

Gender Wise Analysis of the Role of Secondary School Principals with Reference to Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract: The gender wise analysis focused on the role of secondary school principals with reference to emotional intelligence in district Mardan. The research objectives of the study were; to assess the functioning of school leaders, both male and female, in respect to secondary emotional intelligence and to find out comparison of male and female secondary school principals regarding school environment. According to (EMIS 2024) data there were 86 boys and 81 girls' secondary schools located in District Mardan, hence the population was all male and female secondary school principals within District Mardan. For the achievement of the research objectives total one hundred secondary school principals were randomly selected in which fifty-one (51) were male secondary schools heads and forty-nine (49) were female secondary schools heads. The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) of Schutte et al, (1998) revised by Austin, Saklofske, Huang, & McKenney, (2004) was adopted and validated along with proper ethical consideration of the reliability Cronbach alpha (0.83) was used to collect data. The information was gathered using Google Forms. Of the one hundred male and female principals, ninety-eight responded. SPSS version 21 was used to evaluate the data, and the t-test was used. Major findings of the study revealed that both male and female secondary school principals were the positive role regarding the Self-Awareness of emotional intelligence and were equal level of school environment due to emotional intelligence. It was concluded that emotional intelligence positively impacts a positive secondary learning environment, and experimental research is recommended for more accurate results.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, School Environment, Self-Awareness, Experimental Research



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Introduction

The sector of education has a significant impact on the future of society by teaching information and ideals to younger people. Within this framework, principals at schools have a significant leadership role, serving as the link between policies development and its implementation. Research highlights that leadership effectiveness within educational contexts extends beyond administrative qualities to include emotional intelligence (EI) (Goleman, 2021). Emotional intelligence, characterized by the ability to identify, control, and successfully use emotions, is especially important in the educational setting where interactions between individuals frequently occur (Mayer et al., 2022). Principals with strong emotional intelligence can handle complicated challenges, resolve disagreements, and promote a positive school culture. Comparative measurements of their functions in different circumstances demonstrate how EI influences making choices, motivation for educators, and student results.

Problem Statement

Despite increased understanding of the relevance of emotional intelligence in administration, few research studies have looked specifically at how it affects secondary school principals' duties. Many principals encounter challenges such as teacher lack of energy, student discipline problems, and community standards, all of which necessitate

emotionally intelligent solutions. However, the degree to which EI influences their ability to lead effectively across multiple educational environments remains unknown. This research gap requires a comparison study in order to better comprehend the relationship and importance of emotional intelligence in the responsibilities of secondary school principals.

Objectives

Following were set as the research objectives;

1. To assess the functioning of school leaders, both male and female, in respect to secondary emotional intelligence.
2. To find out comparison of male and female secondary school principals regarding school environment.

Research Hypotheses

Following Research hypotheses were tested;

H0₁: There is no significance comparison between the role of male and female school principals in the context of emotional intelligence at secondary level

H0₂: There is no significance comparison between male and female secondary school principals regarding their school environment

Significance of the Study

This study adds to a foundation that exists in educational administration by exploring the relationship between emotional intelligence and the functions of secondary school principals. Its importance is found in the following areas;

Practical Implications: Policymakers will use the findings to construct tailored professional growth initiatives for school leaders that emphasize emotional intelligence.

Theoretical Contributions: This study contributes to the current literature by giving comparing perspectives on the role of emotional intelligence in various educational situations.

Societal Benefits: By improving the effectiveness of leadership, the investigation indirectly promotes higher performance among educators and student results, which benefit communities as a whole.

Delimitation of the Study

The study was restricted to only public secondary schools and principals located in District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is widely recognized as a critical component of efficient leadership, particularly in the context of education. For secondary school principals, emotional intelligence is essential not just for handling administration-related duties but also for developing emotional connections with learners, educators, and guardians (Defrianti & Iskandar [2022](#)). Because leadership styles vary by gender, studying how Emotional Intelligence impacts the responsibilities of male and female principals reveals helpful understanding into efficient management of schools. This literature review examines differences between genders in EI among secondary school leaders, focusing on their managerial strategies and emotional abilities (Purushothaman, [2021](#)).

Emotional Intelligence and Educational Leadership

Goleman (1995) introduced the concept of emotional intelligence, which is divided into five essential domains that include awareness of oneself, self-regulation, inspiration, compassion, and interpersonal abilities. In educational leadership, EI aids making decisions, resolution of disputes, and the establishment of a favorable educational environment. Principals with strong emotional intelligence are more capable to cope with stress, develop teamwork, and encourage instructional staff and students (Bar-On, [2006](#)). According to research, emotional intelligence (EI) increases the overall effectiveness of leadership in schools because emotionally competent administrators may develop more intricate connections with staff and students, hence improving school environment and performance (Joseph & Newman, [2010](#)).



