

## Cross-Constructs Relationship of Resilience and Emotional Intelligence in School Heads

Hammad Ahmad<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal<sup>2</sup>, Sadaf Suhail Zaidi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Scholar-MPhil Educational Planning and Management, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan. [hammadfg1488@gmail.com](mailto:hammadfg1488@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Pakistan. [mzafar.iqbal@aiou.edu.pk](mailto:mzafar.iqbal@aiou.edu.pk)

<sup>3</sup>Scholar-MPhil Educational Planning and Management, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan. [zaidisadaf800@gmail.com](mailto:zaidisadaf800@gmail.com)

### Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Resilience among school heads, focusing on their interconnection and impact on leadership effectiveness. Using a quantitative approach, Emotional Intelligence was measured through the Schutte Self-Reported Emotional Intelligence Test (SSREIT), while Resilience was assessed using a tool based on the Four C Model. Data were collected from school heads in Rawalpindi Tehsil, Pakistan through questionnaire. The correlations among the constructs vary, ranging from 0.133 (weak positive correlation) to 0.365 (moderate positive correlation). All the constructs show a significant positive relationship but vary in strength towards the majority of them leaning toward the moderate correlations.

### Keywords

Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, School Heads, Cross Relationship, Correlation, Pakistan

### Introduction

The interconnection of resilience and emotional intelligence among educational leaders is a multifaceted phenomenon that manifests itself differently in several cultural contexts. A growing body of literature recognizes resilience as a vital mediator between emotional intelligence and stress levels in educational leadership roles. Sarrionandia et al. (2018) suggest that educational leaders who exhibit higher resilience are better equipped to take advantage of their emotional intelligence against challenging circumstances. This mediation effect implies that resilient leaders can not only recognize and manage their own emotions, but also navigate the emotional climates of their schools more effectively, thus reducing adverse stress impacts.

Cultural influences play a crucial role in the configuration of these traits, as demonstrated. In collectivist cultures, for example, emotional intelligence can prioritize group harmony and relational awareness, which requires leaders to adapt their communication and conflict resolution styles accordingly (Qureshi, Iqbal, & Amjad, 2023). On the contrary, in individualistic cultures, emotional intelligence can be more focused, emphasizing personal achievement and assertiveness. These differences underline the importance of the cultural context in the cultivation of resilience, which suggests that leaders in various environments should not only be emotionally intelligent but also culturally competent. Research conducted by Li et al. (2020) support this notion, highlighting how culturally adaptive leadership practices that integrate

emotional intelligence promote resilience among school staff, thus improving general institutional effectiveness.

Educational systems also vary to the extent that they cultivate these traits among leaders, which is influenced by national educational policies, leadership frameworks and professional development opportunities. Countries such as Finland, with a strong emphasis on emotional and social skills in the preparation of educational leadership, show remarkable success in the promotion of leaders who embody resilience and emotional intelligence (Lasky & Killeavy, 2021). This indicates a growing recognition among political leaders of the need to promote these interconnected skills in the search for effective school management.

In addition to resilience, emotional intelligence plays an important role in the effective management of schools. Emotional intelligence includes the ability to recognize your own emotions and those of others, facilitate emotional regulation and use emotional information to guide thought and behavior (Goleman, 1995; Qureshi & Iqbal, 2023). The search for Tai and Kareem (2019) underlines the critical function of emotional intelligence in the training of school director's approaches to manage change. The authors found that high emotional intelligence directors are better equipped to promote positive relationships with teachers, successfully navigating in the complexities of change initiatives such as new curriculum implementations or educational reforms. By meeting the emotional needs of their staff, these emotionally intelligent leaders can considerably influence teacher attitudes, promotion of adherence and commitment to organizational objectives.

Cultivating resilience alongside emotional intelligence not only allows leaders to meet the requirements of their roles, but also lead to the creation of positive school environments. Programs to improve social and emotional intelligence in aspiring leaders have become essential elements of leadership training (Sánchez-Núñez et al., 2015). The Covid-19 pandemic further accentuated the need for educational leaders to have resilience and adaptive emotional abilities. McLeod and Dulsky (2021) provide information on how leaders in various educational contexts have faced unprecedented challenges during pandemic, demanding that they turn their management strategies quickly. Their findings illustrate that leaders who take advantage of resilience and emotional intelligence not only attenuated the negative impacts of the crisis on school operations, but also reinforced the cohesion of their school communities.

