

**The Role of Curriculum and Emotional Intelligence in Shaping Leadership Skills:
A Case of University Students in Pakistan**

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Abstract

Introduction: The current study delves into the influence of existing curricular events and activities for emotional intelligence development and core leadership skills amongst the undergraduate students of higher educational institutes. Notably, the educational curriculum in Pakistan seems to lack adequate focus on nurturing emotional intelligence and leadership attributes.

Problem Statement: This study addresses the gap in the current educational curriculum in Pakistan concerning to the core development of the students' emotional intelligence and leadership qualities. It aims to investigate the state of these attributes and their relationship with curricular activities.

Methodology: To achieve the research objectives, participants were drawn from students majoring in pure social sciences, specifically those pursuing Bachelor of Science programs in Education and International Relations. A representative sample was ensured

through the use of a random sampling technique. Data was collected from two universities, BBSUL and FUUAST in Karachi, Pakistan, with the distribution and completion of survey questionnaires aided by academic and student participation. Goleman's Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence, use as a self-measure was selected as the primary instrument for data collection, particularly suitable for early educational stages.

Results: *Findings of the research study uncover that students in the early stages of their education exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence compared to students in later educational stages. This suggests a discrepancy in emotional development across different educational phases.*

Recommendations: *The results of this study emphasize the need to enhance and align university curricula to foster leadership qualities effectively by incorporating emotional intelligence development in tertiary education. These recommendations aim to bridge the current gap in emphasizing these crucial skills at the university level.*

Keywords: *Leadership, Trait Emotional Intelligence, University Student*

Introduction

Skills are necessary for facilitating the progression of emotional growth, particularly in the context of management. These skills are crucial for achieving effective and efficient leadership, which in turn plays a pivotal role in the success of organizations operating in today's dynamic and competitive environment. Supervisors need emotional maturity and managerial skills to effectively handle issues with fellow employees, coaches, and the entire department (Xianjun, 2022). The educational industry in Pakistan is currently facing challenges in terms of leadership traits and skills, similar to other sectors. The main objective of this research is to discover and assess the emotive maturity of university undergraduates in relation to a curriculum specifically crafted to improve their leadership abilities (Gomez-Leal et al., 2022).

Focus on leadership philosophy with the aim of fostering the growth and advancement of individuals in leadership positions focused in late 1700. The development of various aspects of leadership is crucial at the early stages of education (Hussain, et al., 2023). However, it is evident that in the initial phases of any educational institution, individuals such

as mentor of the students, parents of the students, teachers, faculty staff, politicians of the society, and all other stakeholders assume leadership roles within that specific organization. Individuals must consistently possess the necessary skills and resources to effectively navigate and handle a diverse range of demanding situations (Imran, Zaidi, & Khanzada, 2023). Leaders must promptly and proficiently handle each issue, since they necessitate a distinct leadership response. In the contemporary era, administrators in the twenty-first century possess an understanding that effective leaders adopt a holistic approach towards institutions, taking into account the whole of the organization (Imran, et al., 2023).

These leaders recognize the significance of establishing a collective of stakeholders in order to guarantee that all individuals are provided with opportunities for education of superior quality (Wittmer & Hopkins, 2022)

The advancement and modification of content contribute to the development of healthy and collaborative cultures, which are led by individuals and groups who are dedicated to engaging in thorough processes of inquiry within the realm of teaching and learning. Teachers sometimes face significant pressures to excel and possess a comprehensive understanding of the material (Khan, Hussain & Ahmad, 2023). However, these demands can lead to stress and potentially foster unfavorable attitudes among pupils. The experience of change can be arduous and laden with emotional implications, as it disrupts an individual's established sense of security (Imran & Akhtar, 2023; Wang, 2022).

