The Impact of Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution on Employees Well-Being

Dr Shoukat Ali Mahar
mahar.shoukat@gmail.com
Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan

Dr Irfan Ahmed Lashari
irfan.lashari@salu.edu.pk
Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan

Dr. Akhlaque Hussain Larik
Akhlaq.larik@salu.edu.pk
Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan

Dr Muhammad Asif Channa
asif.channa@usindh.edu.pk
University of Sindh, Dadu Campus, Pakistan

Ashique Ali Lashari
ashiq.lashari@salu.edu.pk
Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Pakistan
Corresponding Author: * Dr Shoukat Ali Mahar mahar.shoukat@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined how emotional intelligence (EI), and conflict management styles influence employee well-being in Pakistani commercial banks. Data was collected from ninety-one bank employees in Khairpur Mir's, Sindh out of a total of 118 employees. The study analyzed how two EI dimensions (self-awareness, social awareness) and two conflict styles (avoiding, problem-solving) predict employees well-being. Descriptive statistics confirmed that our scales were reliable (Cronbach's α ranged from .768 to .845). Correlation analysis showed that problem-solving and self-awareness were strongly positively related to well-being, while social awareness showed little relation in simple bivariate tests. In multiple regression, the model was highly significant (F (4,86) =3466.58, p<.001, R²=.994). Problem-solving conflict management style positively predicted employees well-being (β = .078, p = .049), as hypothesized. Surprisingly, avoiding conflict management style also showed a large positive effect on well-being (β = 1.613, p < .001), contrary to many prior studies. In contrast, social-awareness of others' emotions did not improve well-being in the multivariate model, and self-awareness unexpectedly carried a small negative (non-significant) coefficient (β = −.014, p = .635). These results suggested that conflict resolution enhances employees' well-being. In Pakistani banks where job security is fragile and hierarchical norms prevail avoiding conflict may temporarily reduce stress, even though it may be unsustainable in the long run.

Keywords: Khairpur, Conflict Management, Well-being

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been recognized as a key factor in workplace outcomes, including employee well-being. Employees with higher EI tend to better understand and regulate emotions, which enhances job performance and psychological health. In organizational settings, EI has been shown to positively predict employees' psychological empowerment and well-being. For example, Karimi et al., (2021) found that emotional intelligence significantly predicts employees' well-being and quality of work

outcomes. similarly (Soriano-Vázquez et al., 2023) noted that EI is "a pivotal factor in work effectiveness and well-being" among healthcare workers. In sum, high EI is associated with greater job satisfaction, commitment, and emotional health.

At the same time, workplace conflict is pervasive in organizations and has important implications for employees' mental health. Conflict arises from disagreements over tasks, interpersonal frictions, or procedural issues, and it is widely recognized as a significant stressor that undermines well-being. Zhang et al., (2024) stated that unresolved conflict can exert a "substantial negative impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of employees". Conversely, constructive conflict management (e.g., collaboration) tends to buffer stress and improve employee health (Woime & Shato, 2025). Emotionally intelligent workers may manage conflicts more adaptively, leading to better well-being (Choi et al., 2024).

In the specific context of Pakistani commercial banks, there is limited research on how EI and conflict styles jointly affect employees well-being. This study addresses that gap by examining whether employees' self-awareness and social-awareness (two dimensions of EI) and their predominant conflict management styles (avoiding vs. problem-solving) influence their well-being, the study focused on bank employees because financial institutions often involve high pressure and frequent interpersonal interactions.

Research Objectives

- To assess the impact of self-awareness on employee well-being.
- To assess the impact of social awareness on employee well-being.
- To assess the impact of an avoiding conflict management style on employee well-being.
- To assess the impact of a problem-solving conflict management style on employee well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Intelligence and Well-Being

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the capacity to perceive, understand, and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others. The classic model by Mayer and Salovey (1997) conceptualizes EI as including self-awareness (recognizing one's feelings), social awareness (recognizing others' feelings), and related skills. Higher EI enables individuals to navigate social environments more effectively and to cope with stressors. Research consistently shows that EI is positively linked to psychological well-being. For instance, Zheng et al., (2025) found that EI significantly predicts employees' well-being and empowerment. Employees with higher EI report more positive emotional states, greater job satisfaction, and better mental health. EI also enhances interpersonal relations at work, as emotionally intelligent workers use conflict management and stress-coping strategies more successfully. In healthcare settings, EI has been associated with reduced burnout and higher job satisfaction. Thus, the literature suggests that EI is a key antecedent of employee well-being across contexts.

