

A STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC STRESS OF SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN

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Emotional intelligence of an individual plays an important role in one's well-being and so does stress. The present study endeavoured to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children using descriptive survey research methodology on a sample of 50 male students of classes IX-XII from government schools. Data was collected by administering the Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence (MMEI) scale and an adapted version of the Students' Academic Stress Scale (SASS). The study revealed that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Academic Stress, Relationship, Correlation, School Going Children

INTRODUCTION

Many people think that if an individual has a high level of intellect, the individual will have opportunity to achieve better success compared to those with low intellect. However, there are cases where people with high intellect are left behind than those who have low intellect. Science has discovered a tremendous amount about the role emotions play in our lives. Researchers have found that even more than IQ, your emotional awareness and abilities to handle feelings will determine your success and happiness in all walks of life (Gottman, 2011, p. 20). Emotional intelligence was described formally by Salovey and Mayer (1990). They defined it as 'the ability to monitor one's own

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and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions' (p. 189).

Stress is any uncomfortable emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioural changes (Baum, 1990). While a part of everyday life, the varying degrees of stress are what impact the body and mind. Academic stress is a student's interpretation of the present demands, challenges and threats in the academic environment in relation to available personal resources for coping (Siegel, 2008).

Lopes, Salovey and Straus (2003), tried to relate emotional intelligence, personality, and the perceived quality of social relationship in their study. The study explored links between emotional intelligence measured as a set of abilities, and the personality traits. Slaski and Cartwright (2003) examined the role of emotional intelligence (EI) as a moderator in the stress process. It was found that training in emotional intelligence resulted in increased EI and improved health and well-being.

Gohm, Corser and Dalsky (2005) suggested that emotional intelligence is potentially helpful in reducing stress for some individuals, but unnecessary or irrelevant for others. Miri, Kermani, Khoshbakht, and Moodi (2013) reported that EI growth in different individuals can promote success, it cannot decrease academic stress by itself, which was particularly significant in females. Therefore, other causes of stress such as individual differences must be taken into consideration. Ramos, Berrocal and Extremera (2007) conducted a study on how perceived emotional intelligence facilitates cognitive-emotional processes of adaptation to an acute stressor. The findings suggested that individuals with higher emotional clarity and repair will experience less negative emotional responses and intrusive thoughts after an acute stressor, which enables them to adapt more readily to the experience.

Godati, Bhagyalakshmi and Hemlatha (2015) conducted a study on emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescent boys and girls. The study revealed that there was no statistically significant difference of emotional intelligence and academic stress between boys and girls. There was also no statistically significant association between level of emotional intelligence and level of academic stress with demographic variables (age, gender, area of residence, religion, medium of instruction, group of study, type of management, educational status of father and mother, occupations of father and mother, birth order, monthly family income, type of college, type of family, total number of children, and academic achievement) among adolescent boys and girls.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The Hypothesis of the study is that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is delimited to the following parameters:

- i. A sample of 50 students of Haryana and Chandigarh.
- ii. The sample consists of male students only.
- iii. Students studying in classes 9th to 12th have only been taken.
- iv. Students belong to government schools only.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the present study a descriptive survey research methodology was used from the point of view of achievement of its objective.

SAMPLE

The sample for the study comprises 50 male students from 2 general schools (Table 1) of Haryana and Chandigarh consisting of 25 students per school.

Table 1

Sample Distribution for the Study.

Name of School	Place	No. of Respondents
Aarohi Model Sr. Sec. School, Hisar	Hisar, Haryana	25
Jawaharlal Navodaya Vidyalaya	Chandigarh	25

TOOLS USED

The following tools have been used in the study:

- i. For assessing emotional intelligence, the Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence Scale (MMEI) developed by Darolia (2003) was used.

- (ii) For assessment of academic stress, an adapted version of Students' Academic Stress Scale (SASS) to Indian condition by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990) was used.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

A scatter diagram displaying the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children is shown in Figure 1, which plots the emotional intelligence scores against academic stress scores for school going children.

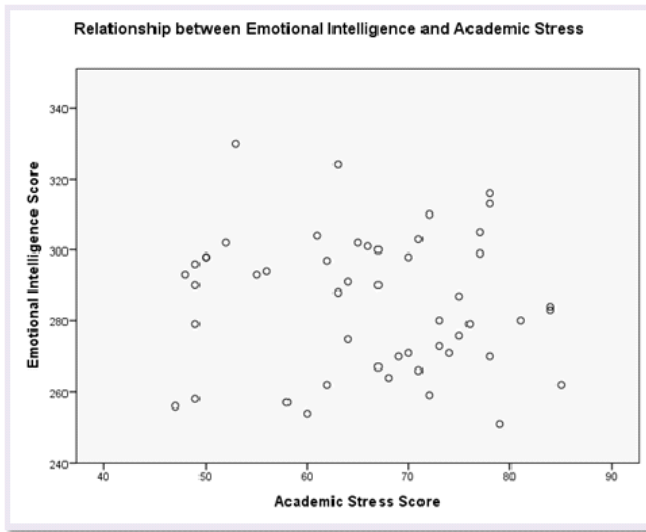


Figure1. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress of School going children.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was applied in order to investigate the relationship between the scores of emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children. The corresponding results are highlighted in Table 2.

Table 2

Coefficient of Correlation (r) of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress of School Going Children.

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation (r)
Emotional Intelligence Academic Stress	50	-0.10 ^{NS}

NS = Not Significant

It is inferred from the above that the 'r' value between emotional intelligence and academic stress of students is found to be -0.10 which is not-significant at 0.5 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children, is retained. Hence, there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children.

As per our analysis, emotional intelligence and academic stress share a negative relationship with 'r' value -0.10, which is small enough to be considered as negligible at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school going children. Therefore, emotional intelligence cannot be used as a predictor of academic stress of school-going children and vice-versa.

The study has the following implications:

- i. The results can find their implications in special as well as inclusive school settings.
- ii. Teachers should be aware of the negative effects that stress could have on themselves, their students and their teaching performance. Hence efforts should be made for establishing a caring relationship in the family and in the educational institutions as well as to minimize stress and accelerating emotional intelligence.
- iii. The key to reducing academic stress is providing students with a feeling of control over their education, information about what to expect, and feedback regarding what can be done to improve their performance. Approaches can be developed keeping this in mind.
- iv. For enhancing the level of achievement of the students, the teachers and schools should make arrangement for training of emotional intelligence and stress management.
- v. The parents can also find the study significant by realizing the importance of cohesive caring stress-free family environment and encouraging value education in children.

CONCLUSION

The person with emotional intelligence can be thought of as having attained at least a limited form of positive mental health. These individuals are aware of their own feelings and those of others. An emotionally intelligent person is often a pleasure to be around and leaves others feeling better (Mayor, 2004).

Helping others, which may make one feel better in the long run, may require sacrifice and emotional toughness (Dienstbier, 1988). While Academic stress, to a level, is necessary to challenge and engage students in learning, but constancy and/or excess may lead to unwanted and severe results. The present study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of school-going children. It was found that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress for school-going children. Thus, emotional intelligence can't be used as a predictor of academic stress and vice versa. However, the study does not deny any relationships among various dimensions of emotional intelligence and academic stress; nor does it deny partial or indirect relationships.

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