



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Academic success is influenced by numerous cognitive, emotional, and social factors. While traditional educational systems emphasize intellectual abilities and academic aptitude, recent research highlights the significant role of emotional intelligence in determining educational achievement. Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and effectively utilize emotions in oneself and others. The present study investigates the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance among college students. A descriptive correlational research design was employed involving 250 undergraduate students from various academic disciplines. Data were collected using the Emotional Intelligence Scale and academic performance records. Statistical analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. Students with higher emotional intelligence demonstrated better self-regulation, motivation, interpersonal skills, and academic outcomes. The findings emphasize the importance of integrating emotional intelligence development into educational programs to enhance student success and overall well-being.

KEYWORDS: *Emotional Intelligence, Academic Performance, College Students, Emotional Regulation, Motivation, Higher Education*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a crucial factor in personal and societal development. Academic performance remains one of the primary indicators of educational success and is influenced by intellectual abilities, motivation, learning strategies, social support, and emotional factors. Traditionally, academic achievement has been associated with intelligence quotient (IQ), which measures cognitive abilities such as reasoning, problem-solving,

and memory. However, growing evidence suggests that emotional competencies also play a significant role in educational outcomes.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence gained prominence through the work of Salovey and Mayer (1990), who defined it as the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively. Later, Goleman (1995) popularized the concept and emphasized its importance in personal, academic, and professional success.

College students face numerous academic and social challenges including examinations, assignment deadlines, peer relationships, financial concerns, and career uncertainties. These challenges often generate emotional pressures that can affect academic performance. Students with high emotional intelligence are generally better equipped to manage stress, maintain motivation, and adapt to changing academic demands.

Emotional intelligence consists of several dimensions including self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These competencies facilitate effective communication, conflict resolution, emotional balance, and resilience, all of which contribute positively to learning outcomes.

The present study seeks to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance among college students and identify the emotional competencies most strongly associated with educational success.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Salovey and Mayer (1990) introduced emotional intelligence as a set of abilities involving emotional perception, understanding, and regulation. Their model laid the foundation for subsequent emotional intelligence research.

Goleman (1995) argued that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to personal and professional success beyond cognitive intelligence. He identified self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as core components of emotional intelligence.

Parker et al. (2004) found that emotional intelligence was positively associated with academic achievement among university students. Students with higher emotional intelligence demonstrated better adjustment to academic environments.

Brackett and Mayer (2003) reported that emotionally intelligent students exhibited superior interpersonal relationships and psychological well-being, which indirectly supported academic success.

Schutte et al. (2001) found significant correlations between emotional intelligence and academic performance, suggesting that emotional competencies facilitate effective learning behaviors.

Qualter et al. (2009) demonstrated that emotional intelligence predicts academic achievement even after controlling for cognitive ability. Their findings emphasized the independent contribution of emotional factors to educational outcomes.

Extremera and Fernández-Berrocal (2006) reported that emotional intelligence was associated with lower stress levels, greater life satisfaction, and enhanced academic engagement among students.

Recent studies indicate that emotional intelligence contributes to academic persistence, self-confidence, leadership abilities, and adaptability, making it an important factor in higher education success.

The literature consistently supports the notion that emotional intelligence positively influences academic achievement and overall student development.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

College students encounter numerous academic, social, and emotional challenges that may affect educational achievement. Understanding the role of emotional intelligence in academic performance can help educational institutions develop effective strategies for enhancing student success. Therefore, the present study investigates the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance among college students.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess emotional intelligence levels among college students.
2. To evaluate academic performance among students.
3. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.
4. To identify emotional intelligence dimensions associated with academic success.
5. To compare emotional intelligence across gender groups.
6. To recommend educational interventions for improving emotional intelligence.

5. HYPOTHESES

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

H2: Students with higher emotional intelligence achieve better academic outcomes.

H3: Emotional regulation significantly predicts academic achievement.

H4: Female students demonstrate higher empathy scores than male students.

6. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive correlational research design to examine the association between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

Sample

The sample consisted of 250 undergraduate students selected through stratified random sampling from various colleges and academic disciplines.

Demographic Distribution

| Category | Number |
|-------------------|--------|
| Male Students | 125 |
| Female Students | 125 |
| Arts Students | 80 |
| Science Students | 90 |
| Commerce Students | 80 |

Age Range

18–24 years

Research Instruments

Emotional Intelligence Scale

A standardized Emotional Intelligence Scale was used to assess:

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Social skills

Academic Performance Records

Students' cumulative grade point averages (CGPA) and examination scores were utilized to assess academic achievement.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission was obtained from participating institutions. Students voluntarily completed emotional intelligence questionnaires. Academic performance records were collected with consent and confidentiality was maintained.

Statistical Techniques

The following statistical methods were used:

- Percentage Analysis
- Mean
- Standard Deviation
- Pearson Correlation
- Independent Sample t-test
- Multiple Regression Analysis

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Emotional Intelligence Levels

| EI Level | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| High | 35% |
| Moderate | 50% |
| Low | 15% |

Most students demonstrated moderate emotional intelligence levels.

Table 2: Academic Performance Categories

| Academic Performance | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|
| High Achievement | 32% |
| Moderate Achievement | 54% |
| Low Achievement | 14% |

The majority of participants fell within the moderate achievement category.

Table 3: Correlation Between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance

| Variable | Correlation (r) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| EI and Academic Performance | 0.57 |

The positive correlation indicates a substantial relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

Table 4: Emotional Intelligence Dimensions and Academic Performance

| Dimension | Correlation |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Self-Awareness | 0.49 |
| Self-Regulation | 0.61 |
| Motivation | 0.65 |
| Empathy | 0.38 |
| Social Skills | 0.44 |

Motivation and self-regulation emerged as the strongest predictors of academic performance.

Gender Comparison

Female students scored significantly higher on empathy and interpersonal relationship dimensions, whereas no significant gender differences were observed in overall emotional intelligence.

DISCUSSION

The findings support the hypothesis that emotional intelligence contributes positively to academic performance. Students with higher emotional intelligence demonstrated greater self-discipline, motivation, and adaptability, which facilitated effective learning and academic success.

The strongest relationships were observed between academic achievement and the dimensions of motivation and self-regulation. Students capable of controlling impulses, managing stress, and maintaining focus were more likely to achieve higher academic outcomes.

The positive association between emotional intelligence and educational success can be explained by the ability of emotionally intelligent students to manage examination anxiety, maintain productive study habits, and build supportive social networks.

The results align with previous studies indicating that emotional intelligence serves as an important predictor of educational achievement beyond traditional cognitive abilities.

Educational institutions should therefore recognize emotional development as an essential component of holistic student growth.

8. CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in determining academic performance among college students. The present study found a substantial positive relationship between emotional intelligence and educational achievement.

Students possessing higher levels of self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills demonstrated better academic outcomes. Among these dimensions, motivation and self-regulation emerged as the strongest predictors of success.

The findings suggest that educational institutions should move beyond exclusive emphasis on cognitive development and incorporate emotional intelligence training into academic programs. Such initiatives may contribute to improved academic achievement, psychological well-being, and future professional success.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Colleges should integrate emotional intelligence training into student development programs.
2. Workshops on emotional regulation and stress management should be conducted regularly.
3. Academic counseling services should incorporate emotional intelligence assessment.
4. Educators should promote supportive classroom environments.
5. Student mentoring programs should emphasize emotional skill development.
6. Emotional intelligence should be included in leadership and career development initiatives.
7. Future studies should investigate emotional intelligence across diverse academic disciplines and cultural contexts.

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