuksen ja tarpeellisuuden tässä kontekstissa ja kuinka muutosjohtajuus sekä tunneäly vaikuttavat alaisten innovatiiviseen työkäyttäytymiseen.

Tutkimuksessa haastateltiin neljää ilmailualalla työskentelevää johtaja sekä esihenkilöä. Haastattelutiedot analysoitiin käyttämällä temaattista analyysimenetelmää. Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että muutosjohtajuus vaikuttaa positiivisesti organisaation innovaatioon, mikä on linjassa aiemman kirjallisuuden kanssa. Lisäksi tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että muutosjohtajuudella kyetään muokkaamaan työympäristöä ja työkuilttuuria niin, että alaiset kokevat itsensä luotetuiksi, rohkaistuuksi ja motivoituneiksi käyttämään innovatiivista työskentelytapaa, mikä voi johtaa lopulta uusiin organisaation innovaatioihin. Johtajien tunneälyn rooli havaittiin auttavan johtajia ymmärtämään yksilöllisiä tarpeita erityisesti muutostilanteissa, ja sitä voitaisiin hyödyntää tulevaisuudessa siirryttäessä kohti yksilöllisempää johtamisotetta, joka todettiin tehokkaaksi tavaksi täyttää alaisten tarpeet ja taata heidän kykynsä innovatiiviseen työskentelyyn.

AVAINSANAT: Transformational leadership, Emotional intelligence, Innovation, Organizational innovation, Innovative work behavior

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1 Introduction

International organizations are facing new challenges caused by the globalization and the rapidly changing business environment. Some of the key challenges relate to talent and workforce challenges, social responsibility, digital transformation, and economic disparities. Customers, investors, and employees' are questioning organizations to participate on solving global issues and challenges. Organizations are required to solve environmental issues but at the same time enhance organizational productivity and profitability, generate innovative work behaviour and overall produce organizational innovation to compete with other companies on the market. To solve environmental issues and enhance organizational processes, productivity and profitability, organizational innovation should be one the focus as innovation is a source of competitive advantage. To achieve innovation among employees, organizations must motivate innovative work behaviour among employees.

Existing research emphasizes that one of the ways to stimulate innovative behaviour of an employee is through leadership. As international organizations are required to react in the changing business environment, it is clear that leadership should also evolve to enhance business performance and possibly increase organizational innovation through leading employee's the greatest possible way. That is why leadership development play crucial role in creation of organizations long-term and strategic goals for balancing the expectations of multiple stakeholders with the targeted profitability expectations of an organization (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). To support this statement, Katz and Khan (1996) indicated that leadership exists because of the changing business environment which organizations are affected by.

Studies of the relationships between leadership and organizational innovations have shown positive outcomes. Leadership and organizational innovation are complex

phenomena and there are many moderators and mediators that can cause, impact, or create positive relationships which is why this subject has been researched from various angles. Especially transformational leadership which is known to motivate and inspire followers has been connected to create the most effect on employees' creativity and innovativeness among their subordinates (Mittal & Dhar, 2015; Bilal & Waheed, 2019). Studies show that emotional competences of leaders support transformational leadership style and create effective leadership as leader's who are aware of their own emotions and others are able to agree with their subordinates the state of the used leadership style (Wang et al., 2016). As transformational leaders are known to be motivators and inspire their followers by creating trust and empowerment (Whu et al., 2003) it is rather fitting to research if emotional intelligence plays a role in this relationship. The aim of this study is to research the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) as a moderator between transformational leadership and organizational innovation.

However, plenty of research has been done between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence on organizational innovation, still research gaps remain under this subject. It can be mentioned that the role of emotional intelligence in the leadership's impact on innovation behaviour on the individual level has not been addressed in existing literature. Among existing studies of transformational leadership and organizational innovation, quantitative research dominates. It focuses more on the causalities, impacts, and outcomes, but the actual impact and essence of these relationships has not been covered. Hence to fill this gap, this research aims to focus on the role of EI in leadership and the way it further shapes the employees' innovative work behaviour by conducting in-depth qualitative research. Furthermore, this research takes a multi-level perspective by exploring the link between individual leader and the leader's impact on individual level.

1.1 Research questions and objectives

RQ 1. How does transformational leadership shape organizational innovation?

RQ 2. How do transformational leaders foster innovative work behaviour among their subordinates?

Research objectives:

- What is the role of emotional intelligence in the transformational leadership style and how it is revealed in practise?
- What is the role of emotional intelligence of the leader in the way employees' innovative behaviour is shaped?

The objectives of this study are to understand the influence which transformational leadership can have on organizational innovation and if emotional intelligence play a mediator between transformational leadership and organizational innovation. In additions, this study seeks to find if EI of transformational leaders plays a role in employees' innovative work behaviour.

1.2 Key concepts

This section provides the definitions of the most important and relevant concepts use in this study for the readers to get an overview of the key concepts and help to understand the aim of the study.

Table 1. Key concepts

Concept	Authors	Code
Transformational leadership	Burns (1978) Bass (1985)	(TL)

	Bass & Avolio (1993) Bass & Riggio (2006)	
Emotional Intelligence	Palmer et al. (2001) Dhani & Sharma (2016) George (2000)	(EI)
Innovation	Lam (2006),	(I)
Organizational Innovation	Noryzy et al. (2012) Lam (2006)	(OI)
Innovative work behaviour	Bilal et al. (2020) De Spiegelaere et al. (2014)	(IWB)

Transformational leadership is a style of leadership which focuses on motivating, encouraging and inspiring employees during needed changes in the organization to shape any processes or behaviours within the organization to achieve wanted goals. Transformational leadership can be used to create organizational culture, focuses on training and mentoring and inspire employees on independent working. (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993)

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to manage own emotions and other's (Palmer et al., 2001). Other scholars simply describe the EI to be the awareness and management of emotions and feelings (Dhani & Sharma, 2016; George, 2000).

Innovation is creating and achieving something new or to develop already existing things better to gain efficiency and achieve better outcomes which adds value. According to Lam (2006) "Innovation can be the process of creating or the outcome at the same time".

According to Noryzy et al. (2012) and Lam (2006) **Organizational innovation** refers to the creation or the adoption of behaviour that is new to an organization. The definition of organizational innovations includes the words "idea/behaviour" and "new".

Organizational innovation concentrates on creating value to the organization and emphasizes knowledge-based behaviour and ideas.

Innovative work behaviour can be defined as the organizational innovative performance of an individual or a group to apply new ideas (Bilal et al., 2020). According to De Spiegelaere et al. (2014) IWB as a concept has strong overlapping with other concepts of innovation but the core of IWB is about employee's behaviour towards innovation.

1.3 Structure of the study

This study begins with an introduction of the thesis which includes background, research question, objectives and key concepts. The second chapter provides literature review of already existing studies of the topic and theories to gain deeper understanding of the topic; what has been already discovered and what gaps there still exists. From the literature review, theoretical framework has been formed for this thesis. The third chapter presents and compare qualitative and quantitative research methods and further justify the chosen methodology of the study. The fourth chapter presents the data collection of this study and describes how data has been analysed to gain research results. This chapter also discusses validity and reliability aspects of the study and presents ethical considerations. The fifth chapter presents research findings and connects the literature review to presents results. The last chapter provides discussion and a summary of the research findings, managerial implication, limitations of the study and suggestions for future research. Last pages include references used in the study and appendices.

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter consist of the literature review of relevant theories and prior literature to this study. Firstly, the study has been framed to focus only from the aviation industry perspective and therefore innovation within aviation industry will be explained. Secondly, the literature review gives an overview of organizational innovation (OI) and innovative work behaviour (IWB). Third section provides literate review of the influence and connection of leadership to innovation and follow-up how transformational leadership (TL) is being linked to OI. Lastly, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is being presented and the prior literature of its influence on OI and IWB. Based on the literature review, the conceptual model is being presented in the end of this chapter to illustrate the variables that this research is using and the relationship between these concepts.

2.1 Innovation in Aviation Industry

This study will focus on aviation industry aspect of how transformational leadership and emotional intelligence can influence on companies operating in the field and leaders' subordinates innovative working behaviour. As an industry which is dependent on adopting constant change and embracing innovative ways to create sustainable aviation, transformational leadership has an impact on how companies in the industry manage to successfully implement this. Even though aviation industry expands the transport industry, has a significant impact of the world's economy and is becoming an enabler of global business connecting the world (ICAO, 2024) it has faced issues such as COVID-19 and the political situation between Russia and Ukraine which change the industry rapidly and forced companies operating in the field to modify, adapt and innovate their business in order to survive the changed business environment. Other challenges and trends that the industry is facing is sustainability which has been recognized by worldwide and required to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals for which the industry needs to be changing continuously and create new ways to continue operating but in more sustainable ways.

However, safety and risk management are important factors in aviation and might limit the innovative work, for example International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) describes how innovation is part of the mobility aspect future aviation "innovation in technology and approaches (e.g. by redefining efficiencies in travel) are essential to redefining mobility. Cutting-edge technology, such as autonomous devices and ultralight materials, creates opportunities to transform the mobility system by enabling new business models and mobility services. Innovations abound in aviation, e.g. unmanned aircraft innovations; artificial intelligence; biometrics; robotics; block chain; alternative fuels and electric aircraft. " (ICAO, 2024).

ICAO questions how aviation can achieve growth in responsible and sustainable way which is why the topic of this thesis is relevant as the companies needs to create innovative culture and work behaviour in order to achieve these goals.

2.2 Organizational Innovation

Often when speaking about innovations, the idea goes to technological innovations. However, innovations can be methods of productions, markets, and any methods for organizing an industry. Organizational innovations are being described management or administrative innovations as it includes people management, allocation of resources or innovating change in organizational structures (Alves et al., 2016). On the other hand, organizational innovations can be looked from different perspective such as organizational structure which affects to the innovation flow, or it might be looked form the process perspective of how innovations are being developed and implemented.

Innovations are used in organizational change where the role might be to overcome resistance to change (Alblooshi et al., 2020). However, in today's complex business environment and globalized markets, organizations are almost demanded to create innovation to survive. Innovations can increase organization's competitive advantage by enhancing business performance. Organizations can create value for their customers,

improve internal processes or even participate on social responsibility. Innovations can also be used for security reasons as the digitalization has increased and created new threats for organizations and their consumers. Consumers and other stakeholders are appreciative of secure products and services which enhance the need for organizations to constantly to be creative and produce innovation. Another driving force for organizational innovation is environmental issues, many organizations are faced to create new innovative ways to make their processes more sustainable or they can create new sustainable innovative products for the markets and this way lure customers, increase competitive advantage and grow the overall business profitability.

Organizational innovation has been a relevant topic in the recent years and many scholars have been interested to research it from various perspectives. However, some studies have indicated an issue that organizational innovation and creativity has been mixed. The issue specifically has been raised when researchers have been using the concepts as they would be the same and have not clarified which one, they are researching. Even though this study is researching organizational innovation rather than creativity, it is relevant to explain the definitions of organizational creativity as many studies show the connection between the concepts and to clarify the difference.

