

**TRAIT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A PREDICTOR OF
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the predictive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance as depicted by Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) in university students. The study sample comprised of 313 participants (161 males and 152 females), with age range of 19 to 30 years (Mean age = 21.49, Std Deviation = 2.308). Data was collected from different Universities of Karachi-Pakistan. Demographic Information Form and Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Form (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2003) were administered on all participants. CGPA of students were recorded. Data analysis was done by using SPSS (version-18). Linear Regression Analysis reflects the trait emotional intelligence as a significant predictor of academic performance in University students. Implications and pathways for further research are suggested.

Keywords: Trait Emotional Intelligence, Academic Performance, University Students

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INTRODUCTION

"Trait emotional intelligence is a constellation of emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies" (cited in Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The term Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a mental process involved in the identification, use, understanding, and management of self and others' affective states based on problem solving and regulation of behavior (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence capacity is also seen to be highly important to an individual's ability to be effective in a social way (Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, & Boyle, 2006). It is in the application of this ability, to recognize, understand and use emotional information about self and others that leads to an effective or good performance (Boyatzis, 2007).

Most of the researcher focused that there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance. Result indicated that the students who had high level of emotional intelligence persisted and the students who withdrew had low level of emotional intelligence (Parker, Bond, Wood, Eastabrook, & Taylor, 2006). Parker and associates (2004) found that students with better developed emotional intelligence skills were more successful academically and socially.

A study by Song, Huang, Peng, Law, Wang and Chen (2010) examined whether emotional intelligence had high validity over and above traditional intellectual abilities. They proposed that Emotional Intelligence and general mental abilities predict academic performance differently and the level of social interactions among college students. The results indicated that Emotional Intelligence and General Mental Ability both had a unique power to predict academic performance, but General Mental Ability was a good predictor of academic performance as compared to Emotional Intelligence and that's related to the quality of social interactions with peers. Contrarily, Goleman (1995a) was with point of view that the emotional intelligence accounts for 80% of all learning, the rest of 20% he attributed to cognitive abilities.

A research study concluded that high achiever students have significantly higher students on several dimensions of emotional intelligence: intrapersonal abilities, adaptability and stress management, than the low achiever students (Parker, Duffy, Hogan, Wood, & Bond, 2005). Marquez, Martin and Brackett (2006) and Rozell, Pettijohn, and Parker (2002) found significant positive

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relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance. The two domains of emotional intelligence were found to have significant and positive relationship with academic achievement that are self-emotion appraisal and the understanding of emotions (Mohzan, Hassan, & Halil, 2013).

In light of above mentioned researches, it is assumed that a significant relationship exist between emotional intelligence and academic performance. Besides a large set of data available on the topic very little research has been conducted in Pakistan. Present research is thus designed to study the predictive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance in male and female university students in Pakistan. It was hypothesized that Trait Emotional intelligence would predict academic performance in University students.

METHOD

Participants

The participants of the study were 313 university students (161 males and 152 females) selected from different Universities of Karachi with age range of 19 years to 30 years with the mean age of 21.49 years. The participants belonged to middle (33.2%), upper middle (41.2%) and upper (25.6%) socio economic status.

Measures

Demographic information form

Demographic information form comprised of basic information like age, gender, birth order, education, family structure, residential area etc. to assess the relevant demographic information of the participants.

Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue-SF)

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2003) comprises 30 items derived from the 15 subscales of the Adult Trait EI sampling domain (two items per subscale). Responses are given in seven point Likert Scale. High score on the TEIQue-SF reveal higher level of trait emotional intelligence. The TEIQue-SF has an adequate reliability

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and validity, Internal consistency is .85 and test re-test reliability ranged from .50-.82 (Petrides & Furnham, 2006).

Academic Performance

In order to assess academic performance the Cumulative Grade point Average (CGPA) scores of university student were taken.

Procedure

Participants were approached through convenient sampling in different universities in Karachi. They were given assurance about the confidentiality of their provided information and were informed about their right to withdraw from the research any time when they want. Then the nature and process of research were explained to them. Written consent from participants was obtained followed by demographic form to complete information related to participant's name, age, education, etc. along with Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Adolescents Short Form (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2003). Then complete research questionnaires were scored according to the standardized scoring procedure of the scales and statistical analysis of the results were done.

Statistical Analysis:

Statistical analysis of the data was done by using, SPSS, Vol. 18. Simple Linear Regression Analysis was computed to find out the predictive relationship of emotional intelligence and academic performance in male and female university students.

