UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: A CASE OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY MANAGERS IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the Emotional Intelligence (EI) levels of university library managers in Pakistan, their Conflict Management (CM) styles, and the relationship between these variables. It highlights the role of EI in effective conflict resolution and professional success in library management.

Design/methodology/approach: A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, incorporating the ESCI scale to measure EI and the ROCI-II scale to assess CM styles. The study used convenience sampling to collect data from library managers of public and private universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. The research instrument was shared through social media groups dedicated to library professionals, resulting in 101 responses.
The Pearson correlation test was applied to examine the relationship between EI and CM styles.

Research limitations: The study was geographically limited to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, restricting the broader applicability of findings. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data may introduce potential response bias.

Key findings: Library managers demonstrated high EI, with no significant gender-based differences in EI levels. The most used CM styles were obliging and dominating, while compromising was the least utilized. A significant positive correlation was found between EI and CM styles, reinforcing the importance of emotional intelligence in effective conflict resolution.

Practical implications:
The study emphasizes the need for training workshops and intervention programs to enhance EI and CM skills among library managers. Organizations should invest resources in developing conflict management strategies to improve overall performance and workplace harmony.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Conflict management, University Librarians, Co-relation study.

Background of the Study:

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to understand and regulate one's own and others' emotions to make effective judgments (Dhani & Sharma, 2016). It encompasses the integration of emotions, psychological changes, and practical knowledge and skills derived from self-motivation or situational factors (Rahman, Uddin & Rahman, 2016). EI allows individuals to recognize, utilize, understand, and manage emotions in a positive manner, leading to stress alleviation, effective communication, empathy, overcoming challenges, and efficient conflict resolution (Vardhan, 2014). It is a dynamic and trainable trait that can be improved through training and conditioning, enabling managers to develop leadership qualities (Rehman et al., 2016).

Goleman (1998) identified four dimensions of EI. First, self-awareness involves perceiving one's internal state, thoughts, moods, and desires, as well as understanding their impact on others. Second, self-management entails managing internal dialogue and thoughts before taking action. Third, social awareness involves recognizing and understanding the emotions and sentiments of others, as well as adapting behavior to different social situations for better interactions and outcomes. Fourth, social management is the ability to connect with people, form effective relationships, respond to others' emotions, and influence team members. Emotionally intelligent individuals excel in understanding and managing both their own and others' emotional states, leading to strong relationship management skills (Rahman et al., 2016).

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The role of EI in organizational settings cannot be overlooked. When emotions are effectively managed, they contribute to meeting individual needs, motivating employees, and creating a comfortable work environment. Highly emotionally intelligent individuals possess the ability to understand, recognize, evaluate, and motivate others, enabling the establishment of cooperative networks (Abas et al., 2012). Studies have shown that EI significantly impacts job satisfaction, commitment, and behavior among employees, leading to overall positive effects on organizational performance. Teams composed of highly emotionally intelligent individuals tend to work more cohesively compared to those with lower EI (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015; Al-Hamdan, et al., 2019; Abas et al., 2012).

Conflict is an inherent outcome of human interaction, arising from differences in goals, values, worth, and trust between individuals or groups (Rahim, Magner & Shapirotheth, 2000). It can have both positive and negative effects on an organization. Conflict management (CM) involves analyzing the causes of conflict, stress management, identifying and controlling conflict, and assessing the psychological environment within an organization (Kharadz & Gulua, 2018). CM aims to address or resolve conflicts effectively (Thakore, 2013). Various CM resolution styles have been identified, with Rahim and Bonomo (1979) and Rahim (1983) proposing five styles: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. Each style represents a different approach to conflict resolution, with varying levels of cooperation and assertiveness (Rahim et al., 2002).

In the United States, a study by Mallikarjun Biradar and Altaf Hussain (2024) explored students' perceptions of mobile libraries (M-libraries) compared to traditional libraries. The study highlighted those students appreciated the enhanced accessibility and convenience offered by M-libraries, noting that mobile technology facilitates faster access to information and supports remote learning. However, the research also pointed out challenges related to digital literacy and the need for libraries to adapt their services to effectively integrate mobile technologies.

