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The Emotional Intelligence of Project Manager and the Project Success with the Mediation of Appropriate Response to Emotions and Appropriate Affective Display

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Original Article

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Keywords

Emotional Intelligence, Project Success, Appropriate response to emotions, Appropriate affective Display.

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of project managers' emotional intelligence (EI) on project success within the construction sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, with a particular focus on the mediating roles of appropriate response to emotions and appropriate affective display. Emotional intelligence, encompassing the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions, is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in effective project management. Drawing on data collected from project stakeholders across various construction firms, this research employs quantitative methods to examine the direct and indirect effects of EI on project performance outcomes, including time, cost, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction. The findings reveal that higher emotional intelligence in project managers significantly enhances project success, and this relationship is partially mediated by their capacity to respond appropriately to emotional cues and to display affective Behaviours suited to professional contexts. These results underscore the importance of emotional and interpersonal competencies in project leadership, offering practical implications for talent development and project management training in the regional construction industry.

Introduction

In the dynamic and high-pressure environment of the construction industry, especially in rapidly developing urban areas such as Rawalpindi and Islamabad, the role of a project manager extends beyond technical expertise to include interpersonal and emotional competencies. Emotional intelligence (EI), defined as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions effectively (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), has emerged as a crucial factor influencing leadership effectiveness and project performance. In the context of project management, EI enables leaders to navigate

interpersonal challenges, motivate team members, and manage stressors that commonly arise in complex projects (Goleman, 1995). Recent studies suggest that project success is not only determined by adherence to cost, time, and scope but also by the project manager's ability to manage emotional dynamics within the team (Rezvani et al., 2016). Furthermore, the mediating roles of appropriate response to emotions and appropriate affective display—how project managers react to emotional situations and how they express their emotions in a socially acceptable and constructive manner—are gaining attention as key Behavioural mechanisms that link EI to successful outcomes (Clarke, 2010). Despite growing global interest, there is a research gap in understanding these relationships within the localized construction sectors of developing countries like Pakistan. This study aims to bridge that gap by exploring how the emotional intelligence of project managers in the Rawalpindi-Islamabad construction sector influences project success, with a focus on the mediating effects of emotional responsiveness and affective display.

This increasing usage of project-based management system practices increases role of project managers. Researcher have widely discussed the project managers skills and capabilities needed to successfully completion of the project. As everyone is confronted by his or her own emotions and those of other people, various studies have depicted the worth and usage of emotional intelligence (EI) of managers in successful completion of projects (Crawford, 2007; Gehring, 2007; Oke, Aigbavboa, Ngcobo, &Sepuru, 2017; Luong, Sivarajah &Weerakkody, 2019). According to the finding of the studies, managers having high level of emotional intelligence tend to motivate and lead the employee in a better way resulted into project success. Moreover, emotional intelligence relatively a new approach which tends to forecast the project success and outcomes. However, the idea of emotional intelligence and its immediate connection with the success of the project is not greatly examined theme in the context of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The main aim of the study is to check the impact of project managers'emotional intelligence on project success with the mediation of appropriate response to emotions and Appropriate affective display. However, the specific objectives of the study are:

1) Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence is significantly related to Appropriate Response to Emotions of Subordinates

2) Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence is insignificantly related to Appropriate Affective Display to Emotions of Subordinates.

3) The relationship between Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence and Project Manager Effectiveness is mediated by appropriate response to emotions have significant relationship.

4) The relationship between Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence and Project Manager Effectiveness is mediated by appropriate Affective Display have insignificant relationship.

Literature Review

Emotional intelligence (EI)

Salovey and Mayer (1990) were one of the first who work on the emotional intelligence (EI) and defined it as "ability to monitor the feelings and emotions of one self and other and be able to discriminate among them and use them to guide the thinking and actions" (p. 189), emotional intelligence (EI) has been identified as one of the necessary managerial skills ever since this work came out. Studies highlighted how significant influence of manager's iteration has on the other. This influence is particular seen in case of the complex projects (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Clarke, 2010; Muller & Turner, 2010). There has been evidence in the literature on the effectiveness of the

emotional intelligence with the managerial effectiveness (O'Boyle et al., 2011). The literature has highlighted that "effective project management is not only done by the hard skills but there is role of the emotions regulation as well" (Fisher, 2011). Mazur at al. (2014) and Muller & Turner (2007) highlighted the role of the emotional intelligence (EI) of managers in context of the project management and particularly these researches has highlighted that "project's manager's ability to understand and regulate their emotions in oneself and other helps them to achieve high quality results along with effective relationship with different stakeholders".

