



THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

There are varying reports on the role of emotional intelligence in education. Although research acknowledges that emotional intelligence is required for positive learning outcomes, others argue that emotional intelligence is more relevant in the workplace. An exegesis of these studies shows that relatively few studies discuss the role of emotional intelligence in students' academic performance. Predominant studies focus on the impact of emotional intelligence in workplaces and organisations without robust insights into its role in teaching and learning. Given the importance of emotional intelligence in teaching and learning, investigating its impact on students' academic achievement seems interesting. On these premises, this study decides to use a quantitative research design to explore the influence of emotional intelligence on students' academic performance. Forty-five participants were recruited for the study. Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews. After analysing the collected data, the results indicate a correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance. Other findings were used to summarise the study's objectives.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, education, academic performance, students', workplace

Introduction

It is commonly accepted that one of the key determinants of our success in the workplace is the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) that we present to the outside world through our diplomas, test results, and other credentials. But how well do you manage the obstacles in life? Emotional intelligence is a specific type of intelligence that is needed in this situation (Singh, 2015). The ability to identify, make use of, understand, and regulate feelings and emotional data is known as emotional intelligence (EI) (Frank, 2019). In the modern world, emotional intelligence is very important, especially regarding how it affects the workforce (Strand, 2020). People are the primary focus of businesses; thus, anything that impairs people's cognitive function also impacts the companies they run or own (Vistorte et al., 2024). This is equally evident among students.

Success encompasses the student's determination, motivation, vision, abilities, and performance. Like the quality and quantity of a student's work, it is multidimensional and strongly linked to the human being's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development. At first, psychologists focused only on cognitive constructs, but researchers have recognised that other fundamental non-cognitive aspects of intelligence, such as emotional intelligence, need to be studied (Atamturk et al., 2021).

While studies on emotional intelligence have evolved, this aspect is understudied in some domains. For instance, the meta-analysis and the literature review of recent studies suggest that in Asian countries, the correlation is strong in countries with a well-developed education system, such as Indonesia and China, and weaker in countries in which the school system is still developing, such as Sri Lanka (Vistorte et al., 2024). The results for the Middle East are inconclusive and suggest a more robust correlation when EI is measured against global marks and less so when focusing on specific subjects, such as language and maths (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023). Besides, some authors confirm the need for more studies on emotional intelligence in their systematic literature review (Kotsou et al., 2019).

Considering the above, views at most studies in education may imply that more studies on emotional intelligence focus more on teachers than students (Singh et al., 2020). Some authors posit that analyzing emotional intelligence's influence on teachers' burnout syndrome is an important area of emotional intelligence research to consider (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019; Herrera et al., 2020). These opinions are made as it seems evident from reports and research on emotional intelligence that while discussing this topic students are less considered as compared to teachers regardless of evidence from studies. Given this, a recent study recommended integrating emotional intelligence studies at the primary school level as they are core determinants of students' academic performance and other academic-related variables (Sarpten, 2021).

The significance of the study lies in its potential to provide valuable insights into the relationship between emotional intelligence and students' academic success. Understanding this connection can have several implications for educational institutions, policymakers, educators, and students. As part of the teachers' strategy, the study can inform educators about the importance of integrating emotional intelligence components into teaching strategies. This knowledge can lead to more effective and student-centred instructional approaches. Also, in emotional well-being, a deeper understanding of how emotional intelligence influences academic performance can lead to initiatives that promote students' emotional well-being, creating a positive and supportive learning environment.

The findings of this study are expected to support teachers in designing instructional practices that take students' emotional intelligence into account. Moreover, the results may inform policymakers by providing empirical evidence on the role of emotional intelligence in learning processes and instructional planning.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the nature and consistency of the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

Methodology

Research Design

A quantitative research design was adopted to achieve the study's objective. This design assists in obtaining quantitative data on the issue investigated (Yin, 2014). The quantitative data will assist in ascertaining the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This approach will elicit information from the participants concerning the relationship between emotional intelligence variables and academic performance.