Similarly, Saragih (2019) investigated students' perceptions of digital libraries as tools for supporting student-centered active learning at Universitas Indonesia. The study found that performance expectancy significantly influenced students' behavioral intentions to use digital libraries, suggesting that students are more inclined to engage with digital libraries when they perceive them as effective tools for enhancing their learning experiences.

Jafari and Shapouri (2018) conducted a descriptive correlational study at the University of Guilan, Iran, to explore the relationship between librarians' EI and library user satisfaction. The study used the trait EI questionnaire (TEIQue) to measure the level of EI and its dimensions among the librarians. The findings indicated significantly higher levels of EI (M=3.72 for self-awareness, M=3.86 for self-management, M=3.72 for social awareness, and M=3.82 for social management) among the Gulian university librarians compared to the average level. This suggests that the librarians at Guilan University possess the required level of EI.

Azami, Azadeh, and Sheikhshoaei (2020) conducted a quantitative study to investigate the EI components among medical university librarians in Tehran, Iran. The study involved 110 librarians working in different faculties of medical university libraries. The librarians' EI scores were measured using standard deviation and mean. The findings indicated a high level of self-awareness (83.5), while social management scored the lowest (69.7) among the dimensions. The overall EI score was 73.3. The study also found no significant difference in EI between male and female librarians and a positive relationship between EI and age.

Sani, Masrek, Shahid, and Nadzar (2013) conducted a descriptive analysis on the EI assessment of Malaysian public librarians. The study included 180 librarians working in public libraries selected from the National Library of Malaysia and Malaysian public libraries. The findings showed that the public librarians had a high level of EI, with self-awareness (mean=5.840), self-management (mean=5.866), social awareness (mean=5.795), and social management (mean=5.574) being the average scores for each dimension. The results indicated that Malaysian public librarians had a good potential for self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

In terms of conflict management (CM) studies, Mallappa and Kumar (2015) investigated CM among library professionals in management college libraries in Bangalore, India. The study used a survey method and a structured questionnaire to gather data from approximately 30 librarians. The findings revealed that the library professionals moderately used the avoiding style (40%) and used the forcing style (43.33%) most frequently. However, a significant portion (46.66%) of the professionals

reported not using the compromising and collaborating styles, which are more productive for teamwork. The avoiding style was identified as the most used style for conflict resolution in the management college libraries.

Adomi and Anie (2006) conducted a descriptive survey on CM in university libraries in Nigeria. The study utilized a questionnaire to collect data from 61 library professionals and paraprofessionals from three Nigerian university libraries. The findings indicated three types of conflict: interpersonal conflict was the highest (37.3%), followed by personal conflict (24.6%), and inter-group conflict (21.3%). The most frequently used strategies for conflict resolution were accommodation (37.7%) and avoidance (29.9%). This study revealed that interpersonal conflict was the most common type among the participants, and accommodation was the preferred method of resolving conflicts among Nigerian library staff.

A growing body of literature highlights the relationship between EI and CM styles in different professional sectors. Yu, Sardessai, and Lu (2006) conducted a study on the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) components and conflict management (CM) styles among MBA students in multiple universities in China. They examined the association between supervisors' and subordinates' EI and CM styles. The study revealed that subordinates frequently used the Integrating style (Mean=5.55) and avoiding style (Mean=5.24) to manage conflicts with their supervisors. It was also found that supervisors' EI positively correlated with conflict management in their subordinates.

Abas, Surdic, Otto, Wood, and Budd (2012) investigated the relationship between EI and CM styles among employees in the human resources division at XYZ University in Malaysia. They explored the correlation between supervisors' self-assessed EI and their subordinates' perceptions. The study utilized the ROCI-II assessment tool to measure supervisors' CM styles. The findings indicated no significant correlation between supervisors' self-assessed EI (Mean=29.00, SD=2.17) and their subordinates' ratings (Mean=30.23, SD=3.32), with a correlation coefficient of $r=0.16$, $p=0.05$. However, supervisors' EI was significantly related to subordinates' Integrating ($F(1, 40)=12.23$, $p=0.01$) and Compromising ($F(1, 40) =4.40$, $p<0.05$) CM styles.

