

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Conflict Resolution: A Study of HR Professionals' Strategies and Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the impact of emotional intelligence on the conflict resolution effectiveness of HR practitioners in the major cities of Pakistan. The research also focused on the value of the various elements of emotional intelligence on the conflict resolution approach taken and the results achieved. Within the study, 150 HR practitioners completed emotional intelligence and conflict resolution effectiveness questionnaires, in addition to 20 senior professionals who were involved in semi-structured interviews. The five cities of Pakistan, i.e. Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta, were the target sample cities of this research study. This research study lasted from January to April 2025. The results of the quantitative study showed the presence of positive correlations in the emotional intelligence elements of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, and conflict resolution effectiveness, with the strongest and most significant resolution effectiveness correlation being empathy ($r=0.782$, $p<0.001$). The results of the qualitative findings showed the five self-regulated and emotionally intelligent HR professionals active, implemented and utilized the strategies of listening, emotional regulation, perspective-taking, collaborative problem-solving, relationship maintenance, and these strategies were linked with and formed successful outcomes in conflict resolution. Based on these findings, this research study showed that in the Pakistani context, emotional intelligence positively impacts the workplace conflict resolution skills of HR professionals and is thus, an important skill that they should possess to maintain workplace harmony.

Keywords: Impact, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, effectiveness, HR practitioners, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

The challenges faced by human resource managers in Pakistani organizations are multifaceted. These challenges arise from the need to manage people from differing socio-economic factors, cultures, relevant educational levels, and addressing (Zeeshan and Qazi 2023). The integration and realization of importance of conflict management within organizations and the harmonious work climates led to the increased prominence of human resource experts. The need to understand and efficiently manage the

nexus of interpersonal relations, the phenomenon of conflict, and integrate human resources goes beyond the organizational policy framework of human resources. The position of human resource managers requires a high degree of emotional intelligence (Nawaz and Naseem 2023).

Emotional intelligence as the configuration of recognizing, understanding, and managing emotions of oneself and others has positioned, and continues to position, emotional intelligence as a defining component of prospective success in various professional disciplines (Aslam, Aslam et al. 2025). The human resource managers require emotional intelligence, and especially in the Pakistani context, more so than other professionals, as they are in charge of managing conflicts within organizations (Rasool, Qian et al. 2022). Within the Pakistani organizations, the significance of emotional intelligence is amplified by the conflict driven hierarchical approaches and managing relationships as the pillars of organizational operation (Zeeshan and Qazi 2023).

The growing and modernizing workplace is the product of workplace diversity, competing interests, and varying perspectives of employees, which means conflict in Organizational settings is unavoidable (Rakhimova 2023). In Pakistan, the conflict in organizations is mostly the result of cultural diversity, generational differences, and different communication approaches. Emotionally responsive conflict mediation is as important as the technical aspect for practicing HR professionals facilitating these organizational disputes (Wahab, Din et al. 2022).

The practices HR professionals adopt for organizational conflict resolution directly correlate to the culture of the organization, employee morale, and organizational productivity as a whole. The aftermath of conflicts can promote relationships and understanding, or if conflicts are improperly handled, the discord and underlying issues will permeate and fester organizational culture leading to diminishing performance. The HR field needs to refine practices involving conflict resolution and understanding the surrounding issues in organizational conflict is crucial (Malik 2024).

The use of emotional intelligence has been documented in several academic studies as a necessary tool in different professional settings, but the resolution of organizational conflict by HR professionals in Pakistan is an area that has not received as much attention. Given the unique cultural and organizational characteristics of workplaces in Pakistan, there needs to be a focus on the interaction of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution in these settings (Malik 2024).

The interaction between emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of conflict resolution is intricate and multifaceted. Different components of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills, may variably contribute to different stages of resolution. Clarifying these relationships can help HR professionals understand how to incorporate conflict management into their competencies, and also help organizations in developing their human resource skills (Aslam, Aslam et al. 2025).