The Target Population and the Sample of the Research

The target population for this study was made up of all international students enrolled in the undergraduate program in business administration in TRNC from October 2023 to January 2024.

The sample of research focused on 153 international students who received the valid questions, Based on the international undergraduate students in Business Administration, a sample size of 153 international undergraduate students was used in this research study. Yamane formula based statistical sampling method was applied to calculate the sample where margin of error is 5 per cent, and the total population is 248. The number of questionnaires that are fully completed by all 153 selected students is 100 percent, it is not stopped in the middle, and it does not have gaps in the data.

Data Collection Tools

A structured questionnaire was the primary tool of the data collection. The study flow was implemented in the time period between October 2023 and January 2024, and the overall number of distributed questionnaires (which each consisted of five pages) was 170; 153 questionnaires were correctly returned, and missing data in the research did not occur.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) Test

The latter, the pyramid of evolution of emotions (PEE), in other words, the Self-Assessment of Emotional Intelligence Test (SAEIT), is composed of 33 items rated on a Likert scale based on rank. Questions 5, 28 and 33 have been reverse coded. The PEE model identifies EI in four dimensions: Managing One's Emotion (ME): 9 items, Managing Others' Emotions (MOE): 8 items, Utilisation of Emotions (UE): 6 items, and Academic Performance Assessment (AP).

Academics were evaluated using the 8 items of the Birchmeier et al., and the scale ranged from 0 (poor performance) to 40 (good performance).

The sample size of 153 students was determined by the use of Yamane's formula for sample size, where the margin of error was 5 per cent of the total number of international students, which was 248. All of them responded to the survey completely, and the obtained data were clean and reliable for analysis.

Data Analysis Process

The gathered data was analysed using Version 22 of IBM SPSS (Statistical Package of the Social Sciences). We employed reliability tests, and correlation analysis. Reliability is a fundamental component of many facets of life; it helps systems operate smoothly, builds trusting relationships, and encourages success in both personal and professional pursuits. To check the reliability of variables, we will use Cronbach's Alpha, a tool that evaluates the internal consistency of our variables. This is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics For EI

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
PE	0.622	10
ME	0.687	9

MOE	0.571	8
UE	0.522	6
AP	0.649	9

Cronbach's alpha is calculated for each variable and reported in Table 4.1. This statistic helps evaluate the reliability of the variables. As such, a variable is reliable when Cronbach's alpha is superior or equal to 0.7. Paying attention to the dimensions of EI, Cronbach's alpha is equal to 0.622 for PE and 0.687 for ME. These values are inferior to the accepted threshold (0.7), but as argued by Itani et al. (2017), a variable is reliable if Cronbach's alpha is superior to 0.6 and it has less than 10 items. This is the case for PE and ME, so we conclude that these variables are reliable.

However, in this case, Cronbach's alpha is inferior or equal to 0.6 for MOE (0.571) and UE (0.522) with items that are 8 and 6. We draw a conclusion that the variable is not reliable, as argued by Itani et al. (2017). Cronbach's alpha of academic performance is 0.649 in item 9; we conclude that this variable is reliable. A statistical measure called correlation indicates how much two variables change together. While it can be useful in determining links and patterns between data, correlation does not indicate causality. Correlation analysis was utilised to investigate the extent of covariation among the variables. In this study, correlation coefficient was employed to evaluate the bivariate relationships between the variables, thereby facilitating the testing of the proposed research hypotheses.

