

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students

Abiya Grace Mathew^{1*}

ABSTRACT

The present paper examines emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. 140 students between the age group of 18-25 from different colleges in India were taken. To evaluate emotional intelligence Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale (BEIS-10) was used, and to evaluate academic stress, Academic Stress Scale (ASS) was used. To analyze the obtained data, correlation, regression, and t-test were employed. The present study's result indicates a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress. The t-test results indicate that there is a significant difference in emotional intelligence between psychology and non-psychology students. Also, there is a significant difference in academic stress between psychology and non-psychology students. The study provides insight into emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Academic Stress, Psychology Students, Non-Psychology Students*

Emotional intelligence is a concept proposed by US psychologists Peter Salovey and John D Mayer in 1997. According to Mayer and Salovey, Emotional intelligence is “a type of intelligence that involves the ability to process emotional information and use it in reasoning and other cognitive activities.” The capacity to control and recognize emotions is referred to as emotional intelligence. It exemplifies managing and controlling emotions (Barrett, 2015). Self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management are its four defining characteristics. Self-management is the capacity to regulate one's own emotions, ideas, and behavior and to modify behavior in response to changing circumstances. Understanding or recognizing one's own emotions and how they influence thoughts and behavior is referred to as self-awareness. To be socially conscious requires empathy. It is the capacity to comprehend social groupings and their dynamics as well as the feelings of others. Understanding how to establish and sustain positive connections through efficient communication is known as relationship management.

Academic stress is defined as the response of the body to academic demands that exceed the adaptive capacities of students. Academic stress may originate from high expectations of the family or the demands placed on them by society. Also, it can come from a desire for

¹MSc. Psychology, Kristu Jayanti College, Bengaluru, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: April 28, 2023; Revision Received: September 18, 2023; Accepted: September 21, 2023

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students

perfection, commitments, or a heavy workload. It can reduce motivation and hinder academic achievement. This in turn leads to higher rates of college dropouts. Academic stress is defined as the body's reaction to academic demands that outpace students' capacity for adaptation (Wilks, 2008).

Need and Significance of the Study

In this world, people interact with diverse challenging situations in their daily lives. People are going through many kinds of stresses in order to meet their daily needs. Nowadays students experience a wide range of academic stress such as the timely submission of assignments, records, and the greater importance of marks than practical skills in the Indian education system. As psychology students study stress, stressors, and how to deal with it, it may or may not help them to deal with stress more than those who study non-psychology subjects such as medicine, engineering, paramedical courses, and other courses. Also, not many studies happened on emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. Therefore, the present study intends to understand how emotional intelligence is related to academic stress, especially between psychology students and students who are studying non-psychology subjects.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Braimah, M. et. al. in 2022 conducted a study on academic stress and emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in selected universities in Ghana. The sample consisted of 460 undergraduate students from three universities in Ghana. The study found that there is a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic stress, and there is no significant difference between emotional intelligence and academic stress based on gender.

Khorasani, E. C. et. al. in 2022 conducted a study on the influence of emotional intelligence on academic stress. The sample consisted of 200 students. And the components of emotional intelligence predicted 27.1% of the variance in students' academic stress. The experimental group demonstrated a statistically significant difference in the mean of each element of emotional intelligence and the overall score of academic stress, which ran concurrently with the educational effect. The study concluded by saying that the student's academic stress can be significantly reduced by educational interventions based on emotional intelligence components.

Kashif, M. F., & Mehddi, F. (2022) conducted a study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among undergraduate students. The sample consisted of 600 undergraduate students selected using proportionate stratified sampling from different colleges in Lahore. The findings demonstrated that students with greater EI experience less academic stress than others because they are more aware of their emotions.

Roy, S. et. al. in 2021 conducted a study on emotional intelligence and academic stress among undergraduate students. The sample consisted of 119 students between the age group of 18 to 24 from various colleges in Kerala. The study found that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress. Also found that there is a significant difference in emotional intelligence based on gender. Males obtained higher emotional intelligence than females. And there is no significant difference in academic stress among males and females.

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students

Rehana, R. in 2018 conducted a study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress of university students. The sample consisted of 504 students, in which the data was collected by stratified random sampling. The results of the study indicated that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress. Males experience a higher level of emotional intelligence than academic stress, whereas females experience higher levels of academic stress than emotional intelligence.

Jayaraman, S. K., & Javid, A. (2016) conducted a study on emotional intelligence, test anxiety, and academic stress among students. The sample consisted of 200 students within the age range of 18 to 23. According to the findings of this study, emotional intelligence is high for female students than for male students, and students majoring in humanities and education have higher emotional intelligence than students majoring in allied medical sciences, business and applied arts, or science and technology. Also found that there is no significant difference in academic stress based on gender, but there is a difference between students studying science and technology and students studying allied medical sciences, business, and applied arts.