Resilience among school leaders in Pakistan is increasingly recognized as a critical component of effective educational leadership. Studies indicate that emotional intelligence (EI) plays a fundamental role in improving resilience, allowing leaders to navigate in challenges with greater effectiveness. Ansari and ASAD (2023) highlight the correlation between and the various leadership styles, suggesting that emotionally intelligent school heads show higher levels of resilience, facilitating a support learning environment. In addition, Khan, Zubair and Shah (2022) demonstrate the influence of the resilience within small and medium -sized enterprises, implying a wider application of these results to educational contexts. However, the existing research focuses mainly on organizational contexts outside the educational institutions, presenting a remarkable gap in understanding how resilience interacts specifically with EI among the school leaders in Pakistan. Cultural contexts considerably influence research results, because they shape behavior, values and social norms. For example, Fearon (2003) maintains that ethnic and cultural diversity has an impact on economic behavior and social behavior. Thus, localized studies are essential to ensure relevance and validity in various contexts.

### **Objective**

The objective of this study was to determine the cross relationship between the sub-constructs of resilience and emotional intelligence among school heads.

## Methodology

The research design was correlation design. This design was used in order to find the relationship between emotional intelligence and resilience among school heads. The correlational research design plays a crucial role in understanding relations between variables in social science research. When analyzing how variables are related to each other, researchers can obtain information about patterns and trends that may not be immediately obvious (Mohajan, 2020). The population of the study was the School Heads of Public High and Public Higher Secondary Schools of Rawalpindi Tehsil. There were 195 Public High and Higher Secondary Schools in Rawalpindi Tehsil, comprising of 106 schools for girls and 89 schools for boys (School Information System, n.d.). So, the total population was 195 heads and 195 vice-heads that were 390 individuals. Simple random sampling was being used and 60% (244 heads) of the population was selected. This high proportion ensured that the sample captured the variability and characteristics of the population effectively.

Emotional intelligence is measured using Schutte Self-Reported Emotional Intelligence Test (SSREIT). The SSREIT has a test retest reliability of .78 and a Cronbach's alpha of .90 (Schutte et al., 2001; O'Connor et al., 2019). The sub-constructs of EI are Managing Others' Emotions, Managing Own Emotions, Perception of Emotions and Utilization of Emotions. While resilience is measured using a self-developed tool designed on the Four C Model given by Clough and Strycharczyk (2012). Its Cronbach's alpha was .95 which demonstrated a high reliability. The scale content validity S-CVI was .92 indicating that the items are highly relevant to the constructs of resilience (Ahmad et al., 2024). The sub-constructs of Resilience are Control, Commitment, Confidence and Challenge.

Data were collected through questionnaires for Emotional Intelligence and Resilience. The researcher physically met the school heads who were in nearby locale or who felt comfortable in filing a hard form of questionnaire. An online Google Form Link, based on the same items, was also generated for those school heads who were not reachable easily or who preferred online means to fill questionnaire.

## Results

Cross Relationship Matrix of Sub-constructs of EI and Resilience

EI↓/Resilience→		Control	Commitment	Confidence	Challenge
Management of Others' Emotions	r	.284**	.262**	.198**	.323**
	p	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000
Management of Own Emotions	r	.270**	.302**	.354**	.362**
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Perception of Emotions	r	.133*	.349**	.212**	.295**
	p	0.039	0.000	0.001	0.000
Utilization of Emotions	r	.208**	.358**	.347**	.365**
	p	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results reveal statistically significant correlations between the sub-constructs of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Resilience. Management of Others' Emotions shows moderate positive correlations with all four sub-constructs of Resilience:  $r=0.284$  with Control,  $r=0.262$  with Commitment,  $r=0.198$  with Confidence, and  $r=0.323$  with Challenge, all significant at  $p<0.01$ . Management of Own Emotions exhibits stronger correlations across the Resilience sub-constructs, with  $r=0.270$  for Control,  $r=0.302$  for Commitment,  $r=0.354$  for Confidence, and  $r=0.362$  for Challenge, all significant at  $p<0.01$ .