Leaders have a crucial role in motivating and guiding their followers to engage in novel endeavors. This necessitates the establishment of trust, which is contingent upon the development of a long-term connection within the teaching and learning context. In addition to the myriad of other stressors that educators in administrative roles encounter on a daily basis, they also face the challenge of managing crises related to their vision and goals. This form of consistent leadership fosters the development of a leader who possesses emotional intelligence, characterized by self-awareness, recognition, comprehension, and effective management of their own emotions. This enables them to navigate various situations promptly and genuinely. Administrator of the educational institutes experience a diversity in reactions of emotions during the workday, as they face the genuine difficulty of balancing self-awareness of their own emotions with attending to the sentiments of others (Oad, Zaidi, & Phulpoto, 2023; Rubio

et al., 2022).

The phenomenon of "emotional labor" can be observed when individuals engage in the conscious suppression of their own emotions in order to provide support or assistance to others. The term "emotional stress" is employed within the field of psychology and social work to denote the cognitive and behavioral exertion involved in regulating the outward manifestation of our emotions (Ahmed, Ahmed & Buriro, 2023). The competences of self-attentiveness and self-organization play a pivotal role in the realm of emotional intelligence, significantly impacting a leader's ability to construct a high-performing team. In previous scholarly works on educational administration, the emotional well-being of educational leaders at the outset of their careers was not given due attention. This oversight occurred despite the importance of self-management, instructional enhancement, and empathetic engagement with staff members (Alharbi & Alnoor, 2022). In the present year of 2021, there is a growing recognition among educational administrators regarding the significance of effectively managing their emotions. This includes acknowledging the starring role of empathy towards others humans, as glowing as the ability to effectively regulate one's own strong emotions. These factors play a pivotal role in fostering the growth of relationships and facilitating the receipt of revolution, both of which are essential for cultivating individual leadership qualities (Ackerman, 2022).

Furthermore, in their study, Shrivastava et al. (2022) made the observation that possessing theoptimal set of skills and knowledge is crucial for school administrators in order to effectively make informed decisions on behalf of others and effectively manage employee stress.

Emotional intelligence is defined as the capacity to effectively monitor one's own and others' emotions and discern between them, subsequently utilizing this information to inform one's cognitive processes and behavioral responses (Hafeez, Iqbal, & Imran, 2021). Daniel Goleman, a renowned pure psychologist and best science writer for the esteemed publication in the era, according to the New York Times, gained widespread recognition for his seminal work on the concept of Emotional Intelligence, which he introduced in his influential book titled "Emotional Intelligence." The book authored by Goleman has had a notable influence on educational institutions and the fieldof child education. The rise in attention to Emotional Intelligence in educational settings can betraced back to the initiatives of the “Collaborative

for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning” (CASEL), an organization actively promoting research and application in this field (Goodlet et al., 2022). The push for implementing focus on “social and emotional learning” (SEL) for undergraduate students originated from the efforts of academic investigators and psychological practitioners in the initial 1990s. This initiative aimed to enrich learners' emotional development within the educational sphere, nurturing the growth of their Emotive/Emotional Intelligence (EI) and core leadership skills, ultimately contributing to their overall life success (Imran, et al., 2023). The concept of social and emotional learning (SEL) has gained considerable acknowledgment and is widely endorsed in educational institutions globally.

Research objectives

1. To assess the impact of existing curriculum on the Emotional Intelligence (EI) and academic efficacy of university-level learners.
2. To investigate the correlation between Emotional Intelligence and leadership skills among university students, examining the role of curricular activities in higher education

Review of the Literature

Naz et. al (2023) acknowledged in their research study relationship between the performance of educators in higher education settings and Emotional Intelligence affects the expressive interactions amongst leaders and staff. The psychological mellowness of leaders plays a role in elevating the professionalism of team members and the effectiveness of groups, relevant across diverse management units. According to findings from the “Center for Creative Management”, better stage of EI are related with enhanced results in crucial domains, including governance transparency, fostering a positive work environment for students, self-awareness, maintaining a work-life balance, promoting equality and mindfulness, establishing new interpersonal connections, rectifying previous conflicts, commitment, influence, dealing with challenging colleagues, and adjusting strategic planning.

