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A Study on the Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Success

Dr. Rajendra B. Patel
Associate Professor & Head,
Department of Education Veer
Narmad South Gujarat University,
Surat

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of Emotional Intelligence on academic accomplishment among students of the Pre services teacher of South Gujarat. The data of the present study were acquired through the use of a questionnaire which obtains information on the students Emotional Intelligence level as well as their academic performance. The results of the study show that the respondents have high level of Emotional Intelligence. Two fields (Self-Emotion Appraisal and Understanding of Emotion) of the Emotional Intelligence investigated are establishing to be significantly and positively related with the respondents academic accomplishment. The findings of the study hold important implications on the value of Emotional Intelligence and their relationships to students' academic performance especially among pre-service teachers.

Key Words: Emotional Intelligence, Academic Accomplishment, Pre-services Teacher

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Dr. Rajendra B. Patel
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South Gujarat University, Surat

Introduction:

It has long been a apprehension of many parties on factors contributing to academic performance among students in learning institutions, starting from as low as pre-school to as high as tertiary level. Results and findings of numerous researches conducted in this area of study over a long period of time show a variety of factors; students' IQ, socio economic status, motivation, peer-relationship, teacher-student relationship, parental contribution and personality. Among all these factors, IQ had been commonly used as a determinant and associated with academic success. However, many contemporary and emerging studies are revealing that IQ alone is not a reliable predictor of students academic accomplishment (Craggs, 2005). One of the most popular and most cited sources is Daniel Goleman's in famous book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ.* In his book Goleman (1995) claims that only 20% of a person's success can be attributed to IQ.

This claim prompts many researchers and academicians to explore and identify other factors that contribute another 80% to a person's success. In his book Goleman (1995) claims that only 20% of a person's success can be attributed to IQ. This claim prompts many researchers and academicians to explore and identify other factors that contribute another 80% to a person's success. The publishing of Goleman's first book has led to a new area of study not only in the field of education but also in business, human relationships, career development, leadership, industrial and organizational psychology and many more. Many parties are intrigued to know how emotional intelligence or EQ of a student can help him or her to learn better and perform academically. Low and Nelson (2006) claim that EQ is crucial to a student's personal health and college success. They stated that students with emotional intelligence skills are better able to survive with demanding and complex college experience. When individuals are able to lead their life successfully in the academe, they can focus on their learning and perform academically.

Apart from its contribution to academic success, a person with high emotional intelligence is also said to purpose better as a worker citing reasons such as being able to be a

team player, work under pressure, and contribute to organization's productivity. It is becoming more obvious that employers nowadays are no longer looking for employees with good grades alone but they are more interested in applicants who can meet the demands of a working world and adapt to the forever changing climate and needs of their organization. This is especially true in profession that requires the employees to be highly emotionally intelligent. A growing amount of research is being carried out to examine stress in workplace including in learning institutions involving educators such as teachers and lecturers. This is because teaching profession is recognized to be one of the most stressful professions (Antoniou, 2000; Kyriacou, 1987; Manthei & Solman, 1988 as cited in Noriah, Ramlee, Zuria, SitiRahayah, 2007).

Perhaps not many teachers realize that they themselves hold the key to managing their emotions and subsequently prevent themselves from being badly precious by stress. Sutton and Wheatley (as cited in Kremenitzerand Miller, 2008) argue that "emotions are an integral part of a teacher's job and have an influence on teacher effectiveness, behaviour, cognition, and motivation" (p. 107). Nelson, Low and Nelson (2005) also posit that teachers can "effectively deal with the pressures and demands of daily life and work" (p. 2) by developing and capitalizing on their emotional intelligence skills. Therefore, due to the nature and demands involved in teaching, teachers should build on and strive to acquire high level of emotional intelligence to stay pertinent and effective in the line of education.

Based on this discussion, it is pertinent that having high emotional intelligence gives an added advantage to individuals, may it be in educational practise or career development. This is because it has been soundly established that emotional intelligence is one of the important determinants of academic accomplishment among students and it is also what makes them adaptable employees once they embark into the working world. This is especially true and more prevalent in professions that require the employees to be highly emotionally intelligent such as in the teaching profession. The next part of this paper will therefore describe an area of investigation that is central to the purpose of the present study in relation to what have been thoroughly discussed earlier.

Objectives:

1. Investigating the relationship between the Pre services teacher of South Gujarat emotional intelligence and their academic accomplishment.
2. Identifying the level of emotional intelligence among the Pre services teacher of

South Gujarat.

Research Questions:

1. What is the level of emotional intelligence among the Pre services teacher of South Gujarat?
2. What is the relationship between the Pre services teacher of South Gujarat emotional intelligence and their academic accomplishment?

