



The Role of Self-Regulation and Emotional Intelligence in Enhancing Problem-Solving Skills among Organizationally Active Students

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Abstract: This study examined the relationship between self-regulation and emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability among students actively involved in organizations. A quantitative correlational design was used with 104 respondents selected through quota sampling at Mua Kudus University. The research instruments were self-regulation, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving scales. Data were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression. The results showed a very significant positive relationship between self-regulation and emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability ($R = 0.743$; $p < 0.01$), with an effective contribution of 55.2%. Self-regulation was positively associated with problem-solving ability ($r = 0.716$; $p < 0.01$) and contributed 51.2%, while emotional intelligence also showed a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.601$; $p < 0.01$) with a 36.2% contribution. These findings indicate that students with stronger self-regulation and emotional intelligence tend to solve organizational problems more effectively. The study suggests that universities should strengthen these capacities through targeted training programs for organizational effectiveness and student development.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan menguji hubungan antara regulasi diri dan kecerdasan emosi dengan kemampuan pemecahan masalah pada mahasiswa yang aktif berorganisasi. Penelitian kuantitatif korelasional ini melibatkan 104 responden yang dipilih melalui quota sampling di Universitas Muria Kudus. Instrumen penelitian terdiri atas skala regulasi diri, kecerdasan emosi, dan kemampuan pemecahan masalah. Data dianalisis menggunakan korelasi product moment Pearson dan regresi berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif yang sangat signifikan antara regulasi diri dan kecerdasan emosi dengan kemampuan pemecahan masalah ($R = 0,743$; $p < 0,01$), dengan kontribusi efektif sebesar 55,2%. Regulasi diri berhubungan positif dengan kemampuan pemecahan masalah ($r = 0,716$; $p < 0,01$) dan memberi kontribusi 51,2%, sedangkan kecerdasan emosi juga menunjukkan hubungan positif yang signifikan ($r = 0,601$; $p < 0,01$) dengan kontribusi 36,2%. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa semakin tinggi regulasi diri dan kecerdasan emosi, semakin baik kemampuan pemecahan masalah mahasiswa. Hasil ini menunjukkan pentingnya pelatihan terarah bagi mahasiswa organisasi dalam menghadapi dinamika organisasi kampus.

A. Introduction

Problem solving skills are among the most essential competencies in contemporary life because individuals constantly encounter situations that require thoughtful judgment, adaptation, and responsible decision-making. Every person faces challenges that demand the ability to identify problems, analyze conditions, and select the most appropriate solution in a changing environment (Jonassen & Hung, 2015). Problem solving is not only relevant in academic settings, but also in social, interpersonal, and organizational contexts where conflict, uncertainty, and competing demands frequently emerge (Wahyuti et al., 2023). In this sense, problem solving reflects a broader capacity to regulate cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses in order to face difficulties constructively (Nezu & D’Zurilla, 2007; Heppner, 2004). Individuals with strong problem-solving skills are usually more effective in managing conflict, adapting under pressure, and reaching functional outcomes in challenging situations (Widyayanti, 2022). Therefore, problem solving should be viewed as a core competence that supports both personal adaptation and collective effectiveness in modern life.

In higher education, the importance of problem solving becomes even more visible because students are expected not only to master academic tasks but also to develop into active, socially responsible individuals. Universities provide opportunities for student development through organizational participation, leadership practice, communication, and teamwork (Naibaho & Sawitri, 2017). Student organizations are intended to become spaces where students can strengthen responsibility, cooperation, and decision-making skills, especially in situations that demand coordination and collective action (Renato et al., 2024). However, the reality is that organizational life often presents conflict, disagreement, and tension that require mature problem-solving ability. Many students still struggle to resolve internal disputes effectively and may remain trapped in prolonged conflict, which weakens organizational functioning (Nuqul, 2018). This condition shows that active participation in organizations does not automatically guarantee strong problem-solving competence; instead, it often exposes students to more complex psychological and social demands that require deeper internal resources.