Samiuddin and Ahmad (2017) did additional enquiries to examine correlation between social skills and managerial effectiveness, productivity levels, and job satisfaction inside the workplace. Ahmad (2019) has determined that a strong correlation exists between intellectual

stimulation and achievement, as well as emotional growth.

According to Fakhar et al. (2020), it may be inferred that CEOs with higher emotional maturity prioritize the ongoing development of their staff over maintaining stability, hence seizing possibilities for growth. Moreover, a significant association exists between effective leadership and elevated levels of emotional intelligence. The correlation between stronger emotional intelligence in leaders and their increased likelihood of achieving performance goals, as well as being perceived as capable by team members, is apparent.

Furthermore, Shafait and Huang (2022) asserted that individuals who possess higher levels of self-esteem are more inclined to exhibit their personality and demonstrate respect towards others. Conversely, individuals with lower self-esteem are low like to participate in such activity. There is a tendency for individuals of a particular gender to gravitate into leadership roles that are characterized by complexity and high demands, with a strong emphasis on collaborative effort. The objective of integrated, descriptive research study is to examine and evaluate the emotive development of boys and girls university undergraduate students. The present study used a descriptive approach to examine the harmonics and percentage of several factors influencing mental capacity. Additionally, it explores the relationship between thoughts and intellectual competence across genders, specifically males and females.

Subsequently, following a comprehensive examination of the pertinent scholarly works, a survey was produced. The content encompassed a wide range of emotionally mature leadership traits and capabilities, including nearly all possible aspects. The construct consists of two constituent elements, the initial of which pertains to the substance, while the latter is linked to the degree of emotional maturation exhibited by leaders (Jan & Anwar, 2019).

Emotional maturity, understanding oneself, self-control, awareness of social dynamics, and fostering significant connections are crucial features of human development (Bibi and Saqlain, 2016).

Research Methodology

Researcher employed a descriptive research methodology, specifically utilizing the causal comparative research method, in order to investigate the potential causes and repercussions of various curricular activities on students' emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership qualities. The cross-sectional survey method was employed to collect data from students across various semesters, including first, fifth, and eight semesters, simultaneously.

The cross-sectional design provides researchers with the possibility to collect one or more samples from the population simultaneously. Moreover, this form facilitates the description of population characteristics or the comparison of many populations at a specific point in time. Additionally, it offers cost- effectiveness by employing a single period for collection of the data (Imran, Sultana, & Ahmed, 2023).

In the study questionnaire utilized was derived from the Self-Report Measure of Emotional Intelligence (SRMEI) created by Khan and Kamal (2010). The tool utilized in this study to evaluate emotional intelligence was deemed trustworthy and valid, particularly within the socio- cultural contexts of Pakistan. The development of the tool involved employing a direct assessment method, specifically in the format of a self-report questionnaire. The evaluation exhibits a high degree of internal consistency, as indicated by a reliability alpha value of 0.95. It consists of a total of 60 items, organized into three distinct subscales. These subscales Emotional Self-Regulation (ESR), Emotional Self-Awareness (ESA), and Interpersonal Skills (IA) derive from 11 aspects within the domain of emotional intelligence. These aspects include Adaptability, Management of Emotional Reactivity, Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, Achievement Drive, Self-Awareness, Perceived Self-Awareness, Self-Confidence, Empathy, Sociability, and Communication. The utilized scale in this investigation employs five response options: 'Always,' 'Often,' 'Sometimes,' 'Rarely,' and 'Never,' each corresponding to scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively.

Data Analysis

The participants in this study, who were students, were categorized into three groups based on their emotional intelligence (EI) levels: those with less EI, those with average EI, and those with better EI. The analysis of the collected data involved using the 1st quartile and 3rd quartile as thresholds to measure the emotional intelligence of the students. The Emotional Intelligence (EI) of learners at different stages, including those who just joined, those at the medium level, and those at the final level, was assessed using a one-sample t-test. The emotional intelligence (EI) of the kids was evaluated by statistical analysis, utilizing the mean and standard deviance.

