

## Predicting Academic Success of University Students: The Symbiotic Role of Emotional Intelligence and Student Satisfaction

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### Abstract

Students' satisfaction has always been remained the center of educational achievement. Investigating the feelings of contentment with one's academic achievements is crucial, as it provides deeper insights into students' psychological well-being and long-term success, that how satisfaction influences motivation, resilience, and future aspirations among students. The objective of the study was to investigate the magnitude and direction of relationship between emotional intelligence and student's satisfaction towards academic achievement and to analyze the magnitude of effect of the relationship between them. For this purpose, cross-sectional survey research was conducted on the university students of three renowned universities of South Punjab-Pakistan i.e. Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Islamia University Bahawalpur and Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan. Total population of these universities was N= 43153. Sample size n=385 was determined through Krejcie and Morgan table (1970) for sample size determination. Data were collected through questionnaire based on socio-economic status and demographic profile, emotional intelligence scale by Bar-On (2006) and student satisfaction scale by Fieger (2012). Data were entered into SPSS-21 and basic profile was presented through frequency and percentage meanwhile the hypothetical model for association and effect were tested through Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Linear Regression model. Findings of the study a linear positive relationship between emotional intelligence and there was also significant effect of each predictor of emotional intelligence on the student's satisfaction towards academic achievement. This study concluded that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in enhancing student satisfaction in education. By promoting better academic performance, effective stress management, and positive interpersonal relationships, EI contributes to a more fulfilling and successful educational experience.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, student's satisfaction, university, academic achievement, South Punjab

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence from the definition of Salovey and Mayer (1990) means the ability to identify emotions, their meanings and appraise, being able to describe the feeling and learn how to regulate them. This psychological construct has of recent, received considerable attention in research on educational psychology, because of its relevance in raising performance of students beyond the cognitive domain. Therefore, in the context of academic environment it plays the major role because it influences a lot of spheres of student life including academic performance, stress level, relationship which in turn contribute to students' satisfaction. Other studies have also shown

that there is an improvement in the performances of children in school once their EI has been promoted. For instance, Sánchez-Álvarez, et al., (2016) pointed out that the students with higher level of EI are likely to perform better academically. This is because the emotionally intelligent students are able to effectively handle pressure, stick to their focus and motivation while studying (Sanchez-Alvarez, Martos & Extremera, 2020).

In a similar vein, other advantages of high EI entail; stress management is another major advantage of high EI. Literally, it means that young students who possess effective EI skills have better possibilities to cope with stress related to schools and academic performances. That way, it employs adaptive coping strategies that regulate the level of stress to be incurred to their well-being. Not only does it enhance academic achievement but also has a core part of a positive learning process (Sanchez-Alvarez, Martos & Extremera, 2020). Moreover, communication with other people also affects the satisfaction of students and its crucial component is emotional intelligence. High entry acumen correlate with the development of good rapport with fellow students, teachers and other stakeholders in the education system. Such relationships foster care, cooperation, and association which all contribute to the satisfaction of the students (Sánchez-Álvarez, et al., 2016). Therefore, there is added value for educational curricula and the inclusion of EI development as a useful tool to ensure both emotional and academic growth. Measures aimed at increasing the level of EI may have several positive effects; it may also be beneficial to increase the provision of opportunities for students to learn essential life skills that can be useful not only at the educational institution but also in other spheres of life. For instance, programs that stress affect management, consciousness, and social skills must have spared scholastic achievement, psychological health, and well-being. Therefore, it is pivotal to understand the role of EI in the context of Pakistan especially South Punjab because people from other cultures mostly might not express emotion in the same way while operating in different social dynamics. Thus, a cross-sectional study can highlight how EI interventions can be adapted to Pakistani students to enhance education strategies and policies that affect them.

### **1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it highlights the critical role of emotional intelligence (EI) in reshaping education policy and curricula in Pakistan, particularly in South Punjab, to promote holistic student development. By integrating EI into academic programs, policymakers and educators can address not only learning outcomes but also students' emotional well-being, mental health, and social engagement. Second, it encourages Pakistani institutions to adopt EI training programs, enhancing student participation, reducing stress, and improving performance. Given the rising mental health concerns among students in Pakistan, EI courses can teach emotion management and promote strong mental health. Potentially improving education quality and student satisfaction. This study findings thus contributes to inform training initiatives to reduce stress, enhance participation, and elevate educational standards, while contributing to global knowledge and collaboration for a balanced, quality education system.