Sharma and Sehrawat (2014) examined the status and relationship between EI and CM styles among mid-level managers in various organizations in India. Their findings revealed that self-awareness positively correlated with the compromising and asserting styles of CM. However, self-awareness showed no relationship with the problem-solving, avoiding, and accommodating styles of CM. Additionally, self-awareness, social skills, and self-management exhibited a positive and significant correlation with the problem-solving aspects of EI, while showing no relationship with avoiding CM styles.

Previous studies have demonstrated significant correlations between EI and CM styles, problem-solving tasks, and team performance in universities (Carmody-Bubb, Duncan & Ree, 2015). High emotionally intelligent mid-level managers have been found to excel in decision-making and conflict management within organizations (Sharma & Sherawat, 2014). EI has also been associated with improved innovation performance and job satisfaction among employees (Zhang, Chen & Sun, 2015; Khan, Masrek & Nadzar, 2016). However, no data are available on the relationship between EI and CM styles specifically in the context of library managers in Pakistan. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between EI and CM styles among university library managers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Goleman's (2001) mixed model of EI identifies self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social management as dimensions of EI. Likewise, Rahim's Organizational Conflict Management Styles (Rahim, et al, 2002) model includes integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising styles as modes of CM. Based on these models, the research framework for this study aims to examine the relationship between EI and its sub-dimensions with CM and its indicators among public sector university library managers in Pakistan. These theories are particularly relevant to the present study. Firstly, Goleman's (2001) mixed model of EI is widely recognized for its measurement of EI with high reliability values. Secondly, Rahim's Organizational Conflict Management Style (2002) is considered a prominent framework for understanding conflict resolution and management globally. In the current study, EI and its five sub-indicators will be treated as independent variables, while CM and its five dimensions will be treated as dependent variables.
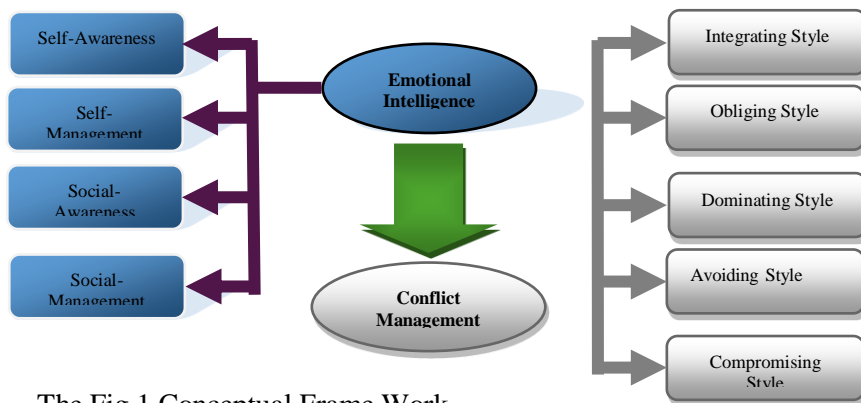
The Fig.1 Conceptual Frame Work

Objectives of the Study:

The current research was designed to meet the following objectives:

1. To explore the library managers' level of EI.
2. To investigate the CM styles of library managers.
3. To find out the relationship between EI and CM styles of library managers.

Methodology:

Research Design: This study utilized a quantitative research method employing a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire survey is an effective means of collecting large amounts of data quickly and providing a quantitative description of the attitudes of a population (Cresswell, 2009). A correlational research approach was also employed to examine the relationships between variables.

Population: The population of this study comprised university library managers working in both public and private sector university libraries in Pakistan. There are 268 public and private sector universities in Pakistan (HEC Pakistan, 2024), with approximately 560 library managers, as reported by Ahmed, Amen, and Ullah (2017).

Sampling: Due to time and financial constraints, the sample for this study was limited to university library managers working in the university libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. There are a total of 71 public and private sector universities in these regions (HEC Pakistan, 2024). However, despite the author's efforts, no authentic list of university library managers was found. Therefore, convenience sampling was adopted, and the research instrument was shared through social media groups dedicated to library professionals, resulting in 101 responses.

Instrumentation: The designed questionnaire included two distinct scales along with demographic information. The first scale utilized was the Emotional and Social Competency Inventory-Self Version-3 scale developed by Goleman (2007). This EI scale consisted of 68 statements and required less time to complete compared to Bar-on scales. The second scale, the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI–II), was adapted to assess the conflict management styles of university library managers. It consisted of 28 statements.