Table: 1 The relationship between the Students Emotional Intelligence and the amount of curricular efficiency (Semester in the B.S)

	Less		Medium		Better		Over-all	
	Participant	%	Participant	%	Participant	%	%	Participant
First Semester	87	26.4	183	49.2	102	27.4	100	372
Fifth Semester	93	23.5	176	49.7	84	23.8	100	353
Eight Semester	100	26.5	163	47.9	77	22.6	100	340
Total	280	29.4	522	49.0	263	24.7	100	1065

The table presented above illustrates the distribution of emotional intelligence levels among students at the commencement of the study. It reveals that 26% of the participants exhibited less emotional intelligence, while 49% demonstrated medium. Additionally, 27% of the undergraduate had better emotional intelligence. In contrast, it is seen that at the midpoint, a significant proportion of students, specifically 26%, exhibited less emotional intelligence. Additionally, 50% of students demonstrated a medium level of emotional intelligence, while 24% displayed high emotional intelligence. Furthermore, it was found that 29% of students in the eight semester exhibited less emotional intelligence, whereas 48% demonstrated a medium emotional intelligence, and 23% displayed better emotional intelligence.

Table 2 The determinants of undergraduate EI and LS

Emotional Intelligence (EI)	N	Test Mean	Mean	SD	SE	T	Sig.
Emotional Self-Regulation (ESR), 27x3=81	1065	81	91.10	15.86	0.463	271.22	0.00
Emotional Self-Awareness ESA, 21x3=63	1065	62	75.910	8.677	0.1755	460.60	0.00
Leadership Skills, IS 12X3 = 36	1065	36	49.247	4.922	0.1787	376.95	0.00
Total EI, 60x3=180	1065	180	217.24	21.96	0.6128	419.01	0.00

The researcher establishes statistical significance for each chamber in the aforementioned table by demonstrating the significance of the t-value. The mean of pupils,

as estimated, exhibit a noticeable increase in comparison to their actual test scores. Therefore, it can be observed that students typically exhibit elevated stages of emotive intelligence and sympathy, which are associated with enhanced social competences that contribute to the development of leadership skills (LS). The study uncovers the association between the attributes of "social awareness" and "relationship management." There exists a notable gender discrepancy in emotional intelligence among leaders, irrespective of their gender.

Table: 3 Students' relation among emotional intelligence, leadership skills with curricula.

EI Aspects	Relative Sets		Mean Change	SE	Sig.
		(Semester)			
Emotional Constancy	First	Fifth	0.17780	0.26800	0.80
		Eight	0.86790*	0.26997	0.01
	Fifth	Eight	1.12990	1.29639	0.68
	Eight	Fifth	0.34558	0.17577	0.14
Leadership (Skills)		Eight	0.61712*	0.17739	0.015
	Medium	Eight	0.17155	0.17981	0.634

The table presented above illustrates that students enrolled in B.S programs at the initial and intermediate stages of education exhibit moderate emotional capabilities, as indicated by a statistically insignificant p-value ($p > 0.05$). Additionally, the data suggests that no substantial difference exists in the correlation between emotional development and core leadership skills among students in the university undergraduate education stage concerning the existing curriculum. However, a statistically notable divergence was identified in terms of emotional stability (0.86790, $p < 0.05$) and core leadership abilities (0.61712, $p < 0.05$) of the pupils.

Discussion and conclusion

Participation of Universities/higher educational institutes has profoundly subjective to

the growth of undergraduate students exhibiting elevated levels of emotional intelligence (EI). However, when examining students with diverse EI factors and considering the entire student body, it becomes apparent that there exists a disparity among the syllabus taught and core skills holistic development among undergraduate students of B.S. Particularly, crucial elements such as emotional self-regulation, emotional self-awareness, and interpersonal skills emerge as pivotal contributors to fostering leadership qualities in students. Additionally, these presently popular enhancements contribute to instilling self-discipline and emotional resilience, both imperative for the success of young individuals in the unfamiliar environment of higher education and their social adaptation.