### **1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- 1- To find out the socio-economic status and demographic profile of the student.
- 2- To analyze the magnitude and direction of the relationship between emotional intelligence and students' satisfaction toward academic achievements among university students.
- 3- To investigate the magnitude of the effect of the relationship between emotional intelligence and students' satisfaction toward academic achievements among university students.

### 1.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

**H1.** Emotional intelligence is positively related with student's satisfaction towards academic achievement in the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan.

**H2.** There is significant effect of emotional intelligence on student's satisfaction towards academic achievement in the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

### Emotional intelligence

Mayer et al. (2008) declared that emotional intelligence encompasses one's ability to get engaged into the information processing by one's self and the emotion of others as well and also the ability to use the information as guide to think and behave". According to this model, individual who have higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to pay more attention to use, empathize and manage the emotions and these skills play adaptive functions that potentially benefit to themselves and others. Mayer and Salovey has clarified that there are four primary categories of emotional intelligence based on ability-based model of intelligence such as "perceive one's self and emotions of others", "use of the emotions", "emotion regulation" and "management of those emotions". Perceived emotions refer to the capacity and competence to rightly identify and define ones and other's emotional state. While use of emotions means usage of emotions for guiding the cognitive system and facilitate thought process. Similarly, emotional regulation encompasses the processes in which feelings are monetized and reshaped by a person (Ishaq, Shabbir & Khan, 2020).

### Gardner's theory of Emotional Intelligence

Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences serves as the main theoretical basis for emotional intelligence. The idea is that intelligence is not a single type, which is typically determined by a person's ability to acquire particular knowledge, but rather that intelligence is made up of different cognitive abilities (Gardner, 1983). Any person can reach this "small set of human intellectual potentials" if they have the right resources (Gardner, 1983, p. 278). Linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal are some of these intellectual skills (Gardner, 1983). Surroundings and care tailored to each individual's potential intelligences. Gardner's theory provides the main framework for emotional intelligence (Gardner, 1983, p. 278). Linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal are some of these intellectual skills (Gardner, 1983). The personal intelligences, which include "the capacity instantly to effect discriminations among the feelings and, eventually, to label them, to enmesh them in symbolic codes, to draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's behavior," are the intelligences most closely associated with emotional intelligence (Gardner, 1983, p. 239). Intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence are embodied within personal intelligences. Intrapersonal intelligence, in its most basic form, is the capacity to discriminate between pleasant and painful emotions.

An individual will employ intrapersonal intelligence to develop the capacity to differentiate between increasingly complicated sets of emotions on a deeper level (Gardner, 1983). These are essentially the differences that a person says about themselves. Interpersonal intelligence is thought to be more external since it concentrates on the capacity to recognize and comprehend the emotions of others, even though it also includes the differentiation between complex feelings. Perceiving and differentiating emotions in other people is a component of interpersonal smarts. In its most basic form, a youngster makes use of this capacity to gauge the emotional states of people in their immediate vicinity. In a more advanced form, someone can ascertain the feelings and moods of others, both the visible and invisible ones. There are these two intelligences in every

situation where social interaction is involved. As a result, emotional intelligence is the link between intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence since both need attention to and understanding of one's own self-image. Gardner (1983) observed that this "sense of self" encapsulates a person's equilibrium between internalized emotions brought on by outside forces (p. 242). Acknowledging this equilibrium within oneself might facilitate the identification of similar attributes in others.

### **2.1 Emotional Intelligence, Students' Satisfaction and Academic Success**

There is some, however scant, research on the relationship between students' emotional intelligence and satisfaction in higher education. According to research by Holt (2007), the majority of undergraduate students who participated in a summer program at a community college in California expressed satisfaction with their educational experience (48% being moderately satisfied and 29% being very satisfied). These same students' sample mean for EI, as determined by MSCEIT, was lower than the standardized mean, with the lowest branch being Understanding Emotions. There was a favorable correlation between satisfaction and the Social Management Task in the MSCEIT score (Holt, 2007). According to Grace's (2004) research, emotional intelligence domains influenced a few satisfaction metrics for undergraduate nursing program participants. Seventy-one percent of the student body overall expressed high or moderate satisfaction with the university. More particular, the usage of emotion was rated lower by those who expressed high levels of satisfaction with their professional advancement. On the other hand, people who performed well on the emotion usage scale expressed greater satisfaction with their internal personal development.

