

Role of Emotional Intelligence in Achieving Work-Life Balance and Enhancing Job Performance: Insights From Female Principals

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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence is becoming a popular topic in today's world, as it is linked with work-life balance and job performance in different fields currently in demand. The same is the case with the female workforce, who are part of educational institutions, especially principals, who face challenges in finding ways to balance their roles with performing well at their jobs to secure promotional opportunities. This study examines the effect of emotional Intelligence on the work-life balance and job performance of female principals in the education sector, particularly in District Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, to determine the level of EI, W.L.B., and JP within the lives of women principals working at higher levels of management. A quantitative approach was employed in this study. The principal instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. With the help of the rule of thumb as a sampling procedure, 304 were from government female institutions and 66 from private institutions, making a total of 370 samples of principals selected through Stratified Random Sampling with Proportional Allocation Rule. The SEM (Structural Equation Model) technique was used to model relationships among the current study's research variables and test the concern hypothesis. The study's results proved that the Emotional Intelligence of female principals has a positive impact on work-life balance and job performance. This study has positive implications for how female principals in Pakistan strive to preserve stability in their professional responsibilities for institutional school administrations. It exposed how female principals in Pakistan seek to balance their professional duties with domestic responsibilities.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Work-life Balance, Job Performance, Female Principals, Educational Institutions, Charsadda and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Introduction

The term *emotional Intelligence* has become synonymous with psychological well-being and satisfaction. It refers to the ability to identify, assess, and articulate emotions. Additionally, it encompasses the skills required to harness and generate emotions for learning, understand sentiments to foster social interactions, and regulate emotions to promote both emotional and cognitive development (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

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A skilled and adaptable workforce is a crucial element that enables organisations to achieve their goals and objectives (Khalili, 2011). However, as organisations continuously strive to stay competitive, employees seek to diversify their roles. Consequently, the emphasis has shifted towards employee well-being and maintaining a balance between professional and personal responsibilities, ultimately enhancing workforce competency.

According to Grant (2007), employee well-being and satisfaction refer to an individual's perception and performance at work, which can be categorised into three key dimensions: mental, physical, and social well-being. Work-life balance (WLB) is defined as the equilibrium between work-related and non-work-related activities that aligns with an individual's lifestyle and contributes to overall harmony (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Emotional Intelligence plays a crucial role in mitigating conflicts between work and home life, thereby enhancing work-life balance and promoting job performance (Carmeli, 2003).

Job performance (JP) is defined as the overall expected value of an individual's behaviours within an organisation over a specified period. Tseng and Huang (2011) employed a six-item scale based on Katz and Kahn's conceptual framework of internal and external functional behaviours, which is grounded in Role Behaviour Theory. Internal functional behaviours refer to adherence to workplace norms and operational standards, whereas external functional behaviours pertain to individual self-regulation and autonomy within the organisation (Tseng & Huang, 2011). Job performance depends on an individual's abilities, the assigned roles, and the nature of the job. It demonstrates that problem-solving capabilities stem not only from external motivations but also from an individual's determination and aptitude in handling responsibilities (Motowidlo, 2003). Similarly, Goleman (1998), in his book *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, outlined key components of emotional Intelligence, particularly for those in leadership positions, emphasising its practical application in various workplace scenarios.

A study conducted by Nadeem (2020) in Pakistan's telecommunication sector supports Katz and Kahn's perspective, revealing a strong correlation between employees' emotional Intelligence, job satisfaction, career performance, and workplace engagement.

Leadership behaviour significantly impacts employees' emotions. Research suggests that positive leadership fosters enthusiasm and facilitates effective communication, leading to improved performance. Conversely, negative leadership contributes to anxiety, frustration, and decreased objectivity, which can hinder team achievements (Wisse et al., 2019). In today's workplace, various studies confirm the link between emotional Intelligence and job performance. A study in Jordan by Vratskikh et al. (2016) explored the relationship between emotional Intelligence, job performance, and job satisfaction, including the mediating role of job satisfaction. The findings established a significant correlation among these factors and confirmed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional Intelligence and job performance. The study concluded that emotional Intelligence is a valuable predictor of both job performance and work satisfaction.

Similarly, research by Arar and Öneren (2021) in Turkey supports these conclusions. Their study focused on the concept of happy employees = productive employees and examined the relationship between workplace satisfaction and perceived intellectual performance. The findings demonstrated that workplace satisfaction has a positive effect on perceived intellectual performance, with emotional Intelligence acting as a mediator and work-life balance as a moderator.

Another study by Nanda and Randhawa (2020) explored the relationship between emotional Intelligence, work-life balance, and job performance among female leaders, emphasising its role

in family well-being. Using both theoretical and empirical approaches, their study confirmed a strong link between emotional Intelligence, work-life balance, and job satisfaction—encompassing factors such as job commitment, engagement, and stress management. The study found that female leaders effectively navigate workplace conflicts by utilising emotional Intelligence and work-life balance strategies, highlighting the need for strategically sound approaches to maximise benefits.

The effectiveness of such strategies among female leaders is further supported by Heath (2012). His research found that successfully managing dual roles depends on job satisfaction and fulfilment, as well as access to various training opportunities that help employees meet their professional and personal demands. Heath emphasised that a strong work ethic is a crucial trait among women in leadership and general workforce roles.