Findings

These findings suggest that an increase in each dimension of EI is associated with a significant increase in AP. Each branch of EI is positively and significantly correlated with the others. This data suggests that an increase in one dimension of EI is associated with a significant increase in the other dimensions. The next is the regression analysis presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Regression Coefficient With EI

	Beta	Standard Error
Constant	10.086**	2.557
Gender	-0.703	0.714
Age	0.512	0.380
EI	0.165**	0.019
R squared	0.367	
F	28.856**	

Note: ** denotes significance at the 5% level

When Table 2 is examined, table shows that EI is positive and significant ($r = 0.165$, $p < 0.01$), which means that when Emotional Intelligence increases, it predicts that Academic Performance will increase significantly and with the coefficient's Pearson being positive, there is a considerable increase in both the proportionate growth in AP and the increase in EI.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Results show a positive and statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance ($r = .165$, $p < .01$). This means that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to do better academically. Although the strength of the correlation is not very strong, the positive Pearson correlation coefficient suggests that improvements in emotional intelligence are linked to better academic results. This finding supports the idea that emotional intelligence is an important, though not the only, factor in academic success. It also reinforces the idea that non-cognitive skills, along with cognitive abilities, influence students' educational outcomes. It is explained in part of the reviewed literature that more recent studies carried out on emotional intelligence have identified emotional intelligence and the family environment as a major factor which affects the quality of friendship and learning between students, especially primary school students (Küçükkaragöz et al., 2020; Gündüz, 2019; Beyoğlu, 2019). Given this, a recent study recommended integrating emotional intelligence studies at the primary school level, as they are essential determinants of students' academic performance and other study-related variables (Sarpten, 2021).

The purpose of this research was to examine the interconnection between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic performance (AP) in the sample of 153 international undergraduate students in TRNC. Judgmental sampling technique was deployed to select students having high probabilities of being exposed to emotional challenges. Analysis of data was performed with the help of SPSS with the application of correlation and multiple linear regression runs.

The results show that there is a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and performance in school. More specifically, all four dimensions of EI involved in the following constructs, i.e. Perception of Emotions, Managing One Emotions, Managing Others Emotions, and Utilization of Emotions, positively related to academic performance:

Perception of Emotions: $r = 0.473$, $p < 0.05$

Acting in Different Ways One Feels Emotionally $r = 0.518$, $p < 0.05$

Knowing how to handle the emotions of other people: $r = 0.537$, $p < 0.05$

Working the Emotions: $r = 0.439$, $p < 0.05$

Response means of EI scores were 111 ($SD = 17.83$), which shows a value that indicates a high level of emotional competence, that is, in all likelihood, required to cope with academic, cultural, and environmental challenges that international students had to face in Australia.

Its regression analysis revealed that the EI is a powerful predictor of academic performance, which is in line with the previous research (e.g., Siegling et al., 2015; Rey et al., 2018; Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The results further prove the claim that university students who are more emotionally intelligent find it easier to cope with stress, develop relationships as well as retain motivation which are critical components to academic achievements.

Additionally, it is important to mention within the literature that the development of EI should be integrated into early education since it influences not only academic performance but social adaptation as well (Küçükkaragöz et al., 2020; Sarpten, 2021).

The results of this investigation suggest that emotional intelligence significantly impacts the academic success of international students. Academic achievement seems to be

forecastable through the four facets of emotional intelligence: emotion perception, self-management, the management of others' emotions, and the utilisation of emotions. This finding highlights the significance of emotional intelligence as a multifaceted construct that contributes to students' academic results.

Beyond emotional intelligence, subsequent investigations should explore additional elements potentially impacting student success, including motivation, satisfaction, and contextual factors. Moreover, the results underscore the necessity of specialised training initiatives for educators, aimed at improving support for students facing emotional challenges. Considering emotional intelligence's established role within education, providing teachers with the competencies to identify and manage students' emotional requirements could potentially improve academic outcomes and promote holistic student welfare.

The study suggests that age, gender, and the four dimensions of emotional intelligence be addressed in testing matters with students as well as researchers on how they impact academic performance, particularly among the international students. Other factors such as motivation, organisational effectiveness, and academic satisfaction should be considered by future researchers. Also, the teachers ought to be trained so that they can handle emotionally negatively influenced students, since emotional intelligence is a very important factor in the success of education.

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