Conflict resolution strategies that HR professionals with higher emotional intelligence use may differ from those employed by their peers with lower emotional intelligence (Jordan and Troth 2021). Recognizing and analyzing these strategies may drive the practical direction of developing conflict resolution approaches and strengthening training programs for HR professionals. In the Pakistani context, with its focus on relationships and saving face, there may be some approaches to conflict resolution that are considered particularly effective in that culture (Shafait and Huang 2022).

This research holds practical value for organizational development and human resource management in Pakistan, in addition to academic value. Due to the increasing complexity of organizations and the economy's continuous evolution, human resource management professionals with the skills needed to

handle and resolve conflicts are invaluable. This study hopes to meet this need by looking at the role of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution and providing practical, data-driven material.

Research objectives

1. To investigate the association between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of conflict resolution by human resource professionals in key cities of Pakistan.
2. To describe and assess the methods used by emotionally intelligent HR professionals for conflict resolution in organizational settings.
3. To assess the consequences of emotional intelligence conflict resolution strategies on organizational performance and employee morale in Pakistan.

Research Questions

1. What are the associations among the various components of emotional intelligence and the efficacy of the conflict resolution techniques employed by HR practitioners in Pakistan?
2. What conflict resolution techniques are adopted by HR professionals with high emotional intelligence, and how are these techniques different from those employed by professionals with low emotional intelligence?
3. In what ways do emotional intelligence-based conflict resolution techniques affect the organizational culture and the relationships among employees in Pakistani organizations?

Significance of the Study

For various stakeholders within Pakistan's organizational environment, this study is of great importance. For HR practitioners, the study illustrates how emotional intelligence impacts the effectiveness of conflict resolution and provides a basis for designing HR practitioners' professional development and skill improvement programs. The study adds to the literature dealing with the application of emotional intelligence as it pertains to human resource management within the Pakistani context. For organizations, the study suggests ways to enhance workplace relationships and minimize the costs related to workplace conflict by designing and implementing selection and training processes that foster the development of emotional intelligence in HR professionals. The emotional intelligence of HR staff is a resource for organizations. The study will also serve various educational institutions by laying the groundwork for the incorporation of these elements into HR and organizational behavior courses. Future practitioners will need the emotional skills outlined in the study. The cultural nuances impacting emotional intelligence and its effect on professional efficacy give deeper insights for global firms functioning within such cultural environments. Practical impacts are also noted on scientific approaches to intervention training and development for conflict resolution HR training programs in different industries within Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional intelligence has been continuously developing, and its benefits being recognized in more professional areas after it was first presented. The precise definition has been attributed to the ability to identify, comprehend, utilize, and control ones and others' emotions, however, there are numerous approaches to formulating the theory (Stein 2023). The concept of emotional intelligence can be traced back to social intelligence, and it has been refined and empirically studied over the years. Different emotional intelligence frameworks have been articulated and the most popular are the ability model and the mixed model, both of which, from different perspectives, delineate the emotional intelligence constituents and how it can be evaluated (Kovalchuk, Prylepa et al. 2022).

Mayer and Salovey's ability model outline emotional intelligence as consisting of four interrelated components: emotion perception, emotional facilitation of thought, emotional comprehension and

development, and emotional regulation regarding self and others. This model identifies emotional intelligence as a cognitive ability, akin to traditional intelligence, and quantifiable through performance metrics, emotional intelligence still being cognitive ability. The four-branch model, having gone through extensive validation, offers a practical and holistic approach to understanding the myriad ways a person can work with and respond to the stimuli of emotions (Mayer, Caruso et al. 2024).

Conversely, Goleman's mixed model encompasses emotions, personality traits, and competences. Goleman's mixed model comprises self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, which highlights the interrelation of personality factors with emotional components. The mixed model approach's inclination toward competency, developed through training and experience, has resulted in an overwhelming acceptance in organizational settings (Saxena 2025).

