

An Analysis of University Students' Emotional Intelligence and Its Influence on Academic Performance

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize and manage our own and others' emotions or feelings, to motivate ourselves, and to motivate others. It is a skill that can be taught, learned, and practiced in order to achieve success in various aspects of life. Previous researchers studied emotional intelligence in various contexts, including education and the industrial sector, and discovered various outcomes, such as improved student academic performance and increased industrial productivity. The primary goal of this study is to investigate the Emotional Intelligence of Oman's university students. Researchers gathered both primary and secondary data for this study, and the primary data collected using a self-assessment questionnaire that included 50 questions about emotional intelligence competencies and their impact on students' academic grades and achievement. Five Emotional Intelligence Competencies (Self-awareness, Emotion Management, Self-motivation, Empathy, Social skills) identified by Goleman (1995), a popular American psychologist were used for the study purpose. To analyze data, descriptive statistics such as mean, median, and standard deviation were used, and inferential statistics such as "t"-test, "p"-test, and One-way Anova were used to test the hypothesis formulated in this study. This study also provides students with recommendation on developing needed emotional intelligence competencies to advance academically and professionally.

Key Words: Emotional Intelligence, Self-awareness, Emotion Management, Self-motivation, Empathy, Social skills, University Students.

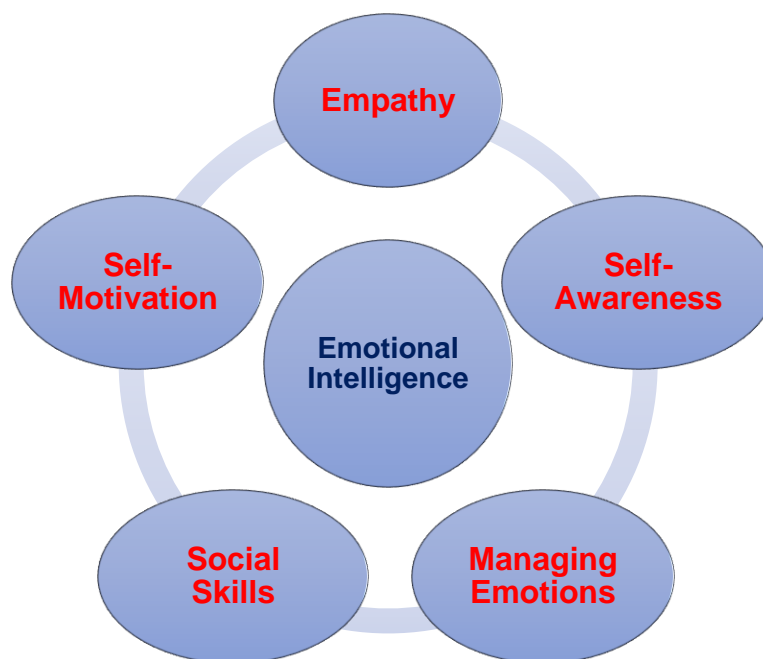
1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence is a heated topic among scholars, and they argue that this is crucial for students to excel in their academic and professional lives. It is a determining factor for students to achieve success in academic and career life (Lawrence & Deepa, 2013). Emotional Intelligence is all about the capacity to recognize and manage our own emotions as well as those of others (Samari, Akbar, & Tahmasbi, 2007). Emotions are a powerful motivational force because they encourage and drive us to act and resolve problems. People who are emotionally intelligent will be able to control their thoughts, actions, and circumstances in a very balanced manner (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Kant (2019) stated that Emotional intelligence is crucial for students' academic and professional survival and development. Having emotional intelligence skills can help students in managing and

adapting to different circumstances, which will improve their academic achievement (Hettich, 2000). In today's competitive educational system, students' emotional intelligence—includes critical competencies like self-awareness, controlling one's own emotion, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills, which include both inter-personal and intra-personal skills—is highly valued (Joibari & Mohammadtaheri, 2011).