One of the psychological factors that supports problem solving is self-regulation. Self-regulation refers to the ability to monitor, manage, and control one’s thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in order to achieve goals within a specific context (Zimmerman, 1989). In problem-solving situations, self-regulation helps individuals focus attention, maintain persistence, evaluate alternatives, and avoid impulsive reactions. It also enables students to balance multiple roles, such as academic responsibilities and organizational obligations, without losing direction or emotional stability (Wulansari & Affandi, 2024). Metacognitively, self-regulation allows individuals to observe their own thinking process, assess the adequacy of their actions, and adjust strategies when a solution does not work as expected (Matlin, 1998). This capacity is particularly important for organizationally active students because they are often required to respond quickly yet carefully to dynamic and sometimes conflicting demands.

Another important factor is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others, and to use that emotional information constructively in behavior and decision-making (Jordan & Troth, 2021). In problem-solving contexts, emotional intelligence matters because emotions can either facilitate or hinder judgment, communication, and cooperation. Rakhmat (2002) emphasized that emotion is an inseparable part of human functioning, while Goleman's perspective highlights that self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills are crucial for effective adaptation and interaction. Students with higher emotional intelligence are generally better able to remain calm in conflict, interpret interpersonal dynamics accurately, and respond in ways that support collaborative solutions. Thus, emotional intelligence is not merely a social skill, but a psychological resource that shapes how individuals process problems and make decisions under pressure.

Previous studies have shown that both self-regulation and emotional intelligence are associated with problem-solving ability. Research by Oetari et al (2024) found a relationship between self-regulation and students' problem-solving skills in environmental pollution contexts, indicating that students with stronger self-regulation tend to show better problem-solving performance. Similarly, Johnson & Njoku (2024) reported that emotional intelligence has a positive effect on problem-solving skills among undergraduate students. Other studies also support these findings, showing that self-regulation contributes to problem-solving outcomes in academic learning (Napis & Rahmatulloh, 2021; Lasmanawati, 2021), while emotional intelligence is linked to conflict management and adaptive decision-making (Sridasweni et al., 2017; Sya'dullah, 2022). These findings suggest that both variables are highly relevant in understanding how students handle academic and social demands. Nevertheless, most existing literature has examined these variables separately or in general academic contexts, leaving the organizational setting underexplored.

The research gap in this study lies in the limited empirical attention given to the simultaneous role of self-regulation and emotional intelligence in shaping problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations. Prior studies often focus on one variable at a time, or they investigate problem solving in classroom-based or general student populations without sufficiently considering the unique pressures of student organizational life. This is important because organizational contexts involve greater social complexity, leadership demands, communication challenges, and conflict negotiation than ordinary academic routines. In addition, the available studies do not always integrate the two variables within a single explanatory model, even though self-regulation and emotional intelligence likely work together in influencing how students analyze problems and choose solutions. This gap indicates that a more contextual and integrated investigation is needed to clarify how internal psychological resources contribute to organizational problem solving.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on students who are actively engaged in organizations and in its simultaneous examination of self-regulation and emotional intelligence as predictors of problem-solving ability. Rather than treating these variables as

isolated influences, this study positions them as complementary internal capacities that may jointly support effective problem solving in real organizational settings. This contextual emphasis is important because students involved in organizations frequently encounter practical problems involving coordination, conflict, responsibility distribution, and decision-making, which require not only cognitive skill but also emotional and self-management competence. By concentrating on this group, the study offers more contextualized evidence than previous research and extends the discussion of problem solving beyond general classroom environments. In this way, the study contributes not only to empirical knowledge, but also to a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms that support student performance in organizational life.

Based on the description above, this study is directed to answer the following research questions: is there a significant relationship between self-regulation and problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations?, is there a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations?, and to what extent do self-regulation and emotional intelligence simultaneously contribute to problem-solving ability in organizationally active students?. Accordingly, the major hypothesis of this study is that self-regulation and emotional intelligence are significantly associated with problem-solving ability. The minor hypotheses are formulated as follows: (H1) self-regulation is positively related to problem-solving ability, and (H2) emotional intelligence is positively related to problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations.

The objective of this study is to empirically examine these relationships and to provide a more integrated understanding of how internal psychological factors shape students' capacity to manage and resolve problems within organizational contexts. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to educational psychology by strengthening the conceptual linkage between self-regulation, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving ability, and practically by informing the development of targeted training programs that enhance students' organizational effectiveness and adaptive competencies. At the policy level, the study may also serve as a reference for universities in designing student organization development programs that support self-regulation and emotional intelligence as key capacities for improving problem-solving performance.

