

Digital Leadership Development: Using Virtual Modalities to Develop Emotional Intelligence
(EI)

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ABSTRACT

Leadership development has traditionally been designed for in-person delivery. However, organizations have been converting their leadership development into virtual or remote modalities. Since this ubiquitous, digital conversion, research showed that organizations are placing more of an emphasis on interpersonal leadership attributes and emotional intelligence (EI) as the cornerstone (Chief Learning Officer, 2020). EI has shown to be a highly effective attribute of leadership (Goleman, 2000). As a result, this narrative literature review sought to answer how to best convert the design and delivery of interpersonal competency interventions, specifically EI, into a virtual mode. Furthermore, the implications for practice present a renewed framework for how the amalgamation of traditional leadership development models and virtual and digital interventions can effectively develop organizational learners' EI. Finally, this review highlights the opportunity for further research, development, and improvement on this scantily utilized approach.

Keywords:

leadership development, learning and development, virtual learning, digital learning, emotional intelligence (EI)

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Leadership development is thought to be an organization's most compelling development strategy with the most resources devoted. It is estimated that corporations in the United States spend approximately \$50 billion annually on leadership development (Kellerman, 2018). There is now a focus on how leadership development has and will be reshaped through the digital and technology realms. However, leadership development has traditionally been focused on in-person development (Lacerenza, Reyes, Marlow, Joseph, & Salas, 2017). As a result, to sustain the learning capacity this mode has established, it must be adapted accordingly. The transition from in-person development to the virtual mode will have both organizations and leadership educators adapting to how they navigate through delivery methods.

In the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), organizations and educators were adapting and restructuring their visions of technology in the business world (Jeronimo et al., 2019). Moreover, the COVID-19 crisis precipitated a drastic pivot to virtual learning. A post-COVID Chief Learning Officer (2020) survey of learning and development leaders concluded that 92% of respondents were using virtual instructor lead training, 90% were using video, and 58% were using podcasts for organizational learning. In this same survey, 62% of leadership development and 71% of soft skill training had moved to digital means. These findings elucidate the importance of transitioning leadership development into the digital mode. As a result, organizations and leadership educators need to adapt to this environment as well.

Therefore, this narrative literature review, first, highlights the most widely used leadership development models to establish traditional design and delivery. Then, it was established how leadership development is reshaping amidst the digital age, to include the importance of interpersonal and emotional skills. The interpersonal emergence is presented

through the emotional intelligence (EI) model, as an essential aspect of leadership. Next, it is shown how the coupling of traditional leadership development models and virtual and digital learning create a framework for a renewed approach to leadership development in the digital age. Specifically, the pairing of traditional leadership development and virtual learning and development are shown, while scantily, to be effective in developing managers' and students' EI. Finally, recommendations for organizations and educators in both practice and theory are presented, which opens the opportunity for further exploration of virtual and digital EI development.

METHODOLOGY

This was a narrative or traditional literature review that examined how to best design and deliver virtual and digital EI interventions. Specifically, it set out to answer how the amalgamation of traditional leadership development and virtual learning and development principles present potential best practices for digital EI interventions. This review's scholarship resulted from an electronic database search that included key terms, such as "leadership development; learning and development; design and delivery of leadership interventions; virtual, remote, and digital leadership development; emotional intelligence (EI) in leadership; EI development and interventions; and virtual, remote, and digital EI development and interventions."

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

Leadership development involves two constructs, individual and social processes. The individual component involves developing leaders' intrapersonal skills and dispositions relative to leadership capacity. Conversely, the social component involves developing leaders' interpersonal (person to person) abilities that facilitate relationship building and collaboration

through their environment. Moreover, leadership development theory uses both of these constructs, human capital and social capital, to effectively develop individual leadership capacity (Amagoh, 2009; Day, 2000; Day, D. V., Fleenor, J. W., Atwater, L. E., Sturm, R. E., & McKee, R. A., 2014; Turner, Baker, Schroeder, Johnson, & Chung, 2018).