Self-Awareness as a dimension of emotional intelligence is to understand and value one's own emotions (Siddiq, Baloch, Nadeem, Ahmad, & Jan, 2015). In construction projects, the manger must have self-awareness so that he can easily identify their own emotions and also able to aware of his workers emotions for enhancing performance (Blair et al., 2007). According to (Shahzad et al., 2010) self-awareness deals with the one's feelings and his/her performance on the work so that to identify his strengths and weaknesses. Self-Regulation dimension of emotional intelligence deals with the management of the emotions or governing one's values and emotions. It refers to the capability of keeping emotions under control and not showing the disturbing emotions (Siddiq et al., 2015). Rahim et al., (2002) concluded that in complex nature of projects where normally individuals deal with the stressful circumstances, strong management of emotions and strong self-belief lead them to overcome the stressful situations and find a way out from the problems. The other dimension of emotional intelligence called social awareness refers to being empathetic to others and being able to understand other's emotions (Boyatzis 1982; Siddiq et al., 2015). There is changing nature of individuals working in an association and administrators can just successfully manage them, when they have the competency of sympathy and it can upgrade the execution also. As indicated by (Boyatzis 1982), individual having the expertise of social mindfulness are equipped for perusing circumstance normally and keep away from biases in their work and this recognizes star entertainers to the normal one. As a result of numerous works, EI is considered a critical success factor in different fields like construction projects. engineering, banking law , other sports and in academic fields (Song et al., 2010, Brackett et al., 201l, Landa et al., 2008). In the area of project management, El plays a vital and positive role, as projects are temporary in nature and have definite start and end dates, so project managers need a high level of El skills to cope with the different aspects of the project (Druskat et al., 2006).

Project Success

Project success (PS) in the complex project has always been an issue because of their timeframe of completion and their size (Toor & Ogrunlana, 2010: Wang & Huang, 2006). The studies however defined the project success (PS) in context of the project management and has considered two important components necessary to define the project success which are success criteria and critical success factors (Muller & Jugdev, 2012; Turner & Zolin, 2012). Success factors usually focus on the objectives measures such as cost, quality and the timeframe for completion (Pinto & Slevin, 1987) these objective measures have been criticized when used to define the project success (PS) of the complex projects due to use of overly simplistic constructs for the complex and bigger projects (Toor & Ogrunlana, 2010). Jugdev & Muller (2005) have argued that these objective measures fail to address the other broader factors such as strategic management in project and the Behavioural skills. The commitment, coordination and ability of the project participants support winning project performance (Jha & Lyer, 2007; Doloi et al, 2011). Teams of "low" and "high" performance showed variations in terms of communication, human resource, cost, scope, risk and quality management areas in favor of "high" levels of project success (Papke-Sheilds et al, 2010).

Emotional Intelligence and Appropriate Response to Emotions

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been extensively studied as a multidimensional construct that significantly influences individual and organizational outcomes. One of the key components of EI is the ability to appropriately respond to emotions—both one's own and those of others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). This involves recognizing emotional cues, interpreting emotional expressions accurately, and choosing responses that are contextually suitable and socially constructive (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Goleman (1995) emphasized that the capacity to regulate emotional responses not only affects interpersonal relationships but also enhances leadership performance, particularly in high-stakes environments like project management.

Appropriate response to emotions refers to the skill of reacting in a measured and thoughtful way, especially during emotionally charged situations. This is essential for maintaining team cohesion and mitigating conflict, which are frequent challenges in project-based work environments (Jordan & Troth, 2004). For instance, when project managers respond constructively to a team member's frustration, they can prevent the escalation of conflict and maintain morale, thereby facilitating smoother project execution (Clarke, 2010). Moreover, emotionally intelligent leaders are more adept at recognizing the emotional states of their team members and adjusting their own behaviours accordingly, leading to improved communication and decision-making (Bar-On, 1997).

