

# Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance among Middle School Students

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**Abstract:** *The present study provides a comprehensive examination of the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic performance among middle school students. Emotional intelligence, recognized as a multidimensional construct, significantly influences students' ability to regulate emotions, manage stress, maintain interpersonal relationships, and adapt to academic demands. In contemporary educational environments characterized by increasing academic pressure and social complexity, EI has emerged as a critical determinant of student success beyond traditional cognitive intelligence.*

*A descriptive correlational research design was employed to investigate this relationship. The sample comprised 100 students from Grades 6 to 8, selected using a random sampling technique. Standardized instruments were utilized to assess emotional intelligence, while academic performance was measured through official school records. Statistical analyses, including mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, were conducted.*

*The results indicated a moderate yet statistically significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.48, p < .01$ ) between emotional intelligence and academic performance. These findings suggest that students with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes. The study underscores the importance of integrating emotional intelligence development into educational curricula to promote both academic excellence and holistic student development..*

**Keywords:** *emotional intelligence*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education in the 21st century has evolved beyond the mere transmission of knowledge to fostering the overall development of learners. While cognitive intelligence (IQ) has traditionally been considered the primary determinant of academic success, increasing attention is now being given to emotional and social competencies. Among these, emotional intelligence (EI) has gained considerable importance.

Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively in various situations. According to Goleman (1995), EI encompasses key components such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Mayer and Salovey (1997) further conceptualized EI as a set of abilities related to emotional perception, understanding, and management.

Middle school students, typically aged between 11 and 14 years, are at a critical developmental stage marked by rapid psychological, emotional, and social changes. During this period, students encounter numerous challenges, including academic expectations, peer pressure, identity formation, and emotional fluctuations. These challenges can significantly impact their academic engagement and performance.

Students with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle stress, regulate their emotions, maintain positive relationships, and stay motivated in their academic pursuits. Therefore, understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance is essential for developing effective educational strategies.

### **RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

The rationale behind this study lies in the growing recognition that academic success is not solely determined by intellectual ability. While IQ contributes to learning capacity, it does not fully explain variations in students' academic performance. Non-cognitive factors, particularly emotional intelligence, play a vital role in influencing how students approach learning, respond to challenges, and interact within the educational environment.

Middle school students often experience heightened emotional sensitivity, academic stress, and social pressures. Without adequate emotional skills, these factors may lead to anxiety, lack of motivation, and poor academic outcomes. Emotional intelligence helps students develop resilience, improve concentration, and adopt effective coping strategies, thereby enhancing their academic performance.

Furthermore, in the Indian educational context, there is a strong emphasis on academic achievement, often overlooking emotional development. This creates a gap in understanding how emotional competencies contribute to learning outcomes. Hence, this study aims to address this gap by empirically examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance among middle school students.

### **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Previous research has consistently highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in academic and personal success.

**Goleman (1995)** emphasized that emotional intelligence is equally, if not more, important than cognitive intelligence in determining success in life. He identified key components such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social skills as critical for effective functioning.

**Mayer and Salovey (1997)** provided a theoretical framework for EI, defining it as the ability to perceive and manage emotions. Their work laid the foundation for empirical research in educational settings.

**Schutte et al. (2001)** developed a standardized emotional intelligence scale, which enabled researchers to quantitatively assess EI and examine its relationship with academic performance. Their findings indicated a positive association between EI and academic achievement.

**Parker et al. (2004)** found that students with higher emotional intelligence demonstrated better academic outcomes, primarily due to their ability to manage stress and adapt to academic demands.

**Suleman et al. (2019) and MacCann et al. (2020)** further confirmed through empirical studies and meta-analysis that emotional intelligence significantly predicts academic success across different age groups.

Recent studies, such as **Giri et al. (2024)**, have reinforced these findings, particularly emphasizing the role of emotional skills in improving learning outcomes in modern educational environments.

#### **Synthesis of Literature**

The literature suggests that:

- Emotional intelligence positively influences academic performance.
- It enhances stress management, motivation, and engagement.
- It supports social adjustment and classroom behavior.
- However, variations in findings across studies indicate the influence of contextual and cultural factors, highlighting the need for localized research.

