

Exploring The Effects Of Emotional Intelligence On Students' Self-Esteem And Academic Achievement At University Level

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Abstract

Human emotions are a fundamental aspect of who we are. Understanding one's own feelings as well as those of others is possible for individuals with strong emotional intelligence (EI), yet it is not highly valued in Pakistan. Therefore, the researcher investigated the effect of EI on student's self-esteem and academic achievement at the University of Peshawar. The hypotheses tested were: there is no effect of students' emotional intelligence on their self-esteem the University of Peshawar and there is no effect of students' emotional intelligence on their CGPA at the University of Peshawar. The study employed a descriptive quantitative research design. Population comprised all undergraduate students at the University of Peshawar, totaling 10943. From this population, 370 students were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Two standardized data collection tools were used: The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) to assess emotional intelligence, and State Self-esteem Scale to assess self-esteem of the sampled students. Linear regression analysis was applied. The regression analysis indicated a significant effect of students' emotional intelligence on their self-esteem leading to the rejection of first hypothesis. Similarly, regression analysis revealed a significant effect of students' emotional intelligence on their CGPA resulting in the rejection of the second hypothesis. The study recommends that universities focus on students' EI to help them regulate their emotions. Universities may also encourage students to practice positive self-talk and make them aware of setting personal goals that are achievable and meaningful.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, self-esteem, academic achievement.

Introduction

Students pass through various vicissitudes during their academic life, and the indicator that explains their educational career is their performance and/or achievement, which is primarily based on their intelligence and/or intelligence quotient (IQ). Mostly, students' academic performance and/or achievement are attributed to their intelligence; however, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is equally important toward students' academic success. It has been observed that students even at university level are unaware of its importance and do not even count-in its implication on one's personal (refers to self-esteem in the present study) as well as academic

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life. The importance of EI cannot be overlooked and its proper awareness among students; particularly, at university level needs to be further explored.

Emotional Intelligence (EI), for the first time, defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as a part of social intelligence. They refer it the capability to organize and monitor a person own and other's emotions and feelings. They further developed a model in 1997 explaining EI as the ability to perceive and judge emotions; use emotion to facilitate ideas or thoughts; comprehend and reason with emotions; and balance the emotions within self and others.

According to Baron (2006), EI includes emotional and social skills, which affect our comprehension as well as expression about ourselves. For example, how we perceive others and how we make interaction with them; hence, it is the capability to deal with daily life needs and demands. EI is regarded as a mechanism, which helps to understand the emotions for assessing thoughts; manners for placing them in various patterns; and to make emotions and intelligent growth and advancement (Goleman, 1995, as cited in Hasvand&khaledian, 2012). While Katyal and Awasthi (2005) considered it is the ability for creating a positive result and making good relation with oneself and others.

In the local context, Afridi and Arshad (2019); Zohra and Butt (2020) conducted the researches in the field of emotional intelligence on secondary school's students and school teachers, respectively. The current study focuses the important aspect of students' self-esteem in addition to their academic achievement in University of Peshawar. The study would further serve to bridge the gap between students' oblivious state of mind regarding EI and its effects on their self-esteem and academic achievement, which has not previously been studied.

What is the Importance of Emotional Intelligence in University Education?

While developing a prosperous nation, it is necessary to have better human resources; while in future development of the society, the role of university graduates cannot be ignored (Fakharuddin&Tharbe, 2018).

EI plays an important role for university students but could be a cause of instability and low sense of self-worth if not managed properly. It is not sufficient to be smart and hardworking, but for getting success, students must be able to understand and manage their emotions (MacCan et al., 2020). The incorporation of an emphasis on EI into colleges and universities has the potential to yield numerous individual, communal, and community advantages (Cohen, 1999; Goleman, 1995; Topping et al., 2000, as cited in Vandervoort, 2006). Today's universities system and workplace environment place equal emphasis on personality traits like self-awareness and emotional regulation as they do on analytical thinking (Goleman, 1995, as cited in Kant, 2019). Emotionally knowledgeable people also tend to have a deeper understanding of themselves, which can help them make better decisions about their professional lives (Gelso & Fretz, 2001, as cited in Vandervoort, 2006).

Students who are emotionally intelligent have better intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and are more adaptive to the environments as well as better in managing stress, also able to overcome their academic stress and pressure. Through high EI, students can deal with negative emotions that might obstruct their learning and can lead to better mental, social and physical health and could achieve better academic result (Mohzan et al., 2013; Vandervoort, 2006;).

