

THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
ON LEADERSHIP STYLES AMONG THE
KADAZANDUSUN COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT**THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
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Leadership is important in organizational studies because it is a critical factor in shaping organizational effectiveness and success. Previous studies have suggested that effective leaders possess high level of emotional intelligence; emotional intelligence is more important than cognitive intelligence; it is a critical component of leadership effectiveness; the higher a manager rises in the ranks, the more important the emotional intelligence to his success; and it is a critical performance determinant. Emotional intelligence is the subset of social intelligence that refers to the ability of an individual to perceive, to process, to understand, and to manage emotions in self and others to guide one's thinking and actions. This study attempts to investigate the influence of emotional intelligence on leadership styles among Kadazandusun leaders, the biggest community in the state of Sabah Malaysia. The main interest is to examine the leadership style differences between individuals with high, normal and low emotional intelligence. Model of study was based on the proposition that emotional intelligence influences decisions and actions, which in turn determine leadership styles. Goleman's (2000) Hay/McBer Model of leadership, which comprises six leadership styles, was employed in this study namely coercive, authoritative, *affiliative*, democratic, pacesetting, and coaching leadership style. The moderating effect of formal authority was also tested in this study. A sample size of 139 Kadazandusun leaders from the government servants and politicians categories participated in this study. The results revealed that there is a positive linear relationship between emotional intelligence and education: the higher the number of years spent on formal education, the higher the emotional intelligence of the respondents. This study also discovered that the higher the emotional intelligence the higher the tendency for the respondents to exhibit authoritative, democratic, and coaching leadership styles. This study also found that the higher the emotional intelligence, the higher the number of leadership styles exhibited by the respondents. The moderating effect of formal authority was not substantiated in this study. However formal authority was found to have a direct effect on the relationship between coercive, authoritative, pacesetting and coaching leadership styles, and emotional intelligence for normal EQ category. This finding indicates that the higher the formal authority, the more the respondents to exhibit coercive, authoritative, pacesetting and coaching leadership styles.