Empirical evidence supports the positive relationship between EI and the appropriate response to emotions. For example, Wong and Law (2002) found that individuals with high emotional intelligence were better at regulating their own emotions and responding appropriately to others, which in turn fostered stronger interpersonal relationships and group effectiveness. In organizational contexts, this capacity has been linked to lower stress levels, higher job satisfaction, and increased productivity (Côté & Miners, 2006). In the field of project management, particularly in emotionally complex sectors such as construction, the ability to respond appropriately to emotional stimuli can have a direct impact on team dynamics, stakeholder communication, and ultimately, project success (Rezvani, Khosravi, & Ashkanasy, 2018).

Overall, the literature suggests that the appropriate response to emotions is not merely a soft skill but a strategic competency within the broader framework of emotional intelligence. As construction projects often involve tight deadlines, resource constraints, and diverse teams, project managers who exhibit emotionally intelligent Behaviours—especially in how they respond to emotional situations—are more likely to foster positive working environments and achieve successful project outcomes.

Emotional Intelligence and Appropriate Affective Display to Emotions of Subordinates

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has become a foundational element in understanding effective leadership Behaviour, particularly in environments that require high emotional labor such as project management. A crucial dimension of EI is the ability to manage and display emotions appropriately in response to the emotional expressions of others, especially subordinates. Affective display, in this context, refers to the outward expression of emotions that leaders use to communicate empathy, understanding, or control in response to their team members' emotions (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Leaders with high EI are typically more attuned to the emotional states of their subordinates and can tailor their emotional expressions in ways that support morale, trust, and performance (Goleman, 1995).

Appropriate affective display is not merely about mirroring emotions but involves a deliberate and context-sensitive regulation of emotional expressions that are conducive to a healthy work environment (Humphrey, 2002). For example, when a subordinate expresses frustration or anxiety, a project manager's calm, supportive, and composed response can de-escalate tension and reinforce psychological safety. Conversely, misaligned or exaggerated emotional displays—such as reacting

with irritation or indifference—can undermine trust and lead to reduced team cohesion (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Research by George (2000) demonstrated that leaders who express emotions congruent with their team's needs, such as concern during stress or enthusiasm during success, are more likely to enhance team motivation and engagement.

Studies further suggest that appropriate emotional display is particularly impactful in hierarchical relationships, where subordinates look to leaders for emotional cues and Behavioural norms (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005). Emotionally intelligent leaders recognize this dynamic and use their emotional expressions strategically to influence the emotional climate of the team. According to Rafaeli and Sutton (1987), this emotional regulation and expression—often referred to as "emotional labor" in leadership—are essential in service and project-based roles, where interpersonal interactions shape outcomes. This is particularly relevant in the construction sector, where projects often involve stress-inducing constraints and emotionally diverse teams.

Moreover, empirical studies have linked appropriate affective display with improved leader–member exchange (LMX) quality and subordinate satisfaction. Sy, Côté, and Saavedra (2005) found that leaders' emotional expressions significantly affect team members' perceptions of fairness, competence, and support. Similarly, Johnson (2009) emphasized that leaders who manage their emotional displays effectively are more likely to inspire trust and cooperation among their subordinates.

In sum, the literature underscores that the ability to exhibit appropriate affective responses to the emotions of subordinates is a critical element of emotional intelligence. This skill contributes to building emotionally supportive work environments, fostering positive leader–follower relationships, and ultimately enhancing team performance and project success.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Project Success (PS)