Reliability of EI Scale

The reliability of the ESCI scale of EI was assessed by calculating the Cronbach's alpha value using SPSS version 22. The overall Cronbach's alpha value for the ESCI scale was .970, as shown in Table 1. Similarly, the overall Cronbach's alpha value for ROCI-II was .926, indicating excellent internal consistency. The calculated Cronbach's alpha values demonstrate that the ESCI scale exhibited excellent internal stability among university library managers.

Table 1 Reliability of EI and CM Scales

Cronbach'sAlpha	Number of Statements
.970	68
Reliability of CM Scale	Number of Statements
.926	28

Data Collection Techniques:

The questionnaire, along with a proper cover letter, was administered to library managers working in various university libraries across districts including Peshawar, Malakand, Dir, Swat, Chitral, Kohat, Karak, Buner, Shangla, Sawabi, Charsadda, Mardan, Nowshera, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, and Bannu.

Considering the difficulty in reaching respondents at the university libraries in the capital city of Islamabad and distant universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa such as Dera Ismail Khan and Laki Marwat, questionnaires were sent to them via email or Whatsapp. Additionally, telephonic contact was made with library managers from various universities to enhance the response rate.

Data Analysis:

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, Pearson correlation, t-test and one-way ANOVA, and t-tests.

Findings

Demographic Profile of Respondents: Table 2 shows that 61.4% of respondents were males and 38.6 % females. Furthermore, 40.6% of participants were from Islamabad while 59.4% library managers were from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Similarly, 65.3% of responses were received from public sector universities, while 37.7% from private sector universities.

Table 2 Frequency Distribution of Gender, University Types, and Location of the University

Group	N	%	
Gender			
Male	62	61.4	
Female	39	38.6	
University type			
Public	66	65.3	
Private	35	34.7	
Location of the University			
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	60	59.4	
Islamabad	41	40.6	

Respondents' Qualification and Experience

Table 3 reveals that a significant number of respondents (n=65) held master's degrees, while 27 respondents had MPhil degrees, and only 9 respondents obtained Ph. D degrees in Library and Information Science (LIS). Additionally, most respondents (n=37) had more than 16 years of library experience. Among the respondents, 25 had experience ranging from 11 to 15 years, 16 had experience ranging from 6 to 10 years, and only 23 had 1 to 5 years of experience. Furthermore, out of the total 101 respondents, 12 were chief librarians, 18 were deputy librarians, 22 were senior librarians, and 49 served as librarians.

Table 3 Professional Qualification and Experiences of the Respondents

Groups	N	%	
Qualification			
M. LISc	65	64.4	
M. Phil	27	26.7	
Ph. D	9	8.9	
Designation			
Librarian	45	48.5	
Senior Librarian	22	21.8	
Deputy Librarian	18	17.8	
Chief Librarian	12	11.9	
Experience			
16 and above years	37	36.6	
11-15 years	25	24.8	
1-5 years	23	22.8	
6-10 years	16	15.8	

Library Managers' Overall Status of EI

Table 4 presents the EI scores of the library managers. The mean EI score for the 101 participants was 3.60, with a standard deviation of 0.598. The mean score of 3.60, which is close to 4, indicates a high value on the scale. This suggests that all respondents demonstrated emotional intelligence, as they possessed the skills and abilities to perceive, control, and utilize emotions. The overall mean score of 3.60 falls within the moderate level of EI within the proposed range of 1-5.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Overall EI Score (N= 101)

Statistics	
Mean	3.60
Std. Deviation	.598
Minimum	1.38
Maximum	4.68

Dimension Wise Status of EI of Library Managers

Table 5 presents the assessment of library managers' EI using the ESCI scale, focusing on its four dimensions. The dimensions are ranked based on the mean scores. The dimension of social awareness, consisting of ten statements, received a relatively high mean score of 3.66. This dimension measures the respondents' understanding of social interactions and their ability to manage organizational activities. Following closely is the dimension of self-awareness, which obtained a mean score of 3.61. This dimension, comprising six statements on the ESCI scale, evaluates the respondents' recognition and understanding of their own emotions and their impact on others.