A review of existing literature indicates that limited research has been conducted on this topic in Pakistan, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Comprehensive studies are necessary to further explore this subject in regions such as Nowshera, Swabi, Bannu, and Charsadda. This study aims to identify the dominant factors of emotional Intelligence that contribute to work-life balance and enhance job performance in educational institutions in Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Objectives

This research aims to identify the emotional intelligence skills that contribute to work-life balance and motivate employees to perform well in their job fields. The same theme was adopted for this study to see the effect of EI on the W.L.B. and JP of female principals in the Education Sector of District Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The specific aims of this study are:

- To identify the challenges related to EI, WLB, and JP faced by female principals in leadership positions in District Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
- To determine the levels of EI, WLB, and JP in the lives of female principals working in higher-level management roles in District Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
- To explore the correlation between WLB and JP among these female principals.
- To identify the most dominant EI factors responsible for creating a successful WLB of female principals of district Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
- To highlight strategies that these women leaders can adopt to create a balance between work and life while excelling in their professional roles.

Hypotheses

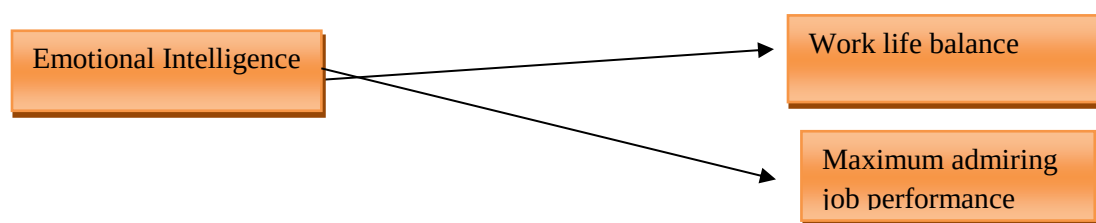
The current research focuses on the following hypotheses;

H1: Emotional Intelligence positively predicts work-life balance.

H2: Emotional Intelligence has a positive impact on job performance.

H3: There is a positive correlation between work-life balance and job performance in employees.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Leadership Roles of Women in Educational Sector

Women's involvement in leadership positions within Pakistan's educational system, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has garnered increased attention recently. Scholars have examined the challenges, opportunities, and contributions of female leaders in this field. A study by Ali and Khan (2021), for example, emphasised the Sociocultural obstacles that women face when attempting to assume leadership roles in the educational system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Similar to this, Ahmed et al. (2022) examined how gender stereotypes impact women's leadership potential and emphasised the need to change policies to promote inclusivity. Building on this, Rehman and Akhtar (2023) examined the tactics employed by female educational leaders to overcome patriarchal restrictions, highlighting their adaptability and tenacity in promoting constructive change.

Although previous studies, such as those by Naz and Malik (2019), Kalsoom and Kamal (2018), Bibi and Kazmi (2015), Haq et al. (2016), Ramdani et al. (2019), Naz et al. (2022), Hussain and Ali (2022), and Rasheed et al. (2023), have explored the relationship between EI, WLB, and JP, there is a noticeable gap in research that simultaneously examines these three variables among female principals, particularly in the context of Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This study aims to fill that gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of these interrelated factors in this specific geographical and cultural context.

Relationship of Emotional Intelligence, Work-Life Balance and Job Performance

In the past, many research studies have been conducted on W.L.B. along with its related parts, although it has gained increasing importance in discussions centred around it, and concurrently, methods to enhance W.L.B. have been explored not only in the business place but also in distinct areas at large. Moreover, there were a few obstacles related to work-family balance, which gave rise to issues associated with individual presentation and E.I., causing manipulation of work-life inequity in business as well (Kumarasamy et al., 2015). In their view, W.L.B. is much more than just calculating different time durations and time patterns for job and non-job moments; thus, it is actually about gaining W.L.B. by reducing associated tasks and non-task disagreements by creating an equilibrium between numerous positions and a variety of works. Consequently, valuable studies on the current subject matter have been successfully met by raising awareness and its effect on rapidly demanding occupational surroundings. According to Mayer & Sakovey (1997), E.I. refers to the potential for recognising and understanding sentiments, reviewing and manufacturing feelings, and scheming sensations to promote expressive and logical growth. A study conducted by Muthu et al. (2015), E.I., work appointment, and business sustainability had an affirmative and noteworthy association with W.L.B. Therefore, a significant statement is that E.I. might influence the way W.L.B. can be retained. Human resources with E.I. may be competent enough to supervise and manage their feelings. Rangreji (2010) found, in his research, that emotional intelligence (E.I.) boosts the actions of both employees and business groups, as it dramatically significantly affects the types of work that workers perform and their interaction with the business. Therefore, how workers sense and articulate their sentiments affects their presentation, thereby facilitating staff members to explain difficulties in both vocational settings and kinship units.

In Sonnentag (2003), research indicates that progress in recital is equally critical, along with the proper character routine, when extra moments are utilised at the workplace and personality is taken into account. In his findings, a little action and the inability to reach an objective may be considered unacceptable and an individual breakdown. Presentation is a necessary, yet not the only,

requirement for proficient development and industry accomplishments in the years to come. In their findings, Van Scott et al. (2000) found that personnel who perform well in organisations get more opportunities for endorsements than those who perform to a lesser degree. Keeping this study in mind, the Personal Entities Task Act will affect W.L.B. There are numerous tools for calculating employees' presentations, outstanding modifications in organisational formation and methods, as well as the advancement of expertise; thus, human beings' occupational obligations are quickly varying these days.