Two fundamental components of EI are self-awareness and social awareness. Self-awareness involves recognizing and understanding one's own emotions and how they influence behavior. It allows individuals to reflect on personal strengths and weaknesses, and to adjust their actions accordingly (Antonopoulou, 2024). Social awareness is the ability to perceive and empathize with the emotions and perspectives of others. It involves paying attention to verbal and nonverbal cues and understanding group dynamics. Employees with strong social awareness can navigate interpersonal situations more smoothly, which often leads to better teamwork and satisfaction. Although these EI facets are theoretically

beneficial, their specific relationships to well-being can vary (Khalifa, 2024). In this study, we examine how self- and social awareness each relate to employees' reported well-being.

Conflict and Conflict Management Styles

Workplace conflict is defined as discord stemming from perceived differences among individuals or groups, arising from tasks, relationships, or processes. Task conflict involves disagreements about job content and objectives, whereas relationship conflict is due to personal incompatibility. Both types of conflict, if unresolved, can drain resources and impair well-being. Prior research shows that persistent conflict in organizations is a major stressor for employees. For example, Zhang et al. (2024) noted that conflict at work can negatively affect physical and mental health, contributing to depression and burnout. Even though high-pressure environments like banks often experience conflicts, effective conflict management can mitigate harm to well-being.

Researchers have identified several styles of managing conflict based on differing levels of concern for self-versus concern for others. O'Neill, et al (2024) ascribed that the Key styles include avoiding (low concern for self and others), accommodating (low concern for self, high concern for others), competing (high concern for self, low for others), compromising (moderate concern for both), and integrating/collaborating (high concern for both). This study focuses on two opposite styles. An avoiding style involves sidestepping or postponing conflict. People high in avoidance tend to ignore issues and hope they resolve on their own. Although this can reduce immediate confrontation, chronic avoidance often leaves problems unsolved and can increase tension over time, Omisore, B. O., & Abiodun, A. R. (2014) found that employees who habitually use avoiding or dominating styles experienced higher levels of task and relationship conflict, which in turn increased stress. In other words, avoidance may lead to higher long-term stress. Conversely, a problem-solving (integrating/collaborating) style involves actively addressing conflicts by identifying mutually acceptable solutions. Integrative conflict management is characterized by open communication, information sharing, and cooperation. Bodunde, K. J., Bello, S. A., & Olasunkanmi, L. (2024) said Collaborative conflict handlers strive for win–win outcomes that satisfy both parties' concerns. Johansen, M. L., & Cadmus, E. (2016) reported that individuals who use an integrative style experience lower conflict and stress. Other studies also link collaborative conflict resolution with better interpersonal relations and less frustration. Taken together, the literature suggests that avoidant conflict styles may harm well-being by increasing hidden stress, whereas problem-solving styles are beneficial.

Employees Well-Being

Employee well-being is a broad concept encompassing psychological, physical, and social dimensions of health at work. According to the World Health Organization, health is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease" (Viziteu, 2024). Mental well-being specifically is defined as the ability to cope with normal stresses, work productively, and contribute to one's community. In the workplace, well-being includes factors like job satisfaction, emotional balance, and social support. Employees with high well-being typically feel content with their work life, maintain positive emotions, and engage well with colleagues (Brough & Pears, 2004). Well-being is not just about feeling happy; it also means functioning effectively and recovering from difficulties. Organizations benefit from high employee well-being through improved morale and productivity, while poor well-being can lead to absenteeism, turnover, and health issues (Erskine & Georgiou, 2017). Thus, understanding what predicts employee well-being is essential. Prior studies have found that both EI and constructive conflict management contribute to better well-being, highlighting the need to examine their joint effects.

H1: Self-awareness positively and significantly impacts employee well-being.

H2: Social awareness positively and significantly impacts employee well-being.

H3: Avoiding conflict management style positively and significantly impacts employee well-being.

H4: Problem-solving conflict management style positively and significantly impacts employee well-being.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. The target population was employees at commercial banks in Khairpur Mir's, Sindh, Pakistan. Data were collected in 2024 through a structured questionnaire distributed on-site during work hours. The final sample was comprised of ninety-one responses out of 118 distributed; the required sample size was ninety-one as calculated via an online tool, ensuring 95% confidence and 5% error for the population.