Woodman et al. (1993, p.293) describes organizational creativity as follows “the creation of valuable, useful new product, service, idea, procedure, or process by individuals working together in a complex social system”. And the extension for organizational creativity is organizational innovation in which this tendency of creating new valuable products or services is successfully implemented for external use or brought to the market which support Hu et al. (2012) outlook of the two concepts. Hu et al. (2012) explain that organizational creativity is the process of generating new ideas, products, and services within the organization whereas organizational innovation is the complete process from the creation to implementation of the new ideas, products, or services. However, Hu et al. admit that organizational creativity plays the role of internal force for successful innovation as other scholars support this claim that creativity is the key contributor for

innovation even though the concepts are different (Amabile et al., 1996; Shalley & Perry-Smith, 2001). Based on the literature, it could be stated that organizational innovation is an umbrella term for innovative behaviour, organizational creativity and creative behaviour as these concepts are linked to form organizational innovation.

As this study research the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational innovation and the influence of leaders on employees' innovativeness, the next chapter will present the concept of innovative work behaviour (IWB) to give a deeper understanding of organizational innovation on the individual level which this study will research.

2.2.1 Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB)

Innovative work behaviour (IWB) can be described to be the organizational innovative performance of an individual or a group to apply new ideas (Bilal et al., 2020). This concept is an important factor for any kind of organizational innovation as the employees are creating new ideas and not the organizations (Mansoor et al., 2020; Gupta, 2020). The concept of IWB can vary from risk-taking to exploring new possibilities. Some key aspects of IWB are idea generation, creativity, problem-solving, risk-taking, proactivity, openness to change, collaboration and learning orientation. However, it is not only fostering creating new ideas but also actively implementing these for practice. IWB was initially launched by Scott & Bruce in 1994 and 1998. IWB continues to be topic of interest as innovative work behaviour is something that organizations are fostering which is why researchers are looking to find mechanisms that stimulate IWB (Afsar & Umrani, 2019).

Even though IWB has been studied already for a few decades, research gaps are identified. Farrukh et al. (2021) outline that more research should be done on how social networks influence workplace innovation. They state that social events and connection across teams could possibly enhance innovation strategies, but more empirical research

should be done to test these hypotheses. Also, Afsar et al. (2019) research findings indicate that crafting social job resources is important for IWB which supports the importance of social relations in the workplace. They also state that crafting structural resources and challenging job demands are essential for creating IWB. The research results indicated that the leaders play a vital role to create the job crafting by providing feedback, support and listening individual's desires. These acts were proven to motivate employees and achieve their crafting goals, moreover the study claims that transformational leadership is the most effective for employees IWB by motivating employees, increasing adaptability and productivity (Afsar et al., 2021). The results are supporting the reason why this study will focus on TL influence on organizational innovation through subordinates' IWB.

The literature review by De Spiegelaere et al. (2014) mainly focuses on discovering clear conceptualization of innovative work behaviour. De Spiegelaere et al. (2014) claim that innovative work behaviour should not be dependent on the results (innovative product) but rather focus on the positive outcome for the organization. They also state that such like innovation as a concept, innovative work behaviour overlaps with other concepts. Creative behaviour will be discussed next as it goes hand in hand with innovative behaviour but also to clarify the difference between innovative work behaviour and creative behaviour.

Creativity has been studied at different levels. The creativity theory by Woodman et al. (1993) describes individual creativity as a sum of past variables, cognitive ability, personality, knowledge, motivation, social and context influence. Group creativity is formed by individuals functioning, problem solving with each other and creating group processes. Social information such knowledge sharing enhances the group creativity. Woodman et al. (1993) highlights that even though group creativity is heavily influenced by individual creativeness, other factors such as diversity within the group or different characteristics will influence creativeness on the group level. Organizational creativity is a function of individuals, groups, and organizational characteristics in the other words

“the creative outcomes of complex social system” (Wood et al., 1993). To sum up why creative behaviour among employees is important in this context; in order to achieve innovative work behaviour, employees should generate creativity to produce innovativeness. Based on the literature and existing theories it can be said that organizational innovation is an umbrella term and under it is innovative work behaviour which involves individuals’ creativity.

2.3 The Influence of Leadership

“Leadership is the act that a person can do to lead others. Leadership can be a position in which a person is acting to lead others. Leadership has power as a leader can influence others to act for good or bad. Leadership is a process in which leader is influencing others to achieve goals. Leadership is a performance of influencing followers to act certain way. Lastly, leadership is a perception of values, norms, moral and ethical acts” (Manning & Robertson, 2022, pp. 5-6-).

The concept of leadership has been studied in various disciplines ranging from social sciences, humanities and professional fields (e. g. management and education) (Shafique & Loo-See, 2018). Leadership has been described to be one of the most complex phenomena with a long history in research in which the earliest models has been introduced in 19th century. However, constantly evolving changes in the business environment such as globalization, digitalization, and economic fluctuations have been shaping our understanding about leadership.

Researchers have introduced many different theories and models for leadership, but all can agree that effective leadership is a core for managing successful organizations. Benmira & Agboola (2020) studied the evolution of leadership theories (see Table 1 for the summary). First theories of leadership in 1940’s were based on traits that a leader is either born with or trained to have. However, in 1950’s this theory was noticed not to bring any advantages which led to creation of new leadership theories. Researchers

found a new way to look leadership which concentrated to the behaviours of the leader, or to the situation related to the leader and these shaped the new leadership theories. Behavioural theory argued that not only the traits of a leader matter but more the actual behaviour. In comparison, situational leadership theory highlights the role of an environment and how leaders should apply their behaviour to the context they are in. (Benmira & Agboola, 2020).

Table 2. Summary of the main leadership theories (Benmira & Agboola, 2020).

Era	Period	Theory	Description
Trait	1840s	Great Man	Focus on natural born leader
	1830s-1840s	Trait	Focus on identifying traits and characteristics of effective leaders
Behavioural	1940s-1950s	Behavioural	Focus on the actions and skills of leaders
Situational	1960s	Contingent and Situational	Focus on leaders adapting their style taking into account the environment
New Leadership	1990s	Transactional	Focus on leadership as cost-benefit exchange
	1990s	Transformational	Focus on inspirational style pushing followers to higher and higher levels of achievement

Even though leadership has been studied extensively, still several research gaps exist. These gaps chosen in this study relates to transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, and organizational innovation. Although, transformational leadership has studied to have positive relationship to organizational creativity and innovation (Lee et al., 2020) there still contains a lot of debates and incomplete findings such as the leader's perception towards EI, how EI impact to the leadership style and how transformational leaders' EI can impact on employees' innovative behaviour on the individual level which this thesis aims to understand.

2.3.1 Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership concept was introduced by James MacGregor Burns (1978). Burns discovered two concepts of leadership "transformational" and "transactional" leadership. According to Burns, transactional leadership concentrates on leading with a personality and ability to make necessary changes through the leader's own vision and goals whereas transformational leadership is set by motivating and inspiring others. However, Burns believed that these two leadership styles are the same but with different outcomes depending on what the leader and follower are offering each other. Burns (1978) illustrated the importance of subordinates in leadership and the leader-follower relationship.

Another researcher Bernard M. Bass (1985) studied transformational leadership and made a theory in which the extent of a transformational leader is measured by its followers meaning that the influence for a leader's can tell if the style of a leadership is transformational. Bass' point of view of transformational leadership differs from Burns (1978) as he argues that transformational and transactional leadership are separate concepts. Transformational leaders can re-shape organizational culture by first understanding the rules and procedures and then revisioning the shared values (Bass, 1985). According to Bass, transformational leaders seeks to motivate and inspire followers for

new ways of thinking and working and the followers will be influenced by the feel of trust between the leaders. Even though the core idea of transformational leadership is to influence their followers, leaders can learn and develop themselves in this process of empowering their subordinates and achieving the individual, team, and organizational goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Later, Bass & Avolio (1993) introduced a transformational leadership model which contains four elements which transformational leadership has *Individualized consideration, Intellectual stimulation, Inspirational motivation, and Idealized influence*.

Individualized consideration – This trait is built around the trust between the leader and the follower. The leader acts as a mentor by giving support on individual level. The follower acts and communicate through the motivation given by the leader. Through individual consideration, leaders are thinking the needs of their followers and based on these needs, leaders provide support. (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Intellectual stimulation – The leader value followers with independent thinking and encourage them for creativity. The core idea is to generate new ways of thinking and transformational leaders will stimulate this within their followers. To achieve this behaviour, leaders encourage followers by questioning their basic assumptions to generate risk taking (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Inspirational motivation – Without motivation there is no results. Leaders with inspirational trait are constantly motivating their followers to achieve future goals. When leaders achieve to inspire, the followers are naturally putting more effort to achieve common goals. (Bass & Riggio, 2006)

Idealized influence – This is the highest trait that transformational leader can achieve and often leaders with this competence are willing to take more risk and achieve high standards (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Charisma, energy, and other dynamic personality traits can stimulate followers to build trust and justification for the organizational vision,

values, and purpose. When followers believe and are influenced by charismatic leader it can create meaning for the work (Burns, 1978).

The sum from the history of transformational leadership is that the leader and their followers are thriving for common good, and they motivate each other's to achieve organizational goals (Burns 1978; Bass 1985; Bass & Avolio 1993). Even the leaders can be the ones who are learning new things when their followers are empowered to creative thinking on the individual level (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

2.3.2 Link between transformational leadership and innovation: Moderators and mediators

Transformational leadership has been studied for now many decades and continues to be part of leadership research topics. As the business environment is continuously changing along with the economic, environmental, and social aspects the leadership must keep in order organizations to succeed in the competitive and challenging environment. Transformational leadership is often used when organizations are facing significant changes or are in need of a new direction, specially creating innovative and technological solutions in the fast-paced industries (Benmiran & Agboola, 2021). According to Hautala (2005), transformational leadership creates higher effectiveness and better outcomes of performance in an organization.

Recent studies of transformational leadership have been connected to environmental and green innovation, organizational innovative climate and psychological factors.

As this study concentrate to understand TL influence on organizational innovation and what are the effects of transformational leader's on individual employee's IWB, already existing research on the subject will be next reviewed to get overall understanding of prior knowledge and literature of the topic.

Many scholars and previous studies about transformational leadership and organizational innovation have concentrated on the moderating and mediating variables as the interaction between these two concepts is complex to address. Scholars have researched the interaction between these two concepts from various angles and used different moderators to find specifics *when* transformational leadership can boost organizational innovation and mediators to find *how* transformational leadership can positively interplay as a mediator between transformational leadership and innovation.

Khan & Khan (2019) studied the impact of knowledge sharing, organizational learning and used social media as a mediator. Their study argues that there is a positive link between organizational learning and knowledge sharing to employee's innovation and they highly believe that transformational leaders who overlook this may decrease innovation creation among employees. Also, Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt (2015) study the connection between transformational leadership, NPD process, organizational learning, and innovation culture in which they propose that without knowledge there is no innovation in organizations. As transformational leadership strongly influences organizational learning which on the other hand plays crucial role for creativity it can be stated that through learning, organizations can enhance innovation processes (Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt, 2015).