Another statistically significant predictor of the degrees of satisfaction with artistic and human growth was the perception of emotions. More studies concentrate on general life satisfaction but also on EI in higher education. Murphy (2006) discovered a weak relationship between community college students' life satisfaction and their overall EI as well as all EI components. All associations, meanwhile, did not reach significance. Additionally, Palomera and Brackett (2006) discovered no significant correlation between life happiness and Spanish undergraduate students' perceived EI. However, another study (Ghorbanshiroudi, Khalatbari, Salehi, Bahri, & Keikhyfarzaneh, 2011) on students at an Indian university suggests that there was a significant, positive relationship between EI and life satisfaction. This suggests that improving social relations and developing empathy for others can help with life satisfaction.

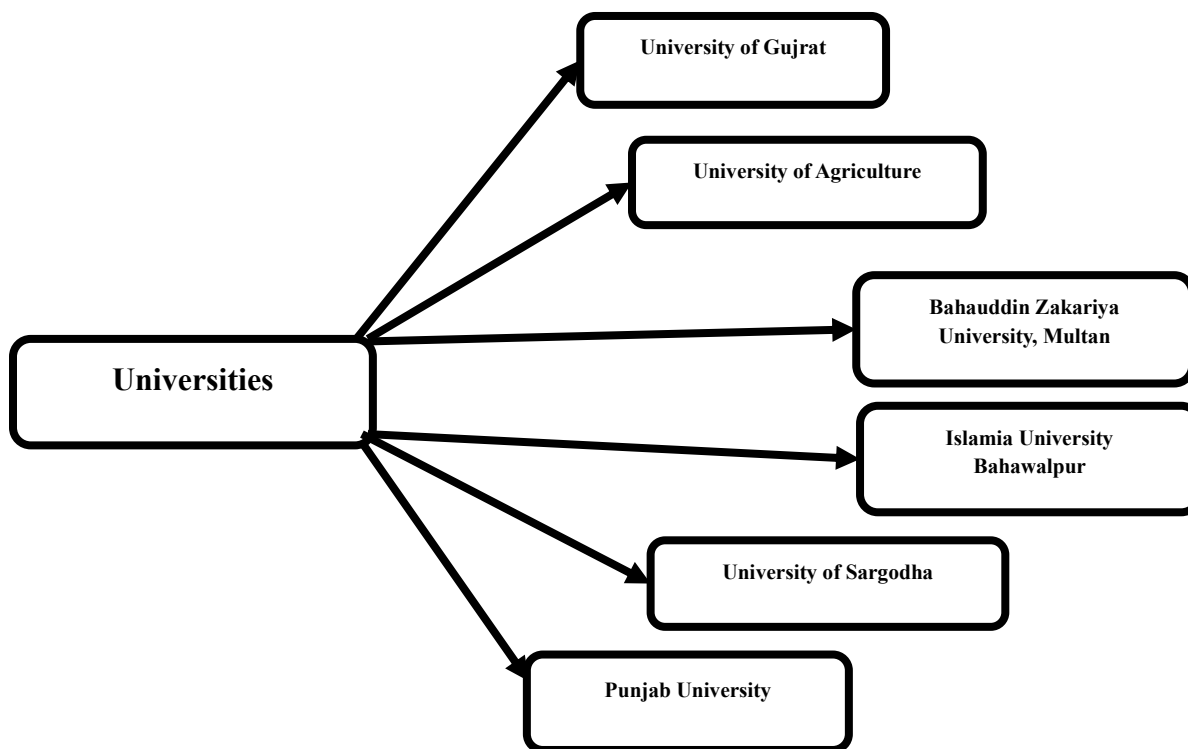
## **3. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The university structural pathology directed that there are three main universities in South Punjab having the population 43153 students. By focusing on these structural conditions principal author designed this study.

### **3.1 Participants and Procedure**

A total number of N=385 students from various departments of three renown universities of South Punjab i.e. Bahauddin Zakariaya University Multan, Islamia University Bahawalpur and Ghazi University Dera Ghazi Khan were approached. The inclusion criteria were based that students must have passed one semester in the university in any of the subsequent program such as BS, Masters, M.Phil. Or Ph.D. and presently registered in the university for at least six months (Ashraf et al., 2020). For the recruitment of study participants researcher used multi-stage sampling technique. In the first stage, researcher had randomly selected three districts from the six districts of South Punjab. In the second stage, researcher selected one university from each district. In the third stage, researcher randomly distributed consent letter among the students in order to check their willingness for the participation. Those who showed their willingness to participate were selected

by de-facto method approach. As it has been mentioned above that total population was 43153, researcher drawn sample size of N=385 from Krejcie and Morgan table (1970).