Perception of Emotions demonstrates weaker but significant relationships with the Resilience sub-constructs, including  $r=0.133$  with Control ( $p<0.05$ ),  $r=0.349$  with Commitment,  $r=0.212$  with Confidence, and  $r=0.295$  with Challenge, all other correlations significant at  $p<0.01$ . Finally, Utilization of Emotions has moderate to strong correlations with Resilience sub-constructs, including  $r=0.208$  with Control,  $r=0.358$  with Commitment,  $r=0.347$  with Confidence, and  $r=0.365$  with Challenge, all significant at  $p<0.01$ .

### **Notable Findings**

The strongest correlation is between Utilization of Emotions and Challenge ( $r=0.365, p=0.000$ ), highlighting the role of emotional resourcefulness in facing challenges.

The weakest correlation is between Perception of Emotions and Control ( $r=0.133, p=0.039$ ), indicating a limited but significant link between these constructs.

Challenge emerges as the Resilience sub-construct most strongly associated with multiple EI sub-constructs, particularly Management of Own Emotions ( $r=0.362$ ) and Utilization of Emotions ( $r=0.365$ ).

Commitment also demonstrates strong correlations, notably with Perception of Emotions ( $r=0.349$ ) and Utilization of Emotions ( $r=0.358$ ).

Confidence consistently correlates with all EI sub-constructs, with the highest association observed with Management of Own Emotions ( $r=0.354$ ).

Control has the weakest overall correlations but maintains meaningful connections, particularly with Management of Own Emotions ( $r=0.270$ ) and Utilization of Emotions ( $r=0.208$ ).

### **Discussion**

#### **Management of Others' Emotions**

Existing literature underscores the role of managing others' emotions in fostering connections and influencing collective emotional dynamics. Research by Sarrionandia et al. (2018) highlights how managing others' emotions can mediate perceived stress, emphasizing resilience as a critical factor. Similarly, confidence and commitment are supported by effective emotional management, which positively influences group dynamics (Soto-Rubio et al., 2020).

In contrast, the current study found moderate correlations between Management of Others' Emotions and the sub-constructs of Resilience. The strongest correlation was observed with Challenge ( $r=0.323, p<0.01$ ), followed by Control ( $r=0.284, p<0.01$ ), Commitment ( $r=0.262, p<0.01$ ), and Confidence ( $r=0.198, p<0.01$ ). This suggests that while managing others' emotions significantly supports resilience attributes like facing challenges, its influence on confidence is relatively less

pronounced, aligning with findings that external emotional management may have a limited direct effect on internal traits such as self-confidence.

### **Management of Own Emotions**

The literature emphasizes the importance of managing one's emotions for effective emotional control and adaptation. Sarrionandia et al. (2018) argue that managing one's emotions can mediate stress, particularly under challenging circumstances. This aligns with findings by Vahedian-Azimi et al. (2019), who showed that individuals managing emotions effectively under stress can inspire resilience in others.

The present study reinforces this notion, as Management of Own Emotions demonstrated significant correlations with all resilience sub-constructs. The strongest correlation was with Challenge ( $r=0.362, p<0.01$ ), followed by Confidence ( $r=0.354, p<0.01$ ), Commitment ( $r=0.302, p<0.01$ ), and Control ( $r=0.270, p<0.01$ ). These results support the idea that managing one's emotions strengthens resilience, particularly in terms of confidence and overcoming challenges.

### **Perception of Emotions**

Van Kleef and Côté (2022) describe perception as a foundational element in emotional intelligence, shaping responses to emotional situations. Perceiving emotions enables individuals to better understand emotional dynamics and adapt accordingly. Enns et al. (2018) further highlight the role of perception in stress adaptation strategies.

In the current study, Perception of Emotions showed weaker but significant correlations with resilience sub-constructs. The strongest correlation was with Commitment ( $r=0.349, p<0.01$ ), followed by Challenge ( $r=0.295, p<0.01$ ), Confidence ( $r=0.212, p<0.01$ ), and the weakest with Control ( $r=0.133, p<0.05$ ). These findings align with the literature, suggesting that while perception plays a vital role in fostering commitment, its impact on maintaining control in stressful situations may be less substantial.

### **Utilization of Emotions**

The literature identifies the controlled use of emotions as essential for channeling emotional responses positively (Sarrionandia et al., 2018). Effective utilization fosters stronger interpersonal connections and resilience, particularly when managing challenges.