Mittal & Dhar (2015) studied that transformational leadership can influence on employees' creativity and this way form creative work environment by acting as an example of creative leader or train their subordinates for creative thinking. The results also indicated that knowledge sharing behaviour as a moderator will increase employee creativity which could mean that in order to achieve knowledge sharing behaviour which can enhance organizational innovation (Khan & Khan, 2019), leaders should drive to foster creative work environment. However, Mittal & Dhar (2015) points out that knowledge sharing behaviour is only used when employees feel motivated and believe that it can bring creative outcomes. This supports the claim that leadership styles which foster knowledge sharing among employees such as transformational leadership can be

beneficial for organizations to enhance creativity and therefore increase possible organizational innovations.

Scholars have also been studying the exploration and exploitation innovation processes and have suggested that using both simultaneously will create better results than using either one or both learning process individually. Exploration process is based on learning and using new knowledge whereas exploitative process relies on existing knowledge. Dual organizational theory utilizes simultaneously exploration and exploitation learning theory (OLT). March (1991) argues that exploration learning behaviour can create innovation. However, exploitation learning behaviour is connected to implementation. This supports the idea of using both learning behaviours for creating and implementing organizational innovations. Dual organizational theory has been used and modified already for innovation (radical and continuous innovation). Feng et al. (2016) results indicated that the moderating role of radical change has positive relationship between transformational leadership and group level innovation behaviour.

According to Mokhber et al. (2018) idea generation moderates the relationship between innovation and transformational leadership. Proposing new ideas can be intimidating as employees might be afraid of the response they will get. However, idea generation amongst employees can increase organizational innovation which is why leaders should create a working environment in which employees feel supportive of generating ideas and presenting them. When employees naturally generate new ideas, it enables organizations to enhance their innovation processes (Mokhber et al., 2018). This supports Jung et al. (2008) statement that the relationship between leadership and organizational innovation is the strongest when the working climate is supportive for innovation.

2.3.3 The impact of transformational leadership on organizational innovation

The influence of transformational leadership on organizational innovation has been studied on different organizational levels; individual, team, organization, and external

level. Even though this focuses to understand the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational innovation on the individual level (between the leader and their subordinates), the playing moderators and mediators between TL and OI on the different levels are still somewhat overlapping which is why it is relevant to discuss shortly what has been studied on all these four levels.

Individual level

Ghosh, K. (2014) study showcased that individual creativity, and innovation has a positive association between the organizational innovative orientation and creativity climate. This is aligned with the hypotheses that leadership and especially transformational leadership which has individual and intellectual characteristics support creativity and innovation on the individual level. Other studies have shown that employee's with high self-efficacy are more creative (Tierney & Farmer, 2002; Gong et al., 2009) which can be again tied with positive correlation between transformational leadership as these leaders will delegate responsibilities, motivate, and foster employee's independent and initiative thinking (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Team level

Scholars have been identifying the positive correlation between transformational leadership and organizational innovation on a team level. Studies show that team with high collective efficacy has higher openness for new perspectives for working (Gibson & Early, 2007). Jung et al. (2003) suggests that transformational leadership can positively effect on team level innovation by creating working environment in which risk-taking and creativity is highly supported. Another, research mediator is knowledge sharing between employees in team level. Sharing ideas, information and suggestion may enhance the creativity process (Zhang et al., 2011).

Organizational level

Hu et al., (2012) introduce three possible mediators for positive relation between transformational leadership and innovation on the organizational level, employee identification with the leader, employee's perception of support for innovation and empowerment which falls under the organizational climate. If the organizational climate is highly supporting innovation there is higher impact on whether the employee's identify themselves with the leader. They also highlighted that employees in organizations that internally support innovations are more likely to be proactive towards creativity. Bass (1985) had already claimed that leaders who are able to give followers autonomy and support the empowerment can create creativity action as they feel more control of their own actions. However, Hu et al., (2012) point out that empowerment and psychological empowerment are separate factors.

External level

Organizations might need support from external sources to gain needed knowledge or resources. In this context, external level means outside of the organization's own competence, knowledge, and resources studied Internal and external support for innovation as moderators between transformational leadership and organizational innovation. The study claims that external support can act as a moderator between transformational leadership and organizational innovation because the effect of transformational leadership is stronger when external support is higher. They found that external support for innovations has more effect on organizational innovations compared to internal support for innovation itself. However, the study was conducted in small and medium sized organization in Turkey which they pointed out that in developing countries where innovation has not been the key driver in organization might have different results compared to organizations in developed countries.

2.3.4 The Summary of Transformational leadership and Organizational Innovation

To summarize the existing studies between TL and OI, it is relevant to mention that because of the extent number of prior studies and literature of this topic this study will not have covered all of them. This literature review has presented the most relevant literature, research, and reviews for this specific study. It is proven that transformational leadership has a positive influence on organizational innovation and employees' innovative behaviour (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Jung et al., 2003; Gumusluoglu & Islev, 2009; Khan & Khan, 2019). Many scholars have been focusing on the causalities and testing different mediators and moderators of which can influence positively between TL and OI. However, more research is needed to understand how transformational leaders can create these mediators such as supportive innovation climate, knowledge sharing, empowerment, or high self-efficacy which is why this research focuses to understand the influence of leader's emotional intelligence and what role it plays to create these mediators between TL and innovative work behaviour to enhance organizational innovation. The next chapter will go deeper in explaining emotional intelligence in this context.

2.4 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence (EI) is ability to manage own emotions and other's (Palmer et al., 2001). Other scholars simply describe the EI to be the awareness and management of emotions and feelings (Dhani & Sharma, 2016; George, 2000). Emotional Intelligence was first introduced as a concept by Salovey & Mayer (1990) and later Goleman (1995). From Salovey & Mayer (1990) study, three different emotional intelligence models have been proposed, ability model, non-cognitive model, and competency model. However, EI can be divided into two categories, ability EI and trait EI (Saha et al., 2022). Ability EI is based cognitive capacities, and the core idea is to understand, manage and facilitate own's and other's emotions whereas trait EI focus on emotional self-efficacy and personality.

Mayer & Salovey (1997) ability model supposes that emotions and processing of emotions are based on mental abilities. Their four-branch ability model includes four areas: the ability to perceive emotions, use emotions to facilitate thought, understand emotions and manage emotions. Bar-on (1997) non-cognitive model defines emotional intelligence as a set of non-cognitive skills, competences and capabilities which can be developed throughout life if trained whereas Mayer & Salovey (1997) ability model argues that the abilities are gained through age, time, and experience.

Another well-known competency model by Goleman (1995) can be divided into five competences, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness, and social skills. **Self-awareness** is the ability of knowing one's own emotions, preferences, intuitions, and resources. **Self-regulation** is managing one's own emotions and internal states such as self-control and trustworthiness. **Self-motivation** is controlling these emotions for reaching goals, achievements, and commitment. **Social awareness** can be displayed as empathy which is understanding others' emotions, needs and concerns. **Social skills** are the description of managing relationships with others such as communication, cooperation and collaboration abilities (Goleman, 1995).

2.4.1 Leading with Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence in the business context encompasses a set of skills and competencies that are essentials for successful workplace. Emotional intelligence has been linked to play a significant role in teamwork, communication, decision-making and overall organizational effectiveness. While the significance of emotions in the realm of leadership has been understated in the leadership field of research, there is evidence from the early stages of transformational leadership concept that emotions are connected. A meaningful example is Bass (1999, p. 18), who assured that "leadership is as much emotional and subjective as rational and objective in effect". Saha et al. (2022) found that based on their bibliometric literature review, the EI and leadership research has been researched over 25 years and was most influential in 2002 based on citations. However,

EI remains controversial subject in leadership as other scholars has found positive results towards employees' performance and organizational innovation. Despite the diversity of the literature, EI influences leaders and their followers and to understand emotions in the work environment is crucial for successful interaction which and should be research even more as a possibility for gaining useful knowledge. Kim & Kim (2017) states that "leaders with high EI are more likely to effectively influence employees by providing visions, inspiring them, encouraging their pursuit of intellectual competence, and attending to their specific needs".

Emotional intelligence is often seen as beneficial competence in the working environment and studies have focused on the positive influence of emotional intelligence. However, some scholars have pointed out that there is also a dark side in emotional intelligence in which individuals can use their emotional intelligence for their own interest not for the common good. Kilduff et al. (2010) study argues that people with high emotional intelligence influence their decision making and strategic behaviour which might lead to pursue personal goals not organizational goals. To quote Kilduff et al., leaders who have high scores based on Mayer & Salovey EI model are able to "perceive when someone else is sad or joyful; integrate this information into their thinking and decision-making; find the right words to describe and explain emotions; and skilfully regulate their own and other people's emotions and anticipate and manage their own responses to others' emotional displays." which can enable this strategic behaviour. Although Kilduff et al. argue that emotional intelligence has its dark side they state that it does not mean the individuals would use it purposely for the bad but rather the power and influence it can create.

2.4.2 Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership

According to George (2000) transformational leaders embodies an emotion-based leadership style as leaders initiate communication and connection with their subordinates through emotions. Chen et al. (2014) studied the relationship with TL, EI and work

performance. According to their research findings (p. 446-447), subordinates who perceive strong transformational leadership behaviour from their manager or supervisor were more motivated to work towards organizational goals and willing to do more.

Saha et al. (2022) reviewed a variety of studies of emotional intelligence and leadership. They found out that emotional intelligence is a competency that can build effective leadership when used. They argue that emotional intelligence can improve leaders' effectiveness which could elevate the effect of transformational leadership on organizational innovation. Khalili (2017) argue that leaders with transformational leadership behaviour have better influence on their subordinates compared to other leadership style and employees with high emotional intelligence have better relationship with their coworkers which can improve overall relationships among leaders and employees. Strong relationships create a powerful work environment where employees feel motivated to create new ideas.

Du Plessis et al. (2020) studied the role of emotional intelligence and autonomy in transformational leadership showed positive influence on employee performance. According to Du Plessis et al. (2020) not only leader's emotions play a part on organizational innovation but also employees' emotional intelligence can create positive outcomes of organizations business results. Leaders with a high level of emotional intelligence boosts employee cooperation, motivation and commitment which are studied to increase the level of creativity for organizational innovation production (Al-Omari & Hung, 2012).

Several theories have been used to research the connection of EI and transformational leadership. Saha et al. (2020) in their EI and leadership literature review classify the main theories to be affective event theory, EI theory, leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, social cognitive theory, social exchange theory and social learning theory. LMX theory focuses on the interaction between the leaders and the followers while highlighting the importance of high-quality exchange (Lecic et al. 2023). The core idea is that followers

feel empowered, motivated and loyalty by their leaders, so they are willing to do more than expected and seek creative and innovative behaviours. According to Chen et al. (2014, p. 439) individuals who are able to identify their feelings and emotions are more likely to improve workplace effectiveness. In order to achieve this, employees must know how to utilize their emotions during problem solving and understand other's emotions (Chen et al., 2014).