Review of Literature

Mayer & Salovey define emotional intelligence as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (1990, p. 189). They later redefine the term as "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and / or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer and Salovey, 1997, p. 10). They propose a model of EQ that consists of four domains of abilities which are the perception, use, understanding and regulation of emotion. Emotional intelligence is claimed to affect various aspects of human performance, namely in physical and psychological health, social interaction and performance at school and in the work place (Bar-On, 1997). Unlike Intelligent Quotient (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ) is associated with career and personal life success, including success in the academe (Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Goleman, 1995). There has been a lot of research carried out in order to establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic accomplishment.

In another study involving more than 3,500 first-year students of a public university, Jaeger and Eagan (2007) found that interpersonal, stress management and adaptability to be significant predictors of students' academic accomplishment. They claimed that ability to deal with stressful situations allow learners to "manage the anxiety of tests, deadlines, competing priorities, and personal crises" (p. 527). Other than that, adaptability among college students identify individuals who are "generally flexible, realistic, effective in understanding problematic and emotional situations, and competent at arriving at adequate solutions" (p. 528). Jaeger and Eagen further concluded that in achieving college success, a student needs to have these abilities to be calm, flexible, and realistic when dealing with pressures. Likewise, Jaeger, Bresciani, and Ward (2003) also found that interpersonal skills

and students' general mood were significantly correlated to high school GPA.Similarly, Aminuddin, Tajularipin, and Rohaizan's (2009) study examining emotional intelligence level among 223 Form One and Form Four students in rural areas reveal findings that also support the influence of emotional intelligence on academic accomplishment. They found that the emotional intelligence is closely related to the students' academic accomplishment, which, they added, corroborates with the findings by Parker et al. and Petrides et al.

Dr. Reuvan Bar-On, one of the proponents and leading researchers in the study of emotional intelligence also recognizes the influence of this non-cognitive ability in the success of a student's life. He posits that "ability to manage one's emotions, to be able to validate one's feelings and to solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature are important for being academically successful; additionally, academic performance appears to be facilitated by being able to set personal goals as well as to be sufficiently optimistic and self-motivated to accomplish them" (2005, p. 14-15). Bar-On further postulates that an assessment of emotional intelligence levels among students can be significantly used to predict their scholastic performance. He argues that such information can be used to identify "students who are in need of guided intervention" (p. 15) and to enhance their emotional-social intelligence competencies and skills thus helping them to perform better academically. In a nutshell, knowledge on students' emotional intelligence allows educators and administrators as well as the students themselves to recognize the importance of emotional competencies in learning hence capitalizing on them to achieve the common educational goals.

All the research findings discussed indicate the role that emotional intelligence plays in determining academic accomplishment among students. Given its importance, there has been recognition to develop emotional intelligence skills among students in order to assist them in performing in their studies. Low, Lomax, Jackson and Nelson (2004) assert that "emotional knowledge, skills, and intelligence hold a major key to improving education and helping students, teachers, faculty, and student development professionals attain higher degrees of accomplishment, career success, leadership, and personal well-being" (p. 2).

Research Methodology

Research Design

The quantitative design methodology employed in the present study is correlational research. This design was selected because the study aims to examine the

relationship between emotional intelligence and academic accomplishment. Therefore the independent variable examined in the present study is students' level of emotional intelligence (*Self-Emotion Appraisal, Others' Emotion Appraisal, Use of Emotion, and Regulation of Emotion)* whereas the dependent variable is students' academic accomplishment in a form of Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA).

Fraenkel and Wallen (2007) state that correlational research is also referred to as descriptive research when the research attempts to describe relationships between variables. However description from a correlational research is different than other types of studies. Description in correlational research describes "the degree to which two or more quantitative variables are related, and it does so by using a correlation coefficient" (p. 335). Therefore in this study, correlation coefficient was carried out to determine the degree of relationship between the independent variable with students' academic accomplishment.

Since the study is a quantitative study, the sole instrument utilized for data collection was questionnaire. Questionnaire is an important and popular instrument in gathering data (Singh, Chan and Sidhu, 2006). Other than being cost effective, questionnaire is suitable to be used as a tool to elicit information and responses from a particular group of people.

Population and Sampling

Population:

The present investigation is meant for the Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Accomplishment of pre-service teacher of South Gujarat, therefore all the trainee teacher of B.Ed. colleges of South Gujarat affiliated with Veer Narmad South Gujarat University Surat was the population of the study.

Sampling:

The present research, the researcher had decided to select from different method subject taught in B.Ed. colleges of VNSGU Surat, namely Language Teaching (Gujarati, Sanskrit, Hindi, English) ,Social Study / Psychology, Economics/Accountancy, Programme and Bachelor of Education in Science in Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics. This study employed simple random sampling procedure in which every sample has an equal chance to be selected as a participant. The distribution of sample was

out of the 278 students sample, a total of 171 students were selected from Language Teaching, 13 students were from Social Study / Psychology, 22 students were from Economics / Accountancy, 13 students were from Science Biology, 20 students were from Science Physics, 23 students were from Science Mathematics and lastly 17 students were from Science Chemistry Programme.

