Volume XXII, Issue (1) (2026) 858-866

International May Conference on Strategic Management

DOI: 10.5937/IMCSM26858J *Research Article*

EMOTIONAL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES VS. ARTIFICIAL ITELIGENCE IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: Artificial intelligence, as a defining trend of contemporary life, is increasingly shaping—and to a certain extent challenging—the decision-making processes of managerial teams on a global scale. Professional management of institutions, particularly within the education sector, entails making highly sensitive decisions, given that such decisions are largely and directly related to the most valuable human resource of any nation: children and youth.
The aim of this study is to examine the direct impact of artificial intelligence on managerial decision-making in educational institutions, as well as the mediating effects of fostering emotionally intelligent leadership and building institutional trust. Furthermore, the study explores the moderating role of emotional intelligence among managerial staff in educational institutions in the context of everyday decision-making processes.
Data collected from 27 respondents were analyzed using correlation, mediation, and moderation analyses. The findings indicate that emotionally intelligent managers in educational institutions positively contribute to the development of institutional trust and to the balanced and judicious use of artificial intelligence in managerial decision-making.
An emotionally intelligent manager in educational institutions prioritizes the human element—human intelligence and performance—while employing artificial intelligence as a supportive tool.

Keywords: Educational Institutions, Artificial Intelligence, Leadership

1. INTRODUCTION

In conditions of intense digital transformation on a global scale, artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly emerging as one of the key "authorities" for making various decisions, and senior executives are not left behind. Rapid data processing for additional data and by offering additional solutions to solve challenges, AI makes it necessary in the face of "reasonable" and

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emotionally intelligent solutions before by the owners of managers. Research analysis that AI Research has changed the process of managerial decision-making, while enabling the cognitive biases and characteristics of more objective and data-based (Chaturvedi et al., 2025). All this develops to turn attention from humans to technology, which is associated with human performance of the account of computer algorithms and saving reports. Intelligent project management programs - AI, software programs and machine learning algorithms take over project managers in every life of the status and provide experiences and forecasts based on data according to the database of the reasons for previous projects, neglecting all and human work Zupatia (Jovcheska et al., 2023).

AI in educational institutions is more complex, due to the sensitivity of the impact that it has on what is needed for the most important resource of every nation - students/students. Professional management of educational institutions means investing in building a nation, in students/students who believe in the institutions and who build trust in them. All this puts managers before the challenge of making the decision to change the changes, but also finding a way, a strategy for how to do it, the correct dosage of both AI and empathy, health and business ethics. AI through automation of the administrator has provided relevant information in real time, but issues related to kata, transparency and trust (Jundon et al., 2025).

Building personal trust, as well as trust in institutions, emerge as a critical factor for successful management with it. Implementation of AI in decision-making processes has more or less importance or greater trust. Managers by applying AI algorithms to solve problems on the one hand and intuition with emotional intelligence on the other hand balance in the decision-making process. The lack of transparency and understanding of algorithms can be requested from users and managers, which is related to the acceptance of AI as a tool for decision support (Schmidt et al., 2020).

Traditional leaders and professional wear is not the standard artificial creation of algorithms at the expense of managerial experience, knowledge and skill. On the other hand, effective leadership in the digital era is a balance between the technological capabilities of AI and human competencies, especially emotional intelligence, in order to ensure sustainable and responsible management (Vesolovska, 2025). After the synergy between human intelligence, with a special focus on emotional intelligence and technology, where AI is used as a tool to support it, and not a substitute for human solutions for more than one side of the positions as the most terrible action of managers' representatives. Such an approach allows for the creation of more informed, ethically justified and contextually relevant decisions, which is especially important in the education sector (Abositta et al., 2024; Abduvaxob qizi, 2025). Humanity, and thus ethics, traditionally build the authority of the leader, and thus of institutions, especially educational ones.

2.1. Transformation of Management

The development of leadership and management theories has given us a range of approaches in which humans and technology act separately and as partners, so that over time they all become intertwined to the point where the boundary where human actions stop and technology begins cannot be found. The transition from traditional to modern approaches to management very clearly presents this dependence and indicates the advantages and disadvantages that this combination creates.