2.4.3 Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB)

Numerous studies have already explored the link between leaders' emotional intelligence and their subordinates innovative work behaviour and showcasing that EI can influence an individual's ability to create innovation in the workplace but also EI can also promote employee creativity and overall innovation climate within organization. However, findings from different studies may vary based on cultural differences or between different industries.

Existing studies have shown positive outcomes of leaders' emotional intelligence on subordinates' work motivation and positive emotions can trigger individual's innovative behaviour (Van der Linden et al., 2017; Anderson et al., 2014). Grosser et al. (2017) claim that through idea generation, idea promotion and idea realization, employees can establish IWB, but it requires motivation which is often achieved by positive emotions towards their work.

Wu & Wu (2019) study claims that people mimic other feelings, emotions and expressions during social interaction which is why positive and negative emotions of the leader influence their subordinates' emotions. They also revealed that positive emotional labour enhances employees' work motivation and engagement which improve their IWB. They suggest that supervisors should focus on their emotions for the employees to feel encouraged to present innovation. However, emotions can have a negative impact on employees' work performance and in this context on innovative work behaviour. Negative emotions of the leaders or supervisors will impact on employees'

emotions negatively. The influence of negative emotions can lead to emotional state which can create exhaustion and even depression (Bhave & Glomb, 2016). This emotional state has a negative impact on their IWB.

2.5 Conceptual Model

Based on prior research on the conceptual model (figure 1.) was designed to help create and guide for the data collection and analysis process. This conceptual model showcases the four factors that are being researched. What we do not know and what we are trying to create an understanding from this research results are:

1. How transformational leadership influence on organizational innovation on the individual level?
2. The perception of emotional intelligence by the leaders and its influence on their leadership?
3. What is the role of emotional intelligence of the leader in the way employees' innovative behaviour is shaped?

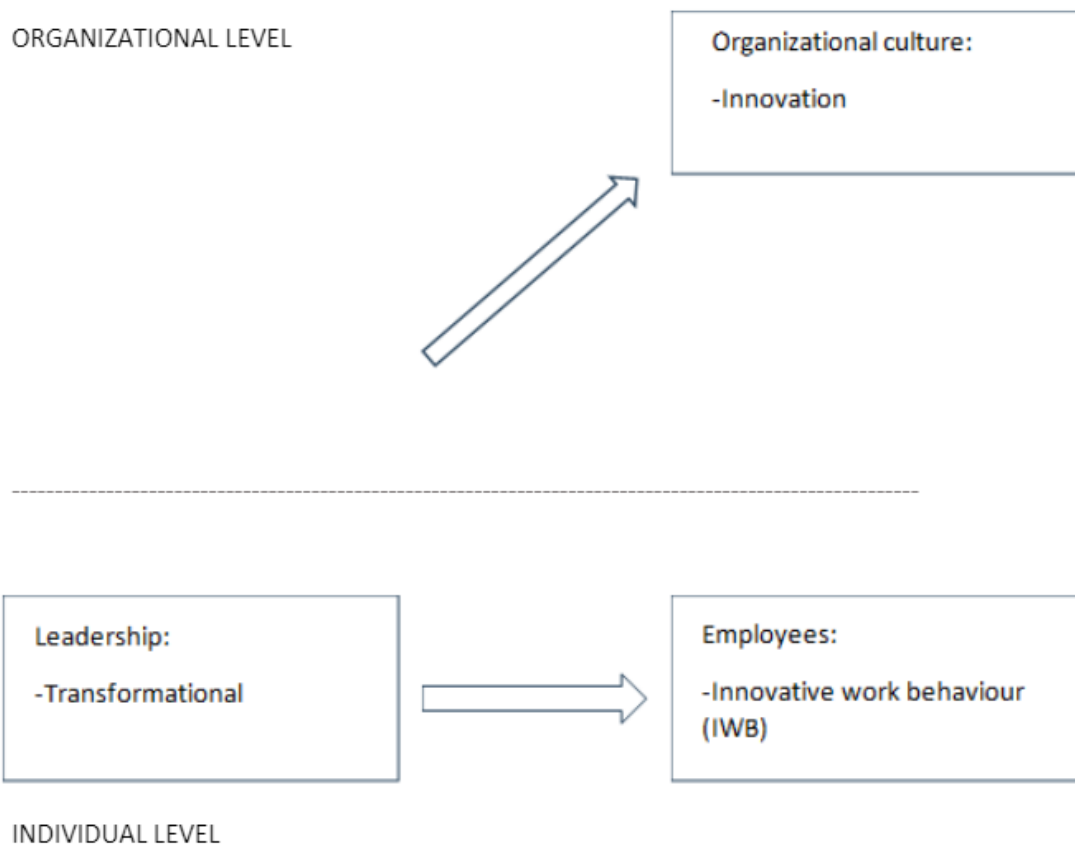


Figure 1. The Conceptual Research Model

3 Methodology

Research described as a straightforward way is the process of collecting information about something to our knowledge. In a scientific manner, research goes beyond only collecting information but creating a description of something and understanding of its existence. The main result is to find an explanation for the problem of the research and predict future events. (Oliver, 2010.) Methodology in research explains why and how the specific methods have been used in the research. Birks and Mills (2011, p. 4) describe methodology as “a set of principles and ideas that inform the design of a research study.”

3.1 Philosophical considerations

Saunders (2007) presents the philosophy of research to be the out layer of an “research onion” (see the image 1.) and describe it as “the development of knowledge and the nature of knowledge” (Saunders, 2007, p. 101). The first layer of the onion is research philosophy which means the belief of how data should be gathered and analysed. The philosophy is dependent on the research questions and objectives and reflects the assumptions serving the base for research strategy which is why it is the out-set layer of the “onion”. This study aims to understand transformational leader’s influence on their employees’ innovative behaviour and what role their emotional intelligence plays in this relationship which is why interpretive approach was chosen to be the most suitable philosophy to follow. According to Saunders (2007), interpretive research is commonly used in business and management research when studying organizational behaviour and human resource management which this study falls into. More detailed, interpretivism is often used when researching differences between people, which this study is trying to evaluate. However, some indications have pointed out that the disadvantage of interpretivism can be the nature of the approach as there is room for biasness and this will be considered when collecting and analysing the research

data to get the most non bias research results. Gioia et al. (2012) states that conceptualizing organizations and organizational processes have room for new theory development which is why qualitative research should be integrated more to generate new theories.

The second layer of the onion is the chosen approach for theory development. The deductive approach is based on forming a hypothesis from the secondary data used in the literature review and then testing the formed hypothesis during the process of collecting and analysing the data whereas inductive approach relies on detecting and observing first without specific hypothesis to create a new theory. One can say these two approaches are opposite to each other's as one (deductive) starts from the existing theory to test hypothesis and the other (inductive) starts from observations to create a theory. However, these two approaches can be combined in the research as this study will do. Graebner et al. (2012) state that qualitative research can be used even though prior theory of the subject exists but if the study examines the subject on the individual's perspective, inductive approach can be applied. The literature review (chapter 2.) indicated the deductive approach as it presents the existing theories of transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, and organizational leadership. To understand the perception and influence of EI on individual level of transformational leaders and the relationship between TL, EI and employees' innovative behaviour, this study will use inductive approach to collect new data to add for the existing literature.

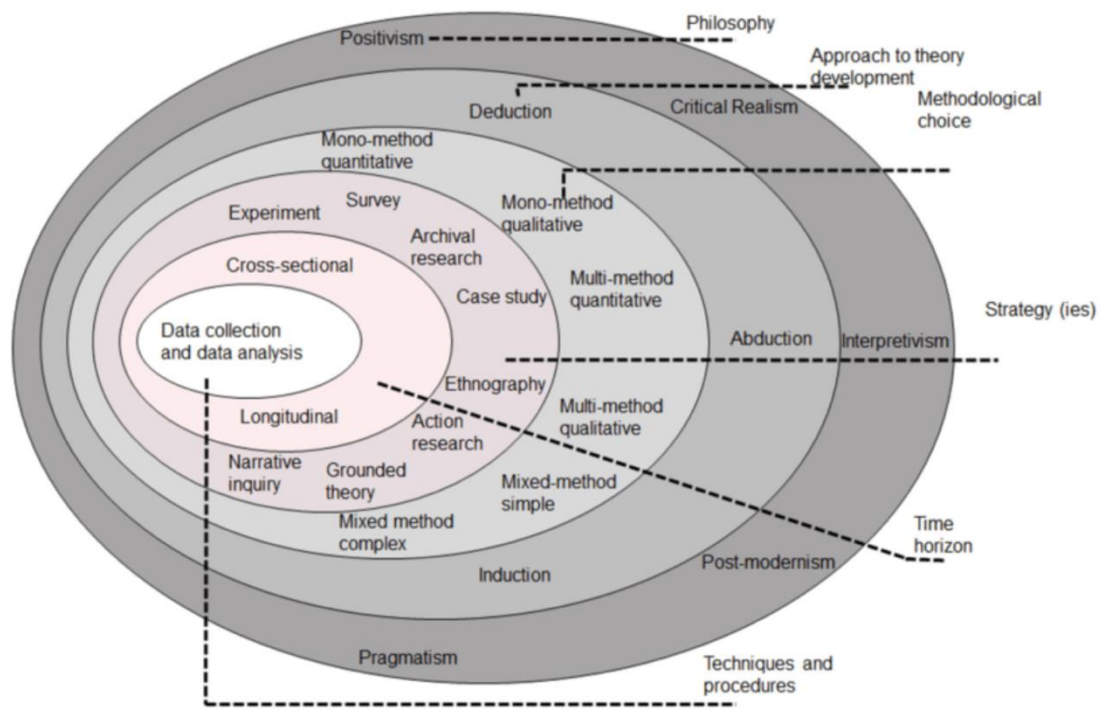


Figure 2. The research onion (Saunders, 2007).

The next layers of the research onion; methodological choice (research method), strategy (semi-structured in-depth interviews) and the techniques and procedures (data collection and analysis) will be discussed more detailed in the next chapters 3.2, 3.2 and 3.4.

3.2 Research Method

Research method is the technique used to collect data and evidence for the study. To select the correct methods for the research is crucial element for the study as it is the foundation of the research (Macdonald et al., 2008). The two most used research methods are qualitative and quantitative research. Erikson & Kovalainen (2008) claims that it is much easier to compare two types of research: qualitative and quantitative, than defining what they are. In the table 2. is clearly presented how these two

approaches differ from each other and explains different variations of research. Qualitative research approaches understanding and interpretation and answers to the questions “how” and “why” whereas quantitative research cannot allocate social and cultural it focuses on statistical analysis, testing hypothesis. (Erikson & Kovalainen, 2008; Brinkmann, 2013.) Qualitative research uses “open-ended” questions and is rather spontaneous than “close-ended” quantitative approach.