Organizational settings research consistently illustrates the benefits of emotional intelligence in the workplace. People with emotional intelligence tend to perform better in leadership positions, teamwork, and job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence is especially relevant in highly interpersonal positions, such as human resource management, sales, and customer service, and general job performance (SAXENA and AWASTHI 2025).

Research and practitioners focus increasingly on the role of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution. Conflicts often sit on emotional and deeply personal issues. In resolving such issues, leaders and mediators need to manage their emotions, guide conflicted parties in dialogue, and encourage less subjective, and potentially destructive, points of view. Emotional intelligence opens the door to the ability to see and understand the issues and emotions involved and facilitate de-escalating of the tensions and conflict (Winardi, Prentice et al. 2022).

Most studies exploring the link between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution portrays a positive relationship between the two. Higher emotional intelligence is correlated with greater efficacy and a more collaborative resolution of conflicts that lead to win-win outcomes (Saqlain and Shahid 2024). Within emotional intelligence, the facet of empathy has proven most useful in conflict resolution, bearing the capacity to perceive and appreciate the feelings and viewpoints of all the individuals in a conflict (Jordan and Troth 2021).

The importance of emotional intelligence in various activities of human resource management, such as recruitment, performance management, employee development, and conflict resolution, has been consistently documented. Emotionally intelligent HR professionals are able to better appreciate the needs of employees, facilitate tough conversations, and foster a positive climate. Moreover, the people-oriented nature of HR activities makes the role of emotional intelligence even more crucial in achieving success in this area (Cahyono 2024).

Intercultural differences can shape emotional intelligence and affect professional efficacy. The impact and intricacies of cultural values and norms on emotional expressions and interactions in professional settings have been documented in literature. In contrast within collectivistic cultures like Pakistan, with emphasized values of relationship harmony and face saving, particular differences and nuances can shape the emergence and resolution of individual and group conflicts. As outlined in the literature, custom and cultural norms can shape the effectiveness of targeted measures to diffuse interactions and facilitate resolution (Zhang, Wei et al. 2025).

Pakistan within the broader South Asian context still has some unique organizational and managerial processes and practices that can shape the influence of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution. The strong hierarchy in relationship-oriented business systems and cumulating the concerned culture and practices, create unique systemic and cultural complexities that shape the role and functions of the human

resource professional. The social structure of individualistic and relationship centric harmony and conflicts in Pakistan can shape the intricacies of the conflict cycle (Mirza, Malik et al. 2025).

Research on emotional intelligence in the context of Pakistan is still scarce, although existing studies point to the increasing relevance of emotional intelligence for professional efficacy, as emotional intelligence is linked to higher job performance across different industries in Pakistan (Saqlain and Shahid 2024). Nevertheless, dedicated studies focusing on the emotional intelligence of HR practitioners, particularly in the context of conflict resolution, is still needed to justify the current study (Waseem, Rasheed et al. 2025).

The ongoing debate on the different facets of emotional intelligence and the development of different instruments to capture these facets is well established. Some instruments seek to capture emotional intelligence as an ability in a performance-based assessment, others, self-report instruments, capture perceived emotional competencies on the part of the individual. The research context will ultimately align with one or the other and will clarify why one over the other is adopted to and how the findings are derived (Munir, Anser et al. 2025).

