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### Meta-Analysis: Investigating the Emotional Intelligence among Undergraduate Students

### Rabia Farooq<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Muhammad Sarwar<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Muhammad Arif<sup>3</sup>

#### Abstract

The concept of emotional intelligence has long been a subject of keen interest and extensive research. The present study aims to find the level of EI of students in Pakistan by conducting meta-analysis emphasizing gender differences and educational impact. Utilizing a meta-analysis of peer-reviewed studies from multiple Database like Google scholar, SCOPUS, Mendeley were searched published between January 2020 to June 2024. The findings revealed that EI significantly influences performance in academics, personal development, and social interactions. Despite minimal gender differences, EI competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation are very important for students' holistic development. The study indicates the integration of EI training into university curricula and suggested professional development for teachers, provide counseling services to students, and engage students in extracurricular activities to cultivate EI. Suggestion to conduct Longitudinal research is for further understand the long-term benefits of EI development were given. This comprehensive analysis provides information to educators and policy makers on the EI's importance in cultivating adaptable, empathetic and resilient individuals.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Academic Achievement, personal development, well-being

### 1. Introduction

A person may deal with personal, social, educational, or political issues throughout his life. These issues stem from the way a person controls their emotions in a certain circumstance (Goleman, 1995). The capacity to recognize, manage, and evaluate emotions is reflected in an individual's emotional intelligence (EI). Emotional intelligence (EI), is the capacity to identify, comprehend, control, and affect one's own and other people's feelings. The value of emotional intelligence (EI) stems from its capacity to fortify interpersonal bonds, foster effective communication, and improve decision-making, all of which have an effect on both personal and professional success. Students with high EI may develop empathy, resilience, and improved communication all of which are essential for learning and problem-solving in the classroom and in peer interactions. Beyond academic achievement, emotional intelligence (EI) inspires students' general well-being and mental health, which is why it is an essential part of education in general. The idea of intelligence was a topic of continuous discussion throughout the 20th century. According to Merrill and Terman (1937), there is only one way to evaluate a person's intellect, and that is via their theory of general intelligence, which they claimed is both universal and quantifiable. Human abilities like learning, reasoning, and problem-solving are quantifiable and measurable. Because of this, a variety of intelligent quotient assessments were created to gauge general intelligence for various objectives. Around the same time, additional ideas began to emerge that suggested there were many intelligences rather than just one general intelligence that could be used to gauge an individual's intellect. Gardner (1983).

Psychologists have continued to concentrate on the cognitive component of intelligence over the last 100 years. Gardner's intelligence and Thorndike's concept of social intelligence are still recognised in the emotional domain of intelligence, but they were not previously associated with a prosperous life or academic success. Over the last four decades, there has been increased focus on emotional intelligence, a different facet of intelligence. Although the idea of emotional intelligence has been around since the beginning of time, it has often been disregarded or accepted as a fundamental feature of human nature. 2002 saw Mayor and Caruso. Salovey & Mayar presented EI as a novel theory in 1990 (Mayer & Salovey, 1990).

In 'Emotional Intelligence' abilities like self-motivation and persistence in a phase of despair, the Control ling impulsion & to delaying relief, managing someone's mood, & to keep anxiety away from competence, emotions, hope, &, think" (Goleman, 1995, p.36). Dulewicz, & Higgs (1999) digs into the increasing awareness of EI, with a consideration on Daniel Goleman's work. The researchers conduct a study linking emotional intelligence, IQ, and managerial quotient to career success. A comprehensive study with a seven-subscale emotional intelligence questionnaire was conducted to explore connections between, personality measures, emotional intelligence and competency models. The findings validate and reliability indicate correlation of emotional intelligence with personality traits and team roles. The study recommends analyzing every individual's EQ in accordance with norms and supports talking with a facilitator regarding the results for the purpose to grow personally. It emphasizes the debatable subject matter of emotional intelligence, indicates how this trait can help with personal growth, and recommends further studies on how it connects with managerial abilities and organizational environments.