According to Nurjanahand and Indawati (2021), in their research study on women at managerial posts. They both wanted to investigate the effect of EI, worker appointment, and work contentment on WLB as an intervening variable. The data were obtained from 100 employees of Surbayan City using an online questionnaire method, along with PLS-SEM 3.3 analysis tools for data analysis, which supported the hypothesis of this study. The results of the study demonstrated a significant relationship between EI and worker appointment, as well as a finding that EI has a negative relationship with work contentment and does not significantly influence it. The study also supports the notion that WLB can productively intervene in the sway of EI and staff appointment, and effectively arbitrate among EI on work pleasure so that EI can influence employment contentment during WLB. This study was particularly noteworthy because the results were adverse, aligning with the current research. This evidence suggests that culture plays a significant role in the EI, WLB, and JP of any region and its style of living.

Chatterjee and Nandi (2022) conducted a research study to explore the association between E.I. and W.L.B. among workers in the Information Technology division. This study used forty females and sixty-three males to determine the variation between their responses. Data were collected through questionnaires, including a demographic profile, on E.I. and WLB. Analysis was done with regression to determine the variation. Certain aspects of E.I. were taken into consideration, i.e., personality alertness, character instructions, sympathy, and communal ability, to check their relationship and significance with W.L.B. The results of this study showed that emotional intelligence is not dependent on an individual's maturity, masculinity, or title within an institution. E.I. is reliant on a single instructional prerequisite and matrimonial position. Furthermore, the research study showed that E.I. manipulate the W.L.B. of the workers.

According to Nair et al. (2023), a study conducted by them focused on two areas of organisational setup that primarily affect workers' attitudes, which include W.L.B. and E.I. According to this study, these factors are responsible for affecting their work presentation and ultimately lead to amplified output and a flourishing vocation. The study was conducted among Malaysian staff, covering their work contentment level and the level of task contribution from their side. The study's results supported the finding that there is an affirmative relationship between E.I., occupational contribution, work contentment, and W.L.B., which has a positive effect. And L.B. can considerably influence work contentment.

A study conducted by Larry et al. (2020) in Enugu, Nigeria, examined subordinates in the banking sector. It observed the effect of two variables, EI and WLB, on the subordinate's job performance. Different factors were of great importance, especially institutional conduct and work participation. The findings of the study revealed that there was an affirmative association between EI and institutional conduct among Nigerian subordinates of the banking sector. Additionally, a constructive connection existed between WLB and the work participation of subordinates in these banks. The study's results also revealed that subordinates with different emotional dispositions tend to deal with and react in distinct ways; their responses are influenced by their level of emotional intelligence. Many of the sentiments expressed by subordinates included managerial

conduct, work contentment, occupational contribution, managerial commitment, tardiness, and absenteeism.

In this research study, it was suggested that individuals should know their attributes to understand their EI and put at ease the appropriate alterations to their occupational surroundings.

A study conducted by Singh (2016) aimed to determine the influence of EI on managerial pledge, psychosomatic perfection, and WLB as significant factors affecting it. It utilised the structural equation model (SEM) along with regression analysis for the data. The study's results supported that EI has a strong relationship with a managerial pledge during the fractional intervention of mental comfort and happiness. Another discovery of this research was that WLB restrain the relationship between emotional fitness and managerial dedication.

According to Naz. El et al. (2021) conducted a study on the association between EI and WLB among females working at different university ranks in the public sector of KP province, Pakistan. The data were collected randomly from 350 females at six pioneer universities for two variables: EI and WLB. It supported its hypothesis that those females who are good at managerial skills at home maximise their EI efficiently, along with WLB, to their fullest level. A noteworthy connection was found between EI and WLB in females. "It was concluded that high emotional intelligence leads to a high work-life balance." It was stressed that there is a desperate need for agendas and strategies by the government that may smooth the progress of staff's WLB.

Another study conducted by Saddam Rahimand and Malik (2010) supported the views on the current topic. According to the findings of this research, some personal factors, i.e, (Age, Education, Job tenure, Gender and Marital Status), are the most influential factors that affect the EI and OP of employees, whether men or women working in the financial institutions of Islamabad and Peshawar. The results of the study showed that women are more emotionally intelligent than men, and maturity, in particular, has a contrary relationship with EI. Another finding that came into the spotlight is that as intellect and academic achievement increase, so does EI. It was concluded that when job satisfaction is high, subordinates will perform well.

According to Rehman and Roomi (2012), a study conducted in Pakistan highlighted some issues related to female entrepreneurs' experiences with EI and WLB, as well as the strategies they are devising to address them. As more women enter the workforce every day, it becomes increasingly complex for them to balance their personal and professional roles. The findings revealed that owning their own business is their most significant incentive to create WLB, as owning it makes them more organised and autonomous in dealing with their relatives and communal tasks. Time deficiency, masculinity prejudice, and communal and edifying customs, along with children's everyday jobs, are all the main areas where these Muslim females face challenging issues. Premeditated scheduling, systematising and handing over all in an effective way to create WLB and become emotionally stable.

Similarly, Qasim, M., and Khan, M. (2020) conducted a study in Karachi, Hyderabad, and Thatta, Pakistan, at the corporate level. Three variables were of great importance: EI, WLB, and JS. Data for this study were collected from corporate officials, and the results were discussed quantitatively. The main aim was to investigate the effects of WLB and the challenges worker has to face in their everyday life, the task EI play and the approaches the business institutions can make to create WLB. Hence, as the workers are satisfied with their jobs in Karachi, Hyderabad, and Thatta, the few cities in Pakistan. The study's findings revealed a strong and optimistic relationship between EI and JS, regardless of whether there was or wasn't WLB. The outcomes obtained through ANOVA showed different results for males and females regarding EI and WLB. However, the same is true for JS, which indicates that EI and JS are correlated across different genders.

