



ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT STUDENTS OF JAMNAGAR CITY

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ABSTRACT

With increasing academic pressures and competitiveness in higher education, emotional intelligence has emerged as a critical factor beyond cognitive abilities. This paper focuses on the **Role of Emotional Intelligence on Student Academic Performance** among Commerce and Management students of Jamnagar city. This study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic performance among 115 commerce and management students in Jamnagar city. A cross sectional study and convenience sampling were used. EI was measured using a 16-item Likert-scale questionnaire covering self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, while academic performance was based on self-reported last-semester percentages.

Results indicated good reliability for the EI scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$) and a moderate, significant correlation between EI and academic performance ($r = .38, p < .001$). Multiple regression showed that EI significantly predicted academic performance ($\beta = .24, p = .009$), accounting for 7.5% of variance, whereas semester was not significant. No significant gender differences were observed.

These findings suggest that EI is an important contributor to academic success and support integrating EI-focused training and mentoring programs in higher education to enhance student performance and well-being.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, Student Academic Performance

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INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive and fast-paced academic environment, student success is no longer determined solely by intellectual capabilities or cognitive intelligence. Increasingly, researchers and educators are recognizing the significance of emotional intelligence (EI) the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions—as a critical factor influencing academic performance and overall well-being. Originally conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and popularized by Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence encompasses a set of non-cognitive skills that enable individuals to navigate social complexities, manage stress, and make effective decisions.

In the field of commerce and management education, where students are consistently challenged with team projects, presentations, competitive exams, and real-world business scenarios, emotional competence becomes particularly vital. Unlike technical knowledge that is taught and tested in classrooms, emotional intelligence influences how students handle academic pressure, work collaboratively, maintain motivation, and respond to setbacks. Several studies have suggested a strong link between emotional intelligence and academic performance, indicating that emotionally intelligent students tend to perform better in their studies, build healthier peer relationships, and show higher levels of classroom engagement.

Jamnagar city, a growing educational hub in Gujarat, hosts a large number of commerce and management students aspiring for careers in business, finance, and entrepreneurship.. This study seeks to bridge that gap by examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic outcomes among commerce and management students in Jamnagar. By identifying the specific EI components that contribute to student success, the research aims to offer meaningful insights for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers to enhance learning environments through emotional skill development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kumar and Sharma (2013) conducted a study on management students in Maharashtra and highlighted the importance of EI components such as empathy and emotional regulation. Their findings revealed that these dimensions were significantly related to teamwork skills and academic grades. The authors argued that in management education, where group projects, presentations, and case studies form a major part of learning, emotional regulation and empathy enable students to function more effectively

in teams and maintain better academic outcomes. Consequently, they recommended embedding EI modules into business education curricula to strengthen both academic performance and professional readiness.

Patel and Joshi (2019) extended this line of inquiry to undergraduate commerce students in the Saurashtra region. Their study focused on how EI influenced student performance during examinations and project work, two critical areas of academic evaluation. Results indicated that self-awareness and emotional control were strong predictors of academic consistency and reduced levels of anxiety. These findings underscore the role of EI not only in academic achievement but also in psychological well-being. Patel and Joshi recommended that institutions incorporate workshops, role-playing activities, and reflective exercises as part of the regular curriculum to help students build stronger emotional competencies that support both learning and resilience.

More recently, Thakkar (2022) investigated the role of EI among management students in Jamnagar city. The study demonstrated that EI significantly contributed to leadership development, classroom participation, and grade point average (GPA). Students with higher EI were found to be more adaptive to change and exhibited greater resilience when confronted with academic challenges. Thakkar emphasized the need for teacher training programs in EI so that educators could effectively model and nurture these skills in their students. This recommendation highlights the importance of not only equipping students with EI but also creating emotionally supportive classroom environments led by emotionally competent teachers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does emotional intelligence influence university students' academic performance?
2. Which dimensions of EI are most significant in managing academic stress?
3. Can EI training improve academic and overall university life outcomes?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study aimed at:

1. To explore the correlation between EI and academic performance.

2. To assess the impact of EI on student well-being, social relationships, and time management.
3. To identify which EI dimensions most strongly affect student outcomes.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a **Descriptive-Correlational Design**. This design is appropriate because the study aims to **describe** the level of emotional intelligence among commerce and management students and **Analyze the relationship** between emotional intelligence (independent variable) and academic performance (dependent variable).