Research on emotional intelligence training and development program interventions demonstrates positive outcomes with respect to organizational outcomes. These programs integrate aspects like developing self-awareness, techniques for regulating emotions, training for empathy, and enhancement of social skills. Such training is particularly beneficial to HR professionals and specialists since their role entails high interpersonal contact and much reliance on emotional dimensions of competencies related to conflict resolution. In developing training programs and interventions with emotional intelligence for Pakistani organizations, understanding, and incorporation interventions related to emotional intelligence that are culturally relevant and aligned to local values and practices will be most beneficial (Zaman, Nawaz et al. 2021).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers adopted a mixed-methods approach to explore emotional intelligence and conflict resolution among HR professionals in Pakistan. The study focused on five principal cities: Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta. The study's subjects were HR professionals from both the public and private sectors who had at least three years of experience in conflict resolution. For the quantitative part of the study, 150 participants were purposefully selected who completed the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) and a self-constructed Conflict Resolution Effectiveness Scale (CRES). For the qualitative part of the study, 20 senior HR professionals were purposefully selected through snowball sampling and in-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out. The data collection process lasted four months, from January to April 2025. The questionnaires were completed in person or distributed through Google Forms, and the organizational interviews were conducted in person. For the quantitative data analysis, the SPSS software was used, and the researcher conducted regression and correlational analysis to examine the relationship of various emotional intelligence components to the effectiveness of conflict resolution. For the qualitative component, interviews were thematically transcribed and analyzed to identify key themes. Approval from the relevant institutional review board was secured. Ethical review was completed, confidentiality and anonymity were upheld, and consent was attained from all participants.

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The comprehensive analysis of data collected from 150 HR professionals across five major Pakistani cities revealed significant insights into the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution effectiveness. The quantitative analysis employed descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression to examine the relationships between variables, while the qualitative analysis

utilized thematic analysis to identify patterns and strategies employed by emotionally intelligent HR professionals.

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Participants (N=150)

| Characteristic | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 89 | 59.3% |
| Female | 61 | 40.7% |
| Age Groups | | |
| 25-30 years | 34 | 22.7% |
| 31-35 years | 48 | 32.0% |
| 36-40 years | 42 | 28.0% |
| 41-45 years | 19 | 12.7% |
| Above 45 years | 7 | 4.7% |
| Experience | | |
| 3-5 years | 45 | 30.0% |
| 6-10 years | 67 | 44.7% |
| 11-15 years | 28 | 18.7% |
| Above 15 years | 10 | 6.7% |
| Sector | | |
| Private | 103 | 68.7% |
| Public | 47 | 31.3% |
| City Distribution | | |
| Karachi | 42 | 28.0% |
| Lahore | 38 | 25.3% |
| Islamabad | 35 | 23.3% |
| Peshawar | 20 | 13.3% |
| Quetta | 15 | 10.0% |

The demographic analysis revealed a relatively balanced distribution of participants across key characteristics. The majority of participants were male (59.3%), with the largest age group being 31-35 years (32.0%). Most participants had 6-10 years of experience (44.7%), and 68.7% worked in the private sector. The city distribution showed higher representation from Karachi (28.0%) and Lahore (25.3%), which is consistent with the larger organizational presence in these metropolitan areas.

Emotional Intelligence Scores

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Emotional Intelligence Dimensions (N=150)

| EI Dimension | Mean | SD | Minimum | Maximum | Cronbach's α |
|------------------|------|------|---------|---------|---------------------|
| Self-Awareness | 4.12 | 0.68 | 2.40 | 5.00 | 0.847 |
| Self-Regulation | 3.89 | 0.74 | 2.20 | 5.00 | 0.823 |
| Empathy | 4.28 | 0.61 | 2.80 | 5.00 | 0.876 |
| Social Skills | 4.05 | 0.69 | 2.60 | 5.00 | 0.859 |
| Overall EI Score | 4.08 | 0.58 | 2.75 | 5.00 | 0.911 |

The emotional intelligence scores demonstrated that HR professionals in the study generally possessed moderate to high levels of emotional intelligence. Empathy scored highest among all dimensions ($M=4.28$, $SD=0.61$), followed by self-awareness ($M=4.12$, $SD=0.68$). Self-regulation scored the lowest among the four dimensions ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.74$), suggesting this area may benefit from targeted development interventions. All dimensions showed acceptable to excellent internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.823 to 0.876.