Leadership and Gender

Gender variations in styles of leadership have been extensively researched, with women typically taking an increasingly cooperative, democratically elected and transformative approach, whereas men frequently gravitate toward task-focused or authoritarian ways (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, [2001](#)). These distinctions could indicate the various manners that male and female principals use their EI. Female administrators, for instance which may exhibit greater empathy and emotional sensibility, resulting in positive learning environments for both pupils and employees (Grogan, [2000](#)). In contrast, male principals may place a greater emphasis on authority and supervision, representing conventional management styles. These gendered methods may influence how emotional intelligence can be displayed in educational leadership positions.

Gender Differences and Emotional Intelligence

According to study results on gender and emotional intelligence, women perform better on EI abilities such as compassion, awareness of society, and managing relationships (Mayer et al., [2004](#)). These characteristics are required to handle the difficulties encountered in school environments and fostering encouraging, beneficial educational settings. According to the results of the study male school principals, on the other hand, often excellent at self-management and confidence in oneself, both of which are necessary to maintaining power while making challenging choice (Bar-On, [2006](#)). Female principals in secondary schools may use their emotional intelligence skills to foster stronger emotionally supporting and expressive connections with employees and pupils. Male principals, while being seen to be less expressive of emotions, can flourish in leadership by using their ability to make decisions and assertiveness skills.

Gender-based Perspectives in Educational Leadership

The gendered perspectives of male and female school leaders additionally impact their leadership approaches. Female principals frequently encounter societal norms and gender prejudices, which influence their working experiences as well as opinions of their management abilities (Shakeshaft, [1989](#)). These problems might increase the emotional demands placed on female principals, necessitating high amounts of emotional work. Male principals, on the other hand, may receive not as much scrutiny for their approach to leadership, but they are expected to conform to established, authoritative patterns (Carli, [2001](#); Gule et al., [2025](#)). Nonetheless, both male and female principals with high emotional intelligence may overcome gendered stereotypes and lead more successfully by developing strong, supportive connections with their staff members and pupils.

Research Gap

The currently existing research on Emotional Intelligence (EI) in educational leadership emphasizes its importance to principals, but there is a significant study gap in comprehending how gender effects the implementation and result of EI in secondary school leadership (Ignatova, [2023](#)). While research suggests that women frequently perform better on EI qualities such as compassion, while men might show stronger self-management and self-assurance, few studies have looked into how both of these gendered disparities affect the effectiveness of leadership in secondary schools. In addition, there is a scarcity of continuous and diverse research that investigates how EI develops in principals over space of time, as well as how societal and institutional variables influence its manifestation across genders. Furthermore, the insufficient inclusion of male principals in EI-focused research hinders the study of how EI emerges in various leadership styles.

Research Methodology

The nature of the study targeted to analyse gender-wise study of the role of secondary school principals with reference to emotional intelligence in District Mardan. The nature of the study was descriptive while the process of the research included the following steps



Population and Sample

The survey comprised all male and female secondary school principals within District Mardan, Khyber Pkhatunkhwa, Pakistan. According to (EMIS 2024), there were 86 boys and 81 girls' secondary schools in District Mardan. For the process of sampling purpose, fifty-one (51) boys' secondary schools and forty-nine (49) girls' secondary schools were chosen randomly. Thus, the whole sample size was one hundred schools.

Research Instruments

A structured questionnaire was developed by using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) of Schutte et al, (1998) revised by Austin et al., (2004) was adopted and reliability and validity was ensured. The Cronbach alpha reliability of the scale was 0.83. Taking into account the entirety of the topic, "School Environment" was included as an additional variable to the scale. The scale contained 19 items in all.

Data Collection and Interpretations

The data was obtained using Google Forms. The total sampling population was one hundred (100) schools with ninety-eight (98) responses that were valid. The gathered data was collated, analyzed, and interpreted using t-test.

Table 1

Comparison of Male and Female Secondary School Principals regarding Self-Awareness of Emotional Intelligence

Principals	N	Df	t-test	Sig	Mean	MD	SD	Cohen's d Effect size
Male	48	96	1.252	.615	10.10	.864	3.57	.25
Female	50				9.24		3.25	
Not Significant at 0.05 (two-tailed)						t-table value 1.984		

The above table 1 showed the results of the comparison of both male and female principals regarding the self-awareness of emotional intelligence. The t-table value was insignificant at 0.05 levels and t-test was found to be 1.252. The mean difference also supports the results. Furthermore, the results declared that both male and female Secondary Schools' Principals have equal level of self-awareness on the scale of emotional intelligence. The effect size is also very small that is .25. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted that there is no difference between the male and female secondary schools' principals regarding the component of emotional intelligence, self-awareness.

