

Relationship among Emotional Intelligence, Social Isolation and Students' Academic Achievement at University level

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Abstract

Students' academic success is significantly impacted by emotional intelligence, which includes the critical components of interpersonal and intrapersonal connections and adaptability. However, it observed that social isolation obstructs the acquisition of critical life skills, including interpersonal and adaptive behaviour. These are unpleasant experiences that result from emotions of isolation, disconnection, and not belonging. Therefore, the present study was performed to survey the aim of emotional intelligence, social isolation and its relation to the academic performance of students of the University of Education Lahore, Faisalabad campus. A sample of 360 students, including 245 females and 115 male were selected using stratified simple random sampling techniques in true sciences and social sciences. Correlation survey research was performed. The study's findings showed that while the respondents' levels of social isolation were low, their emotional intelligence level was high. It

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appears crucial to incorporate emotional intelligence while assisting students in improving their mental health and doing their tasks more successfully.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Social Isolation; Academic Achievement, Intelligence, University level

Introduction

In the context of modern society, it is critical to comprehend the elements that lead to individual success (Krogh, 2023). Emotional intelligence, a well-known quality that includes intentional action, sensible thought processes, and skilful situational adaptation, is one such important component. (Wechsler, 2007). The complex relationship between emotions and these core components of emotional intelligence is essential in determining how people behave in a variety of contexts, including when making decisions, making cognitive assessments, and responding adaptively (Simi et al., 2021). According to Cherniss (2010) and Farley & Chokshi (2012), emotional intelligence is the ability to carefully consider and regulate one's sentiments such that emotions do not dictate one's behaviour.

The importance of emotional intelligence is multifaceted and affects work, education, and personal life. It has a major impact on decision-making, motivation, job competency, and leadership and management abilities (Michael & Maiya, 2009). Numerous empirical studies have consistently shown positive correlations between emotional intelligence and verbal intelligence, including empathy, extraversion, sensitivity to emotional events, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. (Ferrando et al., 2011; Livingstone & Lievrouw & 2010; Cabello et al., 2016; Schutte et al., 2001).

Ferrando et al. (2011) found that among Spanish adults, there were strong relationships between emotional intelligence and extraversion, as well as responsiveness to emotional events. Similarly, Cabello et al. Schutte et al. (2001) found that in adult samples from the United States and South Africa, emotional intelligence was positively correlated with higher levels of life satisfaction. Within the educational setting, stress management surfaces as a critical aspect of students' emotional intelligence, entailing the proficient adjustment and control of affective reactions. (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2010).

Conversely, however, social isolation remains one of the primary issues with homeschooling. It has been described as "the deficiency of interpersonal interactions and the scarcity of deep connections". According to Stephenson (2015), Social isolation is defined as "when a person's social connections are significantly poor in terms of quantity or quality, they might experience negative emotions such as loneliness, disconnection, and a lack of belonging".

It has been demonstrated that social isolation impedes the acquisition of vital life skills that are necessary to maintain fulfilling and long-lasting connections with others, including impulse control, adaptive behaviours, and interpersonal skills (Schultz & Brodtkin, 2002). Numerous studies have revealed that socially isolated pupils are more likely to exhibit characteristics that raise their chance of developing adjustment issues later on, such as difficulty understanding context, picking up a language, and effectively resolving conflicts. (Hawkey & Capitanio, 2015).

Problem Statement

Many studies have demonstrated the positive effects of emotional intelligence on people's success as they go from school to college and university and then into the workforce. It is

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believed that emotional intelligence is a crucial skill that helps college students cope with and overcome the rigorous nature of academics. Previous research has shown a favourable association between students' emotional intelligence and higher academic accomplishment. Emotionally intelligent students have been shown to exhibit features including better stress management, more flexibility, and stronger interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities.

However, students who experience social isolation are more likely to have traits that increase their chance of experiencing adjustment problems in the future, such as trouble recognizing context, learning a language, and having trouble settling disagreements. Students who are socially isolated struggle to control their emotions and interpersonal skills, which affects both their academic achievement and ability to have success. Stated differently, children who exhibit emotional intelligence are more likely to thrive in college and, thus, are better prepared to learn and achieve academic achievement.

Thus, these studies examine the link between emotional intelligence, social isolation, and students' academic accomplishment in light of the numerous assertions regarding the influence of social isolation on academic and interpersonal skills at the University of Education Lahore, Faisalabad campus. It would be interesting to learn how social isolation and emotional intelligence affect students' ability to succeed academically in university.

Research objectives

The following goals serve as the study's guidelines:

1. To identify the level of emotional intelligence (EI) and social isolation among university students.
2. Measure the relationship among the student's emotional intelligence (EI), social isolation and academic achievement.

Research Questions

For this study, the following are the research questions:

1. What is the level of emotional intelligence (EI) and social isolation among university students?
2. What is the relationship between the student's emotional intelligence (EI), social isolation and their academic achievement?

Literature Review'

Salovey & Mayer (1990) Declare emotional intelligence to be "the area of social intelligence that encompasses the ability to monitor, differentiate, and utilize one's own and other people's moods and emotions as a foundation for making decisions". They later redefine the term as "the ability to perceive, assess, 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 in order to promote the growth of both the mind and the heart" (Hussain, 2021; Hussain et al., 2022; Salovey & Mayer, 1997). A great deal of research has been done to determine the connection between academic success and emotional intelligence.

In Ethiopia, ethnic conflicts cause instability and upheaval in communities (Mekonnen, 2015; Herut, Dube, & Dewey, 2022; Hussain et al., 2022); emotional disruptions make it difficult for

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families, educators, and administrators to influence children's emotional state and academic performance when they have conflicting objectives. It is crucial to evaluate intervention strategies and implement targeted solutions through adaptive policies in order to preserve the educational system and generate emotionally intelligent individuals, particularly in areas that are permanently impacted by conflict. (Herut & Dube, 2022; Amir et al., 2022; Umar et al., 2023; Mekonnen, 2015).

Emotional intelligence is generally acknowledged in Africa as a critical component of success in a variety of fields, including leadership. In particular, post-apartheid issues that South African leaders and organizations must deal with include the requirement for a mix of genders and cultures in the workforce, equality laws, and global competitiveness (Hussain et al., 2023; Mayer & Barnard, 2015; Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2012). Female leaders in South Africa have a distinct leadership style that is defined by resonance cultivation. This leadership style is characterized by its cooperative qualities, ability to mentor others, willingness to work together, and skill in adaptive communication, all of which are closely related to emotional intelligence (Hafeez et al., 2023; Zaman et al., 2023; Van Wyk, 2012). This remark emphasizes the deep impact of Emotional Intelligence on numerous facets of existence and underlines the tremendous importance of women in positions of leadership in Africa, as noted by Barnard & Mayer (2015).

Jaeger's (2003) study conducted on 150 students enrolled in a graduate-level course on general management found a correlation between academic success and emotional intelligence levels. Among these 150 pupils, there was a higher link - those who got the emotional intelligence curriculum and those who did not, in terms of the relationship between academic accomplishment and emotional intelligence. Based on the study's findings, researchers concluded that emotional intelligence can be taught and acquired by both instructors and pupils.

This is the first time that social isolation is used to test emotional intelligence and determine how it affects kids' academic performance. As previously said, the researcher has conducted a great deal of study on the relationship between students' academic performance and emotional intelligence; however, social isolation was not previously discovered in any of the researcher's studies in conjunction with emotional intelligence. However, social isolation remains one of the primary issues with homeschooling. It has been described as "the absence of interpersonal interactions and the scarcity of significant connections ". Social isolation sentiments are "When a person's social connections are significantly poor in terms of quantity or quality, they might experience negative emotions such as loneliness, disconnection, and a lack of belonging."

Methodology

1. Research Design

Due to the quantitative and descriptive nature of the current study, the correlational survey research technique was used. The purpose of selecting this design was to look at the relationship between academic performance, social isolation, and emotional intelligence. As a result, the study's independent variables were the students' emotional intelligence and social isolation; in contrast, their academic achievement, as shown by their cumulative grade point average (CGPA), serves as the dependent variable. The questionnaire was the key

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instrument for the collection of data.

2. Population & Sampling

The whole student body of the University of Education Lahore's Faisalabad campus was chosen as the population for this study; through stratified simple random sampling technique, 360 individuals were chosen as the study sample. The students were selected from two distinct degree programs: true sciences and social sciences. In this way, 155 of the 360 students in the sample were associated with the social science programs, whereas 205 students were chosen from the scientific programs following the instructions (Singh et al., 2014).

3. Instrumentation

A five-point Likert scale was developed for data collection. Three (3) sections make up the questionnaire employed in this investigation. Section A (Demographic Background) requests background data from participants, including gender, group, CGPA, and program. Students' levels of emotional intelligence were measured in Section B, while social isolation was measured in Section C. There were 32 statements in the questionnaire; the questionnaire was validated through an Experts Panel and then pilot-tested for reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was .89.

4. Procedure of Data Collection

The procedure of gathering data was done by the researcher's self. The data was collected from students. There were around 360 pupils who received the questionnaire. Every student gave the forms back. The percentage of returns was 100%. Students were requested to fill out the questionnaire with their personal details when it was given to them and respond independently.