B. Method

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the relationship between self-regulation and emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability among students actively involved in organizations. A quantitative method was selected because it enables objective measurement of variables and statistical testing of the proposed hypotheses. The study was conducted at Muria Kudus University, Indonesia. The population of this study consisted of university students who were actively engaged in student organizations. The sampling technique used was quota sampling, which allows participant selection based on predetermined characteristics relevant to the research

objectives (Sugiyono, 2019). A total of 104 students participated as respondents, comprising both male and female students involved in various organizational activities such as the Student Executive Board, Student Associations, and Student Activity Units. These participants were considered appropriate because they experience real organizational dynamics, including conflict, coordination, and decision-making processes.

The instruments used in this study consisted of three psychological scales: self-regulation, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving ability. The problem-solving scale was developed based on the aspects proposed by Anderson (1980), including attitudes and actions in dealing with problems. The self-regulation scale referred to Taylor et al. (2009), which includes working self-concept, self-complexity, self-efficacy, personal control, behavioral avoidance, and self-awareness. Meanwhile, the emotional intelligence scale was developed based on Goleman (2000), encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Each scale consisted of 40 items with a combination of favorable and unfavorable statements measured using a Likert-type format.

Prior to data collection, instrument testing was conducted to ensure validity and reliability. Item validity was assessed using the item-total correlation technique, with a minimum coefficient threshold of 0.30, indicating acceptable validity (Azwar, 2014). Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, where a value above 0.80 is considered satisfactory and values approaching 1 indicate high reliability (Periantalo, 2015). The results showed that all instruments met the required validity and reliability standards, indicating that they were appropriate for data collection. Data collection was conducted using a combination of online and offline methods. Questionnaires were distributed via Google Forms through WhatsApp, and additional data were collected by directly visiting student organization basecamps and providing QR codes for access. This approach was adopted to increase response rates and ensure that participants met the required criteria of being actively involved in organizations.

Data analysis was carried out using SPSS version 26.0 for Windows. Prior to hypothesis testing, assumption tests were conducted, including normality and linearity tests, to ensure that the data met the requirements for parametric analysis. Hypothesis testing was performed using Pearson product-moment correlation to examine bivariate relationships and multiple regression analysis with two predictors to assess the simultaneous contribution of self-regulation and emotional intelligence to problem-solving ability. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.01 level.

Figure 1. Research Flow illustrates the systematic stages of the study from start to finish. The process begins with problem identification, focusing on the importance of problem-solving ability among organizationally active students. It then proceeds to the literature review, which provides the theoretical basis and identifies the research gap. Based on this review, the research objectives, questions, and hypotheses were formulated. The next stage involves selecting the research design, population, and sampling technique, followed by data collection through questionnaires. The study then moves to instrument preparation, validity and reliability testing, and data analysis using SPSS. The final stage is the

interpretation of results and the formulation of conclusions and implications. Overall, the research flow shows that the study was conducted in a structured, logical, and sequential manner to ensure the rigor and credibility of the findings.