According to Jan and Anwar (2020), it has been emphasized that the achievement of cross-cultural awareness is contingent upon the development of mental and cultural awareness. Enhancing one's emotional resilience to its fullest extent is a strategy that world leaders might employ to augment their overall level of achievement. Turi et al. (2020) conducted a study that examined the relationship between leadership and self-efficacy as indicators of an individual's ability to assume a leadership role in a given situation. The research conducted by Asrar-ul-Haq et al. (2017) suggests that students exhibit lower levels of leadership qualities when they possess poor self-efficacy. These findings align with previous research, indicating that individuals who lack the ability to recognize and effectively utilize their skills and abilities tend to have less leadership potential. The regulation of negative emotions is a valuable skill in adolescents, as it aids in the identification and resolution of conflicting situations.

Furthermore, several research studies were conducted to examine the elements that have influenced the disparities in emotional development between males and females over the course of history. While age-related differences are not evident, there is a distinct contrast in emotional adulthood between genders among adults. Females consistently receive higher ratings in this aspect compared to males. Moreover, a research study by Jan and Anwar (2020) reveals that female students demonstrate reduced levels of self-efficacy in leadership. The findings indicate that the implementation of rules and structure fosters a sense of accountability among students in relation to their engagement with academic objectives and adherence to deadlines.

Additionally, it is posited that students exhibit a noteworthy capacity for creativity when confronted with novel tasks and assignments, provided that these tasks are presented in a systematic and organized manner. Furthermore, the collective efforts invested in these

endeavors contribute to the development of students' decision-making skills and overall enactment (Ran et al., 2022).

Course material at the introductory level exerts a significant influence on university students who possess a high level of potential and an optimistic mindset, enabling them to navigate challenging circumstances. In addition, the provision of robust motivation by teachers and the inclusion of relevant curricular content contribute to the enhancement of students' abilities in assimilating new information and applying it in an extra useful way. Moreover, the development of self-possession and emotive intelligence is closely linked to key attributes that foster flexibility and authority among learners, thereby enhancing their sense of responsibility. The impact of Emotional Intelligence experts in academic settings is significant, since they contribute to several aspects such as teachers, curriculum, learning environments, and training personnel. Furthermore, Khassawneh (2022) posited that the capacity to exhibit leadership characterized by sympathy and kindness is a fundamental element of authoritative and efficacious headship, which in turn facilitates the cultivation of students' strengths. The current research findings also indicate that pupils possess a strong understanding of the internal functioning capacities. The present study examines the relationship between the development of Emotional Intelligence and the subjective experiences of leadership approaches among university students. Moreover, the majority of students enrolled in universities has the capacity to effectively communicate their favorable or unfavorable opinions regarding their peers. These kinds of habits need to be regularly monitored.

In the current era characterized by intense competition and intricate dynamics, the presence of robust leadership is important for the achievement of success in any undertaking. Supervisors or stakeholders within educational institutions must possess robust interpersonal and managerial skills in order to properly address instances of student emotional traumas and other disciplinary matters. In order to flourish in the contemporary, highly competitive landscape, it is imperative for any organization to possess robust leadership. This holds true for Pakistan's educational system, which currently faces numerous challenges stemming from disparate curricular contents. It is essential that the content of the curriculum be designed to cultivate the necessary competencies among students, enabling them to effectively address the demands of society.

Hence, it is imperative to assess the emotional state of students in relation to their good development and the subsequent impact on their leadership abilities within the university

context. Efficiency within the realms of management and research is known to cultivate individuals who possess exceptional leadership qualities characterized by a heightened level of emotional intelligence.

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