Table 3. *Comparison of qualitative and quantitative research approaches* (Mack, Wood- song, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005)

	Quantitative	Qualitative
General framework	<p>Seek to confirm hypotheses about phenomena</p> <p>Instruments use more rigid style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions</p> <p>Use highly structured methods such as questionnaires, surveys, and structured observation</p>	<p>Seek to explore phenomena</p> <p>Instruments use more flexible, iterative style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions</p> <p>Use semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation</p>
Analytical objectives	<p>To quantify variation</p> <p>To predict causal relationships</p> <p>To describe characteristics of a population</p>	<p>To describe variation</p> <p>To describe and explain relationships</p> <p>To describe individual experiences</p> <p>To describe group norms</p>
Question format	Closed-ended	Open-ended
Data format	Numerical (obtained by assigning numerical values to responses)	Textual (obtained from audiotapes, videotapes, and field notes)
Flexibility in study design	<p>Study design is stable from beginning to end</p> <p>Participant responses do not influence or determine how and which questions researchers ask next</p> <p>Study design is subject to statistical assumptions and conditions</p>	<p>Some aspects of the study are flexible (for example, the addition, exclusion, or wording of particular interview questions)</p> <p>Participant responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next</p> <p>Study design is iterative, that is, data collection and research questions are adjusted according to what is learned</p>

3.3 Qualitative Research

How something is done or experienced can be studied using qualitative research (Brinkmann, 2013). Qualitative research is typically unstructured and focuses on social sciences such as values, opinions and behaviour which is why this method was chosen to use in this study to research the influence of leaders in this context (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005). However, Dominika Maison (2018) states in her qualitative marketing research book that qualitative research has been evolving from only studying sociological information towards understanding psychological information such as understanding the individual and often unconscious, complex, and psychological process of values, needs and motives.

As this study aims to understand how transformational leaders perceive emotional intelligence and how the emotional competence as a phenomenon influence on the leadership style and then further how the leadership style and the emotional intelligence influence on employees' innovative work behaviour it is rather suitable to use qualitative research method. The goal of this study is not to find only one correct answer or solution but rather understand how each leader (individual) thinks and behave from which can be formed more common understanding. As the research topic has been researched from the quantitative perspective, the qualitative approach was chosen to gain a deeper understanding of human behaviour and the impact of the relationship rather than the causalities. Overall, the qualitative studies in International Business sector are narrow compared to quantitative (Piekkari & Welch, 2006, p. 568) which supports the research gap of conducting qualitative research on transformational leaders, EI, and organizational innovation. They also state that the competences of the researcher should be taken into consideration when choosing the research method which supported the decision to choose qualitative over quantitative as interviewing and observing people comes more naturally for the researcher in this study than analysing numbers.

Because qualitative research focuses on the human habits in everyday practices the method should include people (Flick, 2007) which is why the main method tools of qualitative research are observation, interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, discourse analysis and textual analysis (Travers, 2001). The next sub-chapter (3.2) will present the chosen tool (interviews) to observe leaders for creating understanding of the research objectives.

3.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

To be specific, this research will conduct qualitative semi-structured individual interviews to gain empirical data. Interview is a method for research where interviewee and the interviewers are having conversation about specific topic or topics. The main results are insights of people's values, opinions, experiences, attitudes etc. Qualitative interviews can be divided into four categories: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews (focused) and groups interviews (focus groups). (May, 2011.)

Semi-structured interviews include questions made beforehand to structure the interview, but the conversations are freer than in structured interviews. The main point is to allow the interviewees to answer how they want. (May, 2011.) "It is defined as an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008.) Semi-structured interview method was chosen because it allows to create the most natural environment for the interviewee to talk naturally about their own experiences without influencing their opinions but still ensuring that the conversation is on track with the aim of the study. As the study focus on the subject on the

individual level, focus groups is not suitable option to use as the interviewee wants to ensure that the interviewee feel safe and natural to discuss their own experiences and point of view without other's influence.

4 Data Collection and analysis

To gain data suitable for this study, the author contacted several people from the aviation industry working on leader and manager positions. As the research focus on understanding the influence of transformational leaders' on their subordinates' innovative work behaviour it was important to find people who identify themselves as a transformational leader or have led through transformations. In order to gain data from the organizational innovation and innovative work behaviour it was also important to find people who work in an organization that values innovation and is a part of their business strategic. In addition, the author tried to find participants who had different work positions and background to gain data that could be comparable.

4.1 Conducting Interviews

The interviews were conducted with four people working on manager and leadership positions in companies operating in the aviation industry which one of them is an airline and the other one is operating at the airport. The companies were chosen based on the aviation industry perspective of this study and the network connection of the author. The interviews were held both online and present between November 2023 and December 2023. The interviewees were sent the interview questions beforehand to be somewhat prepared but more detailed questions were asked during the interviews. However, not all the questions were asked during the interviews because of time constraints. The interviews were recorded for which all the participants gave their permissions before the interview. The interviews were chosen to be in Finnish as this language was all of the participants' native language. In order to gain as truthful and insightful answers the interviews should be kept on the native language to avoid any language barriers or misunderstandings. The interview recordings were transcribed to word document for data analysis. To save time, the transcripts were not translated to English which is the language of the thesis. The analysis of the data was conducted in Finnish because of the convenience and to be as coherent as possible with the language and the results. Only after using citations and when the final themes of the data

were formed the language was translated to English. Below (See table 3.) is a visual presentation of the interviewees; description of the company where they work, the position where they work, gender and how many subordinates they have.

Table 4. The list of interviewees

Code	company/Industry	How many subordinates	The work position	Gender
A	Airline company, Aviation	60 + 20 outsourced and 11 direct reports	Vise president, Global sales & Channel management	Woman
B	Airline company, Aviation	10 persons team	Manager, strategic planning	Man
C	Airline company, Aviation	Not available data	Vice president, re-source planning	Man
D	Airport company, Aviation	6 direct reports / leading 130 + 100 in the organization	Head of Passenger Services and Development	Woman

4.2 Thematic Analysis

Even though qualitative data analysis can bring deep insightful findings it has few points to be thoughtful to ensure the quality and trustworthiness of the research results. Analysing qualitative data can be time consuming and being objective might be more difficult compared to qualitative data analysis. Managing the data can also need good management skills as the data is often unstructured like interview transcripts which makes identifying themes and categorization more complex. Thus, overcoming these challenges, qualitative data analysis has several benefits such as finding

unexpected data because of the flexibility and non-structured data collection and analysis techniques.

Qualitative data can be analysed with different techniques and the five most common methods are content analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, thematic analysis and grounded theory. However, these methods can overlap when analysing data as the techniques share similarities. Content analysis method concentrates on grouping the data based on emerging words, concepts, and themes and thematic can be used to discover meanings behind these key themes. As these methods are similar and overlapping which is why often studies use them both. In order to keep the process simpler, only one method was chosen to use. This study will analyse the data using the thematic analysis method as it fit better the research goal to understand what causalities transformational leadership and emotional intelligence has on subordinates' innovative work behaviour and how the leaders achieve these causalities.

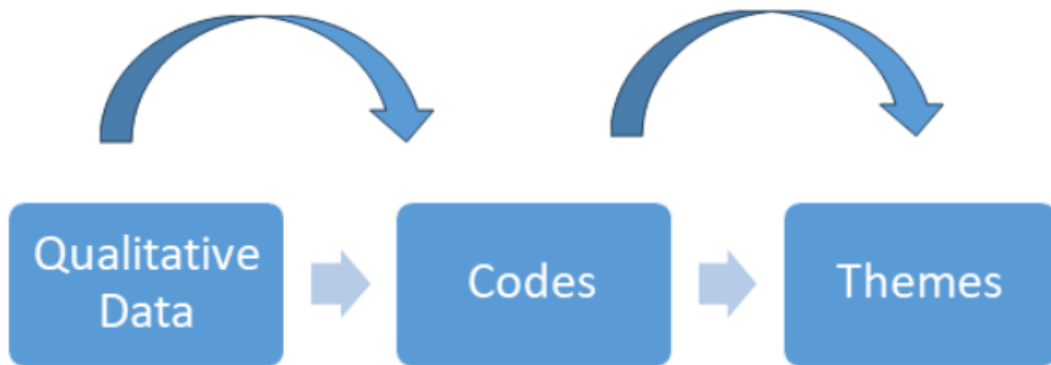


Figure 3. Thematic Analysis method.

The transcribed interviews were firstly read multiple times and then the most important parts were highlighted to leave out the filler words and other non-important phrases. From the highlighted parts of the transcripts the author started the colour code words or short sentences that were pointed out from the interviewees and gave in-depth reasons behind their answers. These words and sentences were then listed to see what things were pointed out by several interviewees, had opposite opinions or similarities. Based on this the words and sentences were grouped into themes. These themes are shown in the table 5. below.

Table 5. Research result themes.

Main theme 1: Creating environment	Main theme 2: Work culture	Main theme 3: Responsibility of emotions
Sub theme 1. Basic needs Sub theme 2. Open discussion Sub theme 3: Social network and relations	Sub Theme 1. Appreciation Sub theme 2: Values Sub theme 3: Risk-taking Sub theme 4: Encouragement Sub theme 5: Coaching Sub theme 6: Trust	Sub theme 1. Understanding individuals Sub theme 2: Emotional Support Sub theme 3: Self leadership

4.3 Trustworthiness

It is important to understand the role of reliability and validity as they affect to the credibility and trustworthiness of the research. Validity refers the accuracy of the findings reflecting the data and the goal findings of the research phenomenon whereas reliability refers the consistency of one's analytical research process. In the other words, another researcher will get comparable results and therefore the results are not dependent of the one researcher. Reliability and validity are key factors in any research thus the nature of qualitative research requires extra carefulness and considerations as the data can be easily interpreted by the researchers. However, qualitative research focuses on holistic experiences, phenomena and participants' beliefs values and experiences which differs from quantitative research. Therefore, in qualitative research reliability and validity are replaced with trustworthiness which refers to the richness, authenticity and depth of the data collected (Guba & Lincon, 1985).

Before the actual interviews, one pilot interview was held with a leader from research, development and innovation company and based on this interview the interview questions were modified for the actual interviews as it was noticed that not all the questions answered to the research questions and some of the questions repeated themselves. The interviewee and the companies they work for was held autonomous in the study to avoid interviewees feel uncomfortable to speak about the research topic. As the pilot interview enabled the author to modify the interview questions to be more focused and allowing the interviewees answer the research questions therefore trustworthiness of the interviews can be justified.

Interviews were held in Finnish as this way there wouldn't be any language barriers between the interviewer and the interviewee as for all the participants Finnish were their mother language. However, as the transcripts were in Finnish, the author needed to translate the used quotes into English which can be seen as a limitation to trustworthiness. The quotes are translated as similar as possible without changing the meaning behind of the original words and phrases. Another limitation for the trustworthiness was

the time limit of the study as the interviews conducted were held within one month and the author had set own personal timetable for graduating and therefore also the study had a time limitation as Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2009) believes that reliable qualitative study should have enough time to conduct.

4.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical point of view should also be considered when conducting qualitative research as it involves humans and their produced experiences. The ethical way of conducting qualitative interviews will allow participants to express freely their information and this way the data will be reliable as the participants feel safe to give honest answers. The data should only be used in a respectful manner in which the results will not harm the participants of the research. The research should also be transparent about the limitations as every research are facing some limitations and transparently give credits to other authors' work used in the research.