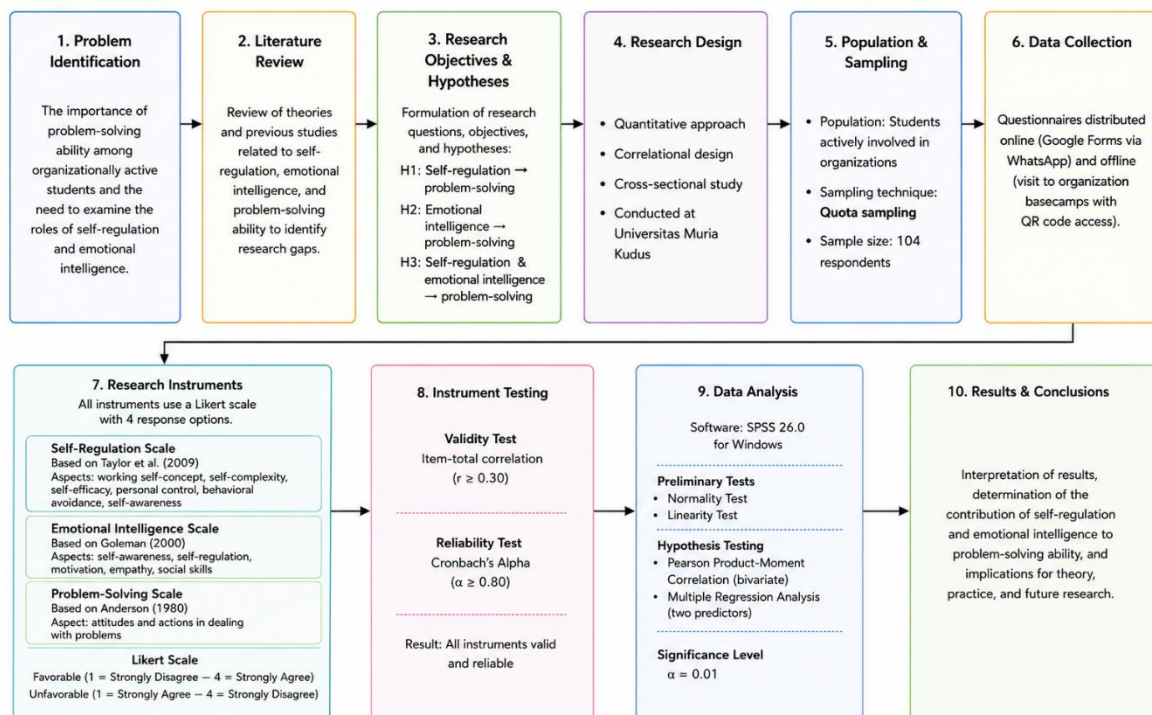


Figure 1. Research Flow

C. Result

This study examined the relationship between self-regulation and emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations. The data were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression analysis with two predictors to determine the strength and significance of the relationships among variables. Prior to hypothesis testing, assumption tests were conducted to ensure that the data met the requirements for parametric analysis.

Table 1. Normality Test Results

No	Variable	K-SZ	P (0.05)	Description
1	Problem solving	0.098	0.072	Normally Distributed
2	Self regulation	0.093	0.172	Normally Distributed
3	Emotional intelligence	0.076	0.200	Normally Distributed

The normality test showed that all variables had significance values above 0.05. The problem-solving variable obtained $p = 0.072$, self-regulation obtained $p = 0.172$, and emotional intelligence obtained $p = 0.200$. These results indicate that the data were normally

distributed, so parametric statistical tests could be applied in the subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 2. Linearity Test Result of Problem Solving with Self Regulation

Variable	F	Sig (p)	Description
Problem Solving and Self Regulation	1.049	0.435	Linear

The linearity test between problem solving and self-regulation produced an F value of 1.049 with $p = 0.435$. Because the significance value was greater than 0.05, the relationship between the two variables was considered linear. This indicates that self-regulation meets the assumption required for correlation and regression analysis.

Table 3. Linearity Test Result of Problem Solving with Emotional Intelligence

Variable	F	Sig (p)	Description
Problem Solving and Emotional Intelligence	0.660	0.888	Linear

The linearity test between problem solving and emotional intelligence showed an F value of 0.660 with $p = 0.888$. Since the significance value was greater than 0.05, the relationship between these two variables was also linear. Thus, the data fulfilled the linearity assumption for further hypothesis testing.

Table 4. Result of the Major Hypothesis Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig (p)
Regression	0.743	0.552	0.540	6.784	44.391	< 0.01

The multiple regression analysis showed that self-regulation and emotional intelligence were significantly related to problem-solving ability, with an R value of 0.743 and an R Square of 0.552. This means that the two predictors jointly explained 55.2% of the variance in problem-solving ability. The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 44.391$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a very strong combined contribution of self-regulation and emotional intelligence to problem-solving ability among organizationally active students.

Table 5. Results of the Minor Hypothesis Test of Self Regulation and Problem Solving

Variable	R	R Squared	Sig (p)
Self Regulation* Problem Solving	0.716	0.512	< 0.01

The correlation between self-regulation and problem-solving ability was positive and significant ($r = 0.716$, $p < 0.001$). The R Squared value of 0.512 indicates that self-regulation contributed 51.2% to problem-solving ability. This suggests that students with higher self-regulation tend to demonstrate better problem-solving skills, especially in

handling organizational demands, managing priorities, and maintaining goal-directed behavior.