Goleman (1998) argued that emotional intelligence was the "best indicator for achievements in life" because of its impact on professional achievement, personal growth, and interpersonal connections. Also, Goleman (1997) found that pupils who worked on their emotional intelligence (EI) were more likely to be ambitious and actively search out new tasks.

According to Merkwowitz and Earnest (2006) EI aids in achievement prediction because it represents how an individual uses information in the here and now. According to Snyder and Lopez (2002) EI is a predictor of achievement in professional settings, family dynamics, and interpersonal connections. Likewise, Pandey (2005) recognizes the importance of EI for its role in stress management and emotional regulation.

How Emotional Intelligence is Associated with Self-Esteem?

In modern world, EI is common denominator for achievement and possesses high importance in aspect of life (Carneli& Josman, 2006). Sulaiman (2013) has found that overall success involves intellectual and emotional intelligence. Yost and Tucker (2000) linked emotional intelligence with a decreased rate of depression, improved self-esteem and mental health functioning and also responsible for good teamwork capabilities. They also linked high self-esteem and positive mood with EI as self-esteem is responsible for happiness, interpersonal harmony, academic, and employment success (Schutte et al., 2002).

EI is strongly associated with greater amounts of self-esteem and an optimistic outlook in people, as well as other psychological factors (Schutte et al., 2002). According to the Malaysia Youth Index 2015, a group of notable individuals will be produced if EI and self-esteem figure into the primary categories and indicators of significant self-improvement, both of these variables also assist the nation in raising young people who are cognitively, bodily, and emotionally strong and capable of overcoming obstacles in the future. Self-esteem has immediately benefited from emotional intelligence (Ciarrochi et al., 2001; Schutte et al., 2002). It's also possible that EI helps boost confidence because talent and smarts inspire pride in one's own abilities (Gonzalez-Pienda& Nunez, 2002; Owens, 1992). One's sense of self-worth can be thought of as a kind of internal evaluation (Rosenberg, 1981). At this point, the benefits of emotional intelligence in assessing and making use of one's emotions are most likely to become apparent. Having a high level of positive emotional intelligence is thought to be a reliable indicator of successful psychological transition and a healthy sense of self-worth, while having a low level of emotional intelligence is strongly linked to feelings of sadness and other depressive symptoms and to detrimental (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

One of the field's forefathers, Rosenberg (1965), defined self-esteem as an individual's subjective sense of approval of him or herself. In addition, he said that having good self-esteem means that you value and honor yourself. Self-esteem, as defined by Sedikides and Gress (2003) is an individual's psychological evaluation of his or her own value, regard, and trust in himself or herself, as well as the degree to which he or she holds favorable or negative opinions about oneself.

The correlation between EI and self-esteem has shown conflicting findings in the literature. Many studies have shown that people vary greatly in their emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 2008). Studies like these examine a person's mental capacities in order to predict their state of mind, physical health, and societal success (Heck & Oudsten, 2008). Researches have shown that EI and self-esteem are causally related (Bibi et al., 2016; Hasanvand&Khaledian, 2012; Country, 2005).

Nnabuike et al. (2018) in their study of doctoral students, found that EI positively correlates with self-esteem, global EI, emotion awareness, and emotion regulation. Although, some researches have found a favorable correlation between EI and self-esteem in college students (Bibi et al., 2016; Country, 2005; Shamsaei et al., 2017). While one research has found no correlation at all (Jennabadi, 2014).

How Emotional Intelligence can Effect Students' Academic Achievement?

Academic achievement is one of the concerns of university academics, authorities and parents of students. Many studies reveal that academic achievement and failure both have an intense effect on individual's destiny. That's why academic achievement or academic failure is based on some personal elements including methodology, intelligence, motivation, physical elements, purposes, compatibility, behavior and emotional or mental conditions. While emotional intelligence, mental and emotional conditions also contribute to the academic achievement or failure (Chyane et al., 2010, as cited in Hasanvand&khaledian, 2012).