Conflict Resolution Effectiveness Scores

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Conflict Resolution Effectiveness (N=150)

| CRE Dimension | Mean | SD | Minimum | Maximum | Cronbach's α |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Problem Identification | 4.15 | 0.71 | 2.50 | 5.00 | 0.834 |
| Solution Generation | 3.92 | 0.78 | 2.20 | 5.00 | 0.812 |
| Implementation | 4.03 | 0.69 | 2.40 | 5.00 | 0.798 |
| Follow-up | 3.85 | 0.82 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 0.789 |
| Overall CRE Score | 4.01 | 0.65 | 2.53 | 5.00 | 0.897 |

The conflict resolution effectiveness scores indicated that HR professionals demonstrated good overall effectiveness in resolving workplace conflicts ($M=4.01$, $SD=0.65$). Problem identification received the highest score ($M=4.15$, $SD=0.71$), while follow-up activities scored lowest ($M=3.85$, $SD=0.82$). This pattern suggests that while HR professionals are skilled at identifying and addressing immediate conflict issues, sustained follow-up and monitoring of resolution outcomes may require improvement.

Correlation Analysis

Table 4: Correlation Matrix between Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution Effectiveness

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. Self-Awareness | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Self-Regulation | .634** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 3. Empathy | .721** | .598** | 1 | | | | | | |
| 4. Social Skills | .698** | .687** | .743** | 1 | | | | | |
| 5. Overall EI | .847** | .823** | .891** | .876** | 1 | | | | |
| 6. Problem Identification | .589** | .542** | .672** | .634** | .698** | 1 | | | |
| 7. Solution Generation | .534** | .567** | .634** | .723** | .687** | .743** | 1 | | |
| 8. Implementation | .612** | .598** | .698** | .701** | .734** | .798** | .823** | 1 | |
| 9. Follow-up | .498** | .523** | .587** | .612** | .623** | .687** | .734** | .756** | 1 |
| 10. Overall CRE | .634** | .612** | .782** | .743** | .789** | .889** | .912** | .934** | .845** |

**Note: ** $p < 0.01$

The correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between all emotional intelligence dimensions and conflict resolution effectiveness measures. The strongest correlation was observed between empathy and overall conflict resolution effectiveness ($r=0.782$, $p<0.01$), indicating that HR professionals who better understand and share the emotions of others are more effective at resolving conflicts. Social skills showed the second strongest correlation with overall conflict resolution effectiveness ($r=0.743$, $p<0.01$), highlighting the importance of interpersonal competencies in conflict management.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis - Predicting Conflict Resolution Effectiveness

| Predictor | B | SE B | β | t | p | 95% CI |
|-----------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|--------|-----------------|
| Constant | 0.892 | 0.234 | | 3.812 | <0.001 | [0.431, 1.353] |
| Self-Awareness | 0.127 | 0.089 | 0.134 | 1.427 | 0.156 | [-0.049, 0.303] |
| Self-Regulation | 0.098 | 0.078 | 0.112 | 1.256 | 0.211 | [-0.056, 0.252] |
| Empathy | 0.456 | 0.098 | 0.428 | 4.653 | <0.001 | [0.262, 0.650] |
| Social Skills | 0.287 | 0.089 | 0.305 | 3.225 | 0.002 | [0.111, 0.463] |

Model Summary: $R^2 = 0.681$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.672$, $F(4,145) = 77.431$, $p < 0.001$

The multiple regression analysis demonstrated that the four emotional intelligence dimensions collectively explained 68.1% of the variance in conflict resolution effectiveness ($R^2 = 0.681$, $F(4,145) = 77.431$, $p < 0.001$). Empathy emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.428$, $p < 0.001$), followed by social skills ($\beta = 0.305$, $p = 0.002$). Self-awareness and self-regulation, while positively correlated with conflict resolution effectiveness in bivariate analyses, did not reach statistical significance in the regression model, suggesting that their effects may be mediated through empathy and social skills.