The individual leadership theories that have been researched throughout the literature are vast. In this review, these theories and styles are not exhaustive and only show an overall categorization throughout the literature. Research describes individual leadership primarily as transformational or transactional. Transformational leadership involves setting aside personal interests for the benefit of the follower and the group, with an emphasis on well-being of others and ethics. Consequently, this type of leader attempts to empower and transform others for their development and to effect positive change (House & Aditya, 1997; Kurniati & Siboy, 2018). These leadership styles include, among others, transformational, servant, charismatic, and authentic. Whereas, transactional leadership is based on the follower-leader dyad's agreement or reciprocity between the two. In other words, there is an exchange between leaders and followers that includes rewards (praise, pay, accolades, etc.) for work well done (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Kurniati & Siboy, 2018). Examples of this leadership style are contingent reward and management by exception. These leadership theories and styles have been widely used to develop leaders through leadership development.

Traditional Leadership Development Models

Scholarship shows that leadership development has heavily focused on formal training (Lacerenza et al., 2017; Turner et al., 2018). However, there has been an effort to integrate multiple strategies and models to fully develop leaders. The most widely used models have been

self-development, developmental activities, and formal training (Yukl, 2013). These models will be briefly discussed to provide the foundation of traditional leadership development.

Self-development models. Some who have little time to attend formal development or participate in developmental activities resort to self-development. Forms of self-development include the internet, books, computer simulations, and audio. There is an abundance of self-help leadership available through print, virtual, and auditory sources (e.g., Harvard Business Review, Franklin Covey, business radio shows, etc.). However, there is evidence that self-development alone is not overall as effective as formal and developmental models (Lacerenza et al., 2017).

There might be several reasons that self-development efforts may not be as effective as its counterparts. Blume, Ford, Baldwin, and Huang (2010) suggested that those who participate in only self-help methods may be less motivated. They described that completing training on their own may reduce motivation because it lacks formal structure, leading to less effective outcomes. However, using self-development to supplement other methods would likely produce positive results.

Developmental activities. Developmental activities are based in practice or hands-on activities that are designed to improve a leader's capacity. The salient factor involved through this model is learning through real-life experiences. Some of these practices include unique job assignments, appointments to task forces or committees, simulations and case studies, mentoring and coaching, and multi-source feedback activities (e.g., 360 degree). This model allows the participant to experience first-hand how a situation unfolds, thus conceptualizing the practice in real life. As a result, this model of development has shown to be one of the most effective methods for leaders to sharpen their skills. (Lacerenza et al., 2017; Weaver et al., 2010).

Lacerenza et al's. (2017) findings were consistent with basic learning concepts (Kolb, 1984) that showed practice was essential in learning. Furthermore, scholarship shows that developmental activities, hence practice, is the most effective model of leadership development by itself. For this effect to manifest, Yukl (2013) suggested that activities be both challenging and varying. Activities should invoke new ways of thinking and implementing different skills. In addition, the types of tasks and situations should vary prompting new ways of approaching and solving problems, hence developing multiple skills. These types of training opportunities include participating in different assignments and cross-functional teams, leading and managing in different cultures, and implementing change efforts. This model can be used both in hands-on activities as well as in simulations. These developmental efforts have been most successful when preparing participants in advance; ensuring they accept responsibility in both successes and failures, learning from them; and providing coaching throughout the process (Yukl, 2013).

Formal learning methods. Traditionally, formal learning methods have been the foundation of learning and development. These methods include class lectures, readings, and taking tests for measurement of learning. Research shows that these methods remain staples in leadership development (Lacerenza et al., 2017). Formal or information-based learning should be implemented with other models. Much of the time, formal development provides the basis for information, knowledge, and the other developmental activities to follow.

However, there are several factors to consider when implementing formal training. Taking from both the fields of general organizational training and leadership development, there are several factors that should be considered. There should be a needs analysis to determine what and who should be taught, as well as who should be facilitating sessions (internal or external trainers). Then, the length and duration of development needs to be determined, to include

spaced training, for cognitive and schematic changes to occur (Lord & Brown, 2004). Finally, the training should be evaluated to determine the learning, transfer of behavior, and results or outcomes from efforts (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006; Lacerenza et al., 2017).