Traditional management theories, such as the classical and bureaucratic models, position the leader as the central decision-maker, with the decision-making process being dominantly rational, hierarchically structured and based on limited information and personal expertise without any support from automated machines and algorithms. In these models,

organizational effectiveness is achieved through control, standardization and clearly defined roles, while the role of emotions and interpersonal relationships is marginalized.

Traditional theories pay minimal attention to emotions, and the focus is on rationality and formal structures in management, in modern theories emotional intelligence (EI) is a central element for effective leadership, and the combination of EI + AI creates better decisions and organizational climate (Dwivedi, 2025). Modern leadership theories emphasize the dynamic and complex nature of organizational management, especially in conditions of digital transformation. The role of data and technology is at the highest level. The integration of artificial intelligence represents a significant turning point, enabling big data analysis, predictive models and support for strategic decision-making that more or less makes the strategy successful. AI reduces cognitive biases and improves the quality of decisions by providing objective and timely information (Chaturvedi et al., 2025). Leaders with high EI better manage the changes caused by AI.

The modern approach to management does not exclude the role of man, but redefines it as a partnership, with decisions being the result of synergy between human and artificial intelligence. The role of the modern leader has changed significantly. Instead of an authoritarian controller, the modern leader appears as a facilitator, mediator and strategist who successfully integrates technological tools with human resources. Emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly taking a priority place in the professional profile of the manager, building trust and effective business communication and the image of the organization. The combination of EI and AI results in better organizational results, increased productivity and more efficient decision-making (Dwivedi, 2025; Vivek & Krupskyi, 2024).

2.2. Emotional Intelligence and Trust in Institutions

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to perceive, assess, understand and generate emotions, their knowledge and reflective regulation, in order to promote the emotional and intellectual development of the person. The main focus of emotional intelligence is: empathy, self-awareness and interpersonal relationships. Emotional intelligence is an important specific determinant of success in many areas of life, which in many cases is more important than IQ. EQ can evolve and change, unlike IQ.

Innovative strategies aimed at developing emotional intelligence in managers represent the basis for ethical, responsible and effective use of artificial intelligence (AI). Emotional intelligence is considered a key mediator between the application of AI and the quality of managerial decisions. Managers with developed emotional intelligence are more empathetic, have greater communication skills and effectively manage human resources, which directly affects the building of personal and organizational trust. The integration of emotional and artificial intelligence results in improved organizational performance, better communication and more effective leadership (Dwivedi, 2025; Vivek & Krupskyi, 2024). Hence, the fair and dosed use of AI is a critical factor for building trust in institutions. Trust does not only imply the technical precision of systems, but also transparency, ethics and responsibility in their application. The lack of transparency and understanding of algorithms leads to reduced trust and resistance among employees and the public (Schmidt et al., 2020). Trust in institutions is appropriate to the professionalism, transparency and ethics of managers and government policies (Jovcheska, 2024). Therefore, modern educational institutions must provide appropriate technical, organizational and educational conditions for the successful implementation of AI, which will allow its use as a support tool, and not as a replacement for human decision-making (Renta-Davids et al., 2025). Otherwise, the lack of professionalism,

low levels of emotional intelligence and inappropriate use of AI can lead to broader negative social consequences.

However, despite technological benefits, AI cannot fully replace human judgment, especially in situations that require ethical sensitivity, empathy, and understanding of social contexts. In this regard, emotional intelligence (EI) enables more effective management of people and building trust in institutions. EI and AI lead to improved decision-making, greater organizational efficiency, and better interpersonal relationships (Dwivedi, 2025; Vivek & Krupskyi, 2024).