Additionally, different genders correlate EI and JS, and EI and JS correlate with each other. However, there is variation in the responses of EI for WLB. This research presented some suggestions for subordinates to develop and progress in their field by adopting such WLB techniques to excel in the sector and get professional recognition.

All the reviews collected for the current study were an attempt to investigate the views and studies conducted by different authors worldwide, along with some national authors, to discover the answers that need to be addressed by this research study. Since Pakistan has a socially different culture from the rest of the subcontinent, and females are bound to have their domestic responsibilities with their pledge, it is challenging for them to create balance at two levels and excel. This research area presented an excellent opportunity for the researcher to investigate techniques adopted by established recruiters and equip upcoming recruiters to channel their efforts to the maximum level. Very few research studies were conducted on the current topic in KP, Pakistan. This was a turning point that made the research more interesting. As a result, more effort was put into working on the current topic and adopting a methodology suitable for the studied area.

Approaches Used by Women Leaders in Applying Emotional Intelligence Strategies

The researcher investigated the critical question, "Are there differences in emotional intelligence between men and women, particularly when they hold managerial roles?" The research claims that people believe women are often more emotional than men, which can occasionally work against them. However, women are also perceived as possessing more emotional intelligence, a crucial leadership quality, than men (Barbuto & Burbach, 2006; Fischbach et al., 2015). Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge that the notion that women are more emotional or emotionally intelligent is a product of the social construction of gender when researching women leaders and emotions. There are conflicting findings in several studies regarding the emotional intelligence of male and female leaders. While some research has indicated no difference in emotional intelligence between men and women (Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008; Torland, 2011), others have found that women tend to be more emotionally intelligent (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Gipson et al., 2017). However, over the past decade, the growing proportion of women in management roles and shifting dynamics have compelled organisations to acknowledge how certain traits of women, such as emotional control, can contribute to organisational success (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Organisations have begun to recognise women's emotional intelligence and its role in supporting effective leadership. Understanding how women manage their emotions in organisations is crucial, as Wu et al. (2021) point out, since relatively few studies have examined the underlying emotions that women experience at work.

By focusing on women, it is crucial to incorporate gender-specific perspectives before completing the study's objectives. By using this method, the researcher was able to pinpoint the specific WLB abilities and EI qualities of female leaders that had been identified in earlier studies and comprehend how they might improve work performance. The current research examines how Eastern cultural norms impact emotional intelligence (EI) to offer gender-specific insights into female leadership in Charsadda, KP. The results highlight the particular challenges faced by female leaders and are based on comparable research by Khan and Ali (2023) carried out in Peshawar, where cultural similarities to Charsadda are apparent. Because societal norms often prioritise family responsibilities over professional goals, these women must demonstrate reasonable self-control to manage both institutional and familial obligations. People with high EI can adjust to social norms while improving their decision-making, leadership, and interpersonal skills. Effective dual role management requires the use of techniques, including prioritisation, boundary setting,

and delegation. Mindfulness and emotional resilience also help reduce stress and prevent burnout. The study concludes by praising the efforts of Charsadda's female principals in utilising emotional intelligence (EI) to achieve excellent job performance (EJP) and attain work-life balance (WLB) despite social and cultural obstacles.

In a research article titled "Modernisation and Socio-Cultural Shifts in Charsadda: Impacts on Gender Inclusion and Education," published in the *Journal of Regional Studies and Development*, Khan (2023) claims that Charsadda's socio-cultural fabric has been significantly impacted by modernisation. Although cultural acceptance of these changes is still slow, research indicates that increased access to education and skill development programs has enabled women to participate more in leadership and professional roles. In a similar vein, Ali, H. (2023) highlights how modernisation has reshaped Charsadda's traditional societal norms in their study, "Historical Transformation and Modernisation in Charsadda: A Socioeconomic Perspective," published in the *Journal of Cultural and Social Change*. Although issues with cultural opposition persist, the report highlights how advocacy initiatives and supportive policy frameworks have enabled women to become essential contributors in the fields of education, healthcare, and local governance.

Methodology

A quantitative study (a quantitative research study is the way to analyse the data by numerical means) approach was used in the execution of the study. Quantitative variables, including emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and job performance, were examined.

Sample

The sample was selected in three steps:

1. Rule of thumb (to select 10 responses per indicator).
2. Stratified random sampling (to divide the sample into two groups, i.e., public and private).
3. Proportionate sample allocation (to know the accurate sample size of a subset from each stratum).

instruments

The principal instrument used in this study was a questionnaire (composed of three standardised scales developed by different researchers; valid and reliable after testing). The questionnaire consisted of 37 questions and was composed of three sections (different scales for every variable). The study employed a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection, comprising 37 questions divided into three standardised sections to measure Emotional Intelligence (EI), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Job Performance (JP). The Self-Report Measure of Emotional Intelligence (SRMEI), developed by Alam and Kamal (2008), comprises 17 selected questions that focus on emotional self-regulation, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills, tailored to the socio-economic context of Pakistan. The Work-Life Balance Scale by Khurram and Ibrahim (2014) comprised 10 questions addressing WLB strategies relevant to workplace and family dynamics. Additionally, the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) by Koopmans et al. (2013) was used to evaluate task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behaviour, with 10 selected items adapted to the study's objectives. Together, these tools provided a structured framework for analysing EI as the independent variable and WLB and JP as dependent variables.