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RESULTS

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Variables	Category	f	%
Gender	Male	161	51.4
	Female	152	48.6
Family status	Joint	98	31.6
	Nuclear	215	68.7
	Middle	104	33.2
Socioeconomic Status	Upper Middle	129	41.2
	Upper	80	25.6
Age		M	SD
		21.49	2.308

Table 2
Summary of Linear Regression Analysis with Emotional Intelligence as predictor of Academic Performance in University Students (N= 313)

Predictor	R	R²	Adjusted R²	F	df	Sig.
Emotional Intelligence	.161	.026	.023	8.318	1, 311	.004

Table 3

Coefficients summary of Linear Regression Analysis with Emotional Intelligence as predictor of Academic Performance in University Students (N=313)

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	2.343	.180		13.005	.000
Emotional Intelligence	.004	.001	.161	2.884	.004

DISCUSSION

Findings suggest emotional intelligence as a predictor of academic performance among university students. Present study results are consistent with previous research done by Nasir and Masrur (2010) they reported emotional intelligence as a considerable predictor of CGPA in university students. Moreover, Holt (2008) also investigated emotional intelligence and GPA of college students and results reflect 14% variance in the GPA. Several past researches are also consistent with present research finding (Holt, 2008; Jaeger & Eagan, 2007; Marquez, Martin & Brackett, 2006; Nelson, Low & Vela, 2004; Parker, Summerfeldt, Hogan & Majeski, 2004). Laborde, Dosseville, and Scelles (2010) asserted that emotional intelligence is a considerable predictor of academic performance.

Emotional intelligence predicts academic performance in University students due to two main reasons. Firstly, students need to work on various tasks such as homework assignments, an adaptation of a variety of teaching methods, academic and non-academic schedule management and working without dependency on others; the number of features of academic tasks like giving exams seemed very stressful for students. Secondly, most of the academic tasks are independent and need to be managed by own (Rode et al., 2007). Emotionally intelligent students have good adaptability in these situations and they do their best to confront these problems instead of avoidance of the problems. They can cope with difficult situations through flexibly adapting to various circumstances.

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These students have the capability to adjust their sentiments, feelings, thoughts and actions to the change of conditions and situations (Bar-On, 1997). Emotionally intelligent students can adjust themselves according to the change of situation by evaluating the circumstances objectively and realistically, and thus they can manage their needs independently. As a result they attain good academic performance. While students who are not emotionally intelligent may have difficulty to adjust themselves with the change of circumstances; due to difficulty in their emotional regulation, feeling, thoughts and actions, ultimately their academic performance is affected.

Emotional Intelligence has a greater role in academic performance because emotional intelligence entails proper appraisal, expression, regulation and understanding of emotions, problem solving ability, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, coping abilities and mood regulation which greatly influence the academic performance. Emotionally intelligent students can manage their emotions properly especially when they experience negative emotions (anger, stress, anxiety and depression) during examination and while making assignments as well as coping with peers' pressure and competition. Their interpersonal and intrapersonal skills can help them to get academic help from their teachers, peers and they can work easily in collaboration. As a result they have an excellent academic performance. According to Maraichelvi and Rajan (2013) interpersonal and intrapersonal awareness have vital role in prediction of academic performance. As good interpersonal and intrapersonal awareness enhance academic performance and vice versa. Other researchers also reported that interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are highly positively correlated with academic performance (Van der Zee, Thijs, & Schakel, 2002; Derksen, Kramer, & Katzko, 2002).

Further, to handle the academic strain students need to be not just emotionally secured but they need to be emotionally intelligent to fulfill the requirements of university life. Emotional intelligence has crucial contributions in academic setting. Such as emotionally intelligent individuals can handle their sentiments effectively and they are emotionally stable, they can maintain their social relationship and address their academic problems properly. With this they can maintain higher level of academic performance. Jaeger and Eagan (2007) asserted that interpersonal, stress management and adaptability scales of Bar-On Emotional Intelligence is positively associated with academic performance. These individual are well adjusted, better in adaptability and able to empathize with others. Empathy helps in maintaining good social relationships. Their

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sociability helps them in resolving academic issues through discussing with each other and their collaborative and teamwork help in completion of multiple academic tasks. They are also flexible in nature, accept change in environment and adjust them accordingly.

Emotional intelligence is closely associated with other kinds of intelligence for instance, cognitive capability and social intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Schutte et al., 1998). Goleman (1995b) assert that cognitive capability assists people to enter in organization, while their emotional intelligence reflects how they are successful in organization. Likewise, academic performance of students after getting admission in universities primarily depends on their level of emotional intelligence. Best performance does not depend upon development and preservation of emotional health only, but it (best performance) is considerably related with maintenance of appropriate relationships with fellows, tutors and significant others also.

It is concluded that trait emotional intelligence is a significant positive predictor of academic performance in male and female university students. The small but significant amount of variance explained by emotional intelligence in academic performance is indicative of role of certain other factors in determining the CGPA of students, among which emotional intelligence may not be among the larger ones, however has a significant role. This study can be helpful to gain insight for the need of development of better emotional capabilities in university students which may bring better education outcome in terms of improved academic achievement. University students are supposed to enter in professional life after completion of their study; emotional intelligence can enhance important life skills related to effective collaborative work, leadership and management that are effective in professional fields. Further, if teachers may have a better understanding of students' emotional intelligence and personality it would be beneficial in creating best classroom atmosphere. Emotional intelligence and personality awareness material can be included in curriculum. Both play an important role in academic performance and well-being.

In present research Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Adolescents Short Form (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2003) is used. This scale assessed the global level of trait emotional intelligence of university students. It did not assess the sub-scale wise score of trait emotional intelligence. Future research can be conducted with longer version of Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Adolescents Form (TEIQue-LF; Petrides & Furnham,

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2003), to explore the predictive relationship of emotional intelligence and academic performance and well-being more precisely by considering 15 subscales of trait emotional intelligence individually.

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