5 Research findings

This chapter will give an in-depth overview of the research findings. The research results are listed below (Table 5. Research results themes).

Main theme 1: Creating environment	Main theme 2: Work culture	Main theme 3: Responsibility of emotions
Sub theme 1. Basic needs Sub theme 2. Open discussion Sub theme 3: Social network and relations	Sub Theme 1. Appreciation Sub theme 2: Values Sub theme 3: Risk-taking Sub theme 4: Encouragement Sub theme 5: Coaching Sub theme 6: Trust	Sub theme 1. Understanding individuals Sub theme 2: Emotional Support Sub theme 3: Self leadership

The interviewees were asked how they would describe what is leadership for them and how their leadership style fit into transformational leadership. The interviewees believe that through leadership they can show their team the direction and the vision where the organization is going and provide context why something is done to create clarity as employees are more willing to follow change and adapt new ways of working when the reasons for it are being justified. The role of leadership was described to be the responsibility of creating work culture where employees can achieve the organizational goals.

“Guides people's attitudes and the operational culture of what is done”

– interviewee B.

Trust, beliefs, empathy and support were mentioned to be part of leadership as front-line work is seeing as a service profession where leaders need to behave in a way that appreciate others, and this way ensure that subordinates want to follow them.

The interviewees said that being transparent, understanding different needs and showing empathy were characteristics that were in line with transformational leadership because they believe that a good leader helps their subordinates to adjust to the ongoing changes. However, interviewee A strongly believes that there is not a difference anymore between leadership and a transformational leadership as the business environment is constantly changing which is why leadership should always be fitted in a way it is transformational.

“I have always been in a state of change, so I feel that transformational is the same leadership. I can't tell the two apart.” – Interviewee A

As the transitions and constant changes in the working environment bring uncertainty the interviewees think that creating safety, especially psychological safety is important which helps employees' clarity and safety in the transition process. Interviewee C thinks that explaining the reasons why the changes are being implemented is highly important for employees to understand why they should start doing things differently and move from the safe environment that they have created for themselves. In addition, in transformational leadership the individual approach is being mentioned by the interviewees for an important aspect as each individuals have different reaction to changes so to avoid resistance to changes and again, they highlight the fact that they try to listen employees' needs. One of the interviewees said that transformational leadership has thought them to understand different needs

“People basically have different needs, but in situations of change, those different needs are especially emphasized, and their consideration is particularly important, and a good leader helps people pace and adapt to the transformational leadership,

in practice it is always management of something, but to also consider individuals in the change.” –

Interviewee D.

5.1 Creating Environment

Based on the interviews, creating a working environment which enable subordinates to work independently, feel psychological safety, be inspired and supported by their leader are important factors in order to employees achieve innovative work behaviour and influence on organizational innovation.

5.1.1 basic needs

For employees to generate innovative work behaviour the work environment needs to allow that. The basic needs have to be covered such as employees shouldn't be overloaded with work as then there is no motivation or energy to allow them to be innovative. When employees are tired, they perform their work as a routine and do not allow them to be creative which is why assuring employees wellbeing, and the basic workflow is seen influential. Recovering from work is highly important and this is leaders' responsibility to ensure that. Work environment should also be safe and trustworthy where team members dare to speak up on their ideas even though these would be somewhat crazy.

“When things go well and the change is very beneficial, it inspires to continue the work, and it is reflected in the well-being of the employees and their desire to improve their own work” – Interviewee D.

As employees' wellbeing was seen important part of their motivations towards work, leaders were asked how this wellbeing is being secured and overload avoided. One of

the interviewees admitted that it can be a challenge and a topic that they have been discussing within the team. In the end the responsibility of wellbeing is on the individuals. However, the leader needs to set the focus for the work with the subordinates in order to remove responsibility of an individual.

“I don't see it, you don't take two hours from the calendar by yourself, you don't now I'm innovating, so it doesn't lead to anything, you mainly don't take care of yourself, you don't stop together regularly to cover where we're going and, in a way, to think about things from a new perspective. I feel that it is one that also removes the individual's responsibility for it, so now everyone should come up with something because I feel that it is not possible alone.” - Interviewee A.

5.1.2 Open discussions

Based on the interviews, often employees might have new ideas, and their working behaviour might generate innovations, but they are not bringing these up as some of them might even be unconsciously made which is why leaders believe that discussing with their subordinates even making little “interviews” they can bring these ideas to life.

*“From my own experience, quite a lot of these ideas come up by discussing them...when that silent information is dug out from there, there are often good tips for what points should be raised and what can be done to move forward... The most effective innovation ideas actually come from discussion. From there, when you know how to find the key factors or the right tips, it's actually been through them that the best thing I've set out to move forward with my own team has been.”
– Interviewee B.*

Supporting the influence of open discussion and communication for processing ideas into innovation, Participant D believes that the most important discussions are held between the manager and the subordinate on a daily basis. However, including forums for

innovative discussions and innovative work is used as a boost to set down and think improvements. Participant D thinks that her role as a leader is to enable open discussions about improvements and innovations for subordinates.

5.1.3 Social network and relations

Creating social networks and relationships between teams and stakeholders can improve the ability to create organizational innovation. Participant A strongly believes that building links between different teams and stakeholders where they have people from different backgrounds have increased the variety of skills and knowhow which enhances the possibility to implement and enable innovation. For example, sales teams can create innovative ideas but in order to build digital tools they need help from employees who have these skills, and they might work in another team. As the participant states that they concentrate improving productivity and profitability and to get there they need innovation in which subordinates innovative work behavior is required

“I measure those business results, i.e. productivity and improving profitability. How we get there usually requires innovation, but the point is not the innovation but the end result and of course the process of how we get there.”

5.2 Work Culture

The interviewees highlighted the importance of work culture when trying to influence on subordinates working performance. Working culture relates to attitudes, beliefs and behaviours whereas work environment is setting physical conditions and social aspect for employees. Transformational leadership can influence on their subordinates' work through attitudes and the two important ones based on the interviews were appreciation towards subordinates and shared values of the company.

5.2.1 Appreciation

The interviewees' were asked how they show appreciation to their subordinates, and they highlighted how showing support for their subordinates in different ways is one of the most important ways to show appreciation. Interviewee A, who is leading a multi-cultural team has gotten feedback from non-Finnish subordinates that in Finland leaders do not often give oral appreciation. Because of this, interviewee A believes that keeping one to one meeting is powerful tool where subordinates can express how they are doing, what are their motivations and how the leader could support them with their work and professional growth. Listening and showing that the subordinate has been heard is a way to show appreciation.

“The fact that the supervisor asks and is present. Listens, really listens and doesn't just ask questions but doesn't know how to listen, that's how it is when something is important...he really listened and understood and now he's trying to do something so it kind of creates that appreciation” – Interviewee B.

Leaders think that knowing their own team and their needs in the transformational time period and adapting the leadership style based on subordinates' different reactions in different situations is a way to regard subordinates needs during the change. As people are different their habit of working and reaction to change differs, some need more support and could appreciate coaching where others need self-time to process before they can start working. According to participant D, in their organization, the leader has been a part of training to grow their employees' readiness for change. To have this resilience has an influence on employees' attitudes towards change. They can see the change in a positive manner and be motivated to use it as an opportunity for innovative work.

Subordinates feel appreciated when their leader gives them motivation and enables their growth both in their professional work and as humans. Interviewee D believes that deeper gratitude of subordinates becomes this kind of actions from behalf of leaders.

“Appreciation comes in the way that I try to give people tasks where they learn and where they can develop professionally and also as people. I invest a lot in this company and planning, but the deeper thanks will probably come in the form of professional development and advancement in my career as well.”

5.2.2 Values

According to participant D, how employees integrate the values of the company can influence their work behavior and motivation which is why the organization sets the attitude that subordinates can follow with the help of their leader or manager.

“In the company's values, we have two equally important values that I consider supportive of change leadership; customer-oriented, what in that business supports the fact that we operate in a customer-oriented way, and another value is renewal, that is, it already guarantees the value-based desire to work better and renew itself.” – Interviewee D.

However, Interviewee D believes that the responsibility of the work development is on the leaders' shoulder. They need to identify the changes and innovations that will serve the organization and support the business

“Some things are nice, but it's not enough, yes, the development or change still has to serve both the customer and the personnel and somehow be reflected positively in financial terms.” – Interviewee D

5.2.3 Risk taking

Based on the interviews, it is important that employees are not afraid of making mistakes. A safe work environment where employees feel trusted to be creative and generate new ideas will be created through open communication and sharing own and others' success and failures will create this community feeling environment where employees feel psychologically safe.

“There is a lot of talk about psychological safety in teams and that kind of trust, a central trust where we dare to say even crazy thoughts and dare to go wrong and make mistakes...It is necessary to create such a culture that that culture in a way expands everywhere and that it is not only one team whose task is to innovate.” – Interviewee A.

However, in aviation industry the risk taking has been seen somewhat hard because of the nature of the industry where safety is key factor. However, the interviewees expressed that they could integrate risk taking more into the work environment especially on the commercial side of the business where there are not the same regulations for risk management as there is on the operational side.

“On the commercial side, we have taken a lot of risks and seen this crisis as an opportunity to reform many things...I see that the pandemic has created a lot of the same culture that you don't dare to try.” – Interviewee A.

Participant C from the same company as the participant A was asked the same question and his answer was similar in a way that he believes they should incorporate risk taking more even though the field has its challenges what comes to safety aspect, but they could create more innovativeness through risk taking.

“That is challenging in itself in our field, we should perhaps encourage it more, but often smart things are left behind under the guise of it, after all, this is security,

so it's a bit too easy card to sometimes go behind that security in the sense that you can do things in many different ways and really we could perhaps be a little braver and often when we're not actually talking about flight safety, risk-taking means that we dare to try something different” – Interviewee C.

5.2.4 Encouragement

Interviewees were asked if there are any situations where the subordinate will independently suggest new development ideas and the answer was that it is a cultural thing of how employees have been supported by the idea of how they could do their work better. The independent creativeness and mindset of thinking new ways to do something better is done by creating a work culture where employees feel encouraged. According to participant B, the role of the leader when being part of creating organizational culture which value innovation is done by encouraging subordinates to bring up their ideas.

“As a leader, you are part of creating the culture that you are generally receptive to new ideas, so you always try to encourage that innovation and ideation and take hold of those ideas, that if I too have come from within my own team. good ideas have come.” – Interviewee B.

Another aspect of encouraging subordinates towards innovative work behaviour is avoiding using the word innovation. According to participant A, the word innovation has been experienced to be intimidating word and miss interpreted which is why the interviewee rather use the words renewal and simplification as the way business can raise productivity and viability is through innovation, but the difference is that the main goal is not just create innovation but rather the outcome and the process of achieve the business goals. This mentality of how innovation is seen in their work culture was supported by another interviewee who also believes that innovation is concrete after something has been changed.