2.3. Trust and Transparency

Trust in management, and thus in institutions, emerges as a central challenge in the application of AI. Unlike traditional systems, where trust is based on authority and organizational stability, modern systems require transparency and explainability of algorithms. Ethical leadership becomes necessary to ensure responsible use of technology, especially in the education sector where decisions have long-term social implications (Jundon et al., 2025). In educational institutions, the application of AI brings significant benefits, such as improving administrative processes, optimizing resources and supporting decision-making. However, research emphasizes that these benefits must be balanced with ethical and social aspects, including privacy, equality and inclusiveness (Renta-Davids et al., 2025). Modern leaders in education are required to possess not only managerial and pedagogical competencies, but also digital skills and the ability to critically evaluate technological tools. Here the question of trust is also raised and how much it can be built, enjoyed and maintained in the newly created conditions of AI governance. The algorithms of already implemented successful strategies impose a specific way of thinking and acting, and humans, in this case students, require professionalism, speed and empathy. Emotional intelligence has never risen above the intelligence quotient (IQ) before. Building trust in educational institutions means building trust in the humanization of decisions, humans as a factor in decision-making.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3. 1. Research sample

The sample of this research is employees in managerial positions in educational institutions in Europe, North America and Asia. The sample was selected randomly.

In this research, 30 respondents (Europe, North America and Asia) with at least 5 years of work experience in managerial positions actively participated.

3.2. Research instrument

The research is empirical and quantitative in nature. Data collection was carried out by recording each statement of the respondents.

3.3. Descriptive statistics

To (dis)confirm the hypotheses, the Kruskal Wallis test was applied, which tested the attitudes of managers according to their length of service. Length of service was chosen as a variable because when selecting the research sample, the length of service of the managers was taken into account, i.e. at least 5 years of work experience in a managerial position in an

educational institution in Europe, North America and Asia. The P-value (the lowest level of significance at which the null hypothesis is rejected) was calculated using the econometric software R and the critical values for 0.01 are also attached. In the calculations, persons with up to 2 years of service were not taken into account, because when selecting the research sample, the length of service of the managers was taken into account - at least 5 years of work experience in a managerial position in educational institutions. The research was conducted on 30 respondents, but the test results were taken into account, which referred to a total of 27 respondents.

In addition, for the hypotheses set, it is assumed that there are no statistically significant differences in the attitudes of the surveyed managers with different work experience.

Kruskal - Wallis Test

Table 1. Ranking and testing of the general hypothesis (own research, 2026)

General hypothesis							
1	2	3		4		5	
1 year or less	From 1 to 2 years	From 3 to 5 years		From 6 to 10 years		10 or more years	
1	2	3	6.5	4	17	5	26
2		3	6.5	4	17	4	17
		3	6.5	4	17	4	17
		3	6.5	4	17	4	17
		3	2.5	4	17	4	17
				5	26	4	17
				5	26		
				5	26		
				3	6.5		
				5	26		
				4	17		
				4	17		
				5	26		
				4	17		
				4	17		
				4	17		
		R1	28.5	R2	306.5	R3	111
N	27	n1	5	n2	16	n3	6
			162.45		5871.4		2053.5
		N	R				
	From 3 to 5 years	5	28.5				
	From 6 to 10 years	16	306.5				
	10 or more years	6	111				
	Test statistics	**44.37**					
	Degrees of freedom	2					
	Critical value for α=0.05	5.991					
	Critical value for α=0.01	9.21					
	p-value	0.0129					

The test statistic (Chi-Square=44.37), at a significance level of 0.01 (p-value=0.0129) with 2 degrees of freedom is 44.37. The read table value of the test statistic for 2 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.01 is 9.21. This shows that there are no differences in the attitudes of the respondents, which confirms:

General hypothesis:

If innovative strategies for building emotionally intelligent managers are implemented in educational institutions, assuming that they have the conditions for their implementation, then managers use artificial intelligence fairly and in moderation in making managerial decisions, which increases trust in institutions.