The dimension of social management exhibited a moderate level, with a mean score of 3.60, which is lower than social awareness and self-awareness. It includes twenty-eight statements on the same scale as previously mentioned and assesses the respondents' ability to manage relationships and establish networks. The final dimension, self-management, received the lowest mean score of 3.59 among university library managers. This dimension comprises twenty-four statements on the ESCI scale and examines the respondents' ability to regulate disruptive emotions and moods and their willingness to suspend judgments.

Table 5 Library Managers 'Dimensions Wise Status of EI (101)

Dimensions	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Social awareness	3.66	.662	1.40	4.70
Self-awareness	3.61	.688	1.17	4.83
Social management	3.60	.610	1.46	4.71
Self-management	3.59	.581	1.38	4.63

Differences in the four dimensions of EI among the respondents based on their gender

The mean scores of male and female library managers were analyzed using independent sample t-tests. The results, presented in Table 6 below, indicate that there were no significant differences in the self-awareness level between females (Mean= 3.73, Std. = .769) and males (Mean = 3.54, Std. = .627), t (101) = -1.390, p = .545 (greater than 0.05). This suggests that male and female library managers share the same opinion regarding self-awareness.

Similarly, another independent sample t-test was conducted to explore potential differences in the views of male and female library managers regarding self-management. The results reveal no significant differences in perception between female library managers (Mean= 3.66, Std. = .627) and male library managers (Mean=3.45, Std. = .551), t (101) = -1.11, p = .564 (greater than 0.05). These findings suggest that male and female library managers had similar perceptions regarding self-management.

Furthermore, the analysis examined gender-based differences in the opinions of library managers regarding social awareness. The results indicate no significant difference in the opinions of female (Mean=3.75, Std=.681) and male (Mean=3.60, Std.=.648) library managers, t(101) = -1.129, p= .943. This suggests that female and male library managers held similar views regarding social awareness. To investigate gender-based differences in university library managers' perceptions of social management, an independent sample t-test was conducted on the mean scores of male and female respondents. The results indicate no significant differences in the opinions of females (Mean = 3.63, Std. = .690) and males (Mean = 3.57, Std. = .557), t (101) = -1.390, p = .545.

Table 6 Differences in the four dimensions of EI among the respondents based on their gender

Respondents' Self Awareness

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Female	39	3.73	.769	-1.390	.545
Male	62	3.54	.627		
Respondents' Self-Management					
Female	39	3.66	.627	-.999	.452
Male	62	3.5	.551		
Respondents' Social Awareness					
Female	39	3.75	.681	-1.129	.943
Male	62	3.60	.648		
Respondents' Social Awareness					
Female	39	3.63	.690	-.517	.308
Male	62	3.57	.557		

Overall Status of CM Styles

The data in Table 7 presents descriptive statistics on the level of CM (Conflict Management) styles among library managers. The overall mean score for CM styles among the 101 library managers was 3.50, with a standard deviation of .688. This mean score is close to 4, indicating a higher value on the scale of CM styles for the library managers. Based on this interpretation, it can be inferred that all the participants were proficient in controlling, managing, or resolving conflicts.

Table 7 Descriptive Statistics of Overall CM Style Score (N= 101)

Statistics	
Mean	3.50
Std. Deviation	.688
Minimum	1.57
Maximum	4.89

Descriptive Statistics of CM Styles Based on the Styles of Library Managers

Through the ROCI-II scale, the CM styles of library managers were assessed across five styles, and the corresponding data is presented in Table 8, ranked by the mean score for each style. The obliging style, comprising six statements on the ROCI-II scale of CM styles, received a slightly high score from library managers with a mean score of 3.88. This style measures their cooperation, generosity, collaboration, and mutual sharing of information to improve one another. Following closely is the domination style, with a mean score of 3.87 and consisting of five statements on the ROCI-II scale. It assesses how managers pursue their own interests regardless of their impact on others.

The integrating style, which aims to achieve robust and mutually acceptable solutions through openness, information exchange, and assessment of differences, obtained a moderate mean score of 3.84 on the table. This style comprises seven statements on the ROCI-II scale of CM styles. On the other hand, the avoiding style, focusing on withdrawal, both physically and psychologically, in conflicts or other situations, received a mean score of 3.73. This style encompasses six statements.