“Innovation is innovation only when something happens and changes.” – Interviewee C.

Through encouragements leaders can also increase and enhance subordinates independent work towards innovativeness. Participant B said that whenever he remembers to encourage his subordinates from their good work, he can see that the employees continue working more freely and are more liberated to continue their independent work as often employees have uncertainty and are not able to see the possible influence of other surrounding stakeholders.

“Just remember to do it more actively and it will bear fruit from there, not a little to this one, they dare to take liberties with it and can also bring out what is their point of view on this.” – Interviewee B.

5.2.5 Coaching

Participant C mentioned that coaching is highly important when creating innovative work culture. He is using his own background of working for a lean coach in his current manager position to develop and coach his subordinates. Another tool he mentioned was this workshop called KAISEN which means continuous improvement.

“KAISEN is, in a way, a similar workshop, where we, together with the stakeholders, can visualize the problem and then decide that these are the actions and monitor that they will be carried out.” – Interviewee C.

Interviewee C also expressed that it is important that not only the leader or manager carry out the changes, and they should act more like an enabler for their subordinates to work independently.

“I’m also trying to get the team members to say that this can’t be like that, so that only the first-person tears and breaks down. But when I said at the beginning that I try to allow them time and certain tools so that they independently promote certain things in the team.” – Interviewee C.

5.2.6 Trust

Based on the interviews, trust is one of the key players in the creating a work culture in which all the employees feel safe to suggest ideas and are not scared even though its innovation wouldn’t be the main priority in their job but innovation would be part of the work culture and therefore not only one team wouldn’t be responsible of creating innovation. The benefit in this type of work culture is that one problem or issue will be looked at from different perspectives and the diversity of different employees can be beneficial to find new solutions.

Interviewee A was asked how she can participate in creating this kind of work culture and her main action is communication and transparency.

“In my opinion, e.g. communication and communication are open and transparent. Talking about things out loud. I just talked about sharing successes, so of course sharing failures can also be quite important in that it becomes normal.”

Interviewee A also pointed out that the culture creation comes from the top management either knowingly or unknowingly and it is important part of the organizational work culture but how she can participate on her behalf, she believes that having weekly meetings with her subordinates is important to keep on track how subordinates are doing as well as successfully keep the communication between the team and information flow from the management so subordinates are being involved.

5.3 Responsibility of Emotions

The interviewees were asked what emotional intelligence means to them and what is the meaning of EI for them. For all of them emotional intelligence is observing, perceiving and process subordinates' feelings and emotions. For all of them emotional intelligence also means adapting their leadership based on their subordinates' feelings and the emotional atmosphere. Also, finding out the emotions or feeling behind of subordinates by asking, observing, listening and learning was mentioned to be part of emotional intelligence as no one will automatically know everything it is important to find out about things. These phrases were used by the interviewees when they described what EI means to them.

“Emotional intelligence is the sensitivity to perceive the emotional atmosphere in a way, both on a personal level and in a group. Of course, it starts with considering it important in general and being aware of it. Also, then you relate what you do according to what the emotional atmosphere is.” - interviewee A.

“Empathy lives close by in that emotional intelligence, and it doesn't get to the thought level of the receiving side and the world, so it makes it a lot easier. And you often have to shuttle, whether it's at the top level of the organization or at the executive level, but the emotional intelligence is that you know how to adapt to that group...There is also the word intelligence. You don't feel is feeling and intelligence is intelligence. To find out about things. You can't know everything, no one knows everything.” – Interviewee B.

“How to deal with employees and their feelings when we are all human and everyone has their own personal life and from there you can influence factors that are reflected in working life and so on.” – Interviewee C

“Recognizing people's feelings and knowing how to use them intelligently in the communication work and as a management tool, and the fact that, in general, I

take into account the feelings of others and pace the manager's own work accordingly whenever it is possible, always it is not possible.” – Interviewee D.

5.3.1 Understanding individuals

As we are human beings, leaders value subordinates’ feelings which is why for all of them understanding how their subordinates feel in different situations and how different individuals have different emotions affect their leadership style. The interviewees were asked in which situations they see EI plays an important role. Interviewee A sees the value of EI during change periods where it is important to face subordinates as individuals to build trust based on the feelings each individual has when they are facing transformational times.

“Emotional intelligence in being able to meet everyone as an individual and in a way create that trust or start building that trust with everyone, taking into account the feelings that everyone had. We have people of very different backgrounds, ages, cultures and everything is in a way very different situations personally, so many people's feelings were really different... I think emotional intelligence is the key to being able to face people as individuals.” – Interviewee A.

Based on the interviews, one way to observe individuals and how they are feelings is one-to-one (personal) conversation which is a basic tool in leadership but seen as an effective way to keep personal connection to each individual. These one-to-one conversations were mentioned by the interviewees (A & B) and others spoke about having conversations and listening to their subordinates.

“Leading with emotional intelligence means that you always manage to take the time for even the most in-depth conversations and then you understand when it's time to hurry...Both from experience, but on the other hand, the tool is such a systematic one2one, i.e. a meeting between two people.” - Interviewee B.

5.4 Emotional Support

The interviewees' were asked how they show appreciation to their subordinates, and they highlight how showing support in different ways is one of the most important ways to show appreciation. Participant A who is leading a multicultural team has gotten feedback that in Finland leaders do not often give oral feedback or appreciation by saying "thank you" out loud. Because of this, the participant A believes that keeping one to one meeting where the leader and the subordinate can express openly and in a safe environment how they are doing, what are their motivations and how the leader could support them. Showing appreciations was connected to emotional support which is important for subordinates to build trust between them and the leader.

Participant B said that listening and showing that the employee has been heard is a way to show appreciation.

"The fact that the supervisor asks and is present. Listens, really listens and doesn't just ask questions but doesn't know how to listen, that's how it is when something is important...he really listened and understood and now he's trying to do something so it kind of creates that appreciation" – Interviewee B.

Third interviewee feels that knowing their own team and their needs in the transformational time period and adapting the leadership style based on that is a way to regard subordinates needs during the change. As people are different, some need more support and appreciate coaching where others need self-time to process before they can start working. In this company, the leader has been a part of training to grow their employees' readiness for change. To have this resilience has an influence on employees' attitudes towards change. They can see the change in a positive manner and be motivated to use it as an opportunity for innovative work.

5.5 Self-Leadership

Even though often when speaking about emotional intelligence the aspect is how we can understand and take into consideration other people's emotions. Interviewees mentioned how they see the value in understanding own emotions and how they can avoid acting certain way or the opposite and show their emotions towards their subordinates.

"It is also super important for a leader to be aware of her own feelings and her own way of acting, so the reflection itself is super important" – Interviewee A.

"It seems that in emotional intelligence it is looking outward from oneself, not how to take into account the feelings of others and adapt accordingly, but next to that there should be a discussion about how, when we manage personnel or ourselves, how we somehow restrain or control or utilize our own emotions. Responsibility for emotions or emotional intelligence has been outsourced even though it should be more internalized." – Interviewee D.

6 Discussion

The aim of this study was to understand the role of transformational leadership and emotional intelligence on subordinates' innovative work behaviour and explore the connection of TL and EI to organizational intelligence through subordinates' IWB. This chapter will provide a discussion about the new perspectives and novels that the research results of this study bring to the literature. Finally, to discuss and present what the research results and what new perspectives this study brings to the literature the research questions and objectives are listed below as they were the frame of this study.

RQ 1. How does transformational leadership shape organizational innovation?

RQ 2. How do transformational leaders foster innovative work behaviour among their subordinates?

Research objectives:

- What is the role of emotional intelligence in the transformational leadership style and how it is revealed in practise?
- What is the role of emotional intelligence of the leader in the way employees' innovative behaviour is shaped?

6.1 Summary of the findings

The findings of this study are separated into two categories: The influence of transformational leadership on IWB and the role of Emotional Intelligence in this context. The research results are being presented with the literature used in this study to finalize this study. The key findings of this study are that transformational leadership enable subordinates needs to be covered in a way that they are able to focus IWB. This is done by creating a work environment which fosters open discussion and the importance of social network and relations within the team and across stakeholders. Transformational leadership also support work culture where trust, encouragement and appreciation are valued and the core of the work culture as this study indicated that these characteristics influence subordinates' ability for innovative work behaviour (IWB). The study indicates that emotional intelligence of the leader will enhance the ability of understanding individuals needs and can help them to modify their leadership style with each subordinate. Moreover, emotional intelligence of the leaders helps shape the work environment and work culture that foster IWB as subordinates who have experienced emotional connection with their leader are more willing to beyond the basic level of the work demand.

6.1.1 The influence of transformational leadership on innovative work behaviour

This study indicate that transformational leaders are encouraging their subordinates to be independently creative, and it is done by creating a work culture where employees feel safe, supported and motivated. According to Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990 leaders who use transformational leadership style will delegate responsibilities, motivate, and foster employee's independent and initiative thinking and therefore is align with this study.

Bass & Avolio's (1993) transformational leadership model which contains four elements: *Individualized consideration, Intellectual stimulation, Inspirational motivation, and*

Idealized influence share similarities with the results of this study. When creating an environment where employees tend to work innovatively, understanding subordinates' needs and ways of working were mentioned to be important for the participants. Based on this knowledge they tend to adjust their approach of leading towards each individual. This behaviour shares similarities with **individualized consideration**.

Intellectual stimulation was found to be used through encouraging subordinates to say out loud even ideas that would feel crazy and helping subordinates to see bigger picture where the creativeness and innovations can be applied in other parts of the organization. Participant A, stimulate subordinates by setting the focus on customers rather than thinking processes internally. This drives subordinates to renewal which can lead to innovation as the perspective of working is different. Bass & Riggio (2006) argue that without motivation there is no results and leaders who succeed to inspire will have better influence on their followers to thrive for common good.

This study found that during change period it is more important to lead with transparency and showing appreciation than drive only for inspiration. Subordinates are more willing to adjust to change and think positively when they understand the reasons for change, and they are being included in the change processes. However, this can lead to innovative work behaviour as the resistance to change can be avoided and more positive approach towards change can lead to innovative ways of thinking new working models. Therefore, transparency and appreciation meet the **inspirational motivation** of this model.

Participant D believes in building the trust and genuine appreciation towards subordinates by providing work tasks and job opportunities in which they can learn and develop professional growth. This genuine appreciation builds belief for subordinates that their leaders drive also for their benefit and good and not only for the organization. Trust and respect are foundations for **Idealized Influence** and leaders who manages to incorporate

these all four elements of the model can create a culture of innovation and impact on organizational innovation.

Based on the results of this study, the working environment plays a significant role in organizational innovation. If the working environment is supportive and psychological safety has been created, the subordinates are more likely to generate creative thinking. According to Mokhberg et al. (2018) and Jung et al. (2008) employees idea generation is the moderator between transformational leadership and innovation and this relationship is the strongest when working climate is supportive towards innovation. This study found that leaders who use TL can positively influence to the working environment and the work culture to generate subordinates innovative work behaviour and therefore support Mokhberg et al. (2018) and Jung et al. (2008) research.