According to Khurshid et al (2018) for the holistically development of university students EI skills work as driving force. This study examines how curriculum activities influence university students' development of emotional intelligence. Considering a group of 1775 students from six universities of KPK, the study examines EI at three different levels entrance, mid and final semesters). The self-report measure of EI (SRMEI) was used for data collection, and findings indicated a significant increase in EI among first-year students and their senior year peers. The findings indicate the significance of curriculum development at the level of higher education. Gujjar et al (2010) examines EI in University students of Punjab. The focus of the study was factors like control, perception and evaluation of emotions. The definitions of EI by Salovey and Mayer, the scores across gender, qualification, age and universities were compared. The findings shows that age doesn't have significant impact, while gender differences exist. Male students have higher EI, especially in self-awareness, relationship management and social awareness.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Department of Education, PhD Scholar, Superior University Lahore, Pakistan, <u>su92-phedw-f23-001@superior.edu.pk</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Professor, Department of Education Superior University, Lahore, Pakistan, <u>muhammad.sarwar@superior.edu.pk</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Assistant professor of Education Department of Education, Superior University, Lahore, Pakistan, <u>mu.arif@superior.edu.pk</u>

The research stresses universities' importance about EI development, especially for females. The recommendations are counseling centers, effective teaching strategies and such programmes which enhance Emotional abilities. The study also highlights the decrease in EI as students mature. The collaboration strategies were suggested among universities and teachers to improve EI of student.

Despite the comprehensive literature on the EI's benefits, still there is a notable gap in the understanding of Students' specific levels of EI in Pakistan and also how gender and different years of education are correlated at different levels. Most of the existing studies are focused on Western contexts or some specific professional domains. Data on EI in the Pakistani context is lacking. Most of the studies have examined the relation among academics and EI, even though there is very limited research on the EI's training integration in universities curricula and its long-term impact on student development. The purpose of the study is to fill the existing void by doing comprehensive analysis of EI among Pakistani students, exploring differences among gender and providing recommendations of practical solutions for enhancement of EI through interventions in education.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

The most important aspect of success in life is having high emotional intelligence, although this aspect is extremely underestimated in a society that places an emphasis on traditional intelligence and absolute technical skills. In Pakistan, the majority of studies has centered on the relationship between high (EI) and various aspects such as academic achievement, with little emphasis on determining the precise emotional intelligence levels of our learners. Therefore, this study was an insignificant attempt to expand awareness of the importance of understanding one's own EI levels and to emphasize that it can and can be improved with adequate support. The objective of this study was to figure out the students' level and to investigate its relationship to years of education and gender as well.

## 1.2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

- To synthesize the literature about emotional intelligence among undergraduate students.
- To compare the findings between male and female Emotional Intelligence undergraduate students.

## 1.3. Research questions

The study will be conduct on the following questions

- What are the level of Emotional Intelligence at Graduate Level based on the literature?
- What are the differences between male and female Emotional Intelligence undergraduate students as reported in literature?

# 1.4. Significance of the study

Assessing emotional intelligence among undergraduate students is important since it might reveal how well they manage their social and personal lives. Teachers can better adapt their teaching strategies and provide a nurturing environment where students can flourish academically and emotionally by having a better understanding of emotional intelligence. Moreover, it provides students the abilities they require to be successful in relationships in the future, social interactions, and professional and personal accomplishment. The study find out the level of EI of students undergraduate.

### 1.5. Research Design

The nature of the study was a quantitative approach. A meta-analysis was conducted to explore the levels of emotional intelligence (EI) among students. Systematic review and synthesizing the results of multiple studies were involve for comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Studies of diverse range were included in this meta-analysis which explore the different aspects of emotional intelligence including its relationship with gender differences, academic performance and impact of EI on different programs. For this study, peer-reviewed studies, published between 2020 and 2024 were selected and focus on key terms related to EI.

The studies were selected based on specific inclusion criteria: they had to be peer-reviewed, published between 2020 and 2024, and focused on emotional intelligence in educational settings. For well-rounded perspective on study, quantitative and qualitative were analyzed. After synthesizes the literature 19 studies were extracted from the literature Data from each study were extracted including sample size and key findings related to emotional intelligence. The purpose of meta-analysis was Emotional Intelligence's understanding among students by integration of various studies and pointing out the educational practice's implications and recommendation for further research.

# 2. Meta-Analysis

# 2.1. Undergraduate's level of emotional intelligence

People's success and prosperity are significantly influenced by their level of education. Success in work is highly dependent on student accomplishment. Student progress in terms of their physical, social, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual aspects may all be considered components of achievement. One of the key components in forecasting success is the concept of intelligence. Psychologists have studied IQ and intelligence tests extensively. There have also been a ton of definitions and ideas offered (Alshurideh, 2020). There isn't a widely accepted explanation, however, since intelligence is a qualitative and unseen phenomenon. The study during pandemic and they compare the self-efficacy and socioemotional aspects of students before and during pandemic. These factors support competence, autonomy, and relationships. Self-efficacy helps students adapt to changes and build resilience. The findings are consistent with other studies linking self-efficacy to optimism, resilience, and well-being. Emotional stability and self-efficacy are important predictors of well-being. Universities should promote social-emotional education and self-regulated learning. This study, which was conducted online, faced biases as it included mostly female psychology students with access to the internet. Future research should balance gender and age groups. Promoting self-efficacy, optimism, and future orientation is essential for well-being. A "healthy university" model is proposed (García-Álvarez et al., 2021).

Kadakol et al. (2021) study finds out that students are expected to be emotionally stable and intelligent. Emotional intelligence can be helpful in bringing stability in emotions. Emotional intelligence has different components from which students are affected. Correlated observations provided four factors which are Self-awareness the first component, self-control is second, the third as self-regulation and finally the empathy can be categorized as forth component. Alsharari and Alshurideh (2020) finds out that students'

retention can be affect positively by creativity, learner autonomy and EI. The strong relation was also shown between emotional intelligence and learner autonomy. It can be assumed from study indicators that they can help inn achieving students' academic goals.

Chandra (2020) study showed how students use their Emotional intelligence and tried to cope the negative effects of pandemic on their studies. Students divert themselves by engaging themselves in different creative activities and took courses which helped them in learning new technical skills. The findings of the studies also showed the significant difference between fear of academic failure, online and environment of home between male and female students. Another study has a twofold purpose: first is to explore student's understanding of emotional intelligence (EI) and second is to assess how students believe EI will impact their careers. For conducted research leading Irish university was involved. The interviews from five students were interpreted using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The findings showed that students had some understanding of EI, and they felt a need to learn more, and they consider EI as an important element for their successful future career (Phillips, 2021).

According to a research by Chang and Tsai (2022), learning motivation and self-efficacy does not directly affect academic accomplishment. The association between academic performance and emotional intelligence (EI) was mediated sequentially by these characteristics, suggesting that higher EI increases learning motivation and self-efficacy, which improve academic achievements. Literature also explore the role of EI in relation to effective teaching and the findings showed that teachers with high EI create supportive classroom environments, effectively manage student behavior, and enhance student engagement and academic performance. EI competencies, such as empathy and self-regulation, are crucial for handling student diversity and promoting well-being. Additionally, EI impacts teacher self-care, job satisfaction, and the development of positive parent-teacher relationships, which collectively contribute to improved educational outcomes (Todmal et al., 2023).