Procedure

This research utilised the (PLS-SEM) Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling technique to model relationships among the study's research variables and test the concern hypothesis. SEM is a broad statistical tool that covers the methods of regression (which involves recognizing and assessing the connection among a reliant variable and one or more autonomous variables), factor analysis (factor analysis is a helpful instrument for examining unpredictable connections for multifaceted perception such as socioeconomic grades, nutritional models, or emotional magnitude) and correlation (Correlation is a numerical assessment that specifies the degree to which two or more are inconsistent and change mutually). SPSS version 21 was used to generate constants for descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, as well as for inferential statistics. These methods for data analysis were used primarily to gauge the accuracy of the feelings these female leaders express while balancing the two roles. The data analysis tools highlighted the most dominant factors responsible for female principals who plan their work appropriately to create WLB, excel in their field, and reach the top of the hierarchy.

Validity and Reliability

Validity ensures the accuracy of research conclusions, while reliability reflects the consistency of findings. In this study, the researcher employed validated tools, including the Self-Report Measure of Emotional Intelligence (SRMEI), the Work-Life Balance Questionnaire (WLBQ), and the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IW PQ). SRMEI, designed to assess emotional intelligence, showed strong reliability with an alpha coefficient of 0.877. WLBQ, adapted for cultural relevance, demonstrated a positive correlation ($r = 0.984$) with SRMEI, indicating high reliability and validity. Similarly, IW PQ, a globally recognised tool, demonstrated internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.839$ to 0.854) and reliability, making it an effective tool for assessing job performance.

Data Analysis

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of the results obtained from a thorough and detailed data analysis process. A brief description of the formulation of the hypothesis to explain the variances is presented; for this purpose, the demographic variables are discussed:

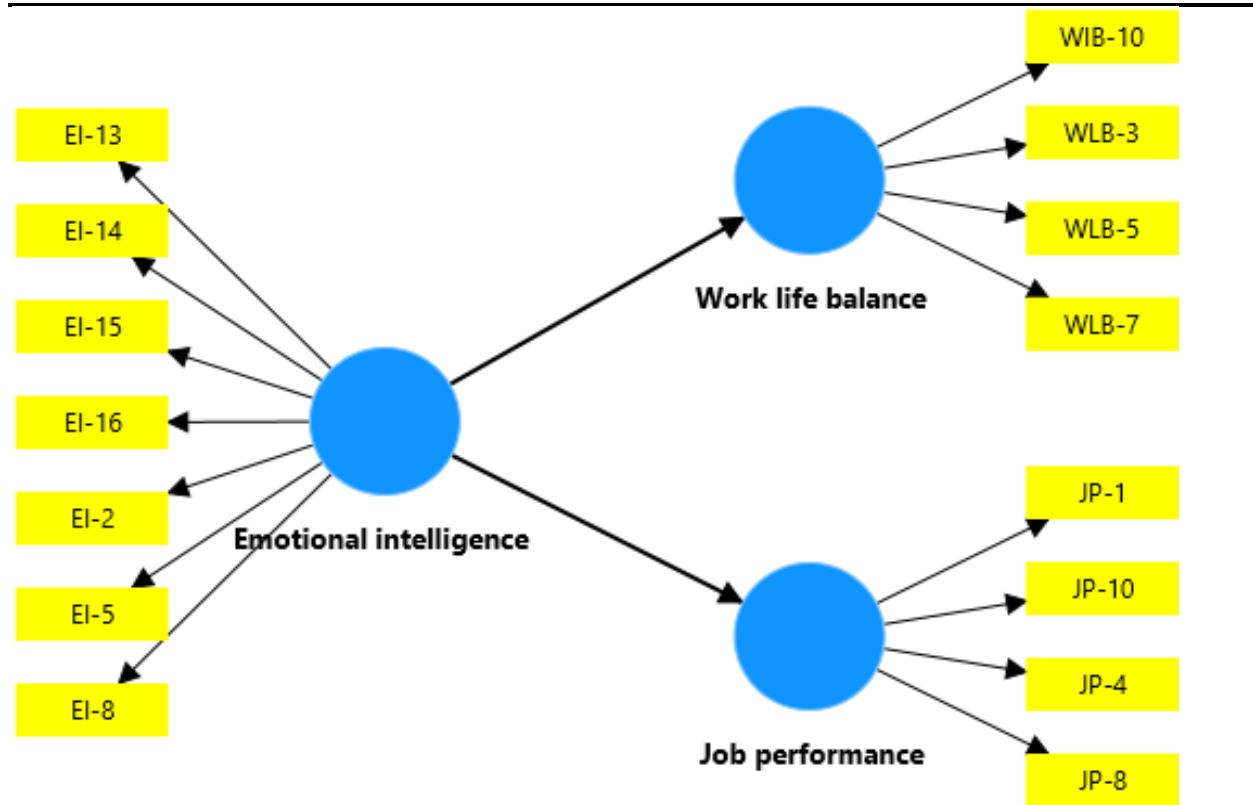
- The study revealed key demographic findings about institutional principals. Most principals were aged 40–44 years, with younger ones (below 40) being more energetic and motivated, while those above 45 showed a reduced level of motivation.
- The majority of principals held master's degrees; however, private sector restrictions on study leave hindered their pursuit of further education.
- Teaching experience data showed that principals with 15–19 years of experience were more common, while those with over four years of experience in the private sector often sought permanent positions in public or private institutions offering better opportunities.
- An equal ratio of private and public institutions was considered, but more data was available from public institutions.
- Most principals had three children, striving to provide them with a quality lifestyle.
- The study also found that a larger proportion of principals were from primary-level institutions, while efforts were made to keep other factors constant to ensure unbiased results.

Analysis of Survey Results

Following the presentation of demographic details, the researcher presents the data collected through the questionnaire in an interpretable format.