SUMMARY

Lacerenza et al. (2017), in the most comprehensive leadership development study to date, showed that traditional classroom (formal) learning used in combination with developmental activities (practiced-based) and observing positive and negative examples (simulations or demonstration-based) was the most effective model of leadership development. In addition, an important facet to evaluating both developmental activities and formal training is feedback. It should be determined whether feedback will be a single-source (via an instructor or coach, whether verbal or through testing) or multi-source, such as a 360-degree analysis. Furthermore, developmental efforts should be evaluated for learning, transfer of behavior, and results. These practices should be supplemented with self-development that would reinforce leaders' learning and growth.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT'S VIRTUAL MODEL

Employee virtual learning and development literature, especially through the human resource development (HRD) stream, has been primarily focused on organizational learning as a basic concept (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; Ausburn, & Ausburn, 2014; Bickle et al., 2019). Research shows that virtual learning is either equal or superior to face-to-face learning (Feser, Nielsen, & Rennie, 2017; Jenkins, 2018; Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2014; Schachar & Neumann, 2010). Some of the reasons given for this phenomenon are that virtual settings encourage the social connectivity and co-construction of activities. In face-to-face and blended environments,

students may only be passive observers. In addition, the virtual environment has shown to have the potential to be less intimidating (Jenkins, 2018; Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2014; Mast, Kleinlogel, Tur, & Bachmann, 2018). Although, Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) found that for virtual instruction to be effective specific guidance is necessary. Pointed instruction can mitigate the potential ambiguity in the virtual space.

However, early virtual leadership development research began with studying student-based outcomes. In particular, this research focused on student perceptions regarding the difference between online and classroom development. In these studies, it was found that virtual leadership training was more effective than the in-person modality (Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2014). However, Lacerenza et al. (2017) recently found that face-to-face leadership development was more effective than its virtual counterpart in the transfer of behaviors, but equal for learning. Lacerenza et al. suggested that more research in this area is needed to determine both modalities' effectiveness. This leaves a gap in the literature studying virtual business management and leadership development outcomes. Although there is limited research on virtual management and leadership development effectiveness, the extant literature supplies a foundation from which to explore new possibilities.

In one study, leadership development involving graduate-level students revealed that virtual learning was actually more effective than its in-person and blended learning counterparts (Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2014). Some of the suggested factors for virtual learning's enhanced performance were individual characteristics such as a proclivity towards independent work and motivation. Another suggestion for higher levels of virtual performance was that through different modes of delivery such as lectures, readings, writings, and interactive projects greater levels of reflection and cogent construction of student deliverables were achieved (Ladyshevsky

& Taplin, 2014; Manning-Ouellette & Black, 2017). Another explanation for this heightened effectiveness is that by the nature of the virtual environment's intimate interactions and discussions, compared to a classroom instructor's focused delivery, a more collegial setting is established. This environment is also aligned with the social constructivist approach that emphasizes the co-creation of knowledge amongst and between online actors. This shared knowledge helps learners construct meaning that has shown to enhance learning (Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2014).

In another study, Jenkins (2018) found that virtual leadership development had benefits that could have broad implications across all industries. In this study, a cross section of practitioners and leadership development scholars were interviewed. The themes that emerged were aligned with previous virtual learning findings in terms of the importance of the social interconnectivity between and among participants (Ausburn & Ausburn, 2014; Bickle et al., 2019; Feser et al., 2017; Jenkins, 2018; Ladyshevsky & Taplin). Jenkins found that both consumers of and those who deliver virtual leadership development interventions showed a need for the social aspect of learning. The salient themes identified were interactions with others such as networking, experiencing diversity, and thoughtful social exchanges. Then, the need for role simulations between participants, both individual and team action learning. Finally, the need for virtual follow up to include online resources and virtual coaches and mentors (e.g., online portals such as an LMS, email, video conferencing, smartphone apps, etc.) (Mehta & Downs, 2019; Pierce, 2020). The importance of continued, sustained leadership development efforts is also supported in the literature (Lacerenza, 2017; Pierce, 2020). These scant virtual leadership development findings lead the way to design future efforts.