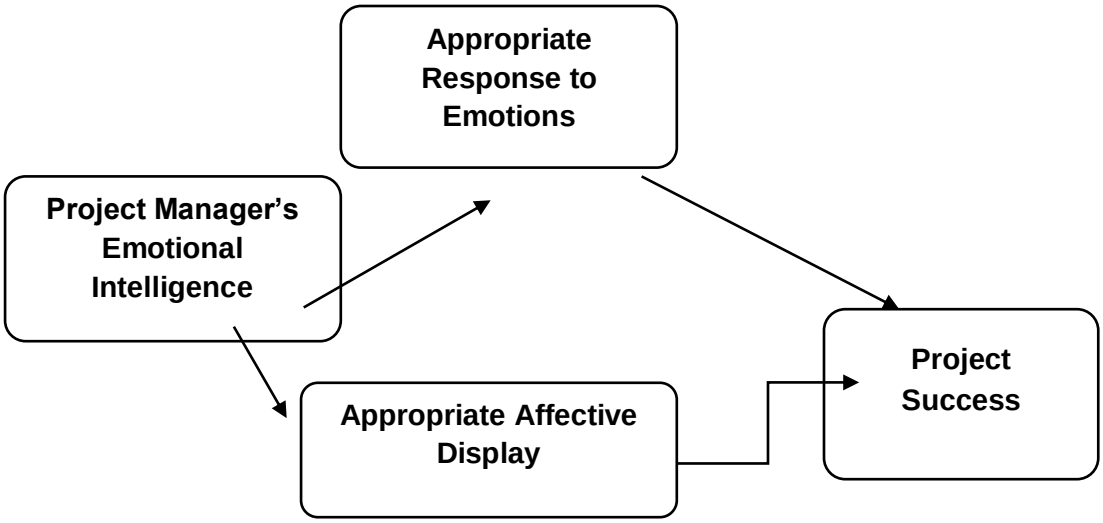
Lidebaum & Jordan (2014) highlighted that emotional experience of people changes with time depending on the work Behaviours and work experiences. However, employee at the working environment having positive emotions can perform better (Mayer et al, 2008; Sy et al, 2006) whereas negative emotions give rise to frustration and decrease in performance (Fisher, 2003; Von Glinow et al, 2004). Project managers with high emotional intelligence have positive impact on the employee in the troubleshooting and providing solutions for the success of the project (Peslak, 2005; Mount, 2006; Clarke, 2010, Mazur et al, 2014; Muller & Turner, 2010). Based on the reviewed literature the following hypotheses are developed for the study and can be seen in the theoretical model of the study (Fig. 1).

H1. Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence is significantly related to Appropriate Response to Emotions of Subordinates

H2. Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence is insignificantly related to Appropriate Affective Display to Emotions of Subordinates.

H3. The relationship between Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence is mediated by appropriate response to emotions have significant relationship.

H4. The relationship between Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence is mediated by appropriate Affective Display have insignificant relationship.



IV's (Independent Variable) Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence

Mediator Appropriate Response to Emotions, Appropriate Affective Display (Manage Subordinate Emotions).

DV: (Dependent Variable) Project Success

Methodology

This casual study is conducted to investigate the role of factors of emotional intelligence in project success. The population of the study is the construction industry of Rawalpindi and Islamabad out of that a sample frame of 150 medium and large construction companies working in Rawalpindi and Islamabad is selected for the study. The data is collected from a sample of 228 project managers that work in those construction companies involved in construction projects is selected. The convenience sampling technique is used, realizing the fact that not all the individuals in the sample would have an equal chance to be chosen. Cross-sectional time horizon was used for the study, conducted only a one-time due to the time constraint and limited resources. Data is collected from the professionals of construction industry using adopted questionnaires (details given in Table 1) for the Emotional intelligence and Project Success with mediation of appropriate response to emotions and appropriate affective display as:

Table 1

Details of the instruments used in the Study

Sr.	Variable	Source	Year	Items
1	Emotional Intelligence	Maulding et al	2012	5
2	Appropriate Response to Emotions	Maulding et al	2012	5
3	Appropriate Affective Display	Maulding et al	2012	7
4	Project Success	Rodolfo et al.,	2018	6

For the analysis of collected data, a mix of statistical methods was employed including rreliability study (Cronbach's Alpha), descriptive statistics, Skewness-Kurtosis, correlation, and regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

Reliability Analysis

Table 2 *Reliability Analysis*

Sr. No	Name of Variable	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence	5	.876
2.	Appropriate Affective Display	5	.912
3.	Appropriate Response to Emotions	8	.845
5	Project Success	6	.802

To ensure the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement instruments used in this study, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each of the key constructs. The Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence was assessed using a five-item scale, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.876, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability. The construct of Appropriate Affective Display, which reflects a project manager's ability to exhibit emotionally suitable Behaviour to influence team dynamics, also consisted of five items and demonstrated excellent reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.912.