The compromising style, which involves splitting differences, exchanging concessions, and seeking middle ground, attained the lowest mean score of 3.05 among the styles. It consists of four statements on the same CM style scale mentioned earlier. These findings suggest that library managers comparatively lacked proficiency in this style of CM.

Table 8 Library Managers' Dimensions Wise Status of CM style (N=101)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Obliging Style	3.88	.808	1.17	5.00
Dominating Style	3.87	.704	1.20	5.00
Integrating Style	3.84	.872	1.57	5.00
Avoiding Style	3.73	.777	1.00	5.00
Compromising Style	3.05	549	2.00	4.50

Differences in the five Styles of CM among the Respondents based on their Gender

To examine the gender-based difference in the Conflict Management styles of the respondents the independent sample t-test was applied. The results regarding the Integration style of the respondents presented in Table 9 indicate no significant differences in the perceptions of the Integrating style between female participants (Mean = 3.88, Std. = .967) and male participants (Mean = 3.82, Std. = .815); t (101) = -.336, p = .159, which is higher than the threshold of p = 0.05. These findings suggest that male and female library managers held similar opinions regarding the integrating style of conflict management.

Similarly, there was no significant difference regarding the Obliging CM Style between female participants (Mean = 4.01, Std. = .893) and male participants (Mean = 3.79, Std. = .745); t = -1.033, p = .177, which is higher than the threshold of 0.05. Thus, findings again suggest that male and female library managers had the same perception regarding the obliging style. In the same way, regarding the compromising style, results once more revealed that there were no significant differences in the opinions of female participants (Mean = 3.15, Std. = .548) and male participants (Mean = 2.99, Std. = .545); t = -1.449, p = .455 (which is higher than 0.05).

To examine the gender-based differences among university library managers regarding the dominating style, the independent sample t-test scores of male and female library managers exhibit insignificant differences in the perceptions of female participants (Mean = 3.93, Std. = .784) and male participants (Mean = 3.83, Std. = .652); t = -714, p = .530, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, results suggest that both genders have similar views on the dominating style. Furthermore, data in Table 9,

indicate that no significant differences were found in the opinions of female library managers Mean = 3.73 and male library managers Mean = 3.54; t (101) = -1.390, p = .545, which is higher than 0.05.

Table 9 Differences in the five Styles of CM among the respondents based on their gender

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Respondents' (CM) *Integrating Style*					
Female	39	3.88	.967	-.336	.159
Male	62	3.82	.815		
Respondents' (CM) Obliging Style					
Female	39	3.66	.893	-1.351	.177
Male	62	3.45	.648		
Respondents' (CM) Compromising Style					
Respondents' (CM) Dominating Style					
Female	39	3.93	.784	-.714	.530
Male	62	2.99	.545		
Respondents' (CM) Avoiding Style					
Male	39	3.78	.855	-.514	.521
Female	62	3.70	.728		

The Correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Conflict Management (CM) Styles

A Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between EI skills and CM styles among the library managers (n=101). The correlation statistics are displayed in Table 10.

The results of the Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship (p=0.01) between EI and CM styles among university library managers. The correlation coefficient (r=.001*) indicated a positive relationship between EI and CM styles, suggesting that higher levels of EI skills are associated with enhanced conflict resolution techniques. When a library manager possesses the ability to understand, perceive, manage, and utilize their own and others' emotions and feelings, they are more likely to effectively resolve conflicts in the library. Therefore, it can be concluded that university library managers with higher EI abilities exhibit greater proficiency in employing conflict management styles compared to those with lower levels of EI.

Table 10 Correlation Between EI and CM Style (101)

	N	P –value	Sig (2-tailed)
Emotional Intelligence	101	0.01	.001*
Conflict Management	101		

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

Conclusion:

According to Bipath (2007), EI is essential in any profession where interaction with clients is required. The focus of this study was on the four dimensions of EI of library managers in universities. The results revealed a moderately high level of social awareness. It demonstrated that the library manager could understand and perceive the emotions and feelings of library users and other staff library staff. Self-awareness of library managers was also found to be at a moderate level. It showed that library managers were well aware of their patrons, which might enhance patron satisfaction with the libraries. Social management was also found at a moderate level. It means that the library managers were cheerful and approachable, they tried to understand individuals and group differences and tried to handle

working with people at workplace with diplomacy, moreover, they were aware of non-verbal messages in the university library. It demonstrated that the library managers portrayed themselves to produce a favorable impression on people (library patterns). They controlled their feelings and emotions and were unlike to give away during crisis in the library.