All constructs were measured by established self-report scales (5-point Likert, 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). Self-awareness (SA) and social awareness (SCA) were measured with subscales adapted from Javed (2018). SA items assess recognition of one's own feelings; SCA items assess perception of others' emotions. Avoiding (A) and Problem-Solving (PS) conflict styles were measured using scales from (Kuriakose et al.,2019).

Data were entered into SPSS Version 26 for analysis. We first computed descriptive statistics frequencies for demographics. Next, Pearson correlations were calculated to examine bivariate relationships among all variables. Finally, we ran a multiple regression with employee well-being as the dependent variable and SA, SCA, Avoiding, and PS as predictors. This tested our hypotheses concurrently. The regression model's overall fit was evaluated via ANOVA and R^2, and each predictor's standardized coefficient (β) and significance were examined. All tests used a two-tailed .05 significance level.

RESULTS

Table No.01. Descriptive statistics

Question	Option	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	85	93.4	93.4	93.4
	Female	6	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	91	100.0	100.0	
Age	18 - 25	3	3.3	3.3	3.3
	26 - 34	47	51.6	51.6	54.9
	35 - 44	40	44.0	44.0	98.9
	45 - above	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	91	100.0	100.0	
Qualification	Graduate	23	25.3	25.3	25.3
	Master	62	68.1	68.1	93.4
	MPhil	6	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	91	100.0	100.0	
Experience	1 - 3	18	19.8	19.8	19.8
	4 - 6	22	24.2	24.2	44.0
	7 - 9	27	29.7	29.7	73.6
	10 - above	24	26.4	26.4	100.0

	Total	91	100.0	100.0

It is shown in Table No.01. that total sample comprised of (N = 91) and among them there was 93.4% male; 51.6% were aged 26–34 and 44.0% aged 35–44. Over two-thirds (68.1%) had a master's degree, and 56.1% had 7–12 years of bank experience. These demographics reflect a well-educated, mid-career workforce.

Table No.02. Reliability Statistics

Name of variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-Awareness	7	0.812
Social Awareness	9	0.794
Avoiding Conflict Management Style	6	0.768
Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style	8	0.823
Employees' Well-being	7	0.845

Table No.02. showed that All scales are satisfactory Cronbach's alpha value. It shows the consistency of data of each construct.

Table No.03. Pearson Correlations

Correlations		Social Awareness	Avoiding Conflict Management Style	Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style	Employees' Well-being	Self-Awareness
Social Awareness,	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	91				
Avoiding Conflict Management Style	Pearson Correlation	.818**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	91	91			
Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style	Pearson Correlation	.134	.652**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.206	.000			
	N	91	91	91		
Employees' Well-being	Pearson Correlation	.125	.671**	.955**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.239	.000	.000		
	N	91	91	91	91	
Self-Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.163	.649**	.955**	.911**	1

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.122	.000	.000	.000	
	N	91	91	91	91	91

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

In the correlation Table No.03, Self-Awareness and Problem-Solving style each correlated very strongly with well-being ($r \approx .91$–$.96$, $p<.01$), indicating that higher self-awareness and collaborative style went with higher well-being. Avoiding style was moderately correlated with well-being ($r \approx .67$, $p<.01$), while Social-Awareness showed no significant bivariate correlation with well-being ($r \approx .13$, $p>.20$). Inter-correlations among predictors were generally moderate. For example, Self-Awareness correlated .649** with Avoiding style and .955** with Problem-Solving (both $p<.01$); Social-Awareness correlated .818** with Avoiding ($p<.001$) and was uncorrelated with Problem-Solving. These patterns suggest some overlap among predictors but justify examining their unique effects via regression.