As the current research focuses on understanding the relationship between EI, WLB, and JP, to explore the different aspects of this relationship, PLS-SEM was adopted as the analysis method. PLS-SEM was employed as an analysis method to investigate the various aspects of this relationship. To achieve the research objectives, an extensive dataset was collected via a carefully designed questionnaire and rigorously analysed using the PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modelling) method. This technique allows for a detailed examination of the complex relationships within the data. The SEM model is given below.

Figure 2: Graphical presentation of SEM



Measurement Model

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was expertly applied to thoroughly evaluate the measurement models using the advanced capabilities of Smart PLS4. The primary purpose of the CFA was to examine the validity of the proposed measurement constructs. This analysis meticulously assessed the reliability and validity of each item within the multi-dimensional construct. Initially, a comprehensive set of 37 items was included, strategically representing the three key factors. Each item within the construct was rated using a 5-point Likert scale, a strategic approach that facilitated the development of a model capable of addressing the data's inherent complexities. Evaluating the measurement model assesses the robustness of the studied constructs. The evaluation starts with a review of both construct reliability and validity to determine the quality criteria.

Assessment of Reliability

In research, evaluating reliability is crucial for determining the robustness and consistency of questionnaires used. One of the most recognized methods for this purpose is Cronbach's Alpha,

which measures the internal consistency of a construct. Composite reliability has recently become a popular method for assessing construct validity.

According to Daud et al. (2018) and Haji-Othman et al. (2022), both Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability should ideally exceed the threshold of 0.60 to be considered acceptable. These benchmarks serve as critical indicators of the reliability of the instruments used in the research.

The following reliability analysis table presents the computed values for Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. Notably, all computed values exceed the 0.60 threshold, confirming the high reliability of all constructs. This underscores the consistency and dependability of the instruments used.

The table encapsulates the comprehensive findings of the reliability analysis, reinforcing the notion that the research instruments have demonstrated a commendable level of reliability. This validates the scholarly rigour applied to ensuring the integrity and consistency of the data collection process.

Table 1: Construct Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's alpha, Composite reliability)

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)
Emotional intelligence	0.840	0.877	0.878
Job performance	0.773	0.839	0.854
Work life balance	0.735	0.842	0.834

The reliability and validity metrics for your Structural Equation Model (SEM) constructs are robust and indicate good internal consistency and reliability. For Emotional Intelligence, Cronbach's alpha is 0.840, composite reliability (rho_a) is 0.877, and composite reliability (rho_c) is 0.878. These values indicate high internal consistency and reliability for the Emotional Intelligence construct. For Job Performance, Cronbach's alpha is 0.773, composite reliability (rho_a) is 0.839, and composite reliability (rho_c) is 0.854, again showing strong reliability and internal consistency. Similarly, Work-Life Balance has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.735, composite reliability (rho_a) of 0.842, and composite reliability (rho_c) of 0.834, confirming is construct's reliability and internal consistency.

Additionally, the factor loadings for the items associated with each construct generally satisfied the threshold criteria, with most loadings being above 0.5. Specifically, items for emotional intelligence, job performance, and work-life balance exhibited moderate to high loadings, indicating that the items are good indicators of their respective constructs.

Ensuring Validity of Constructs

Construct validity ensures that the concepts studied in research accurately reflect the theoretical ideas they are based on. This involves verifying that the measurements obtained through research tools align with the theories being tested. Validity is demonstrated when test results accurately predict the theorized traits. Two key aspects are examined within construct validity: discriminant and convergent validity. This study has established concept and discriminant validity through analysis, and this section will explore the specifics of convergent and discriminant validity.

Establishing Convergent Validity

The primary focus is on confirming convergent validity among the constructs. This validation process begins with calculating the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) through the factor loadings of each construct. This statistical approach is crucial for confirming convergent validity.

Convergent validity is achieved when each element within the constructs shows significant interconnections with all other constructs. In this study, convergent validity is ensured by verifying that the AVE for each construct is at least 0.50, per the recommendation by Haji-Othman et al. (2022).

Table 2: Average variance extracted (AVE)

	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Emotional intelligence	0.513
Job performance	0.605
Work life balance	0.583

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values provided offer valuable insights into the convergent validity of the constructs in this study. AVE assesses the degree to which a construct's indicators capture more variance than what is attributable to measurement error. In general, all constructs exhibit robust convergent validity. For Emotional Intelligence, the AVE value is 0.513, indicating that its indicators effectively capture a substantial portion of the variance within the construct. Job Performance has an AVE value of 0.605, and Work-Life Balance has an AVE value of 0.583, demonstrating strong convergent validity. These values suggest that the constructs are reliable and valid representations of the underlying concepts in this study.

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is a modern method used to assess discriminant validity, which ensures that constructs that are supposed to be distinct are indeed different. HTMT is particularly useful in structural equation modelling as it compares the correlations between constructs. The HTMT ratio is calculated by dividing the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations (correlations between different constructs) by the monotrait-heteromethod correlations (correlations within the same construct). For discriminant validity to be established, the HTMT value should be below the threshold of 0.85 for conceptually distinct constructs or below 0.90 in more lenient cases. This ensures that the constructs are not too highly correlated, confirming their distinctiveness.

Table 3: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (Htmt)

	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
Job performance <-> Emotional intelligence	0.485
Work-life balance <-> Emotional intelligence	0.341
Work-life balance <-> Job performance	0.450

The HTMT values for all construct pairs are well below the threshold of 0.85, indicating strong discriminant validity. Specifically, the HTMT value of 0.485 between Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence suggests that these constructs are distinct and not overly correlated. Similarly, the HTMT value of 0.341 between Work-Life Balance and Emotional Intelligence and

0.450 between Work-Life Balance and Job Performance further confirm that these constructs are distinct.