The Appropriate Response to Emotions variable, which captures the project manager's ability to respond constructively and empathetically to emotional cues from subordinates, was measured using eight items and achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.845, confirming its strong internal consistency. Lastly, Project Success, which encompasses key performance outcomes such as timely delivery, adherence to budget, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction, was measured through six items and demonstrated acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.802. All reliability values exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, affirming that the scales used in the study are both robust and dependable for subsequent analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
MEI	228	3.2719	.96151	-.252	.161	-.653	.321
MARE	228	3.9489	.88484	-1.492	.161	1.836	.321
MAFD	228	3.0455	.93691	-.494	.161	-.499	.321
MPS	228	3.7639	.73655	-.628	.161	.183	.321
Valid N (listwise)	228						

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to understand the distribution and central tendencies of the key variables measured among respondents from the construction industry in Rawalpindi

and Islamabad. The study surveyed 228 participants, primarily consisting of project managers, site engineers, and supervisory staff actively engaged in construction projects across both cities.

The variable Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence (MEI) had a mean score of 3.27 (SD = 0.96), indicating a moderate level of emotional intelligence among project managers. The distribution showed slight negative skewness (-0.252), suggesting that a small number of respondents rated emotional intelligence relatively higher than the average. The kurtosis value (-0.653) indicates a slightly flatter distribution than normal, implying some variability in emotional intelligence levels across respondents.

The variable Managing Appropriate Response to Emotions (MARE) recorded a higher mean score of 3.95 (SD = 0.88), indicating that project managers in the local construction sector generally perceive themselves as effective in responding appropriately to the emotional expressions of their subordinates. The skewness of -1.492 suggests a significantly left-skewed distribution, meaning most participants rated themselves highly on this dimension. Additionally, the positive kurtosis value (1.836) indicates a more peaked distribution, suggesting responses were clustered closely around the mean.

For Managing Appropriate Affective Display (MAFD), the mean score was 3.05 (SD = 0.94), reflecting a slightly below-average tendency among project managers to display emotionally appropriate Behaviour consistently on-site. The skewness (-0.494) and kurtosis (-0.499) both suggest a relatively mildly skewed and flat distribution, pointing to variation in how emotional displays are managed by different individuals in the construction environment.

Lastly, the Project Success (MPS) variable had a mean score of 3.76 (SD = 0.74), suggesting that overall, project success is perceived to be above average within the sample. The skewness (-0.628) again points to a negatively skewed distribution, indicating that many respondents perceived high levels of success in their projects. A small positive kurtosis (0.183) shows that the distribution is slightly more peaked than normal.

These descriptive results suggest that while project managers in Rawalpindi and Islamabad exhibit a generally competent level of emotional intelligence and are effective in managing emotions and achieving project success, there is some variability—especially in affective display—which could influence the consistency of team management and communication on construction sites.

Correlation

Table # 4: Correlation Analysis

		MEI	MARE	MAED	MPS
(MEI) Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	228			
(MARE) Appropriate Response to Emotions	Pearson Correlation	.176**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008			
	N	228	228		
(MAED) Appropriate Effective Display	Pearson Correlation	-.066	.063	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.318	.347		
	N	228	228	228	
(MPS) Project Success	Pearson Correlation	.108	.459**	.104	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.102	.000	.117	
	N	228	228	228	228

Fo examine the relationships among the key study variables in the context of the construction industry in Rawalpindi Islamabad, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed using responses from 228 participants. These participants primarily included project managers, engineers, and supervisory personnel involved in active construction projects across the Islamabad region.

The correlation between Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence (MEI) and Appropriate Response to Emotions (MARE) was found to be positive and statistically significant ($r = 0.176$, $p = 0.008$). This suggests that emotionally intelligent project managers are somewhat more likely to respond appropriately to the emotional cues and needs of their subordinates. Although the correlation is relatively weak, its significance indicates that even a modest increase in emotional intelligence is associated with an improved capacity to manage emotional responses within teams—a key factor in high-stress construction environments.

Interestingly, MEI and Appropriate Affective Display (MAED) showed a weak negative and non-significant correlation ($r = -0.066$, $p = 0.318$), implying that emotional intelligence alone does not necessarily predict a project manager's ability to model appropriate emotional expressions or affective Behaviour on-site. This might reflect the practical nature of the construction sector in Islamabad, where technical and task-oriented leadership styles may sometimes overshadow emotionally expressive Behaviour.