Goleman (1997) found that pupils who worked on their EI were more likely to be intrinsically driven and actively search out difficulties. Different studies indicate that several higher instructional organizations relying academic achievement mostly on GPA and standardized evaluations but for overall success both emotional and mental processing skills is significant. Universities could increase retention rates across the board by gaining a deeper insight into the connection between EI and achievement in enrollment choices and initiatives to boost learner's success. According to Goleman (1995) EI is the driving force behind a person's achievement in virtually every area of life. Positively thinking students are capable of maintaining their focus for extended periods of time and achieving scholastic success without any trouble; they also have a strong sense of self-motivation and psychological characteristics.

The EI is crucial to entire life satisfaction as well as for academic success. The standardized measuring of intelligence and intelligent quotient is responsible for only 20% in success while the rest is determined by emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998 as cited in Hassan et al., 2009)

Statement of the Problem

As the emotions of human are so fascinating still it is an essential aspect of human nature. People blessed with high of EI are capable to understand their own as well as the emotions of others, but in Pakistan, it is not considered worthwhile. It is observed that most of the teacher as well as students don't value EI in teaching learning process. It is because our curriculum promotes students' cognitive intelligence than EI. That's the reason that Pakistani teachers as well as students never get a chance to be benefited with any of the workshops or seminars based on EI at university level.

In fact, our students are expected to have excellent academic performance, but they are emotionally weak; while this psychological trait is very essential in the academic environment as it directly affects the students and their learning outcomes. Through EI, the students can solve different problem of their academic and personal life; apart from the educational importance of EI, it is also considered to be vital in our social life. That is why the study of EI needs to be widened for teachers, parents and other stakeholders who are involved in students learning and development directly or indirectly. The aforementioned reasons compel the researcher to conduct a study at University of Peshawar exploring the questions: Are the students aware of their EI? Do students understand how to assess their EI? Do students have any solution for dealing with their EI issues? Consequently, this study investigates effects of EI on self-esteem and students' academic achievement.

Hypotheses of the Study

- H₀₁ There is no effect of students' emotional intelligence on their self-esteem at the University of Peshawar
- H₀₂ There is no effect of students' emotional intelligence on their C/GPA at the University of Peshawar

Significance of the Study

The study help both theoretically and empirically to contribute to the existing knowledge. From the theoretical point of view the study attempts to showcase the importance of emotional intelligence on the students' self-esteem, and their academic achievement in the available literature. From an empirical perspective, it is an attempt to investigate the students' level of EI and its effect on students' self-esteem and academic achievement in university of Peshawar. The study provides a foundation for the students and researchers to know more about the EI and how one knows about it and its implications in their personal, academic, and professional lives.

Research Design

The purpose of quantitative research design is to determine the number of individuals who think, act, or feel a certain way. Large sample sizes are used in quantitative research, which focus on the volume of replies. Therefore, the current study adopted descriptive quantitative research design.

Population of the Study

The population is the entire set of individual, Institution or object having one or more characteristics in common and unit of interest to which finding of the research are to be inferred (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013). The population of the study comprises all the undergraduate students at university of Peshawar. There are 6 faculties, including 40 teaching departments, which offer BS program. Total number of students at undergraduate level is 10943 (University of Peshawar, 2021-22).

Sample of the Study

Sample is defined as a group of items selected from a larger population based on predetermined criteria (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). The sample for the current study is drawn using stratified random sampling technique and by allocating proportionate sampling to all the six faculties by using the formulae:

$$n_i = \frac{n \times N_i}{N}$$

The students are selected from the mid of the running academic programs (2nd and 3rd years) in order to share the results with them for their personal development and improvement. The sample size comprises 370 by following sampling calculator proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

Table 1: Sample size of the current study

S.No	Name of faculties	Total population in each faculty	Selected sample size proportionately (50% gender wise)
1	Islamic and Oriental Studies	353	12
2	Arts and Humanities	794	26
3	Life and Environmental Sciences	3144	106
4	Management and Information Sciences	1371	46
5	Social Sciences	3847	130
6	Numerical and Physical Sciences	1489	50
	Total	10943	370