Table 6. Minor Hypothesis Results of Emotional Intelligence and Problem Solving

Variable	R	R Squared	Sig (p)
Emotional Intelligence* Problem Solving	0.61	0.362	< 0.01

The correlation between emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability was also positive and significant ($r = 0.601$, $p < 0.001$). The R Squared value of 0.362 shows that emotional intelligence contributed 36.2% to problem-solving ability. This finding indicates that students with stronger emotional intelligence are more likely to respond effectively to conflicts, interpret social cues accurately, and make better decisions in organizational settings.

Overall, the results confirm that self-regulation and emotional intelligence are both important predictors of problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations. Among the two predictors, self-regulation showed the stronger contribution, while emotional intelligence also provided a meaningful and significant explanatory role

D. Discussion

This study was designed to empirically examine the relationship between self-regulation and emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations. The results of the major hypothesis test showed that self-regulation and emotional intelligence were significantly related to problem-solving ability, with an R value of 0.743 and an R Square of 0.552. This indicates that both predictors together explain 55.2% of the variance in problem-solving ability. In practical terms, the finding confirms that students who are better at managing themselves and regulating emotions tend to be more effective in solving organizational problems. This result supports the view that problem solving is not merely a cognitive activity, but a complex process shaped by self-management and emotional adjustment. Factors influencing problem solving are closely related to a person's ability to regulate themselves (Sari, 2025), while emotional intelligence also plays an important role in helping individuals respond adaptively to challenges (Sya'dullah, 2022). In organizational settings, these two capacities become especially relevant because students must deal with teamwork, communication, coordination, and conflict resolution simultaneously.

The first minor hypothesis showed a strong and significant positive relationship between self-regulation and problem-solving ability, with $r = 0.716$ and an explanatory contribution of 51.2%. This means that students with higher self-regulation tend to demonstrate stronger problem-solving skills. Self-regulation allows individuals to set goals, prioritize tasks, control impulses, and evaluate the effectiveness of their actions when facing difficulties. In organizational contexts, these abilities help students remain focused and

systematic even when confronted with pressure or disagreement. Students with strong self-regulation are metacognitively active in planning, organizing, self-managing, self-monitoring, and self-evaluating (Irawan et al., 2023). This finding is consistent with the view that self-regulation functions as a key mechanism in problem-solving processes because it enables individuals to control mental and behavioral processes until a solution is reached (Napis & Rahmatulloh, 2021). The present result is also aligned with prior studies showing that self-regulation is related to problem-solving skills among university students (Olusegun & Matthew, 2022) and students' environmental problem-solving abilities (Oetari et al., 2024). In other words, self-regulation appears to be a particularly strong internal resource for organizationally active students because their daily roles require persistence, discipline, and adaptive thinking.

The second minor hypothesis also showed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability, with $r = 0.601$ and an explanatory contribution of 36.2%. This indicates that students with stronger emotional intelligence are more likely to solve problems effectively. Emotional intelligence supports problem solving because it helps individuals understand their own emotions, interpret others' emotions, and respond appropriately in emotionally demanding situations. In student organizations, this ability is especially important because conflict, disagreement, and interpersonal tension often arise in group decision-making processes. Good mastery of emotional intelligence makes individuals more cooperative, more socially adaptive, and better able to manage conflict constructively (Sridasweni et al., 2017). This result is consistent with the argument that emotional intelligence influences the speed and quality of decision-making and problem resolution (Liyanti & Subhi, 2025). It also supports previous findings showing a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and problem-solving ability among undergraduate students (Johnson & Njoku, 2024; Ismanto & Hurriyati, 2025) and among students working on their thesis (Christabella & Tumanggor, 2025), as well as among students in campus organizations (Nabila, 2025). Thus, emotional intelligence contributes meaningfully to problem solving, although its role in this study appears somewhat lower than self-regulation, likely because organizational problem solving also requires sustained self-management beyond emotional responsiveness alone.

An important point from the present findings is that self-regulation showed a stronger contribution to problem-solving ability than emotional intelligence. This difference suggests that, in the context of organizationally active students, the capacity to regulate one's behavior, attention, and goal-directed actions may be more directly linked to effective problem solving than emotional awareness alone. Such a pattern is reasonable because organizational problems usually require not only emotional control but also discipline, planning, and evaluation of action steps. The combined regression result further shows that although both variables are important, their predictive power overlaps to some extent, which explains why the joint contribution (55.2%) is not simply the sum of the two separate contributions. This means that self-regulation and emotional intelligence likely work together as complementary resources rather than as fully independent forces. Students who

can regulate themselves well may also use emotional intelligence more effectively, and vice versa, creating a more stable foundation for problem-solving performance in real organizational situations.