As this study was framed to include participants only from the aviation industry, the use of risk-taking in innovative work behaviour were expected to be different compared to other organizations from industries which are not as heavily regulated with safety and risk-taking. However, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) have stated that innovation is part of the future aviation which is why risk-taking was one of the topics discussed during the interviews to see how leaders in this field believe risk-taking could be utilized. The results of this study indicate that leaders who work on the commercial side of the organizations could integrate risk-taking more compared to leaders from the operational side where the safety aspect is heavily influencing and restricting risks. According to the participant A, different circumstances can drive for risk-taking such as pandemic or political situations where the industry and organization are being faced enforced transformation which can be utilized as an opportunity to influence the work culture towards braver risk-taking. Participant C stated that risk-taking means that they as a team dare to try something different which is part of the IWB and can lead to organizational innovation.

Learning orientation:

This study found supportive results for Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt (2015) study on the positive connection between TL, learning orientation and innovative culture. Based on this study, subordinates can be motivated to innovate through rewarding and learning orientation. However, based on the interviews, rewarding with money is not the only motivator but through learning, building knowhow and developing own skills which leaders and the organization can support by arranging workshops and trainings. Through learning oriented rewarding employees can feel valued and also as leaders can offer their employees a chance to develop own skills and knowhow which can be beneficial both for the employees and the employer. When employees are motivated, they are more likely to be creative and the IWB is higher and on the other hand employees will gain tangible skills which they can use in their future for example when applying to a new work position.

6.1.2 The role of emotional intelligence

Based on the interviews emotional intelligence is highly important during change period when leaders are approaching each subordinate as an individual and trying to understand their feelings, emotions and ways of reacting for change. Leaders believe that these different emotions of the subordinates affect to their leadership style and in order to lead their subordinates the correct way to avoid resistance to change and drive for innovation it can be beneficial to use individualistic approach in the leadership style.

Social network and job crafting:

Farrukh et al. (2021) state that social events and connections across teams could possibly enhance innovation and they thought that more research should be done on how social networks influence workplace innovation. The results of this study support Farrukh et al. (2021) hypothesis as openness, transparency and good communications with other teams and the team members will decrease prejudices which can lead to better collaboration with different stakeholders. According to participant A. good communication and

social networks between stakeholders and teams can help organizations to implement innovative ideas as anyone can create innovative ideas. According to Woodman et al. (1993, p.293) creating innovative ideas is not considered as an organizational innovation before it has been implemented.

“It's easy to come up with new things or identify areas where you need to do something new, but you can't get it done, implemented, find the right way, so it requires people whose main job is to develop things.”

Participant C. stated that emotional intelligence can help with overcome subordinates' prejudices toward other employees or teams and this way improve collaboration between teams and stakeholders. Emotional Intelligence enable better transparency, understanding of others and communication. Therefore, it can be stated that EI influence on subordinates social and professional network which has a positive impact of implementing innovations. This supports Al-Omari & Hung, 2012 statement that leaders who have high emotional intelligence improve subordinates cooperations, motivation and commitment which are studied to increase creativity and organizational innovation.

According to Bhave & Glomb (2016) negative emotions of the supervisor can have an impact on subordinates' emotions and negative emotions can lead to emotional state of exhaustion and therefore affect on subordinates IWB negatively. This study finds that if employees are overworked, tired and unmotivated it will have a negative impact on their creativeness and IWB. Moreover, if subordinates are emotionally or physically under exhaustion it will decrease their IWB which is why organizations should focus on avoiding these issues.

6.2 Managerial Implications

The study aimed to find how transformational leadership can influence on organizational innovation through subordinates' innovative work behaviour and what role emotional

intelligence plays in this. Therefore, the results of this study provide insights how transformational leadership and emotional intelligence can be used in organizations to enhance innovative work behaviour which is part of creating organizational innovation.

Results indicate that transformational leadership is no longer only useful leadership style when organization is facing transformational period as the business environment especially aviation industry is constantly changing, and transformational leaders tend to lead their subordinates' with empathy, transparency and support to help employees adjust to constant changes faced in their daily work. These leadership characteristics are vital for organizations as employees' attitudes towards the organization and willingness to innovative work behaviour are influenced by the leaders. The results implicate that leaders are focusing on individualistic approach in their leadership style when facing transformational period as employees react different ways during the change. Modifying and adjusting the leadership style based on the individuals' is a way of making sure that each subordinates get the support that are met by their needs as the results showed that filling the basic needs first will motivate employees to work innovatively.

Another implication is that transformational leaders are influencing the work culture towards innovative work behaviour by encouragement, trust building and appreciation. Organizations can benefit transformational leadership by implementing encouragement towards subordinates' independent creativeness and bringing up initiatives for innovation. Trust is important factor during organizational transformations because employees who trust their leader are more willing to adjust change and are more open to use innovative work behaviour as a tool to manage the change. Emotional intelligence of the leader will help build a trust between the leader and its subordinates as understanding one's feelings and showing empathy have noticed to create trust. Employees feel safe to suggest new ideas in safe work environment which can be achieved by trust. One of the implications of this study indicates that through appreciation leaders can motivate subordinates' to have more positive reaction to changes and use transformational period as an opportunity for innovative work. Listening employees, giving positive feedback and

enabling professional growth are ways to show appreciation. By supporting and knowing employees in a deeper level will provide understanding of how each individual react in certain situation and this way leaders can modify their leadership style or approach with different individuals to create the feeling of appreciation.

Based on the research results, training employees to have a resilience towards changes in their work can impact on their attitudes towards constant changes. When employees are less affected by change, they can see the opportunities that changes can provide, and this way are more open for innovative work behaviour.

6.3 Limitations of the study

Most of the studies have their own limitations and this study is not an exception. The limitation are potential weaknesses which can be out of control the author. However, it is important to point out the limitations as this way potential future research can be found. As this study is a master's thesis most of the limitations relates to it.

The research design has its limitation as this study uses qualitative research the weakness is that the results consist of the experiences of the participants which is why the results can't be generalized and form causal conclusions. In addition, the sample size is somewhat small which also participates to the fact that the results of this study can't be generalized. The sample size included only Finnish native which is another limitation and might have an influence on the results. In terms of validity and reliability, another study with larger sample size and preferably with participants with different natives should be conducted. The participants were only from two different organizations which can also have influence on the results in terms of organizational culture. In order to generalize how transformational leadership can influence on organizational innovation through subordinates' innovative work behaviour, different organizational cultures should be included to future research.

This study has been conducted in English; however, the interviews were held in Finnish as all the participants were native in Finnish. Even though this made more sense as this way the participants could speak more easily about their experiences without language barriers it participates on the limitations of this study. Due to the different language in interviews the quotes used in this study needed to be translated which could possibly have an influence on the meanings of the sentences. Due to this issue, some of the words are not translated straightforward from words to words to keep the core meaning the same. Also, English is not the mother language of the author which is one of the weaknesses of this study as it can contribute to the professional and academic writing.

6.4 Suggestions for future research

This study suggested that creating a resilience towards change could avoid resistance to change and this way employees could see the change in more positive manner which could open opportunities for innovative work behaviour. In the future research could study what kind of trainings should be integrated to create the resilience of change for employees in order to apply this study's result in practise.

As the results of this study shows that individual approach in transformational leadership is being used to adjust the leadership which will influence on subordinates' willingness for innovative work behaviour as this way they have been supported on the individual level. However, this study did not research how the number of subordinates' influence leaders' ability to use individual leadership approach. The future research should study how the team size and the number of subordinates can influence this approach in leadership.

Another issue to be cover in the future is how leaders will make sure that even during change period employees wellbeing is assured and overload avoided as this study revealed that subordinates' wellbeing affect their ability to work innovatively and the basic

needs of the works should be filled before employees feel motivated to be part of creating organizational innovation

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview questions (Finnish)

Johtajuus/muutosjohtaminen:

1. Miten sinä määrittelisit käsitteen "johtaja"?
2. Mitkä piirteet ja ominaisuudet, tekevät sinusta johtajan?
3. Millainen on sinun johtajuutesi tyyli ja kuinka se sopii yhteen muutosjohtajuuden kanssa?
4. Millaisilla keinoilla osoitat arvostusta ja miten se on vaikuttanut alaisesi työskentelyyn muutoksen aikana?
5. Millaisilla keinoilla pyrit motivoimaan alaisiasi?

Innovatiivinen organisaatiokulttuuri/innovatiivinen työkäyttäytyminen:

6. Miten teidän organisaatiokulttuurinne tukee innovaatiota?
7. Miten sinä johtajana voit vaikuttaa ja osallistua organisaation innovatiiviseen työskentelyyn luomiseen?
8. Millaisilla keinoilla voit työssäsi rohkaista alaisiasi innovatiivisen työskentelyyn ja innovaatioiden tuottamiseen?
9. Millaisia tapoja tai konkreettisia prosesseja käytät mittaamaan ja arvioimaan alaisesi innovatiivista työskentelyä?

Muutosjohtaminen ja tunneäly:

10. Mitä käsite tunneäly sinulle merkitsee?
11. Miten uskot tunneällyn olevan kytköksissä sinun persoonallisuuteesi?
12. Pystytkö kertomaan esimerkkejä, miten olet sopeuttanut johtajuutesi lähestymistapaa pohjautuen alaisesi tunteiden tarpeisiin (muutos ajanjakson aikana)?
13. Pystytkö kertomaan esimerkkejä, millaisissa työtilanteissa tunteiden ymmärtäminen ja niiden käyttäminen on erityisen tärkeää?
14. Voiko mielestäsi tunnetaidoilla vaikuttaa työntekijöiden innovatiivisuuteen?
15. Miten omien tunteidesi ymmärtäminen on mahdollisesti vaikuttanut vuorovaikutukseen/kommunikaatioon alaisesi kanssa?
16. Miten sinun mielestäsi johtajat voisivat käyttää tunneälyä johtajuuden kehittämisessä?

Appendix 2. Interview questions (English)

Leadership/Transformational Leadership:

1. How would you define the term "leader"?
2. What traits and characteristics make you a leader?
3. What is your leadership style and how does it fit with transformational leadership?
4. In what ways do you show appreciation and how has it affected the work of your subordinates during the change?
5. What methods do you use to motivate your subordinates?

Innovative organizational culture/innovative work behavior:

6. How does your organizational culture support innovation?
7. How can you, as a manager, influence and participate in creating an innovative work culture in the organization?
8. In your work, what methods can you use to encourage your subordinates to work innovatively and produce innovations?
9. What methods or concrete processes do you use to measure and evaluate the innovative work of your subordinates?

Transformational leadership and emotional intelligence:

10. What does the concept emotional intelligence mean to you?
11. How do you think emotional intelligence is connected to your personality?
12. Can you give examples of how you have adapted your leadership approach based on the emotional needs of your subordinates (change over time)?
13. Can you give examples in which work situations understanding and using emotions is particularly important?
14. Do you think emotional skills can affect employees' innovation?
15. How has the understanding of your own feelings possibly affected your interaction/communication with your subordinates?
16. How do you think managers could use emotional intelligence in leadership development?