

Academic Performance and Emotional Intelligence- Their Inter Relationship



Education

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ABSTRACT

In this study the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of student teachers was examined. Student teachers (N=502) took an emotional intelligence test, constructed based on Bar-On's conceptualization of emotional intelligence. Results revealed that emotional intelligence was associated with academic performance. Males scored higher than females on adaptability and stress management.

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence is a comprehensive term which incorporates the intricate aspects of both emotion and intelligence. Emotion and cognition can be integrated to influence performance on a variety of tasks (Gray, 2004). There is considerable interest in establishing the relation between emotional intelligence and academic performance

Much of the earlier studies focused on the impact of cognitive intelligence on academic performance. Researchers have turned their attention to a broad range of other possible prediction for academic success (Parker, 2006). Several studies have examined a relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of school and college students. Surprisingly, few researchers have focused their attention on emotional intelligence of teachers and teacher trainees.

The aim of the present study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance of student teachers. First the relation between academic performance and emotional intelligence will be discussed and then proceed to the influence of gender on emotional intelligence.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The participants were 502 student teachers (144 males, 383 females) doing their Bachelor of Education course in Coimbatore city in Tamil Nadu, India. They were in the age range 20-25 years.

2.2 Materials

2.2.1 Self report Emotional Intelligence Scale

The self report emotional intelligence scale (EIS) constructed by the investigator based on Bar-On's Emotional intelligence model comprised of 60 self referencing statements designed to assess emotional intelligence and the five broad dimensions associated with emotional intelligence namely, intrapersonal ability (12 items), interpersonal skill (12 items), adaptability (12 items), stress management (12 items) and general mood (12 items). For each item the participants were to rate the extent they agree or disagree with each statement on a 5 point scale (5= Always, 1=never for positive statements and 1= always and 5=never for negative statements) and can be completed within 20-25 minutes. However, there is no imposed time limit. The scale gives an overall emotional intelligence score and five subscale scores. A high score indicates the presence of the respective dimension of emotional intelligence.

2.2.2 Academic performance

Academic performance was assessed based on the marks the student teachers obtained in their theory courses and practical aspects given in the Bachelor of Education curriculum. Academic records were collected from the Controller of Examinations office, after the final marks for the entire academic year has been processed by the Controller's office.

2.3 Procedure

All participants completed the EIS in a classroom sitting. Student teachers were tested in groups ranging from 25-30 sub-

jects. Before completing the EIS, all participants completed a list of demographic questions.

3. Results

3.1 Reliabilities

For the EIS, which was administered, split half reliabilities were found. The results obtained were for the total scale ($\alpha=0.74$) and the reliabilities for the different components of emotional intelligence were found to be intrapersonal ability ($\alpha=0.73$) interpersonal skill ($\alpha=0.66$) adaptability ($\alpha=0.69$) stress management ($\alpha=0.78$) general mood ($\alpha=0.81$).

3.2 Correlations

Table 1 shows the inter correlation of all dimensions of EIS. It can be seen that all are positively and significantly correlated.

Table 1. Intercorrelations among the dimensions of emotional intelligence

Dimensions	Intrapersonal ability	interpersonal skill	adaptability	stress management	general mood
Intrapersonal ability	1	0.533**	0.635**	0.630**	0.609**
Interpersonal skill		1	0.583**	0.538**	0.600**
Adaptability			1	0.731**	0.646**
Stress management				1	0.692**
General mood					1

****Highly significant**

In EIS, inter correlations are significant at the $p<0.01$ level (Table 1). The correlation between academic performance and emotional intelligence scores were found using Pearson's Product Moment method and Table 2 presents the correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

Table 2 Pearson's correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance.

Dimensions	Academic Performance
Intrapersonal ability	0.449**
Interpersonal skill	0.372**
Adaptability	0.496**
Stress management	0.529**
General mood	0.457**
Total Emotional intelligence score	0.555**

****Highly significant**

3.3 Gender difference

Means and standard deviations for the total emotional intelligence and its five dimensions for the whole sample and for

males and for females are separately shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for males and females

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence	Group I Male (N1=144)		Group II Female (N2=358)		t -value
	M1	SD	M2	SD2	
Intrapersonal ability	45.09	6.53	44.12	5.74	1.656NS
Interpersonal skill	47.27	5.96	47.89	5.88	1.06NS
Adaptability	45.13	6.99	43.04	6.56	3.17**
Stress management	44.79	7.71	42.66	7.23	2.93**
General mood	45.34	7.18	45.22	6.59	0.18NS
Total score (EI)	227.63	29.86	222.93	26.37	1.74NS

As seen from Table 3, the t-values suggests that there is significant difference between male and female student teachers in the dimensions of emotional intelligence namely, adaptability and stress management. The mean values indicate that males appear to have higher scores on all emotional intelligence dimensions, with the exception of the dimension interpersonal skills, where females have higher scores.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study are in congruent with those of Parker (2004), Austin et al (2005) and Petrides et al. (2004) who found an association between emotional intelligence and academic performance. The correlation results showed that the total emotional intelligence is moderately related to academic performance.

The differential analysis showed that gender did not influence the total emotional intelligence, whereas t-value obtained for the different dimensions of emotional intelligence indicates that male teacher trainees were more adaptable and were able to manage stress better than their female counterparts.

Thus the present study supports the notion that emotionally intelligent people solve challenges of life and lead a successful life. The student-teacher relationship has been shown to predict academic success over several years (Hamre and Pianta, 2001). Emotionally intelligent teachers can create emotionally intelligent citizens. So the student teachers, who are at the threshold of entering the career of teaching, should understand their levels of emotional intelligence and this will in turn reflect in their teaching and dealings with their students and finally it helps in developing emotionally intelligent future citizens.

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