Sekar, M., & Alagarsamy, S. (2012) conducted a study on the role of emotional intelligence in managing academic stress among engineering students in Tamil Nadu. The sample consists of 510 engineering students. An examination of the correlation reveals a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress. The findings of the regression analysis demonstrate the importance of the academic stress variable as a predictor of emotional intelligence.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives

1. To understand the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology students and non-psychology students.
2. To understand the influence of emotional intelligence on academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students.
3. To understand the difference in emotional intelligence between psychology and non-psychology students.
4. To understand the difference in academic stress between psychology and non-psychology students.

Variables and Operational Definitions

- **Emotional Intelligence:** Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand emotional information in order to deal with a variety of stressful situations that may arise.
- **Academic Stress:** Academic stress is mental distress regarding academic challenges or failure, which eventually leads to academic burnout.
- **Psychology and Non-Psychology Students:** Psychology students are those who are studying psychology as a professional course between the age range of 18 to 25 years. Non-Psychology students are those who are studying courses other than psychology like medicine, engineering, architecture, law, paramedical courses, and so on, within the age range of 18 to 25.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology students and non-psychology students.

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students

2. There is no significant influence of emotional intelligence on academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students.
3. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between psychology and non-psychology students.
4. There is no significant difference in academic stress between psychology and non-psychology students.

Sample

The sample consists of 140 students (70 psychology and 70 non-psychology students) of the age range of 18 to 25 from different colleges in India.

Inclusion Criteria

College-going students of the age range 18 to 25, who are studying psychology and non-psychology subjects are included in the study.

Exclusion Criteria

Age groups other than young adults (18-25) are excluded.

Assessment Tools

- **Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale- 10 (BIES-10):** The 10-item Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Davies K A, Lane, A. M., Devonport, T. J., & Scott, J. A (2010) is a condensed form of the 33-item scale EIS scale. The Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale is based on Salovey and Mayer's theory. A panel of experts evaluated the EIS's substance validity to start developing the BEIS. The affective content was evaluated first, followed by its theoretical applicability to Salovey and Mayer's model. Over a 2-week span, test-retest reliability was also established. There were five options for each item, ranging from "Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree." The scores for each answer ranged from 1 to 5.
- **Academic Stress Scale:** The academic Stress Scale is a 40-item rating scale that was created by Kim (1970). Rajendran and Kaliappan adapted the scale to Indian circumstances in 1990. There are 40 items on the scale. There were five options for each item, ranging from "No Stress" to "Extreme Stress." The scores for each answer are 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively. The authors determined the tool's content validity based on expert review and item validity through item analysis. It was discovered that the test-retest correlation for 50 people with a 25-day interval was 0.82.

Research Design

A quantitative research approach was adopted, in which a convenient sampling method was used to collect the data. A questionnaire on emotional intelligence and academic stress was sent online, with the inclusion and exclusion criteria considered, and a total sample of 140 was gathered.

Statistical Technique

Inferential statistics and descriptive statistics were utilized in this study. Mean and standard deviation are descriptive statistics measures. Correlation, linear regression, and t-tests are inferential statistics measures used with SPSS software of version 25.

RESULTS

To test the first hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students, the correlation method is used.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress.

Variables	N	M	SD	1	2
1. Emotional Intelligence	140	38.19	5.76	-	
2. Academic Stress	140	89.43	27.16	.205*	-

* $p < .05$ (two-tailed)

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the correlation between emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. The mean and standard deviation of the variable emotional intelligence is 38.19 and 5.76 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of the variable academic stress is 89.43 and 27.16 respectively. Here mean of academic stress is higher than that of emotional intelligence.

The correlation coefficient obtained is .205, and the significance value is .015, which is less than .05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. And accepts the alternate hypothesis that a significant positive relationship exists between emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students.

Table 2 Regression Table Predicting Emotional Intelligence with Academic Stress

Variable	B	β	SE	t	p
(Constant)	58.41		15.26	3.82	0.001
Emotional Intelligence	.812	.172	.395	2.05	.042

Note: $R^2 = .172$, Adjusted $R^2 = .023$

Table 2 shows the regression table predicting emotional intelligence with academic stress. The R^2 is .172, the adjusted R^2 is .023, and the B and β values of emotional intelligence are .812 and .172 respectively. It was found that there is a significant influence of emotional intelligence on academic stress with a significance level of 0.05. Hence the second hypothesis is rejected. And found that the change in academic stress has a 2.3% influence on emotional intelligence.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of the T-test

