

Title: Exploring the abilities of emotional intelligence in psychological empowerment: digital leadership as mediator

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Abstract: Numerous studies have been conducted on psychological empowerment's effects on individual and organizational outcomes. This research study investigates the effects of emotional intelligence (EI) on psychological empowerment (PE) directly and indirectly through digital leadership (DL) in higher educational institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan. This study investigates the academic authorities' capacity to follow the EIs in identifying the PE from Pakistan's HEIs. The researchers have applied a survey questionnaire to collect quantitative cross-sectional data. To conclude, the researchers used 427 useable cases to get the results. Based on the structural equation model (SEM), the results reveal a positive and significant effect of EIs, subscales like self-regulation (SR), self-awareness (SA), self-motivation (SM) and social skills (SS), on DL and PE. Besides, DL positively and significantly affects PE. Finally, DL mediates the association of SR, SA, SM and SS with PE. This research can bring a new vision in exploring the policy to the higher authorities for the educational sector to have better direction and interpretation of EIs, DL and PE to develop new measures of positive and proactive attitudes in the organization. The results support developing DL practices toward digital transformation among HIEs. This study contributes significantly by presenting valuable empirical insights for HEIs leaders. Importantly, it introduces a construct mediating the role of DL, effectively addressing the remaining gaps in the literature.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Psychological empowerment, Digital leadership, Education system, Higher educational institutes

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