Previous researchers concur that emotional intelligence will enable students to make sensible decisions and lessen pressure throughout their academic, careers and beyond. Researchers have contributed with theoretical and empirical work to the field of Emotional Intelligence. Many research articles in various languages have been written and published in various national and international journals in various contexts, including educational and industrial sectors. However, we believe that there is still a gap in this area because students' Emotional Intelligence and its impact on their academic grade and performance have not received adequate attention and focus, especially in the context of the Sultanate of Oman. It has been observed from the literature that, students who lack emotional intelligence struggle in their studies and career in many ways. The most important is that they are unable to develop the self-confidence and take right decisions which will later affect their academic performance and other aspect of life (Upadhyaya, 2006). Emotionally weak student unable to use university as a platform for their personal growth and development. They will not be able to perform well in their exams and also face many challenges in their career and other aspect of life (Eriksen, 2009). The aim of this research is to find an answer to the following questions. What are the essential emotional intelligence competencies for students? How will emotional intelligence competencies benefit students? Do emotional intelligence competencies influence students' academic grades?

In this study, researchers studied the emotional intelligence of university students using the Daniel Goleman model. To assess the previous research findings in diverse circumstances, several research papers have been reviewed and analyzed. Daniel's five aspects of emotional intelligence given in the below diagram were in focus throughout the study.



(Figure. 1) Diagram Designed by Researchers Source: (Golman, 1996)

According to [Dierdorff and Rubin \(2015\)](#), self-awareness is a process of identifying and analyzing one's emotion, thoughts, values and behavior and how they affect others. Self-awareness is necessary for people to make better decisions and work well in teams ([Michael, 2005](#)). The study conducted on college students by [Annaraja and Jose \(2005\)](#) found that the place of residency has an impact on emotional intelligence competencies like self-awareness, self-control, and social skills. [Güleç \(2020\)](#) stated that Konuk the master's degree students carried out a study that looked at the effects of empathy-based exercises on students' environmental awareness and academic advancement. A total of 51 students participated in this study, of which 22 were female and 29 were male. The study found that, students who have higher levels of empathy not only have greater environmental awareness than their peers but also outperform them academically. In his research, [Rosenthal et al. \(1977\)](#) found that those who can empathize with others' feelings are more successful in their careers and other spheres of life. In addition to finding, this study also found that students with the same IQ, but stronger empathy skills perform better than those with lower empathy abilities. [Nowicki and Duke \(1992\)](#) also discovered that students with higher empathy skills receive better grades. Similar to emotional intelligence, social competence is a crucial component that has a better connection to students' academic success. Low academic achievement has been linked by prior researchers [MacMullin \(1994\)](#), [Scott-Jones and Clark \(1986\)](#) to the student's social skills. According to MacMullin, students with poor social skills find difficult to communicate effectively with their tutors and to ask for the help they need. According to Scott-Jones and Clark's research, social surroundings and student learning are linked, and developing social skills is crucial for academic success. Some social skills, like paying attention and following teachers' and academic advisors' instructions, should be studied because they are crucial for academic achievement ([Cartledge & Milburn, 1978](#)). Another important and key competency of emotional intelligence is self-motivation. Self-motivation is the power that involves arousing, sustaining, and regulating interest ([Bernard, 1965](#)). Students need to be motivated in order to participate actively in learning activities and be inspired to keep learning ([Yahaya et al., 2012](#)). In this study, researchers took into students' motivation of priority for learning, which is a powerful component in fostering enthusiasm in their academic pursuits. [Christiana \(2009\)](#) investigated the impact of motivation on students' academic performance and discovered that the school environment has an impact on students' motivation and that motivation improves performance. Similarly, the meta-analysis study conducted by [Orhan Özen \(2017\)](#) produced somewhat comparable but dissimilar findings. It was determined through this meta-compilation analyses of 205 research studies and application of the random effect model that motivation has a somewhat favorable impact on student performance. [Shuaibu Muhammad et al. \(2014\)](#) in their study found a high positive correlation between students' motivation and academic achievement at one of Malaysia's universities. Further result from the regression analysis of this study indicates that motivation is a strong predictor of students' performance and concluded that strong relationship exists between motivation and students' academic performance and also students' motivation serves as a yardstick in predicting their performance. Other studies on social skills conducted in elementary and high schools by [Rashid \(2010\)](#) and [Tallat \(2014\)](#) indicated that the social skills have not developed among children to the extent expected. However, students have learned to show willingness towards others who carry such social skills.