### 2.2. Gender differences regarding emotional intelligence

According to a research by Sabir and Thomas (2020), there are no variations by gender in college students' emotional intelligence or motivation for achievement. Furthermore, overall does not exist discernible correlation between incentive to succeed and mental ability. But when when compared with men, women were shown to have greater levels of both achievement motivation and EI. The research emphasises how crucial it is to include emotional intelligence (EI) instruction in higher education in order to improve academic performance and student well-being. Educators and policymakers should consider gender and cultural differences in EI, using this awareness to improve teaching practices, student retention, and overall educational outcomes (Halimi et al., 2020). Bru-Luna et al. (2021) conducted a systematic review investigates 369 university students' emotional intelligence levels from departments of teaching and coaching at Kırıkkale University and Aksaray University in Turkey. Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale was Used, the findings showed no significant gender differences but identifies higher level of EI in coaching students as compared to teaching students. Higher emotional intelligence was shown in professional athletes and First-year students. The study recommends targeted training programs for improving emotional intelligence and suggests further research in the field.

According to a research by Gong and Archer (2021), there were no significant variations in EI between doctorate candidates studying educational leadership who were male or female. In a similar vein, the study discovered no discernible variation in EI among sample age groups. These results imply that gender and age do not significantly correlate with differences in EI among doctorate students in educational leadership, at least not within this particular cohort and utilising the Schutte Self-Report EI Test. The findings revealed that contextual factors and other personality traits could have a major impact on how doctorate students in educational leadership develop their emotional intelligence. A thorough study by Karkada et al. (2020) revealed that medical students' academic performance is typically better when they have greater emotional intelligence (EI). While age differences do not substantially affect EI, females have greater EI than men. Despite certain irregularities, the results generally demonstrated that emotional intelligence (EI) has a beneficial role in the academic and professional development of medical students.

Table 1: Themes extracted from the meta-analysis		
Themes	Description	Reference Studies
EI impact on Student performance	Emotional stability, resilience and wellbeing is associated by EI.	García-Álvarez et al. (2021) Chang & Tsai (2022)
Gender Biases in EI	Studies shows higher level of EI in females. But, mixed findings	Karkada et al. (2020)
research	regarding gender, some have significant and some have insignificant difference. Sample imbalances and methodological biases were observed.	Sabir & Thomas (2020)
EI benefits	Self-awareness, self-control, self-regulation are main components of EI. It help in emotional stability and control student retention and good academic performance.	Alsharari & Alshurideh (2020) Kadakol et al. (2021)
Practical Implications	Accentuate the significance of incorporating emotional components in educational program of study. Importance of EI competencies in teachers classrooms and outside environment	García-Álvarez et al. (2021) Todmal et al. (2021)
Future directions and considerations	The need to discourse the biases related to imbalance representative sample and explore different context of educational. Further studies might focus on the diverse EI aspects.	Phillips (2021) Chandra (2020)

The current research investigated the association between academic success and spiritual and EI in college and high school apprentices. The study's findings showed that there existed little differences in academic success, emotional intelligence, or spiritual intelligence between high school and college pupils. Educational achievement and mental capacity and academic performance and

emotional intelligence were revealed to be significantly correlated. But compared to spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence turned out to be a more accurate indicator of student accomplishment.

This meta-analysis's findings showed that among the elements in raising educational outcomes is spiritual intelligence. Spiritual intelligence may help kids succeed academically and improve how they perform. It seems that pupils who possess greater levels of spiritual intelligence are more able to adjust to various teaching approaches than students who possess lower levels. Thus, more effective educational results may result from the use of tactics that address the requirements of children with different degrees of spiritual intelligence.