Sector and Experience Differences

Table 6: Independent t-test Results for Sector Differences

| Variable | Private Sector (n=103) | Public Sector (n=47) | t | p | Cohen's d |
|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| | M (SD) | M (SD) | | | |
| Overall EI | 4.15 (0.56) | 3.89 (0.62) | 2.651 | 0.009 | 0.45 |
| Overall CRE | 4.08 (0.63) | 3.84 (0.69) | 2.134 | 0.035 | 0.37 |

The analysis revealed significant differences between private and public sector HR professionals in both emotional intelligence and conflict resolution effectiveness. Private sector professionals demonstrated higher mean scores in overall emotional intelligence ($M=4.15$, $SD=0.56$) compared to their public sector counterparts ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.62$), with a medium effect size (Cohen's $d=0.45$). Similarly, private sector HR professionals showed greater conflict resolution effectiveness ($M=4.08$, $SD=0.63$) than public sector professionals ($M=3.84$, $SD=0.69$), though with a smaller effect size (Cohen's $d=0.37$).

Table 7: One-way ANOVA Results for Experience Differences

| Variable | Experience Groups | F | p | η^2 |
|-------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 3-5 yrs | 6-10 yrs | 11-15 yrs | >15 yrs |
| | M (SD) | M (SD) | M (SD) | M (SD) |
| Overall EI | 3.89(0.62) | 4.12(0.54) | 4.21(0.49) | 4.35(0.41) |
| Overall CRE | 3.84(0.71) | 4.05(0.61) | 4.18(0.58) | 4.28(0.52) |

The one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences in both emotional intelligence and conflict resolution effectiveness across experience levels. Post-hoc Tukey tests indicated that HR professionals with more than 15 years of experience demonstrated significantly higher emotional intelligence and conflict resolution effectiveness compared to those with 3-5 years of experience. The effect sizes were

moderate, suggesting that experience plays a meaningful role in developing both emotional intelligence and conflict resolution capabilities.

Qualitative Analysis

The analysis of the 20 semi-structured interviews with senior HR professionals identified five key themes in the qualitative analysis with respect to integrating emotional intelligence in conflict resolution strategies. These themes were the result of an inductive approach to thematic analysis while still focusing on the theory of emotional intelligence.

Theme 1: Active Listening and Emotional Awareness

Focusing on the conflict resolution stage, all senior HR professionals interviewed recognized the value and contribution of active listening and the awareness of the emotional state of every conflict party. Consider the case of a respondent in Karachi who stated, "When employees come to me with conflicts, I first listen to understand their emotional state. Are they angry, frustrated, hurt, or disappointed? Understanding the emotion helps me address the real issue, not just the surface problem." This theme was strongly represented in professionals with elevated empathy ratings who appeared to possess the most advanced emotional reading and responsiveness capabilities.

Active listening was described as consisting of components like eye contact, asking clarifying questions, summarizing what was said, and acknowledging feelings. It was observed within the Pakistani cultural context that employees tend to communicate workplace conflict in an indirect manner, thus HR professionals needing to attend to and interpret emotional cues. Several participants pointed out that with experience the ability to discern these cues and the deficit of emotional awareness was consciously improved to the significant extent.

Theme 2: Emotional Self-Regulation During Conflicts

The second important theme was the focus on emotional self-control while dealing with and resolving workplace conflict. Participants described several techniques they used to manage their own emotions during difficult conflict situations. One HR manager from Lahore recounted, 'There are heated conflict situations and I can feel the emotion rising. I have learned to pause, take the breath, and remind myself that my role to facilitate resolution and that I do not take sides and become emotionally involved.' This was the important focus on the self-control necessary to retain one's own credibility and efficacy as a mediator.