The present findings also reinforce the relevance of the research gap identified in the introduction. Previous studies often examined self-regulation and emotional intelligence separately, or they focused on general academic samples rather than students who are actively engaged in organizations. By contrast, this study demonstrates that both variables are important simultaneously in a more specific and demanding context. Organizational life creates unique psychological pressures because students must negotiate roles, maintain relationships, and respond to conflict while still managing academic responsibilities. Therefore, the present findings extend earlier studies by showing that internal self-management and emotional competence are both essential for problem solving in organizational settings. This strengthens the argument that student organizations are not merely extracurricular environments, but also developmental spaces where psychological competencies are tested and shaped in real time.

Overall, these findings indicate that problem-solving ability among organizationally active students is strongly supported by internal psychological resources, especially self-regulation and emotional intelligence. The results suggest that students who can control their behavior, maintain focus, and manage emotions are better equipped to face conflicts, make decisions, and resolve problems effectively. This has clear implications for higher education institutions, which may consider developing structured programs to enhance self-regulation and emotional intelligence as part of student organization development. Such programs may help students build stronger adaptive capacities, improve interpersonal cooperation, and contribute more effectively to organizational functioning. In this sense, the study does not only confirm the statistical relationships among the variables, but also highlights their practical significance for student development and organizational effectiveness.

E. Implication

The findings of this study carry several implications for educational psychology and student development. Theoretically, the results strengthen the understanding that problem-solving ability among organizationally active students is shaped not only by cognitive processes but also by internal self-management resources, particularly self-regulation and emotional intelligence. Practically, the study suggests that students who are involved in organizations would benefit from structured efforts to improve goal setting, self-monitoring, emotional awareness, and emotion regulation, since these capacities are closely linked to more effective problem solving in real organizational situations. At the institutional level, universities may use these findings as a basis for designing student development programs, training workshops, or mentoring activities that explicitly cultivate self-regulation and emotional intelligence as core competencies for organizational effectiveness, interpersonal cooperation, and adaptive decision-making. In this way, the

study offers both conceptual and applied value for improving the quality of student participation in campus organizations.

F. Limitation and Suggestion for Further Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the data were collected using self-report questionnaires distributed through Google Forms via WhatsApp, so the researcher could not directly supervise the response process. As a result, there is a possibility that some respondents misunderstood certain items or answered based on personal interpretation, which may have affected the accuracy of the data. In addition, the use of both online and direct distribution through student organization basecamps may have created slight differences in response conditions, potentially influencing the consistency of participants' answers. Second, because the study used a cross-sectional correlational design, the findings can only demonstrate relationships among variables and cannot be used to infer causal effects. Third, the study focused only on students who were actively involved in organizations at one university, so the results may not fully represent all students or other organizational contexts.

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to use longitudinal or experimental designs in order to examine the causal direction of the relationship between self-regulation, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving ability more rigorously. Further studies may also broaden the scope of participants by involving students from different universities, academic levels, or types of organizations so that the findings can be generalized more widely. In addition, future research would benefit from including other relevant psychological variables, such as resilience, social support, or leadership style, to build a more comprehensive model of problem-solving ability in organizational settings. Using more controlled data collection procedures and, if possible, combining self-report data with observational or qualitative approaches may also improve the depth and validity of future findings.

G. Conclusion

This study concludes that self-regulation and emotional intelligence are significantly and positively related to problem-solving ability among students who are actively involved in organizations. The findings indicate that students with stronger self-regulation tend to be more capable of managing attention, controlling impulses, evaluating actions, and maintaining goal-directed behavior, which in turn supports more effective problem solving. In addition, emotional intelligence also contributes meaningfully to problem-solving ability by helping students understand emotions, respond adaptively to interpersonal situations, and handle organizational conflict more effectively. Together, these two internal capacities explain a substantial proportion of the variance in problem-solving ability, showing that organizationally active students rely not only on cognitive skills but also on self-management and emotional competence when confronting real-world problems. Overall,

the study reinforces the view that strengthening self-regulation and emotional intelligence is an important strategy for improving students' problem-solving performance and organizational effectiveness.

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