

## Emotional Intelligence: Insights from and for School Leaders

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### ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence can be defined as competencies, skills, and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others, and relate to/with them for coping on a daily personal and professional basis. It has also been increasingly demonstrated that emotional intelligence attributes are essential for innovative, successful, and effective school leadership. This study explored the emotional intelligence of public school leaders in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates, based on five different elements: a) a self-awareness, b) management of emotions, c) motivating oneself, d) empathy, and e) social skills. For this paper, a qualitative research methodology was employed, and semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore Abu Dhabi school leaders' exhibition and utilization of these attributes. Findings substantiated the emotional intelligence attributes exhibited by Abu Dhabi school leaders, as well as challenges that they face applying them to their roles and responsibilities. The paper addresses areas that school leaders need to nurture in order to facilitate school changes.

**Keywords:** Educational challenges; emotional intelligence; school leaders; school transformation