The Acceleration of the Virtual Leadership Development Model

Many organizations were already practicing in the digital realm of learning. In fact, technology has reinvented organizational learning through varied platforms such as microlearning, nanolearning, and learning management systems. Through the Center for Creative Leadership's (CCL) (Mehta & Downs, 2019) extensive experience with the leadership development and digital learning industries, they have suggested the following amalgamation of initiatives: (a) Ensure that asynchronous learning is not overbroad but focused on learners' experience, time needed, and objectives that are aligned with the organization and digital assets. (b) Ensure that there is support from the top of the organization prior to development efforts; this will help with buy-in of the development (Pierce, 2020). (c) Focus on learner-centered strategies for effective learning. Examples of these strategies include hosting virtual meet and greet and luncheon sessions for exchange of ideas, as well as creating internal and external social network tools that can facilitate informal learning (Ardichvili, Natt och Dagg, & Manderscheid, 2016). Furthermore, spacing out topics for ease of learning will also promote leader development (Lacerenza et al., 2017). (d) Embrace leaders' participation as teachers—this strategy will help scale learning initiatives across the organization. (e) Create learning partnerships such as accountability partners (peer to peer) to keep each other on track. Also, learning partners (e.g., boss, mentor, coach, etc.) can enhance learning and development. (f) Finally, measuring the development initiatives to evaluate effectiveness (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). For digitally based initiatives, some salient factors of evaluation are participants' experiences specific to the virtual space, gathering data points of participation, and aligning objectives with the digital content (may be different from in-person environments). These were the emerging practices of virtual learning and leadership development prior to the pandemic.

The digital disruption that had been anticipated for some time was accelerated through the world-wide pandemic. This crisis exponentially accelerated organizations' digital footprint for many of their operations. In particular, the organizational learning and development industry's, to include leadership development, use of digital technologies was similarly accelerated (Chief Learning Officer, 2020, Yawson, 2020). Chief Learning Officer's (2020) research involving learning and development leaders shortly after the crisis began revealed the significant pivot to the digital world. Specifically, it was estimated that in the midst of digitization they would be forced to rethink their organizations' leadership competencies. It was estimated that they would increase, above already in-place efforts, training in communication skills by 30% and emotional intelligence and empathy by 33%. The recent digitization of organizations shows the infusion of interpersonal or soft-skills with the virtual model of leadership development.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS NEEDED FOR THE DIGITAL ORGANIZATION

In 2017, the World Economic Forum identified the current era as the second coming of the machine age, or the 4IR (Groscurth, 2018; Mdluli & Makhupe, 2017). This new era presents advanced capabilities involving the physical, biological, and social realms. These advancements include 3-D printing, artificial intelligence, robotic process automation, and nanotechnology to name a few (Groscurth, 2018). Furthermore, Ardichvili et al. (2016) differentiates leadership in a digital organization from a traditional one. They described the digital environment as technology-mediated and associated with complexity. As a result, leadership has been adjusting to this changing environment to include the upskilling across the areas of the digital, physical, strategic, adaptability, contextual, and emotional dimensions (Mdluli & Makhupe, 2017; Oosthuizen, 2017; Schwab, 2016).

Moreover, the COVID-19s crisis has further exacerbated the need for leadership development to adjust and adapt. Bennett and McWhorter (2021) reviewed six industry reports that reflected business practices post-COVID. They analyzed the need for hard skills (e.g., digital, marketing, technical, etc.) and soft skills (e.g., emotional, mentoring, coaching, etc.) in this new environment. All six industry reports, as expected, showed a need for both soft and hard skills. However, four out of the six reported a specific need for EI characteristics such as empathy, self awareness, and interpersonal skills. In addition, Dietsch (2021) found that the emerging leadership qualities post-COVID also included interpersonal skills such as empathy and caring for the well-being of others, characteristics associated with EI. As a result of the emergence of leadership's use of EI in the digital organization, the empirical background and salience of the EI model will be briefly discussed.

BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE OF EI IN LEADERSHIP

It was long thought that socio-emotional skills had no place in leadership. However, research shows that emotions are an integral part to decision making and leadership capabilities (Bar-On, 2006; Goleman, 2000; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Nafukho, Muyia, Farnia, Kacirek, & Lynham, 2016). EI has been broadly defined as the ability to recognize one's own emotions, recognize and understand others' emotions, and then to self-regulate while managing relationships (Goleman, 2000; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Nafukho et al., 2016). Sadri (2012) and a host of others found an integration of EI competencies with leadership development approaches. Sadri asserted that EI components were important for leadership development (e.g., empathy and social skills improve communication). However, there are many models of EI, sometimes referred to as emotional quotient (EQ) (Bar-On, 2006; Goleman, 2000; Goleman &

Boyatzis, 2017; Nafukho et al., 2016). Goleman's version of the skills and competencies that contribute to EI are widely used throughout the industry.

Goleman & Boyatzis (2017) defined EI as having four domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. The self-awareness domain consists of one defined competency: emotional self-awareness. Next, the self-management domain is comprised of emotional self-control, adaptability, achievement orientation, and positive outlook dimensions. Then, the social awareness domain includes empathy and organizational awareness dimensions. Finally, the relationship management domain is made up of influence, coach and mentor, conflict management, teamwork, and inspirational leadership competencies. Leaders who possess these skills and competencies are found to be more effective and productive in their organizations, than those who do not. Furthermore, research shows that EI can be learned and developed through feedback and practice (Goleman, 2000; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Lopes, 2016; Nafukho et al., 2016).

While there is evidence that suggests in-person EI interventions do not have a positive effect on leadership outcomes (Fambrough & Hart, 2008; Weinberger, 2009), there is overwhelming research that shows this development is effective on a personal level (Caruso, Mayer, & Salovey, 2002; Goleman, 2000; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Lopes, 2016; Nafukho et al., 2016). Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts's (2004) conducted a critical review of the EI models' effectiveness. They described Caruso et al.'s. (2002) model of EI measurement as ability based. Caruso et al. contended that this is the only model that can have correct answers during an assessment and is based on cognitive abilities for processing and regulating emotions. An ability-based instrument measures the response to a situation, similar to intelligence tests. Whereas, Goleman's (2000) and Bar-On's (2006) models are considered trait or mixed models. These

models focus on competencies and traits of individuals' non-cognitive responses. A trait or mixed model's instrument measures only self-reporting behaviors during a situation. Research suggests the most effective measurement of EI is to use both the ability and trait or mixed models. Then, remeasure with both instruments at least six months after an intervention to evaluate reliability (Gilar-Corbi, Pozo-Rico, Sánchez, and Castejón, 2019; Nafukho et al., 2016; Weinberger, 2009).

FRAMEWORK: EXPLORING EI LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DIGITAL CONCEPTS

The traditional leadership development models are extended through virtual and digital learning and development to create a framework for a renewed approach in the digital age. The digital age has shown the need for renewed leadership skills. Moreover, the literature emerges the importance of interpersonal and emotional skills through this renewal (Bennett & McWhorter, 2021; Dietsch, 2021; Mdluli & Makhupe, 2017; Oosthuizen, 2017; Schwab, 2016). The EI model has been rigorously studied and established as a salient variable that improves leadership skills and abilities (Goleman, 2000; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Nafukho et al., 2016). This concept leads to the importance of why EI is paramount in leadership development. Furthermore, the acceleration of the digital organization has precipitated the need to train and develop organizational leaders through virtual and digital means (Bennett & McWhorter, 2021; Chief Learning Officer, 2020, Yawson, 2020). Therefore, extant virtual learning and development practices are explored to emerge the most effective means to design and deliver remote EI interventions.