### 3.2 Measurement

For this purpose, the author had divided the questionnaire into several parts. i.e. (a) socio-economic status and demographic profile, (b) predictor variable (emotional intelligence) and (c) the outcome variable (student's satisfaction). Part (a) demographic characteristics of the participants were based on the variables such as age, level of education, monthly family income, gender, place of residence, family type, and residential area. These variables were retrieved from Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (2013-14). Consequently, emotional intelligence was used as independent variables. Researcher adapted emotional intelligence scale constructed by Bar-On (2006) based on intrapersonal relationships, interpersonal relationships, stress management, adaptability and general mood. Meanwhile, student satisfaction was measured through Student satisfaction scale by Fieger (2012) grouped into following themes; teaching, assessment, generic skills and learning experiences. Responses were recorded through five-point Likert scale ranges from (1=strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree to 5=strongly agree).

### 4. DATA ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

For coding, recoding and transforming the variables of interest, data were entered into SPSS-21. At the first step, socio-economic status and demographic profile of the students were presented through frequency and percentage. After that the relationship between predictor and criterion variable was analyzed through correlation coefficient and regression analysis.

## 5. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

### a. Descriptive statistics

*Table- 1: distribution of the respondents with respect to their socio-economic status and demographic profile*

Sr. No.	Item	Categories	F (%)
1	Age	18-24	189 (49)
		25-30	99(25.7)
		>30	97(25.1)
2	Gender of the respondent	Male	201(52.2)
		Female	184(47.7)
3	Level of Education	BS	203(52.7)
		M.Phil.	145(37.6)
		Ph.D.	37(9.6)
4	Place of Residence	Rural	186(48.3)
		Urban	199(51.6)
5	Monthly Family Income	15000PKR-30000PKR	84(21.8)
		31000PKR-45000PKR	96(25)
		46000PKR-60000PKR	46(12)
		>60000PKR	159(41.2)
6	Family Type	Joint Family	204(53)
		Nuclear family	56(14.5)
		Extended family	125(32.4)

*N=385, f=frequency, %=percentage*

The above-mentioned Table-1 shows the frequency distribution of the respondents with respect to their socio-economic status and demographic characteristics. Findings of the study showed that there were (198; 49%) respondents who were between the age of 18–24-year-old, while (99; 25.7%) of the respondents were belonging to the age group of 25-30-year and remaining (97; 25.1%) were above 30 years. The next item was about the gender of the respondent (201; 52.2%) were male respondents and (183; 47.7%) were females who took part in the study. When they were asked about their level of education, (203; 52.7%) mentioned that they were studying in BS, while (145; 37.6%) reported they were doing Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) and remaining (37; 9.6%) said they were doing Ph.D. in various departments. The next question was about their place of residence, (199; 51.6%) mentioned their place of residence in urban area and (186; 48.3%) reported their place of residence is in rural area. Majority of the respondents (204; 53%) were living in joint family system, while (125; 32.4%) were living in extended family system and (56; 14.5%) were living in the nuclear family system. When they were asked about their monthly family income, most of the respondents (159; 41.2%) reported their monthly income more than 60000 PKR, While, (96; 25%) were reported their monthly income from 31000PKR-45000PKR but the remaining (84; 21.8%) and (46; 12%) said their monthly family income is between 15000PKR-30000PKR and 46000PKR-60000PKR respectively.

### Inferential statistics

#### Pearson correlation coefficient

**H1.** Emotional intelligence is positively related with student's satisfaction towards academic achievement in the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan.

**Table- 2**

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4
Emotional intelligence	28.1	4.925	r	1	.549**	.397**
			p		.000	.000
Students' satisfaction	25.63	4.763	r		1	.545**
			p			.000

Note: n=385, M=Mean, SD= Standard Deviation,  $p < 0.01 < 0.05^{**}$

The above-mentioned Table- 2 shows the magnitude and direction of the independent and dependent variables of the study. Findings of the correlation coefficient showed a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and students' satisfaction in the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan which means if the emotional intelligence quotient is high among the students, they will be more satisfied with their academic achievements.