Variables	Psychology		Non-psychology		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Emotional Intelligence	40.13	4.125	36.26	6.502	4.206**
Academic Stress	94.59	23.783	84.27	29.430	2.281*

** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the t-test. The mean and standard deviation of emotional intelligence of psychology students are 40.13 and 4.125 respectively, and of non-psychology students are 36.26 and 6.502 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of academic stress of psychology students are 94.59 and 23.783 respectively, and of non-psychology students are 84.27 and 29.430 respectively. From the table, it is evident that, for psychology students, the mean of emotional intelligence is higher than that of non-

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students

psychology students. As well as psychology students have a higher mean of academic stress than non-psychology students. Psychology students have more ability to understand their own emotions and the emotions of others and can deal effectively with difficult situations than non-psychology students. At the same time, psychology students experience higher academic stress but the insight into the situations and coping strategies help to become more resilient compared to non-psychology students.

The t value for emotional intelligence is 4.206 and for academic stress is 2.281, which is greater than 1.96. The significance value of emotional intelligence is .001, which is significant at the .001 level. Therefore, the second hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is a significant difference in emotional intelligence between psychology and non-psychology students. The significance value of academic stress is .024, which is less than .05. Therefore, the third hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is a significant difference in academic stress between psychology and non-psychology students.

DISCUSSION

The present study seeks to investigate emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. The sample consists of 140 students within the age range of 18 to 25. A convenient sampling method was used to collect the data. The tools used in the study are Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale-10 and Academic Stress Scale. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS.

The findings of the present study show that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. Academic stress has a significant influence on emotional intelligence in psychology and non-psychology. Similar studies found that emotional intelligence and academic stress are correlated positively (Roy, S. et. al., 2021). Another study also revealed the same that there is a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic stress (Bramah, M. et. al., 2022). Also, it was found that there is a significant influence of emotional intelligence on academic stress, which is supported by a study, that emotional intelligence has an influence of 27.1% on academic stress among medical science students (Khorasani, E.C. et. al., 2022).

In the present study, the results found that there is a significant difference in emotional intelligence between psychology and non-psychology students, also, there is a significant difference in academic stress between psychology and non-psychology students. Studies based on gender revealed that there is a difference in emotional intelligence. Males have more emotional intelligence compared to females, and there is no difference in academic stress based on gender (Roy, S. et. al., 2021). A study based on subjects studying revealed that there is a difference in academic stress between students studying science and technology and students studying allied medical sciences, business, and applied arts (Jayaraman, S. K., & Javid, A., 2016).

In the present study, it was found that emotional intelligence is higher for psychology students than for non-psychology students, as well as, academic stress is higher for psychology students than non-psychology students. Psychology students face more academic stress, but their understanding of events and coping mechanisms help them become more robust and emotionally savvy when compared to non-psychology students. Studies contradicting this result suggested that students with poor emotional intelligence suffered

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students

higher academic stress; such students will have a limited ability to reason about their emotions, which hampers their thinking and impacts academic stress (Subramanyam,2016).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study aims to analyze emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. The sample consists of 70 psychology students and 70 non-psychology students, totaling 140 students. A convenient sampling method was adopted for data collection. Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale-10 and Academic Stress Scale are the tools used to collect data. And the gathered data were statistically analyzed using SPSS software.

Depending on the findings the study concluded that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. There is a significant influence of emotional intelligence on academic stress among psychology and non-psychology students. There is a significant difference in emotional intelligence between psychology and non-psychology students. And there is a significant difference in academic stress between psychology and non-psychology students.

Implications

As psychology students experience more academic stress than other students, it is helpful to plan appropriate future interventions to reduce academic stress. Giving students the necessary instruction on how to handle stress and other facets of life. So that they will learn how to regulate their moods and emotions as well as how to balance everything.

Limitations

- Convenient sampling method was used to select the sample.
- Age groups other than 18 to 25 are excluded.
- The questionnaire had to be completed online by participants. This might have interfered with the participants' ability to concentrate, leading to inaccurate answers.

Suggestions for Future Research

- Similar studies can be conducted using various other variables among the same group.
- Random sampling method could be adopted for more accuracy.
- Studies can be conducted by including a greater number of samples.

Ethics Followed

- Prior to the study, the participant's consent was taken.
- The feelings of the participants were not questioned in any manner.
- Participants' details and responses were kept private.
- Individuals taking part in the study were kept anonymous.
- The participant's data were not utilized for any other reason than the agreed-upon research project.

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Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students

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Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Mathew, A.G. (2023). Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress in Psychology and Non-Psychology Students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(3), 3890-3897. DIP:18.01.361.20231103, DOI:10.25215/1103.361