Tools of Data Collection

EI of the students was measured through adapted “Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)” a 33-item self-report 5-point Likert’s Scale developed by Schutte et al. (2009). In order to measure and assess the self-esteem, an open access instrument “State Self-esteem Scale” proposed by Heatherton and Polivy (1991) was used. The instrument comprises 20-items 5-point scale measuring participant’s self-esteem at a given point and positive or negative feelings about self-worth.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire for this study comprises two scales. The first scale is Schutte self-report emotional intelligence scale for which researcher sought permission from Nicola Schutte while the other state self-esteem scale is an online open access scale, researcher used these two standardized tools for study. After completing the questionnaire phase, researcher started collecting data. For that purpose, researcher personally visited selected departments. The researcher sought permission from each department head and physically distributed questionnaire among various semester students and remained with the respondents until they had filled the questionnaire and to remove any ambiguity arise in filling the questionnaire. Most of the data were collected on the spot from respondents. Respondents, who could not fill the questionnaire on the spot, returned filled questionnaire on next day.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data and to extract results, linear regression was applied for measuring that how it's affecting the emotional intelligence of students' self-esteem and academic achievement in order to test the hypotheses. Besides, Norms/ Scoring proposed by Schutte (2009). Heatherton and Polivy (1991) was used to interpret the data received from adapted questionnaire/scale.

Regression Analysis

Table 2: Emotional Intelligence and Self Esteem

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.205 ^a	.042	.039	9.59392

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	29.604	3.487		8.491	.000
SMean	4.017	1.000	.205	4.018	.000

The above table shows the regression analysis for testing hypothesis and the effect of emotional intelligence on students' self-esteem measured at .05. The table shows significant value **.000** indicating significantly strong effect on students' emotional intelligence on their self-esteem at university of Peshawar, with R=0.205, and t=4.018. Thus, it is concluded that the null hypothesis, "There is no effect of student emotional intelligence on their self-esteem at University of Peshawar" is hereby **rejected**.

Table 3: Emotional Intelligence and Students' CGPA

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.195 ^a	.038	.035	.35564

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.195 ^a	.038	.035	.35564		
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	2.850	.129		22.052	.000	
S Mean	.141	.037	.195	3.804	.000	

The above table shows the regression analysis for testing hypothesis and the effect of emotional intelligence on students' C/GPA measured at .05. The table shows significant value **.000** indicating significantly strong effect on students' emotional intelligence on their C/GPA at university of Peshawar, with $R=.195$ and $t=3.804$. Thus, it is concluded that the null hypothesis, "there is no effect of student emotional intelligence on their CGPA at University of Peshawar" is hereby **rejected**.

Findings

1. A significant number of 284 students fall on the higher side of emotional intelligence level; while 11 students had high self-esteem; whereas 273 students had low self-esteem.
2. The 284 students with high emotional intelligence level while 84 students had Grade "A", 165 students had Grade "B", 26 students had Grade "C", and 9 students had Grade "D" in terms of CGPA.
3. A small number of 7 students were at the border between high and low emotional intelligence level while 7 students had low self-esteem.
4. The 7 students who were at the border between high and low emotional intelligence level while 2 students had Grade "A", 5 students had Grade "B" in term of CGPA.
5. A considerable number of 79 students had low emotional intelligence level while 2 students had high self-esteem whereas 77 students had low self-esteem.
6. A considerable number of 79 students had low emotional intelligence level while 10 students had Grade "A", 57 students had Grade "B", 9 students had Grade "C", and 3 students had Grade "D" in terms of CGPA.

Conclusions

The study concluded the importance of students EI and their overall self-esteem and academic achievement. It was concluded from the result that the students might were unaware of self-esteem and EI however they were briefed about the terms and detail during data collection process. It was further concluded that most of the teacher as well as students don't value EI in teaching learning process and the students also don't know about emotional intelligence. It is because our curriculum promotes students' cognitive intelligence than EI. That's the reason that Pakistani teachers as well as students never get a chance to be benefited with any of the workshops or seminars based on EI at university level. In fact, our students are expected to have excellent academic performance. Moreover, in term of affecting self-esteem and academic achievement of university students, it was concluded that emotional intelligence affected students' self-esteem and academic achievement at university level.

Recommendations

1. University may encourage students to practice positive self-talk which involves using positive language to describe themselves, their abilities and their accomplishment, encourage students to focus on their strength and what they do well. This can help students develop a more positive self-image and improve their self-esteem and their confidence.
2. University teachers may encourage students to set personal goals that are achievable and meaningful to them and encourage students to celebrate their achievement no matter how small. This can help them develop a sense of purpose and accomplishment which can boost their self-esteem and enhance their academic achievement.
3. University milieu may encourage students to build positive relationships with peers who are supportive and encouraging. This can help students feel more connected and valued, which can boost their self-esteem.

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