Each participant mentioned how, throughout their careers, they developed self-regulation strategies like mental reframing, breathing techniques, and taking breaks during highly emotional situations. They felt that it was especially hard to maintain emotional neutrality when that which was being negotiated involved personal relationships and when culturally or religiously sensitive issues in Pakistan were at stake.

Theme 3: Perspective-Taking and Empathy

The third theme focused on the importance of perspective taking and empathy in grasping all facets of a conflict. Participants explained how they made an effort to understand all the different viewpoints and the issues that each party, including the conflicting parties, had. An HR director in Islamabad described how, "I always try to put myself in each person's shoes. What are they feeling? What do they need? What are they afraid of losing? When I can truly understand their perspective, I can help them see each other's viewpoints too." Such an approach, aimed at helping the conflicting parties see each other's perspective, was, in their view, fundamental to trust building and for an environment to be created where effective and sustainable solutions could be developed.

Involvement of different cultural backgrounds in Pakistani organizations made perspective-taking more complicated. Conflicts regarding an issue also included an understanding of an individual's rank in a structure, obligations to a family, or social standing. Participants indicated that an effective empathetic response also appreciated the social context and the social and cultural frameworks from which each position and emotions were derived.

Theme 4: Collaborative Problem-Solving Approaches

The fourth theme discussed the manner in which emotionally intelligent HR professionals encouraged and facilitated the process of collaborative risk and problem solving as opposed to imposing or mandating actionable solutions. Participants described the process as leading and instructing the warring factions to achieve a harmonious and mutually acceptable settlement by the discovery of mutual interests and convergence of interests. A senior professional from Peshawar provided the example, "Instead of telling people what to do, I help them discover solutions together. When they create the solution themselves, they're much more committed to making it work." This collaborative approach was seen as particularly effective in the relationship-oriented culture of Pakistani organizations.

As a rule, the participants described the process of issue negotiation as the problems of the factions collapsing-in and regrouping (coalescing) around interests (end) from different (conflicting) structural or positional vantage points and the generation of multiple problem solutions and the gauging of the feasible solutions against a rational and objective standard. Most participants emphasized the culture of consensus and its related tenets of courtesy, process, and structure. This required a high degree of constructive emotional and processual organizational structure to keep the problem solution moving towards objective and rational goals.

Theme 5: Relationship Maintenance and Follow-up

The finest theme talked about the follow-up and the maintenance of relationships after resolving a conflict. Some participants recounted the steps they took to ensure that relationships between those in conflict were not only repaired but were also strengthened as a result of the positive resolution. One of the HR managers from Quetta put it this way: "Addressing the problem at hand is only the beginning. The valor of a solution is when parties engaged in the dispute start collaborating and working together. I follow up and make sure they are forming working relationships." The attempt to nurture relationships and capture the maintenance of a conflict resolved situation in positive equilibrium was driven from the long-term perspective, and it stemmed from the highest emotional intelligence every HR professional displayed.

The qualitative analysis revealed the environmental and systemic challenges around the emotional intelligence framework. These were primarily due to: lack of time, organizational culture around the need for immediacy, parties in the conflict with a dominant personality who focus on authority, collaborative conflicts that cross multiple and intertwined cultures, and multiple generational perspectives. Even with these challenges, participants consistently stated that the application of emotional intelligence to these situations reaped the greatest results.

DISCUSSION

This study highlights the importance of emotional intelligence for the effectiveness of conflict resolution among HR professionals in Pakistan. The study findings that emotional intelligence dimensions and conflict resolution outcomes have strong positive relationships confirm the theoretical expectations and aligns previously extant scholarly work to the Pakistani organizational context. The strong relationship between empathy and effectiveness in resolving conflict ($r=0.782$) suggests that the ability to understand and feel what others are experiencing is crucial to resolving workplace conflicts.

