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**Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership in the NZ and
UK Construction Industry**

**A Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of**

Master of Science

In

Construction Management

At Massey University, New Zealand

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2015

Dedication

In memory of Margaret Bailey

Acknowledgements

A debt of gratitude is owed to those persons and organisations that have provided me with assistance throughout the duration of this thesis.

First, I would especially like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Temitope Egbelakin, for the endless guidance and support offered to me in this endeavour. I appreciate all the time, patience and ideas she has provided to make this a productive and enjoyable experience.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Prof. Robyn Phipps, who acted as my co-supervisor. It is her perpetual energy, words of encouragement and time devoted to thought provoking and constructive discussions that has enabled me to remain motivated and focused.

Another significant person is Dr. Elizabeth Bates, who has been a fantastic source of information regarding statistics, this has helped me to understand and implement the relevant methods of data analysis using SPSS. Initially I considered statistical analysis to be a daunting and confusing minefield of possibilities, but with her support I was able to gently tread through this field and eventually, with confidence, start to enjoy the journey.

I am deeply grateful to Dave Bulling of Cook Brothers Construction Ltd for the financial support offered to me, without which, this research would not have been possible. I have been fortunate to have worked for such an innovative company who believe and invest in the development of their employees. I wish Dave and the company every possible success in the future.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Brian Dewil, the Director of Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), for the support offered in capturing the attention of participants in both New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Special thanks is due to Dr. Chi Sum Wong, who kindly gave me permission to replicate the Wong and Law psychometric measure and scales he previously developed, to be incorporated into this academic research.

Along the way, my family and friends have been a constant source of support and inspiration, especially my parents who have also been interminably generous and patient. Words cannot express my gratitude for all they have done for me.

Finally, I would like to thank my partner Matthew, for his tolerance and understanding during the endless hours I have spent on this study, while at the same time conveniently avoiding the daily chores.

Abstract

Productivity and project performance is paramount within the construction industry. Low levels of productivity and performance has been attributed to poor leadership of construction project managers. The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) highlighted the need for influential leaders to respond to the evolving social, economic and environmental constraints of the construction industry.

Previous research in other sectors, has shown that transformational leaders can contribute to positive project outcomes from their teams. Despite the link, little research has been conducted in respect of this leadership style within the construction industry. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the transformational leadership style and emotional intelligence, for construction project managers in NZ and the UK. To achieve this aim, three key objectives were to; 1) identify the most prevalent leadership style adopted by construction project managers; 2) identify the average emotional intelligence of construction project managers working in NZ and the UK; 3) determine if there is a significant correlation between the construction project managers emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style adopted.

An online questionnaire was administered to construction project managers who were recruited from the project managers practicing in NZ (N=38) and the UK (N=34). The findings revealed that the most prevalent leadership style for construction project managers was transformational leadership. Over two thirds (73%) of participants self-reported this leadership style. These results are important as they confirm the current situation in terms of leadership style, identify the potential scope for improvement and act as a point of comparison for future leadership improvements to be calculated. The average emotional intelligence (EI) score for participants was 78 with a range between 60 and 95. This quantification provides a benchmark against which others can be measured. The results confirmed a significant positive relationship between a construction project managers' emotional intelligence and the likelihood that they would employ a

transformational leadership style. It also established that the project managers' ability to effectively use their emotions with their project team was the main element responsible for transformational leadership to come into effect. There were no significant differences found between the UK and NZ samples. These combined results are important, as they will assist with the identification and selection of those with high emotional intelligence, most suited to the challenging and demanding role of the construction project manager.

Based on the findings, a number of practical implications for the construction industry have been made, including suitable methods for identification, recruitment and training of project managers. These recommendations have the potential to improve leadership and the associated project performance in the construction industry at a time of much needed change.

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List of Acronyms

| | | |
|-------------|-------|--|
| Bar-On EQi: | | Reuven Bar-On Emotional Quotient Intelligence Test |
| CIOB: | ..... | Chartered Institute of Building |
| CPM: | ..... | Construction Project Manager |
| CR: | ..... | Contingent Reward |
| EI: | ..... | Emotional Intelligence |
| IC: | ..... | Individualised Consideration |
| II: | ..... | Idealised Influence |
| IIA: | ..... | Idealised Influence Attributes |
| IIB: | ..... | Idealised Influence Behaviour |
| IM: | ..... | Inspired Motivation |
| IQ: | ..... | Intelligence Quotient |
| IS: | ..... | Intellectual Stimulation |
| LFL: | ..... | Laissez-Faire Leadership |
| MBEA: | ..... | Management By Exception (Attributes) |
| MBEP: | ..... | Management By Exception (Behaviour) |
| MLQ: | ..... | Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire |
| MLQ 5X: | ..... | Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Short Form |
| NZ: | ..... | New Zealand |
| PAL: | ..... | Passive Avoidant Leadership |
| PALs: | ..... | Passive Avoidant Leaders |
| PM: | ..... | Project Manager |
| RICS: | ..... | Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors |
| TL: | ..... | Transformational Leadership |

TLI: Transformational Leadership Inventory
TLQ: Transformational Leadership Questionnaire
TLs: Transformational Leaders
TRL: Transactional Leadership
TRLs: Transactional Leaders
UK: United Kingdom
WLEIS: Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale