

# A STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC STRESS OF VISUALLY DISABLED STUDENTS


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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 examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students using descriptive survey research method on a sample of 50 visually disabled male students of classes IX-XII from government and government-aided schools of Haryana and Chandigarh. Data was collected by administering a Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence (MMEI) scale and an adapted version of the Students' Academic Stress Scale (SASS). The study revealed that there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students.*

**KEYWORDS:** Emotional Intelligence, Academic Stress, Relationship, Visually Disabled Students, CWSN

## INTRODUCTION

The eye is not only the most beautiful but also the most important sensory organ of the human body. It accounts for a very large segment (about 80%) of the total information available to a person through his/her senses. Persons with visual impairment are an integral part of the society but their impairment limits them to perceive the real world through their eyes. The disability in turn may affect their physical, mental and emotional state. Approaches must be

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developed to eliminate or minimize the negative effects of the disability. 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). Emotional intelligence was described formally by Salovey and Mayer (1990). They defined it as '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'.

Stress is any uncomfortable emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioural changes (Baum, 1990). In everyday life, the varying degrees of stress have a great impact on 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; Nakalema & Ssenyonga, 2014).

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 Emotional Intelligence (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.

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 suggest 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. Rana (2012) reported significant relationship between the socio-emotional climate and adjustment among visually impaired children.

Miri, Kermani, Khoshbakht, and Moodi (2013) reported that Emotional Intelligence (EI) growth in different individuals can promote their 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.

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, and there

was no 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

To investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study has been delimited to a sample of 50 male visually disabled students studying in classes from 9th to 12th from one government special school and from one government aided special school located in Haryana and Chandigarh respectively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the present study, descriptive survey research method has been used.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The sample for the study comprised of 50 visually disabled male students from two special schools of Haryana and Chandigarh consisting 25 students per school (See Table 1).

Table 1

Sample Distribution.

Name of School	Place	No. of Respondents
Govt. Institute for the Blind, Panipat	Panipat, Haryana	25
Institute for the Blind, Chandigarh	Chandigarh	25

## TOOLS USED

The tools used for the study are given below:

1. For assessing emotional intelligence, Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence Scale (MMEI) developed by C. R. Darolia (2003) has been used.
2. For assessment of academic stress, Students' Academic Stress Scale (SASS), adapted to Indian conditions by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990) has been used.

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A scatter diagram displaying the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress for visually disabled is shown in , which plots the emotional intelligence scores against academic stress scores of visually disabled students.

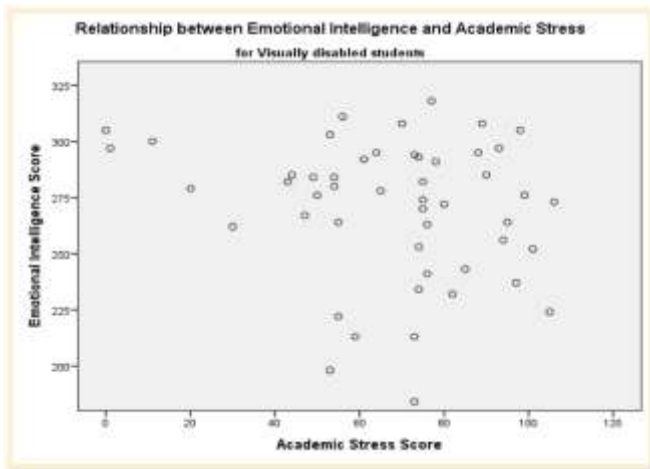


Figure 1. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress of Visually Disabled Students.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was applied in order to investigate the relationship between the scores of emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students. The corresponding results have been highlighted in Table 2.

Table 2

Coefficient of Correlation (r) of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress of Visually Disabled Students.

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation ( r )
Emotional Intelligence	50	-0.20 <sup>NS</sup>
Academic Stress		

*NS = Non Significant*

It is inferred from that the 'r' value between emotional intelligence and academic stress for visually disabled students is found to be -0.20 which is negative and non-significant at 0.5 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students, is accepted. Hence, there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students.

As per the analysis, for visually disabled students, emotional intelligence and academic stress share a weak and negative relationship which is not strong enough to be considered significant. Thus, there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of visually disabled students at 0.05 level of significance.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

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. The 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 visually disabled students. It was found that there exists no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress for the visually disabled students. Thus, emotional intelligence can't be effectively used as a predictor of academic stress and vice-versa in case of visually disabled students.

#### EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Following are the educational implications of the study:

- i. The results can be implemented in special as well as inclusive school settings.
- ii Teachers should be aware of the negative effects of stress on themselves, their students and their teaching methodology. Hence efforts should be made for caring relationship in the family and in the educational institutions as well as to minimize stress and accelerating emotional intelligence.
- iii The key to reduce academic stress is to provide students with opportunities to clear their doubts, by information about what is expected from them, and giving feedback regarding what can be done to improve their performance.
- 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, encouraging value education from the family itself.
- vi Presence of a disability is seen to increase the stress levels in students. Knowing the results, the teachers and school administration can work on increasing emotional intelligence levels and thus reducing their academic stress.

#### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Future directions of the study are given below:

- i. Studies can be done on both variables along with other psychological variables such as mental health, depression, academic anxiety etc.
- ii Studies can be performed to investigate partial or indirect relationship between the two variables.
- iii The study can be replicated for various other disabilities separately and/or in combination.
- iv Studies can be performed taking different demographic variables, viz., gender, economic conditions, geographic location, caste etc., in consideration.

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