## 3. Discussion

Diverse conclusions were drawn from studies looking at the connection between intelligence and various levels of education (Keshavarz et al., 2014; Jenaabadi et al., 2015). Even though the difference was not statistically significant, the current research found that schoolchildren had a little higher mean spiritual intelligence score than university students. Some of the diversity may be explained by university students' older ages, more life worries, and professional viewpoints (RAEISI et al., 2013; Ashoori et al., 2014). Girls outperformed males on the mean spiritual intelligence measure, based on earlier research. Conversely, undergraduates outperformed preschoolers on the mean emotional intelligence measure. This might be explained by the fact that college students are mature people with a variety of life experiences. On the mean emotional intelligence scale, girls outperformed boys, but not in a manner that is statistically significant. These results are consistent with earlier research (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

Academic success revealed when educational grades were taken into consideration. The disparity in educational standards between universities and schools might account for the fact that colleges cover more subject in comparatively shorter amounts of time than schools do (Sánchez-Álvarez et al., 2020). Research has shown a high and positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence, which emotional reactivity (Ranjbar et al., 2017). This research looked at how academic success in learning organisations is affected by spiritual and emotional intelligence. The results show a positive and significant relationship between academic achievement and the various forms of intellect. Furthermore, the results demonstrated a substantial link between educational achievement and psychological intelligence as well as a remarkable correlation between its two subcomponents, academic performance and emotional intelligence. According to studies by Mr. Sanchez and associates, academic success and emotional intelligence are positively correlated (ALmegewly et al., 2022). In line with other studies, may have resulted from the men's part-time work and obligations. However, women often dedicate more time to learning and studying than do men, which results in better performance in school. Corresponding coefficients show how significant spiritual and emotional intelligence are to individuals' academic success in college and high school. Putting together seminars on the use of different forms of intellect might enhance instruction and enable learners to meet more challenging educational goals (Zhou et al., 2024).

### 4. Conclusion

The study provided a comprehensive evaluation of Emotional Intelligence (EI) among undergraduate students, highlighting its critical role in their personal and academic development. The analysis, which covers studies published between 2020 and 2024, emphasizing that EI is a principal factor in students' ability to regulate emotions, achieve better academic success, and involve in positive social engagement. The findings showed that while there is negligible difference in EI levels among genders, the perks of EI training programs are equally significant for all students. These programs are vital not only for educational success but also for nurturing resilience, versatility, and socio-economic competences, which are imperative for addressing personal and professional obstacle.

To cultivate these emotional capabilities such as self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation the merging of EI training into undergraduate curricula is firmly endorsed. Educational institutions, especially universities, should take anticipatory actions to implement programs that strengthen EI, consequently aiding intellectual growth and overall well-being. Moreover, the analysis reveals that EI is not only an innate attribute but can be strengthened through planned educational programs. Continued research is indispensable to investigate the impact of EI measures across different demographics and cultural settings. Long-term studies will offer in-depth analysis into how boosted EI competencies play a role in students' careers, mental health, and overall well-being. In conclusion, understanding EI among undergraduate students is critical for enhancing their learning outcomes and empowering them to face the difficulties of a complex and interconnected world. By focusing on EI development, policymakers and educators can foster conditions that promote comprehensive student progress and overall well-being, ultimately supporting to a more robust and compassionate society.

### 4.1. Recommendations

To strengthen emotional intelligence (EI) among undergraduate students, including EI training into the curriculum is crucial. Constructing a particular module that emphasize on EI competencies will provide students with key knowledge and skills required for their personal and academic development. Furthermore, establishing professional development programs for teachers will ensure they have the skills to showcase and foster EI effectively, creating a supportive classroom environment for all students.

Intensifying facilitation and support and peer mentoring groups among universities is additionally essential. These supports should provide tailored guidance to address a spectrum of needs and support both male and female students, regarding any gender-focused EI challenges. Continuous assessment of students' EI is vital for evaluating progress and highlighting areas for enhancement, with actionable feedback to help students understand their strengths and areas for development.

Lastly, extra-curricular activities such as workshops, seminars, and expert lectures can provide more opportunities to develop EI. Encouraging student-led organizations to create practical experiences for applying emotional skills will support students' overall well-being. Conducting longitudinal studies will be beneficial in tracking the long-term impact of EI development programs on students' academic performance, career success, and personal well-being, thus guiding future initiatives.

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