Furthermore, with a 95% confidence level, the t-test was employed to assess gender-based differences among library managers' EI. According to the findings, there were no gender-based differences in the EI and its dimension-wise status among university library managers.

Conflict occurs when individuals or groups disagree. Adomi and Anie (2006) stated conflict is mostly viewed as unfavorable or negative; it can contribute to organizational performances. Library managers may have conflicts with their bosses, co-workers, subordinates, and library visitors. Clients may be unable and ineffective in expressing their information requirements in libraries and information centers and may be unable to interact effectively with librarians. Hence, conflicts and challenges arise in such situations (Azami, Azadeh & Sheikhshoaei, 2020). The librarian must be able to control the situation well.

The current study revealed that the CM (Conflict Management) styles of library managers were assessed to be moderate to good. Effective conflict management plays a crucial role in enabling libraries to achieve their goals. Among Pakistani university library managers, the most used style for managing conflicts was the obliging style. The findings indicated a minor, yet moderate level of obliging style, where library managers prioritize resolving conflicts through lose-win situations. This means that the managers tend to yield or give in, allowing the other party to win and resolve the conflict. The second most prevalent style was the dominating style, also found at a moderate level. This style involves pursuing victory at all costs or seeking win-win outcomes, often reflecting autocratic behavior of library managers who prioritize their own interests over the needs and expectations of others. This approach is particularly useful for making swift decisions when subordinates are unable to do so (Farooqi, 2015).

The third most used style among library managers was the integrating style, which was observed at a moderate level. Library managers utilized this style to address complex problems, seeking win-win solutions by considering multiple perspectives and bringing parties together. This aligns with the endorsement of this style by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), who suggested its effectiveness in controlling organizational activities.

In summary, the integrating style was considered most suitable for dealing with library rules, policies, and objectives. The avoiding style was also found to be moderate, leading to lose-lose situations, indicating a low concern for the interests of both parties. Although compromising was the least prevalent style among library managers, it was still at a moderate level. This style involves making decisions on behalf of conflicting parties through negotiation. It reflects a democratic approach by considering the interests of all parties involved. While this style offers temporary solutions to problems, it may not be appropriate for complex issues. According to Rahim (2002), most managers adopt a compromise approach to address complex problems and find successful solutions.

Furthermore, a t-test was conducted to examine gender-based differences among university library managers in their CM styles, revealing no significant gender-based differences. The Pearson correlation test indicated a strong and significant relationship (p=0.01 and r=0.001) between EI (Emotional Intelligence) and CM styles of library managers. These findings confirm the statistically significant relationship between EI and CM styles, highlighting the importance of emotional intelligence in conflict management.

Recommendations:

This study represents the first investigation into the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Conflict Management (CM) among Pakistani university library managers. Based on the conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Explore and implement EI enhancement training and intervention programs aimed at improving staff EI and resolving conflicts among library managers. EI improvement has been observed to enhance CM techniques.
2. Recognize and reward library managers who effectively resolve conflicts using their EI. This recognition will stimulate and motivate them, while also setting an example for their peers to improve their conflict resolution techniques.

3. Encourage Pakistani university librarians to elevate their existing level of EI competencies from moderate to high to meet today's professional demands. Active participation in professional development activities, training sessions, and continuing education programs can help achieve this.

4. Take concrete steps, led by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and university authorities, to enhance the abilities of library managers in EI and CM styles. This will contribute to a more satisfied workforce.

5. Consider incorporating the constructs, dimensions, and modes explored in this study into the existing Library and Information Science (LIS) curriculum. This can help reduce skill gaps among future librarians.

These recommendations aim to improve the overall conflict management skills and emotional intelligence of Pakistani university library managers, resulting in more effective and efficient conflict resolution practices in library settings.

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