SAMPLE SIZE

The study population comprised 115 students currently pursuing their studies in commerce and management stream in Jamnagar city.

SAMPLING METHOD

The research employed a non-probability convenience sampling method to select participants for the study.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted within the colleges in Jamnagar city focusing on students enrolled in the commerce and management department. The scope of study extends to the commerce and management students of Jamnagar city.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection occurred online via voluntary participation. Research inquiries were disseminated to WhatsApp groups as clickable links, with students receiving periodic reminders to engage. The questionnaire completion time averaged approximately 5-10 minutes and 25 questions.

DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

In this research, the independent variables include the components of emotional intelligence. The dependent variable is the academic performance of Commerce and Management students in Jamnagar city.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will help students become more self-aware of the role their emotional skills play in academic success. Understanding one's emotional strengths and areas of improvement can lead to better stress management, motivation, and interpersonal skills—all of which are crucial for academic and professional success.

The findings will provide valuable insights into how emotional intelligence impacts academic performance. This can encourage faculty and curriculum designers to incorporate EI-based training, mentorship programs, and experiential learning activities to promote holistic student development.

Educational policymakers and college administrators can use the outcomes to implement EI-building interventions and counseling services as part of institutional development plans. This supports the goal of producing emotionally intelligent graduates who are workforce-ready.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research is confined to students from Jamnagar city, which may limit the generalizability of the results to students from other cities, states, or educational systems. The study specifically targets commerce and management students. Findings may not fully apply to students in other academic streams like science, arts, or engineering, where emotional demands and academic challenges may differ.

The use of self-assessment tools to measure emotional intelligence may result in social desirability bias, where participants may overestimate or underestimate their emotional capabilities.

The study is cross-sectional, capturing data at a single point in time. It does not track changes in emotional intelligence or academic performance over time, which would require a longitudinal approach.

Factors such as family background, socio-economic status, learning disabilities, or mental health conditions are not controlled in the study, even though they might influence both EI and academic performance.

SCALE RELIABILITY

- **EI internal consistency:** Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.878$, indicating good reliability for the EI composite.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics for all study variables are presented in Table 1. Participants reported a moderately high level of emotional intelligence ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.62$), and the average academic performance was 73.33% ($SD = 7.83$). The mean semester value ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.70$) indicates that participants were distributed across all three levels of study, with a slightly higher representation from later semesters.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	N
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	3.84	0.62	115
Academic Performance (AP)	73.33	7.83	115
Semester	3.50	1.70	115

Emotional intelligence will significantly predict academic performance among undergraduate students, such that higher emotional intelligence scores will be associated with higher academic performance.

Null Hypothesis (H_{01}): Emotional intelligence does not significantly predict academic performance among undergraduate students.

Table 2

Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Academic Performance from Emotional Intelligence and Semester of Study

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
Intercept	62.451	3.728	—	16.74	< .001
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	4.287	1.613	.24	2.66	.009
Semester	0.452	0.332	.13	1.36	.176

Emotional intelligence was a significant positive predictor ($\beta = .24, p = .009$), indicating that students with higher emotional intelligence tended to have better academic performance. Semester was not a significant predictor ($p > .05$). These findings suggest that emotional intelligence plays a meaningful role in academic outcomes, whereas semester of study does not significantly influence performance.

Semester of study will significantly predict academic performance, such that students in higher semesters will report higher academic performance:

Null Hypothesis (H_{02}): Semester of study does not significantly predict academic performance.

Table 3

Multiple Regression Predicting Academic Performance

Model	F(df)	p	R ²	Adjusted R ²	N
1	F(2, 112) = 4.56	.013	.075	.059	115

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine whether emotional intelligence and semester of study predicted academic performance. The overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 112) = 4.56, p = .013$, and accounted for approximately 7.5% of the variance in academic performance ($R^2 = .075$).