Tool:

Since the study is a purely quantitative study, questionnaire is the only tool used for the purpose of data collection in the present study. The rationale for using questionnaire is because it is not costly, could be easily distributed and the most convenient way to collect data (Holmes et al., 2005).The questionnaire used in this study consists of 2 Sections. Section A (Demographic Background) requires participants to provide background information such as gender, age, CGPA and program. Section B (Emotional Intelligence) attempts to measure students' level of Emotional Intelligence. This section was taken from the version adapted by Wong & Law (2002) which consists of four (4) dimensions which are *Self-Emotion Appraisal*, *Other's Emotion Appraisal*, *Use of Emotion* and *Regulation of Emotion*. Respondents were required to respond to the items which employed a 7-point Likert scale in which they have to rate their responses ranging from 1 which indicated *Strongly Disagree* to 7 which indicated *Strongly Agree*. There are 16 items in Section B and it employs a self-report measure. The responses gathered from Section B provide the level of the students' emotional intelligence.

Data Collection Procedures

Respondents were approached and informed that they had been randomly selected to be the respondents for the study and they were given a brief explanation on the purpose of the study and its contribution to the field of education. Respondents were given a brief instruction on how to respond to the 7-point Likert scale items in order to make sure they understand what is expected of them. Once the questionnaire was administered, the respondents were given ample time to complete it and the questionnaire was collected on the same day to ensure high response rates.

Data Analysis Procedures

Once all the questionnaires were collected, all the data gathered were keyed-in and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for statistical analysis. Both descriptive and referential statistics were carried out in answering the research questions of

this study. Descriptive analysis was conducted to describe the demographic background of the respondents as well as to determine the level of emotional intelligence among the respondents. The results obtained are presented in forms of percentages, means and standard deviations. Referential analysis through the use of correlation coefficient on the other hand was carried out in order to establish the degree of relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

All the results obtained are presented in tables and graphs and are accompanied by descriptions explaining the results. Then, discussion of the results is carried out in order to answer the research questions and necessary conclusions are drawn based on the findings of the research. Based from the overall findings, the researcher discusses the significant implications of the study and put forth a few suggestions for further and future research.

Findings and Analysis of Data

Demographic Information

Table-1 Distribution and Percentage of Respondents according to Gender, Age, CGPA and Programmes (n=265)

Respondents Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	54	20.4
Female	211	79.6
Age		
20 – 22	141	53.6
23 – 25	109	41.4
25 >	13	4.9
Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)		
Low (< 3.00)	36	15.1
Average (3.00 – 3.49)	138	57.7
High (3.50 – 4.00)	65	27.2
Programmes		
Language Teaching	154	58.1
Social Study / Psychology	18	6.8
Economics/ Accountancy	20	7.5
Science Biology	14	5.3
Science Physics	20	7.5
Science Mathematics	21	7.9
Science Chemistry	18	6.8
Total	265	100

Level of Emotional Intelligence among the Respondents.

The items in the questionnaire require respondents to indicate their response base on 1 to 7 point Likert scale. In this study, respondents' responses with a mean score of 0.00 to 2.99 are considered as *Low*, 3.00 to 4.99 are considered as *Moderate* while responses with a mean

score of 5.00 to 7.00 are considered as *High*.

Table-1.1 Descriptive Analysis of Level of Emotional Intelligence

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	5.268	0.726

Table-1above presents the overall mean score of emotional intelligence among the respondents while Table-1.1 on the other hand presents the mean scores of the four domains of emotional intelligence investigated in this study. Firstly, finding in Table 5.2.1 reveals that the students of pre-service teacher of South Gujarat had high level of emotional intelligence (*M*= 5.268, *SD*= 0.726). Secondly, the respondents also were reported to have high level of emotional intelligence for all the four domains investigated in this study with (*M*= 5.542, *SD*= 0.874) for *Self-Emotion Appraisal*, (*M*= 5.107, *SD*= 0.956) for *Others' Emotion Appraisal*, (*M*= 5.419, *SD*= 1.027) for *Understanding of Emotion* and (*M*= 5.003, *SD*= 1.136) for *Regulation of Emotion*.

The findings from Table-1.1 indicate that the respondents were highly aware of their own emotions and feelings and they understood that emotions can evolve depending on situations. On top of that, they could anticipate what emotion is likely to transpire under certain circumstances. However, the results show that the respondents had less awareness of others' emotions as compared to the awareness of their own emotions. It was also found that the lowest mean score of the four domains is on the respondents' ability to regulate their emotions.