The correlation between MEI and Project Success (MPS) was positive but non-significant (r = 0.108, p = 0.102), indicating that while emotional intelligence may contribute to project outcomes, it may not be a strong standalone predictor of success in this sector. This highlights the complex and multi-dimensional nature of project success in Islamabad's construction industry, which is often influenced by external factors such as regulatory issues, supply chain disruptions, labor challenges, and stakeholder dynamics.

The most significant finding from the matrix is the strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation between MARE and Project Success (r = 0.459, p < 0.001). This indicates that project managers who effectively respond to emotions are much more likely to lead successful projects. This aligns with real-world observations in Islamabad's construction industry, where the ability to understand and address the emotional climate of work crews can enhance team motivation, reduce conflict, and improve on-site productivity.

Finally, MAED and Project Success also showed a positive but weak and non-significant correlation (r = 0.104, p = 0.117). While modeling appropriate emotional Behaviour may support a healthy work environment, it appears to have a more indirect or less pronounced effect on measurable project outcomes in this specific industrial and regional context.

In summary, within the construction sector of Islamabad, the ability of project managers to respond appropriately to emotional situations (MARE) has the strongest and most direct relationship with project success. Emotional intelligence (MEI) plays a supporting but less dominant role, particularly in influencing emotional responses rather than project outcomes directly. These findings suggest that emotionally responsive leadership, more than emotionally expressive Behaviour, is a key driver of effective project performance in Islamabad's construction industry.

Table # 5 Model Summary
Outcome ~ Appropriate Response to Emotions

	Coeff	se	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant (ARE)	3.4201	2.055	16.6444	.0000	2.8863	3.9539
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	.1616	.0603	2.6819	.0079	.0051	.3182

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence (EI) on their ability to demonstrate an Appropriate Response to Emotions (ARE) within the construction sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The analysis aimed to determine whether higher emotional intelligence among project managers significantly predicts more effective emotional responsiveness towards subordinates and team members.

The regression model yielded a statistically significant result, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.1616, indicating that for every one-unit increase in emotional intelligence, the appropriate response to emotions increases by approximately 0.16 units. The standard error (SE) associated with this estimate was 0.0603, and the t-value of 2.6819 with a p-value of 0.0079 confirms that this relationship is statistically significant at the p < 0.01 level. The 95% confidence interval (CI) for the coefficient ranges from 0.0051 to 0.3182, suggesting that the effect is both meaningful and consistent across the sample.

The constant term (intercept) of 3.4201 represents the expected value of the appropriate response to emotions when emotional intelligence is at zero, although this is more of a statistical artifact than a practical reality. The p-value for the constant is also highly significant (p < 0.0001),

with a confidence interval ranging from 2.8863 to 3.9539, confirming the robustness of the baseline level of ARE.

These findings are particularly relevant for the construction industry in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, where interpersonal dynamics, labor diversity, and site-level stress require project managers to demonstrate both emotional control and responsiveness. The statistically significant positive relationship between EI and ARE suggests that emotionally intelligent project managers are better equipped to recognize, interpret, and respond appropriately to the emotional needs of their teams, ultimately fostering better communication, morale, and team cohesion in complex project environments.

In summary, the regression results support the hypothesis that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in shaping how effectively project managers respond to emotional cues, which is a vital skill in the human-centric, fast-paced nature of the construction sector in these urban center.

Table # 8 Model Summary

Outcome ~ Appropriate Effective Display

	Coeff	se	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant (Appropriate Effective Display)	3.2575	.2205	14.7719	.0000	2.6846	3.8303
Emotional Intelligence (MEI)	-.0648	.0647	-1.0017	.3175	-.2328	.1032

A linear regression analysis was conducted to explore the influence of Project Manager's Emotional Intelligence (MEI) on their Appropriate Affective Display (MAED) within the context of the construction industry in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. This analysis aimed to determine whether emotionally intelligent project managers are more likely to display appropriate emotional expressions in managing subordinates on construction sites.

The results indicate that the regression coefficient (B) for MEI is -0.0648, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0647. The t-value of -1.0017 and a p-value of 0.3175 suggest that the relationship between emotional intelligence and affective display is not statistically significant at conventional levels ($p > 0.05$). Furthermore, the 95% confidence interval for the coefficient ranges from -0.2328 to 0.1032, which includes zero—further confirming the lack of a statistically meaningful effect.