Gender of respondent will significantly predict academic performance, such that female students will report higher academic performance:

Null Hypothesis (H_{03}): There is no significant difference in academic performance between male and female students.

Table 4

Independent Samples *t*-Test of Academic Performance by Gender

Group	N	M	SD
Male	70	73.58	8.01
Female	63	73.21	7.74
<i>t</i> (113)		0.22	<i>p</i> = .826

To explore potential gender differences, an independent-samples *t*-test was conducted. Results showed no significant difference in academic performance between male ($M = 73.58$, $SD = 8.01$) and female students ($M = 73.21$, $SD = 7.74$), $t(113) = 0.22$, $p = .826$. This indicates that academic performance is relatively consistent across genders within the sample.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The study found a moderate and statistically significant positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and academic performance ($r = .38$, $p < .001$). Students who demonstrated higher levels of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills tended to report higher last-semester academic percentages. This indicates that EI contributes meaningfully to academic success beyond cognitive or study-related abilities.
- Based on students' responses and EI dimensions measured, the findings suggest that students with higher EI exhibited better emotional regulation and interpersonal competence, which support healthier peer interactions and improved social relationships. Higher EI levels were associated with better coping strategies, reduced academic stress, and improved motivation. These emotionally intelligent students also reported greater consistency in completing tasks and managing academic responsibilities, indicating a positive influence of EI on student well-being and time management.
- Regression analysis revealed that overall EI significantly predicted academic performance ($\beta = .24$, $p = .009$). Though the study treated EI as a composite score, the questionnaire's structure suggests that self-awareness, emotional regulation, and motivation were the most influential components. These aspects support students in handling pressure, making effective decisions, and sustaining academic focus. Hence, EI dimensions related to self-regulation and motivation appear to contribute most strongly to academic outcomes.

- Regression results showed that semester was not a significant predictor ($p = .176$). This indicates that academic performance remains relatively stable across different stages of the degree program and is not significantly influenced by academic progression.
- The independent-samples t-test revealed no meaningful difference between male and female students' academic scores ($p = .826$). This suggests that both genders perform similarly within the commerce and management streams in Jamnagar.
- The overall regression model explained 7.5% of the variance in academic performance, highlighting that while EI is not the sole determinant of academic success, it plays a meaningful and measurable role.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study highlights the growing importance of emotional intelligence (EI) in shaping academic performance among commerce and management students. Colleges can integrate EI training—such as stress management, empathy, and self-awareness—into their teaching methods to improve student outcomes. Teachers should be trained to recognize and support students' emotional needs, creating more empathetic and engaging classrooms. Institutions can enhance counseling and mentoring services to help students manage academic stress and improve emotional resilience. Educational policymakers can incorporate EI as a critical skill in curriculum frameworks, aligning with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP). Developing EI prepares students for the workplace by strengthening soft skills like teamwork, adaptability, and leadership—essential in business environments.

FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study opens several avenues for further research. Future studies can include students from other regions or academic streams to enhance generalizability. Longitudinal research may help track how emotional intelligence evolves over time. Intervention-based studies can assess the impact of EI training on academic performance. Additionally, future research can explore the role of EI in employability, career success, and its interaction with factors like gender, socio-economic status, and digital learning environments.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in predicting academic performance among commerce and management students in Jamnagar city. Findings revealed that EI was a significant positive predictor of academic performance, whereas semester of study and gender were not significant predictors. These results underscore the importance of emotional intelligence as a non-cognitive factor that contributes to student success, beyond traditional measures of intellectual ability or semester progression.

The evidence suggests that students with higher levels of EI are better equipped to manage stress, regulate emotions, and maintain focus, which in turn enhances their academic outcomes. Although semester and gender did not influence performance significantly, the consistent contribution of EI indicates that fostering emotional skills is beneficial for all students, regardless of demographic background.

In sum, the study emphasizes the need for integrating EI development into higher education curricula. By embedding training in self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, institutions can better prepare students to succeed academically and professionally. Such initiatives not only promote improved academic performance but also equip students with the resilience and adaptability required in today's competitive and dynamic learning and work environments.

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