This domain is the most advanced of all the four abilities that make an emotionally intelligent individual (Mayer and Salovey, 1990). According to Mayer and Salovey (1990), having the ability to regulate emotions allows individuals to accept and handle both pleasant and unpleasant feelings. This ability is crucial in living a student's life where one has to cope with occasional failures and disturbing experiences as well as the pressure to perform academically (Pfeiffer, 2001).

Table-1.2 Descriptive Analysis of Domains of Emotional Intelligence

Domains of Emotional Intelligence	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Emotional Intelligence	Mean	Std. Deviation

Self-Emotion Appraisal	5.542	0.874
Others' Emotion Appraisal	5.107	0.956
Understanding of Emotion	5.419	1.027
Regulation of Emotion	5.003	1.136

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Accomplishment

Table-1.3Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Accomplishment

	***r* –value**	**Sig.**
Emotional Intelligence	0.084	0.193

Table-1.4 Correlation between Domains of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Accomplishment

Domains of Emotional Intelligence	**r –value**	**Sig.**
Self-Emotion Appraisal	0.138	0.017
Others' Emotion Appraisal	-0.029	0.326
Understanding of Emotion	0.154	0.008
Regulation of Emotion	-0.006	0.462

In determining the strength of the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic accomplishment, Pearson correlation analysis was carried out. The overall result is presented in Table 5.3.1 whereas Table 5.3.2 shows the relationship according to the domains of emotional intelligence. Table 5.3.1 shows that there is a positive and weak relationship (r= 0.084, p= 0.193) between the respondents' overall emotional intelligence and their academic accomplishment which means that the higher their level of emotional intelligence, the better they perform academically. This relationship however was found to be not statistically significant.

Nevertheless, investigation of the relationship between the four domains of emotional intelligence and academic accomplishment as presented in Table 5.32 reveals that out of the four, two domains which are the *Self-Emotion Appraisal* and *Understanding of Emotion* are significantly associated with academic accomplishment. The results show that the relationship between *Self-Emotion Appraisal*; *Understanding of Emotion* and academic accomplishment is positive though weak with their respective *r* and *p* values (r= 0.138 p= 0.017, r= 0.154 p= 0.008), significant at the level of 0.05. This finding indicates that students who are well aware of their feelings and emotions and have the ability to understand those emotions as well as to anticipate what emotions would transpire under certain circumstances are better able to cope effectively with the pressures for academic excellence in higher learning institutions. Low et al., (2004) assert that emotional knowledge, skills, and intelligence do play a significant role

in attaining higher academic accomplishments and improving quality of education. Salovey, et al., (as cited in Mayer and Salovey, 1993) also agree to the notion that individuals who could identify their feelings and emotions clearly and know how to manage them are more capable to recover effectively from emotional distress following failures and unpleasant experiences.

There is a similarity between the results of the present study with Pishghadam's (2009) who also found that EQ was weakly associated with academic performance when it was examined as a whole but when examined according to subscales, the findings yield significant relationship with academic accomplishment.

The other two domains on the other hand were found to be negatively and weakly associated with academic accomplishment.They are the *Others Emotion Appraisal* (r= -0.029, p= 0.326) and *Regulation of Emotion* (r= -0.006, p= 0.462). These negative relationships suggest that the higher the respondents ability to recognize other people's emotion and to regulate their emotions, the lower their academic accomplishment. This finding is in contrast with other research findings that have established a positive relationship between emotional intelligence skills and academic accomplishment. According to Parker et al., (as cited in Jaeger and Eagan, 2007), inconsistent findings among studies investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic accomplishment "may be the result of methodological problems of narrowly defining emotional capabilities and/or assessing academic success over very short time periods" (p.518). Jaeger and Eagan (2007) further illustrated that the uncertain relationship between the two might depend on "the operationalization of the academic performance variable" (pp.518-519).

Conclusions and Discussion

Based on the findings, a few conclusions can be drawn to answer the research questions of this study. Firstly, the finding shows that the students of pre-service teacher of South Gujarat have high level of emotional intelligence. However, no significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence and student's academic accomplishment. Since the pre-service teachers are future educators, there is an essential need for them to possess emotional intelligence skills which will allow them to be caring and sympathetic teachers. Relating this to the student teachers, Goad and Justice (as cited in Nelson, Low and Nelson, 2005) emphasize the importance and the value of emotional intelligence in teacher preparation programs by claiming that teachers with emotional intelligence skills are better able at maintaining classroom management performance and

remain in the teaching profession especially among trainee teachers. Therefore, since the findings suggest that the respondents are future teachers with high level of emotional intelligence, it is expected of them to be able to take on the challenge to educate the young generations and adapt to the demanding and stressful working environment (Nelson, Low and Nelson, 2005) in the teaching profession. This is especially true among novice teachers who just embark into one of the most stressful profession as educators.

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