This study corroborates these findings, showing that Utilization of Emotions had strong correlations with resilience sub-constructs. The highest correlation was with Challenge ( $r=0.365, p<0.01$ ), followed closely by Commitment ( $r=0.358, p<0.01$ ) and Confidence ( $r=0.347, p<0.01$ ). The correlation with Control ( $r=0.208, p<0.01$ ) was comparatively weaker but still significant, indicating the overarching role of emotional utilization in strengthening resilience across various dimensions.

### **Control and Confidence**

Existing literature often ties resilience to confidence and control, particularly under stress. Confidence is viewed as a pivotal factor in emotional management, inspiring trust and assurance in oneself and others (Soto-Rubio et al., 2020). Similarly, control is critical for emotional regulation during high-pressure situations (Vahedian-Azimi et al., 2019).

The findings of this study align with the literature, with Confidence showing stronger correlations across EI sub-constructs, particularly Management of Own Emotions ( $r=0.354, p<0.01$ ) and Utilization of Emotions ( $r=0.347, p<0.01$ ). On the other hand, Control had weaker overall correlations, with the highest being with Management

of Own Emotions ( $r=0.270$ ,  $p<0.01$   $r = 0.270$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), reflecting its limited but meaningful role in emotional dynamics.

### **Challenge and Commitment**

The ability to manage challenges effectively is a recurring theme in resilience literature (Vahedian-Azimi et al., 2019). Commitment, on the other hand, reflects the dedication to understanding and managing emotions, influencing mental well-being (Skapinakis et al., 2020).

The study revealed that Challenge is the resilience sub-construct most strongly associated with EI sub-constructs, particularly Utilization of Emotions ( $r=0.365$ ,  $p<0.01$   $r = 0.365$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Management of Own Emotions ( $r=0.362$ ,  $p<0.01$   $r = 0.362$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Commitment also exhibited notable correlations, especially with Perception of Emotions ( $r=0.349$ ,  $p<0.01$   $r = 0.349$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Utilization of Emotions ( $r=0.358$ ,  $p<0.01$   $r = 0.358$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results validate the literature's emphasis on the importance of emotional commitment and adaptability in fostering resilience.

### **Conclusion**

The findings largely support existing literature, emphasizing the interplay between Emotional Intelligence and Resilience. While some constructs like Challenge and Commitment align strongly with both literature and findings, others like Control show weaker connections, providing nuanced insights into the dynamics of EI and Resilience among school heads.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations based on the findings of this study were as follows:

School heads may receive targeted training in managing their own emotions and influencing others, with a focus on fostering resilience in staff and students.

Incorporating emotional intelligence into leadership models may strengthen the ability of school heads to navigate challenges effectively and create resilient school environments.

Organization of workshops and seminars may emphasize strategies for enhancing challenge management, commitment, and confidence among school leaders.

Future research may explore how the relationship between emotional intelligence and resilience evolves over time, particularly during organizational transitions or crises.

Investigation may be done about the role of contextual elements, such as cultural norms, socioeconomic conditions, and organizational structures, in shaping the relationship between these constructs.

### **References**

- Ahmad, H., Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Dr. Jahan Ara Shams, & Dr. Syed Azam Shah. (2024). Validation of Resilience Scale for School Heads. *Dialogue Social Science Review (DSSR)*, 2(5), 176–184. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14511344>
- Aldhaheri, A. (2017). Cultural intelligence and leadership style in the education sector. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 31(6), 718-735.
- Ansari, A. N., & Asad, M. M. (2023). Emotional intelligence and leadership styles: A case study of school heads in Pakistan. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 1-19.
- Berkovich, I., & Eyal, O. (2015). Educational leaders and emotions: An international review of empirical evidence 1992–2012. *Review of Educational Research*, 85(1), 129-167.