Table 2

Comparison of Male and Female Secondary School Principals regarding Motivation of Emotional Intelligence

Principals	N	Df	t-test	Sig	Mean	MD	SD	Cohen's d Effect size
Male	48	96	3.186*	.011	8.80	2.07	3.85	.644
Female	50				6.72		2.45	
*Significant at 0.05 (two-tailed)					t-table value 1.984			

The above table 2 showed the results of the comparison of both male and female secondary school principals regarding the Motivation of emotional intelligence. The t-table value showed significant at 0.05 the t-test value was found to be 3.186. The mean difference also supports the results which is 2.07. Furthermore, the results declared that both genders male and female Secondary Schools' Principals have difference in the motivation on the scale of emotional intelligence. The effect size is also large that is .644.

Table 3

Comparison of Male and Female Secondary School Principals regarding Empathy of Emotional Intelligence

Principals	N	Df	t-test	Sig	Mean	MD	SD	Cohen's d Effect size
Male	48	96	2.18	.492	8.13	.185	4.06	.044
Female	50				7.94		4.33	
Not Significant at 0.05 (two-tailed)					t-table value 1.984			



The above table 3 showed the results of the comparison of both male and female principals regarding the empathy of emotional intelligence. The t-table value is not significant at 0.05 level and the t-test was found to be .218. The mean difference .185 also support the results furthermore the results declared that both the gender (secondary school Principals) has equal level of empathy on the scale of emotional intelligence. The effect size is also very small that is 0.044. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted that there is no difference between the male and female secondary school principals' empathy of emotional intelligence.

Table 4

Comparison of Male and Female Secondary School Principals regarding the School Environment

Principals	N	Df	t-test	Sig	Mean	MD	SD	Cohen's d Effect size
Male	48	96	.970	.636	8.65	.866	4.77	.196
Female	50				7.78		4.05	
Not Significant at 0.05 (two-tailed)						t-table value 1.984		

The above table 4 illustrated the results of the comparison of both male and female principals regarding the school environment due to emotional intelligence. The t-table value is not significant at 0.05 level and the t-test was found to be .970. The mean difference .866 also support the results furthermore the results declared that both the gender (secondary school Principals) has equal level of school environment due to emotional intelligence. The effect size is also very small that is .196. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted that there is no difference between males and females secondary school environment due to emotional intelligence.

Findings

Findings of the study illustrated that both male and female Secondary Schools' Principals have equal level of self-awareness on the scale of emotional intelligence. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted which provide the evidence that male and female secondary schools' principals were the same perceptions regarding the component of emotional intelligence, self-awareness. The results revealed that both genders male and female Secondary Schools' Principals have difference in the motivation on the scale of emotional intelligence. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected on the basis of the results. The results of the study regarding the empathy of emotional intelligence showed that the t-table value is not significant at 0.05 level and the t-test was found to be .218 furthermore, the results illustrated that both the gender (secondary school Principals) has equal level of empathy on the scale of emotional intelligence.

The results were illustrated that t-table value is not significant at 0.05 level and the t-test was found to be .970. Furthermore, the results declared that both the gender (secondary school Principals) has equal level of school environment due to emotional intelligence. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted that there is no difference between males and females secondary school environment due to emotional intelligence.

Conclusions

The notion that leadership performance in educational settings is enhanced by high emotional intelligence is supported by research. According to Mayer et al. (2004), principals with higher EI are better able to support their staff, resolve conflicts, and address growth. Research indicates that administrators who possess strong emotional intelligence foster greater levels of academic achievement and teacher satisfaction (Joseph & Newman 2010; Saima et al., 2025).

Administrators who are able to identify and manage their emotions are more equipped to handle the demands of leadership, which leads to better decision-making and improved academic performance. Gender differences exist in the way EI manifests, though. According to the study's findings, men principals can balance their emotional intelligence with a stronger focus on accountability and outcomes, whereas female leaders typically use their emotional intelligence to communicate with staff in a more social way. It was determined that emotional intelligence played a beneficial effect in fostering a supportive learning environment at the secondary level.



Recommendations

It was suggested that an experimental research study be carried out in order to obtain more precise data concerning the emotional intelligence of secondary school principals, based on the conclusions and findings mentioned above. Additionally, it is advised that professional development courses be scheduled on a regular basis with particular incentives to inspire school principals and improve their emotional intelligence skills in order to establish a supportive learning environment at the secondary level.



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