Table 2. Ranking and testing of special hypothesis 1 (own research, 2026)

Special hypothesis 1							
1	2	3		4		5	
1 year or less	From 1 to 2 years	From 3 to 5 years		From 6 to 10 years		10 or more years	
1	3	4	13.5	5	23.5	5	23.5
3		3	5	5	23.5	5	23.5
		3	5	4	13.5	4	13.5
		4	13.5	4	13.5	5	23.5
		1	1.5	4	13.5	5	23.5
				5	23.5	5	23.5
				5	23.5		
				1	1.5		
				3	5		
				3	5		
				5	23.5		
				5	23.5		
				4	13.5		
				4	13.5		
				4	13.5		
				4	13.5		
		R1	38.5	R2	247	R3	131
n	27	n1	5	n2	16	n3	6
			296.45		3813.1		2860.2
		N	R				
	From 3 to 5 years	5	38.5				
	From 6 to 10 years	16	247				
	10 or more years	6	131				
	Test statistics	**26.63**					
	Degrees of freedom	2					
	Critical value for α=0.05	5.991					
	Critical value for α=0.01	9.21					
	p-value	0.0128					

Regarding Special Hypothesis 1, it can be noted that the Chi-Square value is 26.63, which at a significance level of 0.01 (p-value = 0.0128) with 2 degrees of freedom is 26.63. The read table value of the test statistic for 2 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.01 is 9.21. Hence, it can be concluded that the obtained results indicate that there are no differences in the attitudes of the respondents according to their work experience, which confirms:

Special hypothesis 1

If innovative strategies for building emotionally intelligent managers are implemented in educational institutions, then managers enjoy greater trust among employees and students.

Table 3. Ranking and testing of Auxiliary hypothesis 1(own research, 2026)

Auxiliary Hypothesis 1							
1	2	3		4		5	
1 year or less	From 1 to 2 years	From 3 to 5 years		From 6 to 10 years		10 or more years	
2	3	5	20	5	20	4	8.5
3		4	8.5	4	8.5	5	20
		4	8.5	4	8.5	5	20
		4	8.5	4	8.5	5	20
		2	1	5	20	5	20
				5	20	5	20
				5	20		
				3	3		
				4	8.5		
				3	3		
				5	20		
				5	20		
				5	20		
				5	20		
				5	20		
				5	20		
		R1	46.5	R2	240	R3	108.5
N	27	n1	5	n2	16	n3	6
			432.45		3600		1962
		N	R				
	From 3 to 5 years	5	46.5				
	From 6 to 10 years	16	240				
	10 or more years	6	108.5				
	Test statistics	**11.151**					
	Degrees of freedom	2					
	Critical value for α=0.05	5.991					
	Critical value for α=0.01	9.21					
	p-value	0.0257					

Regarding Special Hypothesis 1, it can be noted that the value of Chi-Square is 11.151, which at a significance level of 0.01 (p-value = 0.0257) with 2 degrees of freedom is 11.151. The read table value of the test statistic for 2 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.01 is 9.21. Hence, it can be concluded that there are no differences in the attitudes of the respondents, which confirms Special Hypothesis 1,

Auxiliary Hypothesis 1

The trust of students is higher in educational institutions where managers use artificial intelligence in a fair dose and controlled manner.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results indicate that there is a significant connection between educational strategies, emotional intelligence and the use of artificial intelligence. Investing in the development of emotional intelligence among managers can contribute to a more responsible use of technology and increased trust in institutions. Managers who have undergone such training show a higher level of empathy, self-control and ethical behavior. These characteristics directly affect the way

in which artificial intelligence is used. Instead of uncritical use, emotionally intelligent managers approach it carefully, taking into account ethical aspects and potential consequences. Transparent and controlled use of artificial intelligence contributes to increasing trust among employees and the public. Trust is a key factor for the effective functioning of institutions.

3. CONCLUSION

Modern educational organizations operate in conditions of rapid technological change, where artificial intelligence plays an increasingly important role in decision-making processes. In such a context, it is crucial for managers to possess not only technical knowledge, but also a high level of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a key factor for effective leadership. In a managerial context, it contributes to better communication, ethical decision-making and building trust, which is very important considering that management concerns the most fragile generation of people. Managing with empathy on the one hand and moderately fair use of AI on the other hand builds trust among students, thus investing in the future of every nation. With the help of AI, analysis of large amounts of data is enabled, and with the help of emotional intelligence, generations are understood. All this results in professionalism, fairness and high business ethics in decision-making and strategies. However, the use of AI has required and will require an increasingly careful and responsible approach to use.

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