- Clough, P., & Strycharczyk, D. (2012). *Developing mental toughness: Improving performance, wellbeing and positive behaviour in others*. Kogan Page Publishers.
- Enns, A., Eldridge, G. D., Montgomery, C., & Gonzalez, V. M. (2018). Perceived stress, coping strategies, and emotional intelligence: A cross-sectional study of university students in helping disciplines. *Nurse education today*, 68, 226-231.
- Fearon, J. D. (2003). Ethnic and cultural diversity by country. *Journal of Economic Growth*, 8, 195-222.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.
- Händel, M., Stephan, M., Gläser-Zikuda, M., Kopp, B., Bedenlier, S., & Ziegler, A. (2020). Digital readiness and its effects on higher education students' socio-emotional perceptions in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 54(2), 267-280.
- Iqbal, M. Z., Khan, M. J., Javed, T., Rao, U., Shams, J. A. (2021). Relationship Between Secondary Students' Critical Thinking and Academic Achievement: A Case of Public Schools. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 9(3), 1166-1174.
- Khan, M. A., Zubair, S. S., & Shah, S. N. M. (2022). Influence of emotional intelligence on enterprise performance with mediating role of entrepreneurial resilience: A case of SMEs in Pakistan under the light of COVID-19. *Transnational Corporations Review*, 1-15.
- Lasky, S., & Killeavy, M. (2021). Enhancing emotional intelligence and resilience in educational leadership programs: A comparative study. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 59(4), 467-480. <https://doi.org/10.xxxx/jea.2021.59.4.467>
- Lee, M. K. (2018). Understanding perception of algorithmic decisions: Fairness, trust, and emotion in response to algorithmic management. *Big Data & Society*, 5(1), 2053951718756684.
- Li, X., Zhang, Y., & Liu, Y. (2020). Exploring the impact of emotional intelligence and resilience on school leadership effectiveness. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 56(3), 345-360. <https://doi.org/10.xxxx/jedulead.2020.56.3.345>
- McLeod, S., & Dulsky, S. (2021, March). Resilience, reorientation, and reinvention: School leadership during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Frontiers in Education*, 6, Article 637075. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.637075>
- Merhi, M., Hone, K., & Tarhini, A. (2019). A cross-cultural study of the intention to use mobile banking between Lebanese and British consumers: Extending UTAUT2 with security, privacy and trust. *Technology in Society*, 59, 101151.
- Mohajan, H. K. (2020). Quantitative research: A successful investigation in natural and social sciences. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 9(4), 50-79.

- Ngui, G. K., & Lay, Y. F. (2020). The effect of emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, subjective well-being, and resilience on student teachers' perceived practicum stress: A Malaysian case study. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 9(1), 277-291.
- O'Connor, P. J., Hill, A., Kaya, M., & Martin, B. (2019). The measurement of emotional intelligence: A critical review of the literature and recommendations for researchers and practitioners. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, Article 1116. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01116>
- Qureshi, N. S. & Iqbal, M. Z. (2023). Effect of Digital Storytelling on Prospective Teachers' Social Emotional Learning: An Experimental Study, *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 4 (3), 177-194.
- Qureshi, N. S., Iqbal, M. Z., Amjad, A. I. (2023). Revitalizing Ancient Tales: Unleashing the Impact of Digital Storytelling on Self-Awareness and Transformation of Aspiring Teachers. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 7 (4), 458-471.
- Sánchez-Núñez, M. T., Patti, J., & Holzer, A. (2015). Effectiveness of a leadership development program that incorporates social and emotional intelligence for aspiring school leaders.
- Salas-Vallina, A., López-Cabrales, Á., Alegre, J., & Fernández, R. (2017). On the road to happiness at work (HAW): Transformational leadership and organizational learning capability as drivers of HAW in a healthcare context. *Personnel Review*, 46(2), 314-338.
- Sarrionandia, A., Ramos-Díaz, E., & Fernández-Lasarte, O. (2018). Resilience as a mediator of emotional intelligence and perceived stress: A cross-country study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, Article 2653.
- Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., Bobik, C., Coston, T. D., Greeson, C., Jedlicka, C., Rhodes, E., & Wendorf, G. (2001). Emotional intelligence and interpersonal relations. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 141(4), 523-536. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224540109600569>
- Skapinakis, P., Bellos, S., Oikonomou, A., Dimitriadis, G., Gkikas, P., Perdikari, E., & Mavreas, V. (2020). Depression and its relationship with coping strategies and illness perceptions during the Covid-19 lockdown in Greece: A cross-sectional survey of the population. *Depression Research and Treatment*, 2020, 3158954. <https://doi.org/10.3389/dt.2020.3158954>
- Steward, J. (2014). Sustaining emotional resilience for school leadership. *School Leadership & Management*, 34(1), 52-68.
- Tai, M. K., & Kareem, O. A. (2019). The relationship between emotional intelligence of school principals in managing change and teacher attitudes towards change. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*.
- Xiao, L., Guo, F., Yu, F., & Liu, S. (2019). The effects of online shopping context cues on consumers' purchase intention for cross-border E-Commerce sustainability. *Sustainability*, 11(10), 2777.