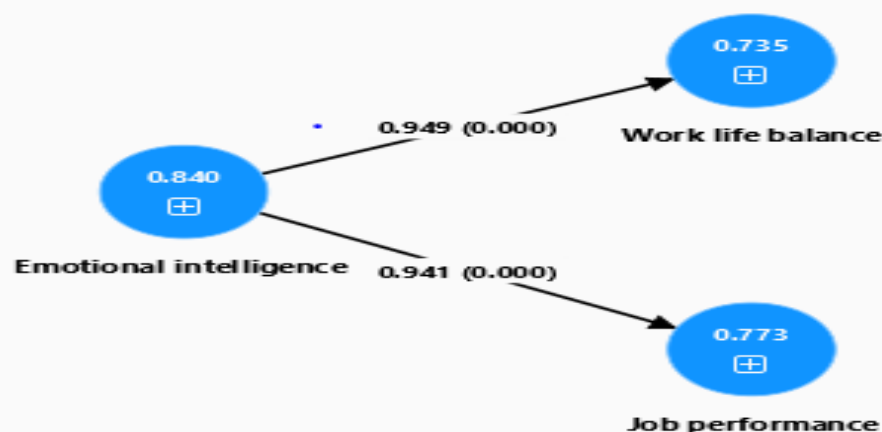
These results imply that the constructs of emotional intelligence, job performance, and work-life balance effectively capture different underlying concepts, providing confidence in the discriminant validity of the model. This supports the conclusion that the constructs are reliable, valid, and distinct, ensuring a robust structural equation model.

Additionally, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all constructs were examined and found to be satisfactory, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in this model. The acceptable VIF values further validate the robustness of the constructs, ensuring that the indicators for Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance, and Work-Life Balance are distinct and not excessively correlated. This comprehensive assessment confirms that this study's constructs are reliable and valid.

Structural Equation Modeling

Commonly referred to as SEM, Structural Equation Modeling is a statistical method widely used in the social sciences. It is employed to identify and evaluate structural relationships between both observable and non-observable variables. SEM is a powerful tool because it combines the advantages of factor analysis and path analysis to determine these associations. Researchers favour SEM because it allows for estimating relationships between latent and measured variables in a single analysis. This method has proven highly effective, and its popularity continues to grow in the social sciences due to its robustness and accuracy in determining structural associations. Consequently, SEM stands as an indispensable tool for researchers seeking a comprehensive understanding of the structural interconnections among variables within their study. A graphical representation of the structural model is provided below.

Figure 3: Structural Model



Structural Model

The structural model is a vital research methodology component, rooted in path coefficients, also known as regression coefficients. These coefficients are fundamental elements that indicate the strength and direction of associations between latent variables. They play a central role in

illustrating the anticipated causal links or direct relationships between these variables. Consequently, the path coefficients within the structural model are crucial in discerning the connections among the diverse latent variables under investigation. The following table provides an overview of these coefficients.

Table 4: Summary of Structure Equation Model

	Beta coefficient	Standard deviation	T-statistics	P-values
Emotional intelligence -> Job performance	0.942	0.006	158.835	0.000
Emotional intelligence -> Work life balance	0.950	0.005	176.521	0.000

The influence of contextual findings on the results can be examined more comprehensively by quickly looking at its outline. This study emphasises the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) in helping female leaders manage their personal and professional lives, which in turn lowers stress, strengthens bonds, and promotes success. In addition to providing a comprehensive framework, this study offers fresh insights and valuable information by examining the relationship between Job Performance (JP), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Emotional Intelligence (EI). It highlights the positive outcomes of this partnership and provides information that can help and motivate future generations of female leaders to navigate their sociocultural and professional challenges successfully. To address the sociocultural and professional challenges that female leaders in Charsadda face, the research presents a novel paradigm that integrates Emotional Intelligence (EI), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Job Performance (JP) techniques. Together with individualised WLB tactics and improved training programs to balance obligations, it provides practical EI applications, including self-awareness and emotion regulation. Furthermore, it enhances productivity and flexibility by redefining leadership in terms of job performance through task anticipation and flexible work arrangements. By addressing these aspects, the study provides a comprehensive framework for empowering female leaders in culturally aware settings and offers practical suggestions to enhance their development and effectiveness.

Summary

A summary of research is a concise outline of the study that provides an overview of its essential points, the methods employed, and the research conclusion. The current study examines the effect of emotional intelligence on work-life balance and job performance of female principals in the education sector, particularly in district Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, to determine the level of EI, WLB and JP within the lives of women principals working at higher-level management. A quantitative approach was employed in this study. The principal instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of a total of 37 questions. With the help of the rule of thumb as a sampling procedure, 304 were from government female institutions and 66 from a private institution, making a total of 370 samples of principals selected through Stratified Random Sampling with Proportionate Allocation Rule. The SEM (Structural Equation Model) technique was used to model relationships among the current study's research variables and test the concern hypothesis. The study's results supported the hypothesis that the Emotional intelligence of female principals positively impacts work-life balance and job performance. The study's findings also supported a positive correlation between work-life balance and an employee's job performance. Now, each of the constants will be summarised for a quick review.