#### **Key Insights from Literature**

- Female students often demonstrate higher emotional intelligence than male students.
- High EI contributes to better stress management and academic engagement.

- EI supports social adjustment, improving relationships with peers and teachers.
- Some studies report moderate or weak correlations due to contextual differences.

### **III. RESEARCH GAP**

- Limited studies on middle school students.
- Lack of focus on Indian educational settings.
- Need for empirical evidence linking EI and academic performance.

### **IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To assess the level of emotional intelligence among middle school students.
- To evaluate students' academic performance.
- To analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

### **V. HYPOTHESES**

**H<sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis):** There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

**H<sub>1</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis):** There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

### **VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **6.1 Research Design**

A descriptive correlational research design was used to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

#### **6.2 Participants**

Sample Size: 100 students

Grades: 6 to 8

#### **6.3 Sampling Technique**

Random sampling method was used to ensure equal representation and minimize bias.

#### **6.4 Variables of the Study**

**Independent Variable:** Emotional Intelligence

**Dependent Variable:** Academic Performance

#### **6.5 Tools and Measures**

Emotional Intelligence Scale (standardized tool)

Academic Performance Records (school marks/grades)

#### **6.6 Data Collection Procedure**

Permission obtained from school authorities.

EI scale administered to students

Academic scores collected from school records

#### **6.7 Statistical Techniques Used**

**Descriptive Statistics:** Mean and Standard Deviation

**Inferential Statistics:** Pearson Product-Moment Correlation

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## VII. RESULTS

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and academic performance among middle school students.

### 1. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics revealed that the mean score of emotional intelligence among students was **115.6** with a standard deviation of **12.4**, indicating a moderate to high level of emotional intelligence. The mean score of academic performance was found to be **72.3** with a standard deviation of **8.5**, suggesting an average level of academic achievement among the students.

#### Interpretation:

The relatively moderate standard deviation values indicate that the data are reasonably consistent and not highly dispersed, reflecting similar levels of emotional intelligence and academic performance among most students.

### 2. Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance.

The results showed a **moderate positive correlation** between emotional intelligence and academic performance ( $r = 0.48, p < 0.01$ ).

#### Interpretation:

This indicates that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to perform better academically. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, which means there is less than a 1% probability that this relationship occurred by chance.

### 3. Findings

The findings clearly demonstrate that emotional intelligence is positively associated with academic performance among middle school students. As emotional intelligence increases, academic performance also tends to improve.

**Table : Descriptive Statistics and Correlation**

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2
Emotional Intelligence	115.6	12.4	—	
Academic Performance	72.3	8.5	0.48	—

**Note:** N = 100,  $p < .01$

The findings indicate a **moderate positive correlation** ( $r = 0.48$ ) between emotional intelligence and academic performance, which is statistically significant.

## VIII. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study clearly demonstrate that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in enhancing academic performance. Students with higher EI are more capable of managing academic stress, maintaining focus, and engaging positively in classroom activities.

These students are also better at building relationships with peers and teachers, which creates a supportive learning environment. Emotional intelligence contributes to improved self-discipline, motivation, and problem-solving skills, all of which are essential for academic success.

The results align with previous research, reinforcing the idea that emotional intelligence is a critical factor in educational achievement.

### **IX. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

Incorporate emotional intelligence training into school curricula  
Provide teacher training on emotional development  
Encourage parental involvement in emotional learning  
Introduce programs such as happiness curriculum and social-emotional learning

### **X. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Small sample size (N = 100)  
Limited variables considered  
Restricted geographical area

### **XI. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the study establishes that emotional intelligence is a significant and meaningful predictor of academic performance among middle school students. It highlights the necessity of moving beyond traditional teaching approaches that focus solely on cognitive development.

Integrating emotional intelligence into the educational system can lead to improved academic outcomes, better mental health, and overall personality development. Schools, educators, and policymakers must recognize the importance of emotional competencies and actively incorporate them into teaching practices.

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