Digitally Developed EI Leadership Training

Organizations have recently scrambled to meet the demands created through the expeditious rise of the digital world. The digital age further precipitated the emergence of interpersonal skills as key for leaders' success (Bennett & McWhorter, 2021; Chief Learning Officer, 2020; Dietsch, 2021). This revelation provides the opportunity to explore and examine how to effectively integrate EI training into the digital leadership development model. The extant literature on virtual EI leadership development is scant but shows promise for future training. Research demonstrates that virtual or remote EI training does effectively develop leaders, thus improving their interpersonal skills and abilities (Gilar-Corbi et al., 2019; Salcido-Cibrián, Ramos, Jiménez, & Blanca, 2019).

Salcido-Cibrián, et al. (2019) conducted a study using EI development through a completely online format. There were 12 remote sessions, each 90 minutes long. These sessions focused on developing participants' self-awareness, empathy, and overall well-being. The sessions included practice wherein trainees encountered varied emotional situations and levels of complexity. There was also a remote portal through which participants would report back after each session, ask questions, and for general conversations about the topics. Some of the information reported back were results from required practice and homework between sessions. The salient piece of the open portal was a moderator who ensured timely feedback for optimal learning. The results of the study reported a marked increase in self-awareness and some empathy characteristics. It appeared that this study, in part, produced positive results from the remote modality because of the interactions and involvement between sessions, hence experiential learning. A limitation of the study was that the results were derived from self-reporting only and participants were from a university course. However, these results show promise for future remote EI leadership interventions.

Gilar-Corbi et al. (2019) conducted another study that involved managers who participated in a seven-week EI intervention program, which included both in-person and online modalities. Each in-person session was 95-minutes long that worked towards improving trainees' EI skills and abilities. Then, after each session, participants were required to engage in an online format, for five hours between sessions, further discussing and analyzing topics. The online contributions were described as consolidating knowledge learned through the in-person sessions and preparing for future learning. Using both modalities contributed to the model being interactive or experiential. Results were measured at the end of the seven-week program and again one year later to determine if skills were maintained. Study results showed that emotional understanding and emotional management improved over time. It also showed that self-awareness skills were maintained over time. This research used both self-reporting and ability-based measures, making the results more reliable.

This current review extends the existing research on virtual EI development. These techniques and methods included virtual practice using EI-based scenarios during sessions for enhanced learning (Jenkins, 2018; Salcido-Cibrián, et al., 2019). Between sessions there was application of course materials through practice, which included keeping diaries of learning (Williams & Wessel, 2004), and homework that was reported back through a remote portal. Also, after sessions there was remote dialogue amongst class participants and between participants and moderators that facilitated both current and future learning (Ladyshewsky & Taplin, 2014; Manning-Ouellette & Black, 2017; Salcido-Cibrián, et al., 2019). Then, if EI learning and development was maintained for at least six months after training it was shown to be effective and reliable (Gilar-Corbi et al., 2019; Nafukho et al., 2016). There was no other extant research located involving developing workers' or students' EI through virtual

interventions. Therefore, this mode of design and delivery of EI interventions needs to be further explored in the realm of organizational and management education.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

While organizations and leadership educators enter into the advanced digital age, their focus must adapt with the times (Bennett & McWhorter, 2021; Chief Learning Officer, 2020; Dietsch, 2021). The digital age has accelerated the need for interpersonal and emotional dimensions in leadership development (Bennett & McWhorter, 2021; Dietsch, 2021). For organizations and leadership educators to best adapt, there must be a reenvisioning of current models. Traditional models of leadership development have been self-development, developmental activities, and formal learning. The current review explored and extended the current models of traditional leadership development through the advancement of virtual and digital learning and development. The results of which show an overall need for organizations and leadership educators to adapt traditional models incrementally, and at times use revelatory insight, for improvement of techniques and methods to best develop leaders (Corley & Gioia, 2011). From this review, the following are techniques and methods recommended for virtual and digital EI learning and development best practices:

- Asynchronous learning should not be abundant but narrowly focused and spaced out to help learner comprehension (Mehta & Downs, 2019).
- More informal virtual learning sessions should be used (e.g., luncheon sessions, internal and external social networks, etc., for exchanges of ideas) (Mehta & Downs, 2019).
- Virtual sessions should be more interactive, to include action learning (e.g., one-on-one or group simulations, group discussions of results for understanding, break out rooms,

use of annotations and chat messages, etc.) (Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2014; Jenkins, 2018; Salcido-Cibrián, et al., 2019).