This study was conducted based on the following two main objectives. 1. To identify and analyze the competencies of Emotional Intelligence of University students in Oman. 2. To examine the influence of the competencies of Emotional Intelligence on Students' academic grades and performance. Hypotheses have been formulated to assume the probability of research progress. They are predictive proposition about the possible outcome

of research and for this study, researchers formulated the hypotheses given below and tested them using various statistical tools “t” test, “p” test, and one-way Anova etc. the result of hypotheses tested can be seen in the data analysis section. H₀₁: There is no significant difference between Male and Female students with respect to Students’ Performance due to the Competencies of Emotional Intelligence. H₀₂: There is no significant difference among the GPA Scores of the students with respect to Students’ Performance due to the Competencies of Emotional Intelligence. The result of hypotheses testing can be seen in the analysis section.

2. Research Methodology

The descriptive research approach which is most well-like and frequently applied research methodology in the social science was used to carry out this study. As mentioned earlier, the Daniel Goleman model of emotional intelligence was utilized as a tool to assess the emotional intelligence of university students. A structured questionnaire was used, and general information such as name, age, gender, and marital status were collected first to determine the context of the research questions before moving on to questions that probed deeper into the study's content. The questionnaire, which includes 50 questions designed to assess students' emotional intelligence, was used to collect responses from university students in order to assess their Emotional Intelligence. Multiple-choice questions with five-point Likert scales were used to allow respondents to indicate the 'intensity' of their feelings about various aspects of the emotional intelligence. The Likert scale had options ranging from 'Never applies to you' to 'Always applies to you' used for the questionnaire. Books, journals, magazines, publications, and other periodicals published online and offline are examples of secondary data sources. The collected primary data was analyzed with the SPSS software application, as well as descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The method of probability sampling, simple random sampling, was chosen. In total, 114 university students participated in the survey and provided data.

3. Limitations & Future Research Scope

This research is restricted to higher education institutions in Oman, and it is not applicable to other educational institutions such as high or higher secondary schools. The limitation of this study is due to paucity time and resource, researchers couldn't have a large sample size and data was only collected from only 114 respondents which is very small. Furthermore, the chosen respondents may not fully reflect genuine response to their skill of emotional intelligence. According to the finding one of the researchers, when students are asked to self-assess their abilities, they are more likely to underestimate their ability (Spratt, 2001). This study was conducted over a single semester, emotional intelligence and its competencies develop overtime, and one semester may not be an accurate reflection of emotional intelligence of university students. Analysis of data shows that majority of the respondents were female university students only 10.5% respondents were male. Furthermore, the findings of this study were influenced by individuals' perception of their own emotional intelligence and participants were chosen at random and some declined to participate in survey.

This study was conducted among university students in Muscat, Oman, was primarily concerned with assessing students' emotional intelligence. Similar studies can be conducted in other parts of Oman, as well as in other parts of the world for comparison. More research with a larger sample size is required to accurately investigate the impact of emotional

intelligence on academic performance in students. Another opportunity for future researchers is to have an equal number of large numbers from both genders for accurate comparison, as the current study respondent's (Female: Male) ratio is 9:1, which may not be sufficient to obtain accurate results between genders. Finally, the variables used in this study were chosen based on the existing literature on emotional intelligence. The replication of this study in other GCC countries and other parts of the world will certainly help to improve our understanding of how emotional intelligence influenced academic and other aspect of students' life.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Demographic Profile of The Students:

TABLE 1 Demographic Profile of The Students
(Sample Size = 114)

VARIABLES	OPTIONS	FREQUENCIES	(%)
Gender of the Student	Male	12	10.50
	Female	102	89.50
Age of the Student	18 – 21 Years	Open ended Question (Scale Variable)	71.90
	22 – 24 Years		28.10
Marital Status of the Student	Married	7	6.10
	Unmarried	107	93.90
GPA in last Semester of the Student	Upto 2.5	16	14.00
	2.6 to 3.0	59	51.80
	3.1 to 4.0	39	34.20

Source: Primary Data

From the above table, it is inferred that Female Students (89.50%) are more than Male Students (10.50%). In terms of Age of the Students, majority of them (71.90%) belong to the age group of 18 – 21 Years. 93.90% of the students are unmarried and 51.80% of the students have 2.6 to 3.0 GPA Scores in last semester.

4.2 Identifying and analysing the competencies of Emotional Intelligence of students.

TABLE 2 Competencies of Emotional Intelligence of Students: Descriptive Statistics

VARIABLES	N	Mean	SD
Self-Awareness	114	36.32	5.000
Managing Emotions	114	32.31	3.819
Motivating Oneself	114	36.58	5.828
Social Skill	114	36.82	4.930
Empathy	114	32.70	6.597
COMPETENCIES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	114	174.73	18.381

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it is found that out of five competencies of Emotional Intelligence, the students have perceived more on 'Social Skill' (M = 36.82) than others and they have perceived lesser on 'Managing Emotions' (M = 32.31) followed by 'Empathy' (M=32.70) when compared with others. The Overall Mean value of the Competencies of Emotional Intelligence is 174.73, which is 69.89% (174.73 / 250 x 100). This indicates that Students' Competencies on the Emotional Intelligence is nearly 70%.

4.3 INDEPENDENT SAMPLE 't' TEST – ANALYSIS

H₀: There is no significant difference between Male and Female students with respect to Competencies of Emotional Intelligence. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the difference between Male and Female students with respect to Competencies of Emotional Intelligence.

TABLE 3 Gender of The Student- Competencies of Emotional Intelligence

VARIABLE	GENDER OF THE STUDENT – COMPETENCIES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE						t - value	p – value
	MALE			FEMALE				
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Self-Awareness	12	35.67	4.053	102	36.39	5.111	0.569	0.577
Managing Emotions	12	30.67	3.651	102	32.50	3.809	1.638	0.124
Motivating Oneself	12	35.00	5.784	102	36.76	5.833	0.999	0.335
Social Skills	12	35.50	4.317	102	36.98	4.993	1.104	0.287
Empathy	12	36.42	4.337	102	32.26	6.694	2.931	0.009
COMPETENCIES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	12	173.25	12.152	102	174.90	19.016	0.415	0.683

Source: Primary Data
(5% Level of Significance)

As the *P* value (0.683) is greater than Sig. Value (0.05) in the Competencies of Emotional Intelligence Score, the Null Hypothesis is accepted. Based on the mean Score of the Competencies of Emotional Intelligence of Students, we can say that the mean score of Male students ($M = 173.25$) and Female Students ($M = 174.90$) is more or less same. This indicates that the Male students and Female students have same level of Competencies of Emotional Intelligence. Hence, there is no significant difference between Male and Female students with respect to Competencies of Emotional Intelligence.

4.4 ONE -WAY ANOVA

H₀: There is no significant difference among the GPA Scores of the students with respect to Competencies of Emotional Intelligence. A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the significant difference among the GPA Scores of the students with respect to Competencies of Emotional Intelligence.