### Linear Regression model

**H2.** There is significant effect of predictors of emotional intelligence on student's satisfaction towards academic achievement in the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan

**Table- 3**

Dependent Variable	Interpersonal relationship		Intrapersonal relationships		Stress management		Adaptability		General mood	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Students' Satisfaction	0.885	0.59	.116	0.66	.0755	.049	0.060	.088	0.033	.064
<b>B</b>	0.753**		0.90		0.699		0.046		0.28	
<b>T</b>	18.45		1.764		15.65		.0683		0.532	
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.565		.008		0.48		0.44		0.511	

n=384, B= Beta coefficient, SE= Standard error  $p < 0.05^{**}$

Table- 3 shows the magnitude of effect of predictors of emotional intelligence i.e. intrapersonal relationships, interpersonal relationship, stress management, adaptability, general mood and their effect on student's satisfaction separately. Findings of the step wise linear regression showed that there is a significant effect of each predictor of emotional intelligence on students' satisfaction towards academic achievement in the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan.

### DISCUSSION

Emotional intelligence (EI) is now receiving much attention in educational psychology as a factor that may influence students' achievement and their overall satisfaction with schooling. The current discussion aims at synthesizing the information about EI and students' satisfaction with their academic performance based on the findings of the studies.

The main objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and student's satisfaction towards academic achievement in the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan. Emotional intelligence is, according to Salovey & Mayer (1990), the individual's capacity to assess and effectively regulate his own emotions as well those of others. Goleman (1995) added to this by asserting that self-awareness, self-control, drive, concern for others, and social aptitudes are learnable components of the EI. From the above list, the following are some of the qualities that are important in pace setting for learning and relationships with other people in academic environments. Findings from the correlation coefficient showed a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and student's satisfaction towards academic achievement. Which means if the higher scores of emotional intelligence are directly linked with students' satisfaction among the universities of South Punjab-Pakistan.

A number of research works have confirmed this cross-section as the fact with potential relation between EI and academic performance. For instance, Parker et al (2004) using student self-report method established that when a student has a high EI, the student is likely to perform well academically. This could be because, emotionally intelligent students are able to cope with stress, even maintain motivation and continue to focus of their studies.

It is therefore important to establish how students' experience at school – their psychological state as well as their performance – is affected by some of these factors. EI is pivotal in this regard. Qualter et al. (2009) concluded that the students who showed more EI had the propensity to express more satisfaction on aspects concerning academic session. This is probably due to their capability to deal with academic pressure and foster friendly relations with fellow students and trainers. Hannah, Zeidner, and Morris (2011) pointed out that students with high EI are able to cope well with stress hence eliminating any accruing anxiety which in turn enhances the student's capacity to deal with academic challenges. These are also in lined with the findings of regression model in current study which shows that there is strong link between stress management, interpersonal relationship and student's satisfaction.

Likewise, other findings such as significant effect of general mood, adaptability and intrapersonal relationships also lead towards student's satisfaction in academic activities in university. These results are similar to the findings of prior studies which discovered that EI helps in interaction and rapport with peers and teachers for enhancing the general educational climate (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011). To some extent, high EI enhances self-efficiency, which increases students' academic self-confidence and their satisfaction concerning their academic achievements (Schutte et al. , 2001). Also, emotional intelligence increases self-fulfillment that is useful to accomplish academic objectives and to find personal satisfaction in overall academic process (Petrides, Frederickson & Furnham, 2004).

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE**

The consequence of the study regarding the degree of influence of EI on academic satisfaction has profound implications with reference to the educational field. Integrating EI training and development in to the students' curriculum can assist in the subject improvement because it continues to boost the students' emotional skills, ultimately leading to their enhanced academic achievement and satisfaction. Strategies when it comes to EI include training as well as developing activities such as mindfulness, stress management as well as social skills.

Although previous studies emphasize the role of EI in students' educational satisfaction, there is a need to extend the research attention in the following domains such as cultural Differences examining on how cultural differences play out in the EI and academic satisfaction relationship. Compared investigations of the efficacy of particular forms of EI with regards to various learning environments.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, emotional intelligence plays a critical role in enhancing student satisfaction in education. By promoting better academic performance, effective stress management, and positive interpersonal relationships, EI contributes to a more fulfilling and successful educational experience. Educational institutions should consider integrating EI development into their programs to support students' holistic growth and well-being. By fostering emotional intelligence, educators can help students navigate the complexities of academic life, ultimately leading to higher levels of satisfaction and success in their educational journeys.

Pakistan's education system faces numerous challenges, including high dropout rates, low academic performance, and limited resources. A cross-sectional survey on the impact of emotional

intelligence (EI) on student satisfaction can provide insights into how developing EI can help mitigate these issues by enhancing students' coping mechanisms, academic performance, and overall well-being.

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