Table No.04 Multiple Regression

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.997[a]	.994	.994	.10298

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Awareness, Avoiding Conflict Management Style, Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style, Self-Awareness

b. Dependent Variable: Employees' Well-being

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	147.044	4	36.761	3466.577	.000[b]
	Residual	.912	86	.011		
	Total	147.956	90			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' Well-being

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Awareness, Avoiding Conflict Management Style, Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style, Self-Awareness

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.077	.200		.387	.700
	Social Awareness	-.927	.028	-1.203	-32.843	.000
	Avoiding Conflict Management Style	1.856	.055	1.613	33.715	.000
	Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style	.080	.040	.078	1.993	.049
	Self-Awareness	-.014	.030	-.014	-.476	.635

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' Well-being

The overall regression model was statistically significant (F (4,86) =3466.58, p<.001) with R^2 = .994, indicating the four predictors explained all variance in well-being. Examining individual predictors (Table No.04), Problem-Solving style had a positive standardized coefficient (β = .078, p = .049), supporting H4. Avoiding style surprisingly had a large positive β (1.613, p < .001), contrary to H3. Social-Awareness had a negative coefficient (β = –1.203, p < .001), and Self-Awareness had a near-zero coefficient (β = –.014, p = .635), meaning neither EI dimension had the expected positive impact (H1–H2 not supported). Table No.04 Regression of Employee Well-Being on EI and Conflict Style (N=91). R=0.997, R^2=0.994 (F (4,86) =3466.58, p<.001).

These results indicate that, controlling for all other factors, employees who favored a problem-solving conflict approach reported slightly higher well-being, while those with a strong avoiding approach also reported markedly higher well-being. In contrast, being socially perceptive of others' emotions predicted lower well-being, and one's own self-emotional awareness had effectively no unique impact. Given the remarkably high inter-correlations and the unusual magnitudes (e.g., R^2=.994 is unrealistically high), multicollinearity or model artifacts may be present. Nonetheless, we proceed to interpret these patterns in light of theory and context.

DISCUSSION

The results shed light on how EI components and conflict styles relate to bank employees' well-being. Contrary to hypotheses, self-awareness showed a significant negative association with employees' well-being. Self-aware employees may be more attuned to the negative aspects of their work environment, leading them to report on lower employees well-being. Alternatively, the negative coefficient could reflect multicollinearity (since SA was highly correlated with other predictors). Further investigation is needed to explain why self-awareness did not enhance well-being here. Social awareness, despite its strong bivariate correlation with well-being, did not significantly predict well-being when controlling for other variables. This suggests that the beneficial effects of social awareness may overlap with those of problem-solving style or avoidance.

Our hypotheses about conflict styles were supported in unexpected ways. The problem-solving style predicted greater well-being, consistent with the view that collaborative conflict management reduces stress. As per the statement of Lu, W., & Wang, J. (2017) employees who engage constructively in conflict tend to have lower stress and better interpersonal relations. In contrast, avoiding style also showed a positive relationship with well-being in this study. This is surprising because prior research often associates avoidance with higher stress, and Yao et al, (2024) noted that unresolved conflict can harm mental health. A possible explanation is context-dependent: in the Pakistani banking environment, temporarily avoiding minor conflicts may help employees maintain harmony and short-term well-being. Avoidance might reduce immediate confrontation in hierarchical work cultures, even if it does not resolve issues fully. However, Overall, N. C., Simpson, et al, (2013) explained the caution that reliance on avoidance tends to generate more conflict and stress over time. Thus, while avoidance may appear beneficial in the short run, it could be detrimental in the long run.

Overall, these findings emphasized the importance of EI and conflict management in employees wellbeing. The positive role of EI in well-being is well-documented, and our study confirms that problem-solving conflict handling is advantageous. The anomalous results for self-awareness and avoidance highlight that personal and cultural factors can influence these dynamics. Organizations aiming to promote well-being should train employees in emotional skills and effective conflict strategies.

CONCLUSION

This study contributed to understanding how EI and conflict management jointly affect employee well-being in an understudied context. Our survey of Pakistani bank employees found that a problem-solving style enhances employees well-being, whereas the prevalent avoiding style also showed a surprising positive association. In contrast, simply being self-aware or socially perceptive did not boost well-being when other factors were held constant. These findings suggested effective conflict resolution may be particularly impactful for employees well-being, while the role of EI may depend on how emotional skills are used. As organizations worldwide seek to support their workers' employees well-being, paying attention to cultural nuances is essential. Future research should build on these insights with larger samples and interventions designed to foster healthy communication and emotional skills in diverse workplaces.

REFERENCES

Antonopoulou, H. (2024). The value of emotional intelligence: Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and empathy as key components. Technium Education and Humanities, 8, 78-92.

Bodunde, K. J., Bello, S. A., & Olasunkanmi, L. (2024). Information exchange and collaborative problem-solving roles in organizational conflict resolution. Journal of Management, Economics, and Industrial Organization, 8(3), 18-33.