Finding that emotional intelligence explains 68.1% of the variance in the effectiveness of conflict resolution hinges on the conclusion that emotional competencies are cardinal attributes determining HR professionals' effectiveness at conflict resolution. The strong influence of empathy and social skills as predictors, while reporting non-significant influence of self-awareness and self-regulation, underscores the importance of the external or performance dimensions of emotional intelligence to conflict resolution as compared to the internal or self-regulation aspects of emotional management. For training and development purposes, this study suggests that empathy and social skills will most likely improve intervention effectiveness on conflict resolution.

The qualitative insights offered tell a story on how emotional intelligence is exercised among the effective HR professionals. The five themes - active listening and emotional awareness, emotional self-regulation, perspective-taking and empathy, collaborative problem-solving and relationship maintenance - provide a signal framework on emotional intelligence and resolving conflicts. The strategies described mirror the sophistication towards the understanding of people and the actioning of emotional intelligence in the working world. The long-standing emphasis on relationship maintenance and follow up is suited to the organizational culture of Pakistan, where relationships, harmony, and face-saving are central. The combination of qualitative and quantitative findings develops a robust estimation of emotional intelligence and how it works towards resolving conflicts in the Pakistani context.

CONCLUSION

This study has underscored the importance of emotional intelligence on the effectiveness on conflict resolution among HR professionals in Pakistan. The research has successfully answered the primary questions in scope by building strong empirical links between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the outcomes of conflict resolution, identifying the specific strategies associated with emotionally intelligent practitioners, and situating these within a particular cultural context. This research has both theoretical and practical relevance.

Statistical results indicate emotional intelligence, especially empathy and social skills, is an important predictor of conflict resolution effectiveness, explaining more than 60% of resolution outcome variance. This is the first study relating emotional intelligence to conflict resolution specifically to HR professionals in Pakistan, thus adding to the contextual literature on the contribution of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution. Qualitative data further reinforce this conclusion and reveal five specific strategies that HR professionals with strong emotional intelligence utilize: active listening and awareness of emotions, self-regulation, empathy with emotional perspective, collaborative problem-solving, and follow-up relational maintenance.

Findings from the study provide a bases for emotional intelligence and HR practices integration and development on an organizational level, and professional training in Pakistan. Organizations need to be more selective to emotional intelligence competencies when hiring HR practitioners and focus on emotional intelligence development within their professional staff. The emotional intelligence strategies identified provide a basis for developing conflict resolution specific training. Additionally, participants' cultural engagement illustrates that organizational emotional intelligence frameworks should be contextualized to local organizational cultures and norms.

The research also underscores the importance of fostering emotional intelligence in human resource professionals on an ongoing basis throughout their careers. Experience positively correlates with emotional intelligence and the effective resolution of organizational conflicts. This suggests that these skills may evolve throughout one's career with focused effort and thoughtful self-assessment. Organizations that focus on the longer-range cultivation of their HR personnel's emotional intelligence are likely to benefit from greater improvements in conflict resolution and organizational cohesion.

Subsequent research might address the emotional intelligence training methodologies within Pakistan's various workplace settings to better understand their implementation and to study emotional intelligence-imbued conflict resolution frameworks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In Pakistan, organizations ought to provide their human resource specialists with extensive emotional intelligence evaluations and developmental plans, paying special attention to the empathy and interpersonal relationship dimensions as well as developing a training, mentoring, and experiential learning framework. Designing and implementing standardized protocols for conflict resolution, which aids the HR conflict resolution framework, should ensure the five emotional intelligence strategies are adaptable to cultural and context-specific protocols and situations. Furthermore, organizations should establish structured and continuous professional development training that allows HR professionals to practice their emotional competencies through role playing, case studies, and peer review. Moreover, emotional intelligence and conflict resolution proficiency should be incorporated into finalized and public performance appraisal systems and systems of recognition and reward. Organizations should also focus on building emotionally intelligent organizational cultures that are supportive and provide HR professionals with sufficient time and resources to utilize and champion the comprehensive, relational approaches to conflict resolution and avoid superficial, quick fixes.

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