- Focus EI scenarios for optimal learning based on the leaders' experience level and organizational context (Cortellazzo, Bruni, & Zampieri, 2019; Salcido-Cibrián et al., 2019).
- Training and development need to be both selective with the amount of information digested and spaced over time for optimal learning and transfer of behaviors to the workplace (Lacerenza et al., 2017; Mehta & Downs, 2019).
- Between and after training there should be a digital forum through which leaders report back learning, questions, and insights amongst learners and between a moderator. This could also include smartphone applications for real-time learning (Gilar-Corbi et al., 2019; Pierce, 2020; Salcido-Cibrián et al., 2019).
- There should be assigned learning partnerships during and after learning for an extension of informal learning (e.g., peer accountability partners and mentors or coaches) (Mehta & Downs, 2019).
- Senior leadership needs to support efforts from the inception for buy-in throughout the organization, as well as participate in teaching to help scale development (Mehta & Downs, 2019; Pierce, 2020).
- Ensure evaluation of efforts to measure success and adapt for future learning and development (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). In the virtual space these are salient factors: examining participants' experiences in the virtual space, gathering data points of participation, and aligning objectives with the digital assets (Mehta & Downs, 2019).

- For EI evaluations, research establishes measuring at the conclusion of training and at a six-month interval to validate learning and behaviors (Gilar-Corbi et al., 2019; Nafukho et al., 2016). Also, both trait-based or mixed models (competencies) and ability models (cognitive decision making) should be used for reliability (Gilar-Corbi et al., 2019; Weinberger, 2009).

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

This review explored the expedient rise of the digital organization that emerged emotional dimensions as paramount for leadership. This concept was elucidated through how to best develop leaders using the EI model. This review suggests that traditional leadership development be extended through extant virtual and digital learning and development theory. Digital leadership development has scant evidence of success in the organizational setting (Lacerenza et al. 2017; Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2014). Furthermore, this review found that digitally developed EI leadership training has even less established scholarship. However, this review's framework highlighted how virtual interventions were effective with developing EI in research participants.

The hope of this examination is to promote management theory research in the specific area of virtual and digital EI learning and development. In this review, there were only two studies found that used virtual interventions to develop EI, one with management participants and the other with students. Therefore, management and leadership scholars and practitioners should explore how virtual learning and development theories inform the design and delivery of digital EI interventions. Management and leadership scholars need to consult organizations and practitioners for the importance and direction of virtual development and how EI interventions

might fit into this. As a result, this incipient framework could add to leadership development's digital footprint.

CONCLUSION

Organizations and leadership educators are embarking on the precipitous emergence of the digital age and how leadership development fits into this landscape. Leadership's history and contemporary leadership development models were discussed for context. Then, the emergence of the digital organization highlighted the importance of the interpersonal and emotional dimensions. This phenomenon was elucidated through how the EI model could be effectively used to develop leaders. The author suggested a framework in which leadership development models are extended through emerging digital learning and development practices for the effective design and delivery of remote EI interventions.

The extant literature from these constructs shows that EI training can be virtually and digitally designed and delivered for effective leadership development. The evidence demonstrates that the extension of the current leadership development models of formal training, developmental activities, and self-development all play an intricate role in virtual and digital EI leadership training. This examination's underlying tenets were that formal learning still occurred in the digital space, as expected. However, the action learning or experiential aspect should not wane in this environment but be extended through the opportunity to capitalize on the social aspect of this learning space. Finally, self-development is instrumental both between course sessions and thereafter for the maintenance and refinement of skills and abilities. The continuing evolution of this field of study is important as ever with the perpetuity of the digital organization.

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