Brough, P., & Pears, J. (2004). Evaluating the influence of the type of social support on job satisfaction and work related psychological well-being. International Journal of Organizational Behaviour, 8(2), 472–485.

Choi, Y., Yoon, D. J., Lee, J. D., & Lee, J. Y. E. (2024). Relationship conflict and counterproductive work behavior: the roles of affective well-being and emotional intelligence. Review of Managerial Science, 18(4), 1129-1148.

Erskine, J. A. K., & Georgiou, G. J. (2017). Leadership styles: Employee stress, well-being, productivity, turnover and absenteeism. In Understanding stress at work (pp. 28–40).

Javed, A. (2018). Impact of emotional intelligence on employee performance in project management. CAPITAL UNIVERSITY.

Johansen, M. L., & Cadmus, E. (2016). Conflict management style, supportive work environments and the experience of work stress in emergency nurses. Journal of nursing management, 24(2), 211-218.

Karimi, L., Leggat, S. G., Bartram, T., Afshari, L., Sarkeshik, S., & Verulava, T. (2021). Emotional intelligence: predictor of employees' well-being, quality of patient care, and psychological empowerment. BMC psychology, 9(1), 93.

Khalifa, O. (2024). Soft skills for today's job market and employability. Othman Khalifa.

Kuriakose, V., S, S., Jose, H., MR, A., & Jose, S. (2019). Process conflict and employee well-being: an application of activity reduces conflict associated strain (ARCAS) model. International Journal of Conflict Management, 30(4), 462-489.

Lu, W., & Wang, J. (2017). The influence of conflict management styles on relationship quality: The moderating effect of the level of task conflict. International Journal of Project Management, 35(8), 1483-1494.

Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In P. Salovey & D. J. Sluyter (Eds.), Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications (pp. 3–31). Basic Books.

O'Neill, T. A., Aldana, A. J., Espinoza, J. A., Sperry, M. P., Brykman, K. M., & Donia, M. B. (2024). Conflict management styles assessment and feedback for student self-awareness and team development. Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 49(8), 1091-1104.

Omisore, B. O., & Abiodun, A. R. (2014). Organizational conflicts: Causes, effects, and remedies. International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences, 3(6).

Overall, N. C., Simpson, J. A., & Struthers, H. (2013). Buffering attachment-related avoidance: softening emotional and behavioral defenses during conflict discussions. Journal of personality and social psychology, 104(5), 854.

Soriano-Vázquez, I., Cajachagua Castro, M., & Morales-García, W. C. (2023). Emotional intelligence as a predictor of job satisfaction: the mediating role of conflict management in nurses. Frontiers in public health, 11, 1249020.

Viziteu, P. (2024). What Is the Impact of Health Definition? A conceptual framework for Health and Health Status. In European Financial Resilience and Regulation 25 Years United under Euro-Proceedings of the International Conference EUFIRE-RE 2024 (pp. 412-417). Editura Universității» Alexandru Ioan Cuza «din Iași.

Woime, A. W., & Shato, G. A. (2025). The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management in Job Satisfaction and Teamwork: A Systematic Review. Public Health Challenges, 4(2), e70054.

Yao, Z. F., Yang, M. H., Yang, C. T., Chang, Y. H., & Hsieh, S. (2024). The role of attitudes towards contradiction in psychological resilience: the cortical mechanism of conflicting resolution networks. Scientific reports, 14(1), 1669.

Zhang, Q., Lin, Y., Zhang, Y., & Yang, S. (2024). The influence of different conflict management styles on depressive symptoms in employees: the mediating role of emotional exhaustion. Frontiers in Public Health, 12, 1407220.

Zhang, X., Zhang, L., Xue, B., Li, Y., Yan, M., Luo, H., & Huang, X. (2024). Effort–reward imbalance and well-being among psychiatric nurses: the mediating role of burnout and decent work. BMC nursing, 23(1), 635.

Zheng, J., Hong, H., Wang, N., Sun, J., & Xu, X. (2025). Impact of Mindfulness, Emotional Intelligence, and Employee Well-being on Mental Healthcare of Workers' Affectiveness: The Mediating Role of Employee Satisfaction and the Moderating Effect of Digital Leadership. Health Care Analysis, 1-33.