TABLE 4 GPA Score of The Students- Competencies of Emotional Intelligence

VARIABLES	GPA SCORES OF THE STUDENT – COMPETENCIES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE			F – value	p – value
	Upto 2.5 (16)	2.6 to 3.0 (59)	3.1 to 4.0 (39)		
	Self-Awareness	35.19	35.86		
	4.293	5.114	4.994		
Managing Emotions	32.63	32.20	32.33	0.077	0.926
	4.193	3.995	3.467		
Motivating Oneself	32.88	36.41	38.36	5.479	0.005**
	4.703	5.748	5.724		
Social Skill	35.25	36.51	37.95	2.985	0.032*
	3.550	5.117	4.984		
Empathy	28.63	32.61	34.51	4.838	0.010*
	7.126	6.576	5.744		
COMPETENCIES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	164.56	173.59	180.62	4.873	0.009**
	13.928	18.753	17.614		

Source: Primary Data (No. of Students are shown in brackets)
(*5% Level of Significance)
(**1% Level of Significance)

As the *P* value is lesser than Sig. Value (0.01 and 0.05) in case of Motivating Oneself ($M = 0.005$), Social Skill (0.032), Empathy (0.010) and also in Competencies of Emotional Intelligence Score (0.009), the Null Hypothesis is rejected. The Null Hypotheses are accepted in case of Self Awareness (0.189) and Managing Emotions (0.926), since the *P* values are greater than Sig. Value (0.05). Apart from reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean score among the GPA Scores of the Students groups is also large ($M = 164.56$ to 180.62). The Mean score of the level of Competencies of Emotional Intelligence in case of the GPA Scores of the students '3.1 to 4.0' ($M = 180.62$) is more than others. Hence, it is inferred that the students who have '3.1 – 4.0' GPA Scores have more level of Competencies of Emotional Intelligence than others.

5. Discussion

Emotional Intelligence is a person's ability to identify, evaluate, control, and express his or her emotions in a positive and effective manner. Emotional intelligence influences people's lives because it affects their behaviour and relationships, which are crucial to their success (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). As published in India Today, a popular news publication in India, students with high Emotional Intelligence will be able to communicate better with others. Emotional intelligence not only reduces anxiety and stress, but it also assists in developing and maintaining better relationships with others. This study indicates that students who are able to manage their emotions have a positive impact on their classroom performance and they can achieve high academic results. As stated, before Daniel Goleman's five key components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills were used to assess the emotional intelligence of Oman's University students. The data analysis shows that the self-awareness Mean score is 36.32, which equals 72.64 percent, which is a very good sign for the students because self-awareness is an important skill needed in university students. Self-awareness is critical because it helps students to understand how they see themselves as individuals. People who are self-aware will be able to recognize their own strengths, weaknesses, understand and express their feelings openly, as well as understand the feelings of others, and develop a growth mindset. The second important aspect of emotional intelligence studied in this study is 'Emotion Management'. The result shows that, the Mean score of 'Managing Emotions' is 32.31, which equals 64.62 percent. Researchers believe that students required to pay attention to developing the skill of managing their emotions. Gaining control of our emotions is difficult; it takes a lot of regular practice and guidance to achieve these skills, but once achieved, a person will be able to deal with difficult situations and challenges. Similarly, it is critical for students to recognize and manage their emotions because they will be able to adjust their behaviour and do well in life if they face difficulties and setbacks. Individuals with this ability are better able to deal with situations and are not afraid to seek help and support from others when faced with difficulties and challenges. Third, competency is self-motivation, which is an important aspect of emotional intelligence. Motivating oneself, also known as self-motivation, is the inner force that drives a person to do things. People are generally motivated by a variety of factors, and it is an important skill that will help people keep moving toward their goals even when they face setbacks and challenges, and they look for opportunities to achieve their desired goals and objectives. The analysis result has a Mean score of 36.58, indicating that the score is around 73%, which is good. It shows that students in Oman have self-motivation competency, but they must be more persistent and show commitment to retain this skill because motivation changes frequently due to different circumstances faced by the person. If someone wants to achieve big and valuable goals, self-motivation is essential, but many people struggle to stay motivated over time. So, in order to