Summary of hypotheses testing

H1: Emotional intelligence positively predicts work-life balance

The relationship between emotional intelligence, an independent variable, and the dependent variable of work-life balance is statistically significant at all levels ($p < 0.000$), indicating that the model is statistically significant at the 0.000 level. In other words, the model accounts for a substantial portion of the variance in work-life balance. The beta coefficient for this relationship is 0.950, indicating a powerful affirmative effect. The standard deviation of the beta coefficient is 0.005, suggesting that the estimation is highly constant. The T-statistic for this relationship is 176.521, which is exceptionally high and indicates a highly significant association. The P-value is 0.000, confirming that the relationship is statistically significant. The significance level (Sig) is 0.000, indicating a substantial predictor of work-life balance.

H2: Emotional intelligence has a positive impact on job performance

Emotional Intelligence, a significant predictor of job performance, was also tested by the model. It was concluded that emotional intelligence has a substantial and positive impact on job performance, as supported by the T-statistic for this relationship, which is 158.835—a remarkably high value that signifies a highly significant relationship. The P-value is 0.000, further confirming that the relationship is statistically significant. In other words, the model accounts for a considerable amount of variance in job performance.

H3: There is a positive correlation between an employee's work-life balance and job performance

The Pearson Correlation coefficient measures both the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables. In this case, with a significance level of $P < 0.05$. $< .000$, we find that the observed correlation between job performance and work-life balance is statistically significant at a .05 level. The significance (2-tailed) value is 0.000, indicating that this correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The high correlation coefficient statistically signifies a strong relationship.

Conclusion

A conclusion is the synthesis of significant viewpoints and findings in any research, presented to the reader. This research aimed to find the relationship between EI, WLB and JP by collecting the data from the 370 school principals and analysing it with the PLS-SEM analysis technique, a quantitative measure. It found a significant relationship between all three variables, which were supported by;

Stepwise Conclusion Aligned with Objectives

Objective 1: To Identify the Challenges Related to EI, WLB, and JP Faced by Female Principals in Leadership Positions in District Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

- The study identified several challenges female principals encounter due to cultural and societal norms, including balancing work responsibilities with family obligations, limited training opportunities, and insufficient organisational support.
- Emotional intelligence (EI) was found to be crucial for managing stress, self-awareness, and exercising self-control, helping these leaders overcome barriers to their work-life balance (WLB) and job performance (JP).

Objective 2: To Determine the Levels of EI, WLB, and JP in the Lives of Female Principals Working in Higher-Level Management Roles in District Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

- The research showed that while female principals demonstrated moderate to high levels of EI, many struggled with WLB due to societal expectations and limited institutional flexibility.
- Job performance levels varied based on the ability to anticipate outcomes, exhibit flexible work routines, and effectively manage tasks under challenging circumstances.

Objective 3: To Explore the Correlation Between WLB and JP Among These Female Principals

- The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between WLB and JP (Pearson Correlation Coefficient = 0.984).
- Female principals who maintained a better work-life balance exhibited higher job performance, highlighting the interconnected nature of these two factors.

Objective 4: To Identify the Most Dominant EI Factors Responsible for Creating a Successful WLB for Female Principals in District Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

- Key EI factors influencing WLB included:
- Meeting people's expectations
- Maintaining self-awareness and emotional control
- Avoiding negative biases and pessimistic viewpoints

These factors stabilised emotional states, enabling better work-life integration and improved job performance.

Objective 5: To Highlight Strategies That These Women Leaders Can Adopt to Create a Balance Between Work and Life While Excelling in Their Professional Roles

- Based on the findings, strategies for achieving WLB included:
- Creating personalised work-life balance programs
- Moderately engaging in family and extracurricular activities.
- Managing elder dependency wisely
- Fostering continuous professional development through targeted training
- These strategies demonstrated significant potential for helping female principals balance their dual responsibilities while excelling in their leadership roles.

Key Insights and Recommendations

- *Significance of EI:* Emotional intelligence was established as a cornerstone for improving both WLB and JP, particularly in the challenging sociocultural context of Pakistan.
- *Role of WLB:* WLB was found to mediate the relationship between EI and JP, indicating that better emotional regulation is associated with enhanced professional performance.
- *Policy Implications:* The study underscores the need for educational institutions to develop policies that promote EI, provide flexible work arrangements, and encourage leadership development programs.

Concluding Remarks

This section provides recommendations for future research on Emotional Intelligence (EI), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Job Performance (JP) among institutional leaders in education, based on the study's findings.

1. *Extensive Research*: Conduct longitudinal studies to analyse trends in EI, WLB, and JP among institutional leaders, helping to identify underlying patterns and potential interventions.
2. *Qualitative Research*: Complement quantitative data with qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, to gain deeper insights into non-verbal aspects of EI, WLB, and JP.
3. *Diverse Sample Representation*: Expand the sample size and include leaders from various industries to enhance the reliability and applicability of the findings across different organisational settings.
4. *Comprehensive Evaluation*: Utilise validated psychometric tools to assess EI, WLB, and JP, taking into account behavioural, emotional, and cognitive aspects for more accurate results.
5. *Intervention-Based Studies*: Develop and test intervention programs aimed at improving EI, supporting WLB, and enhancing JP through structured experimental research.
6. *Cross-Cultural Research*: Investigate the influence of cultural norms and traditions on EI, WLB, and JP among institutional leaders in diverse cultural environments.
7. *Interdisciplinary Collaboration*: Integrate insights from psychology, sociology, and organisational behaviour to enrich understanding and develop holistic perspectives on EI, WLB, and JP.
8. *Practical Implementation*: Translate research findings into actionable strategies, policies, and training programs that enhance EI and WLB while optimising JP among institutional leaders. By following these recommendations, future researchers can contribute to the practical advancement of knowledge in institutional leadership, refining strategies to enhance administrative effectiveness and workplace performance.

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