The intercept (constant) value is 3.2575, with a highly significant p-value ($p < 0.0001$) and a 95% confidence interval ranging from 2.6846 to 3.8303. This indicates the average baseline level of appropriate affective display among project managers when emotional intelligence is statistically held at zero—although this is more illustrative than practical.

These findings carry important implications for the construction sector in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, where the environment is often task-driven, fast-paced, and dominated by tangible deliverables rather than emotionally expressive leadership. The non-significant relationship suggests that emotional intelligence alone may not directly influence how project managers express emotions or manage emotional displays on-site. In this industry, project success may rely more on technical expertise, directive leadership, and operational efficiency rather than overt emotional behaviors or affective display.

Moreover, the negative (albeit non-significant) coefficient may hint at a subtle tension between being emotionally intelligent and choosing to suppress or regulate emotional expressions in high-

stakes, hierarchical site settings—where displaying too much emotion may be culturally discouraged or perceived as unprofessional.

In summary, this analysis indicates that within the construction industry of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, emotional intelligence does not significantly predict appropriate affective display, highlighting the need to consider context-specific leadership dynamics and cultural norms when evaluating emotional competencies in project environments.

Table # 7 Model Summary

	Coeff	se	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant (PS)	1.8713	.2224	8.4134	.0000	1.2935	2.4492
Appropriate Response to Emotions (ARE)	-.2994	.1249	-2.3976	.0173	-.6239	.0250
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	-.0147	.0434	-.3390	.7349	-.1276	.0981

To investigate how Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Appropriate Response to Emotions (ARE) influence Project Success (PS), a multiple regression analysis was conducted using data collected from professionals in the construction industry of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The goal was to understand whether project managers who are emotionally intelligent and respond effectively to the emotional needs of their teams are more likely to lead successful construction projects.

The regression model revealed some noteworthy results. The coefficient for Appropriate Response to Emotions (ARE) was -0.2994, with a standard error of 0.1249, a t-value of -2.3976, and a p-value of 0.0173. This indicates a statistically significant negative relationship between ARE and project success at the $p < 0.05$ level. The 95% confidence interval ranges from -0.6239 to -0.0250, confirming the robustness of this negative effect.

This finding may appear counterintuitive at first glance—a higher level of appropriate emotional responsiveness by project managers is associated with lower levels of reported project success. However, in the specific cultural and operational context of the construction industry in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, this result can be explained. Construction projects in this region often operate under tight deadlines, strict budgets, and rigid hierarchies.

In such environments, project managers who spend more time addressing team emotions or prioritizing interpersonal harmony may unintentionally sacrifice task focus, decision-making speed, or authority, which could hinder objective project outcomes like cost, time, and scope performance.

On the other hand, Emotional Intelligence (EI) itself had a very weak and statistically non-significant effect on project success, with a coefficient of -0.0147, standard error of 0.0434, t-value of -0.3390, and p-value of 0.7349. The 95% confidence interval (-0.1276 to 0.0981) spans zero, indicating that emotional intelligence alone does not have a direct predictive effect on project success in this context.

The constant term in the model was 1.8713, with a highly significant p-value ($p < 0.0001$), and a confidence interval of 1.2935 to 2.4492. This reflects the baseline level of project success when both ARE and EI are held at zero, reinforcing the idea that other operational or contextual factors are also contributing to success outcomes.

These findings suggest that in the construction sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, emotional engagement—particularly responsiveness to emotions—does not necessarily translate into higher project performance, and may even be counterproductive when overemphasized in environments that demand decisiveness and operational control. It also supports the notion that technical and managerial competencies, such as planning, risk management, and stakeholder coordination, may play a more decisive role in driving project success in this sector than emotional intelligence factors.

In summary, while Emotional Intelligence remains an important leadership trait, it does not directly influence project success in the construction sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Moreover, being overly responsive to team emotions may detract from project focus, thus negatively impacting performance. These insights emphasize the need for a balanced leadership approach—where emotional intelligence is applied strategically without compromising task execution or managerial authority.

Table # 10 Model Summary

Outcome ~ Project Success

	Coeff	se	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant Project Success (PS)	1.6510	.2611	6.3240	.0000	.9727	2.3292
Appropriate Effective Display (MAED)	.0660	.0439	1.5017	.1346	-.0482	.1801
Emotional Intelligence	-.0025	.0438	-.0579	-.9539	-.1163	.1113

To evaluate the combined effect of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Appropriate Affective Display (MAED) on Project Success (PS), a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using data from 228 professionals working in the construction sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. This model aimed to identify whether emotionally intelligent project managers, and those who appropriately express emotions in workplace interactions, contribute significantly to the success of construction projects.