stay motivated, persistence is essential, as it provides vitality and determination to face challenges. Students who are academically weak should learn and develop this competency because it will improve their mental thought, focus, persistence, and keep them on a steady path to success. Another important emotional intelligence competency studied in this study is empathy, which is primarily concerned with being a responsible member of the community on campus or elsewhere. The analysis of data shows that university students' empathy competency has a Mean score of 32.70, indicating that students' empathy competency is around 65.4 percent, which is one of the lowest among other emotional intelligence competencies. Empathy is an important skill for university students to develop because it allows them to be peaceful, productive, understand, and collaborate with others. Empathy development is not difficult, but it requires proper attention and commitment from those who wish to develop an empathetic personality. Previous researchers have shown that students who develop and possess empathy have higher levels of classroom engagement, communication, understanding, and less emotional disorder. They usually succeed in improving their relationships with their colleagues and professors. Finally, social skills are interpersonal skills necessary for developing emotional intelligence. The ability to interact with others is referred to as social or interpersonal skill. This is an important skill for students to develop in order to have a successful life and career. The results show that university students in Oman have good social skills, with a Mean score of 36.82, or roughly 74%. Developing social skills is critical for students' future lives because it prepares them for a lifetime of healthier interaction in all aspects of life.

Researchers investigated emotional intelligence competencies based on gender in this study. Researchers did not reach an equal number of male students because we used a simple random sampling method, as stated in the methodology section. As stated above, data was collected from only 10.50 percent of male university students and remaining 89.5 percent were female, which is not proportionally equal. The analysis results show that both male and female students have similar emotional intelligence competencies. According to Forbes.com, the general assumption is that women are more emotionally intelligent than men because they express their emotions more effectively. However, in their survey, which included millions of people from all over the world, both men and women were found to be equally emotional intelligent. As a result, we can say that our result is re-confirming the Forbes.com result on emotional intelligence. However, we as researchers believe that there is a need for further research on this topic in Oman universities, where an equal sample size should be taken and measured to reconfirm the emotional intelligence based on gender. The inferential statistical tool (One-way Anova) was used to understand the difference between three means of GPA score of the students which is (Up to 2.5, 2.5 to 3 and 3 to 4) in order to identify the relationship between GPA scores of the students and emotional intelligence competencies. [Table 4.](#), shows that three emotional intelligence competencies, namely 1. motivating oneself, 2. social skill, and 3. empathy, show a statistical difference. The Mean score of the level of competencies of emotional intelligence of students with GPAs greater than 3 is higher than the other two groups mentioned in the [table 4](#). As a result, it can be concluded that emotionally intelligent students outperformed their peers in terms of academic performance and GPA average. The result shows that students lack in 'Empathy' and 'Emotions Management' as discussed earlier they need to work on developing these competencies because they will undoubtedly help university students achieve high academic performance.

6. Conclusion

To summarize, students in Oman are good well in some aspects of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, social skills, and self-motivation. Students must, however, demonstrate commitment and persistence in practicing these skills on a regular basis in order to retain these competencies. The analysis also shows that students are lacking in Managing Emotions and Empathy, implying that students should focus on developing these skills because they influence their performance. As a result, universities in Oman would benefit from holding some training sessions or a seminar for students to help them understand techniques for developing competencies in managing emotions and empathy. Such seminars or workshops will undoubtedly raise the importance of these competencies among the student community, improving not only their emotional intelligence skills but also their understanding of how their emotional intelligence competencies will affect not only academic performance but also other aspects of their lives.

7. Declaration

We hereby testify that neither individuals nor organizations funded the author's work on this project. To the best of our knowledge, this paper is an original report of the research study that was done by the researcher in Oman, and its publication will not give rise to any conflicts of interest. This study is a descriptive study which analyses university students' Emotional Intelligence and Its Influence on Academic Performance." It is the authors' original work, and data collection and its methods and tools were approved in accordance with the authors' employer's ethical standards.

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