5. Procedure of Data Analysis

After data collection, data were sorted and then put into SPSS and statistical analysis was performed. The research issues of this study were addressed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. In addition to determining the respondents' level of emotional intelligence and social isolation, a descriptive study of their demographic background was carried out. The resulting findings are displayed as means, standard deviations, and percentages. Conversely, inferential analysis was performed to ascertain the degree of association between the independent and dependent variables using the correlation coefficient.

Every result that was acquired is shown in a table with an explanation of the results included. The data were then analyzed to answer the research questions, and crucial conclusions were drawn in light of the study's findings. Based on the overall results, the researcher highlights the study's significant implications and makes some recommendations for more and future research.

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Data Analysis and Findings

Demographic information

Table 1

Respondents' percentages according to Gender, CGPA, & Program (n-360)

		<i>f</i>	%
Gender	Male	115	32%
	Female	245	68%
Program	Science	205	57%
	Social Science	155	43%
CGPA (Average)	2.1 - 3.0	89	25%
	3.1 - 4.0	271	75%

RQ1. Level of Emotional Intelligence and Social Isolation,

Respondents must use a Likert scale of 1 to 5 to express their answers to the questionnaire's items. In this study, answers that have a mean score between 0.0 and 2.9 were categorized as Low, while those that have a mean score between 3.0 and 5.0 were categorized as high.

Table 2

Level of Emotional Intelligence and Social Isolation

	$\bar{x}$	σ
Emotional intelligence	4.36	1.235
Social isolation	1.95	0.197

Table 2 displays the respondents' average total score for social isolation and emotional intelligence. First, the results in the table show that while the students at the University of Education had low levels of social isolation ($M= 1.95$, $SD= 0.197$), they had high levels of emotional intelligence ($M= 4.36$, $SD= 1.235$).

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RQ2. Relationship among emotional intelligence, social isolation and academic achievement (AA)

Table 3

Correlation among Emotional Intelligence (EI), Social Isolation and Academic Achievement'

	r- value,	Sig.
Emotional intelligence (EI)	0.057	0.042
Social isolation	-0.017	0.013

Table 3 shows that there was a substantial and positive correlation between an individual's academic achievement and emotional intelligence ($r = 0.057$, $p = 0.042$), indicating that higher emotional intelligence was associated with improved academic performance. This relationship, however, was found to be statistically significant. The results of this study suggest that students who possess a strong awareness of their emotions and feelings, as well as the capacity to comprehend and predict those emotions in specific situations, are more likely to be able to manage the demands of academic excellence in higher education. However, the aforementioned data demonstrates that there is a negative correlation ($r = -0.017$, $p = 0.013$) between students' academic success and social isolation. Students who choose to live in social isolation have consistently performed poorly academically. Their academic performance lacked strength.

Discussion and Conclusions

Results demonstrate that the respondents possessed a high degree of self-awareness regarding their emotions and sentiments, as well as an understanding that their emotions may fluctuate depending on the situation. According to Mayer and Salovey (1997), People who are able to control their emotions are able to accept and deal with both positive and negative emotions. This capacity is essential to surviving as a student since they must deal with the pressure to achieve academically, as well as the occasional setbacks and upsetting events (Pfeiffer, 2001). However, the mean score for social isolation was extremely low, indicating that students consistently ignore and avoid being in a socially isolated environment. They enjoy working in groups, building emotional bonds with other pupils, and exchanging ideas with one another. Students believe that a person who is socially isolated cannot succeed more in life or in their academic endeavours. Social isolation may be defined as having few meaningful connections and no ties with other people (De Jong et al., 2016). The results demonstrate that the University of Education Lahore, Faisalabad campus students have low levels of social isolation and high levels of emotional intelligence. On the other hand, no significant correlation has been shown between a pupil's intellectual success and social isolation. Rather, there is a clear correlation between academic success and emotional intelligence. The respondents' aspirations to become teachers make emotional intelligence skills essential for them to be sympathetic and perceptive educators in the future.

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Goad and Justice (cited in Nelson and Low, 2005) stress the value of emotional intelligence in teacher training programs with regard to student teachers, contending those teachers with these abilities are more likely to remain in the field and uphold classroom management, especially for new teachers.

Conclusions

1. Students enjoy working in groups, building emotional bonds with other pupils and exchanging ideas with one another.
2. Students who are socially isolated cannot succeed more in life or in their academic endeavours.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that educational stockholders keep in mind that students' emotional intelligence, socialness, and isolation directly affect their academic achievement.

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