The analysis revealed that the overall model was not statistically significant, with neither predictor showing a strong influence on project success. The coefficient for Appropriate Affective Display (MAED) was 0.0660, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0439 and a t-value of 1.5017, resulting in a p-value of 0.1346. This suggests a positive but statistically non-significant relationship between affective display and project success. Although managers who display emotions appropriately may be slightly more likely to lead successful projects, this effect is not strong enough to be conclusive in this context.

Similarly, Emotional Intelligence (EI) showed a very weak negative coefficient of -0.0025, with a standard error of 0.0438, a t-value of -0.0579, and a non-significant p-value of 0.9539. The 95% confidence interval for EI ranges from -0.1163 to 0.1113, indicating no meaningful effect on project success. This implies that, in this setting, emotional intelligence does not directly translate into measurable success outcomes for construction projects.

The constant (intercept) value of 1.6510 ($p < 0.0001$) represents the baseline level of project success when both EI and MAED are held at zero. The confidence interval for the intercept (0.9727 to 2.3292) confirms the statistical reliability of the model's baseline.

These findings suggest that neither emotional intelligence nor affective display, on their own, are strong predictors of project success in the construction industry of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. This can be attributed to the practical and results-oriented nature of the construction sector, where success is often driven by technical competencies, scheduling accuracy, cost control, and regulatory compliance rather than interpersonal emotional skills. Moreover, the work environment in this region may place greater value on authoritative leadership and task execution over emotional expressiveness or affective leadership behaviours.

In summary, while emotional intelligence and affective display are valuable soft skills, they do not independently predict project success in this specific industrial and cultural context. Future research may explore whether these variables act as mediators or moderators in combination with other factors like team collaboration, stakeholder engagement, or conflict resolution capabilities.

This study examined the relationship between project managers' emotional intelligence (EI) and project success (PS), with a focus on the mediating roles of appropriate response to emotions (ARE) and appropriate affective display (MAED) in the construction sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The findings reveal a complex and context-dependent dynamic:

- **Emotional intelligence**, on its own, **does not have a significant direct impact** on project success. This suggests that in the construction industry—characterized by time-bound, cost-sensitive, and performance-driven environments—emotional intelligence is not a standalone determinant of success.

- Interestingly, **appropriate response to emotions (ARE)** was found to **mediate the relationship between EI and project success**—but in a **negative direction**. Project managers with higher EI tend to be more responsive to team emotions, but this may **negatively impact project performance**, possibly due to overemphasis on emotional considerations over task execution.

- **Appropriate affective display (MAED)** showed no significant effect on project success and was not influenced by EI in a meaningful way. This indicates that in the construction culture of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, affective behavior may not be perceived as an essential leadership quality.

These findings highlight the cultural and industry-specific nature of leadership behavior and project performance. Emotional and interpersonal skills, though important, may not yield the same impact in high-pressure, task-oriented settings like construction projects in Pakistan.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for project managers, organizations, and policymakers in the construction industry of Rawalpindi and Islamabad:

1. Balance Emotional Intelligence with Task Orientation

Project managers should be trained to use emotional intelligence strategically, applying it when it supports motivation and conflict resolution, but not at the cost of performance metrics like timelines, quality, and cost control.

2. Customized Leadership Development Programs

Emotional intelligence training should be contextualized for the construction sector, focusing on situational judgment—when to engage emotionally and when to adopt a task-focused approach.

3. Awareness of Cultural Norms

Given that emotional expressiveness (MAED) was not valued as strongly, training should respect local cultural expectations around professionalism and emotional control, especially in hierarchical, male-dominated construction environments.

4. Improve People Management without Overindulgence

Encourage project leaders to respond to emotional needs of subordinates, but with clear boundaries to maintain project momentum and authority.

5. Further Research

Future studies should investigate the moderating roles of organizational culture, project size, and team composition in the EI–PS relationship.

A qualitative component could also explore how project managers perceive and apply emotional intelligence on-site, revealing deeper insights.

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