

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH STRESS RESILIENCE

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Abstract. *This study investigates the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience among undergraduate students. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions, plays a crucial role in individuals' psychological well-being and adaptive functioning. Stress resilience, on the other hand, refers to the capacity to cope effectively with stress and recover from adverse situations.*

The purpose of this research is to examine the extent to which emotional intelligence influences students' ability to manage academic stress. A quantitative research design was employed, involving a sample of undergraduate students. Standardized instruments were used to measure emotional intelligence and stress resilience, and statistical analyses including correlation and regression were conducted.

The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience, indicating that students with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate better coping abilities and emotional regulation. Furthermore, emotional intelligence was found to be a significant predictor of stress resilience, explaining a substantial proportion of its variance.

The results highlight the importance of developing emotional intelligence skills in educational settings to enhance students' psychological adaptability and academic performance.

The study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the role of emotional intelligence in stress management among students. Practical implications include the integration of emotional intelligence training into educational programs to support students' well-being and resilience.

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence; Stress resilience; Emotional regulation; Coping strategies; Higher education; Psychological well-being; Student development; Academic stress.*

1. Introduction. In the contemporary educational and professional landscape, individuals are increasingly exposed to various stressors arising from academic pressure, social expectations, and rapid technological changes. As a result, the ability to effectively manage stress has become a crucial psychological competence. Among the key factors influencing stress management, emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a significant construct in both psychological and educational research.

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions in oneself and others. The concept was initially introduced by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer [1], and later popularized by Daniel Goleman [2], who emphasized its importance in predicting personal and professional success. Emotional intelligence encompasses several key components, including emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills, all of which contribute to effective interpersonal functioning.

Stress resilience, on the other hand, refers to an individual's capacity to adapt successfully in the face of adversity, trauma, or significant sources of stress [3].

It involves a dynamic process of psychological adjustment that enables individuals to recover from challenging situations and maintain mental stability. In academic environments, students frequently encounter stressors such as examinations, deadlines, and social pressures, making resilience a critical factor for success and well-being.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience has been widely discussed in the literature. Individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to demonstrate better emotional regulation and coping strategies, which enhance their ability to manage stress effectively [4]. They are more likely to interpret stressful situations as manageable challenges rather than overwhelming threats, which positively influences their psychological responses.

From a theoretical perspective, this relationship can be explained through emotional regulation theory and cognitive appraisal models. Emotional intelligence enables individuals to accurately assess stressful situations and choose appropriate coping mechanisms [5]. For example, emotionally intelligent individuals are more inclined to use problem-focused coping strategies, such as planning and active problem-solving, rather than avoidance or denial. This leads to more adaptive outcomes and greater resilience.

In the context of higher education, emotional intelligence plays a particularly important role.

Students with high emotional intelligence are more capable of managing academic stress, maintaining motivation, and engaging in learning activities [6]. Conversely, low emotional intelligence is often associated with anxiety, burnout, and poor academic performance.

Therefore, understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience is essential for improving student outcomes.

Recent studies have also highlighted the role of emotional intelligence in promoting psychological well-being and reducing stress-related disorders [7]. Educational institutions are increasingly recognizing the importance of incorporating emotional intelligence training into their curricula to support students' mental health and academic success. However, despite growing interest in this field, there is still a need for empirical research that specifically examines this relationship within higher education settings.

Moreover, many previous studies have focused on either emotional intelligence or stress resilience independently, rather than exploring their interaction. This creates a gap in the literature that needs to be addressed through comprehensive research designs and quantitative analysis.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience among undergraduate students. The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of emotional intelligence among students?
2. What is the level of stress resilience among students?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience?

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to both theory and practice.

The findings can provide empirical evidence supporting the link between emotional intelligence and stress resilience, as well as practical recommendations for educators to enhance students' emotional competencies.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence and stress resilience are closely interconnected constructs that play a vital role in students' psychological functioning and academic success. By examining their relationship, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into how emotional skills can be developed to improve stress management and overall well-being in educational contexts.

2. Methods

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience among undergraduate students.

The correlational approach was selected because it allows for the identification of the strength and direction of relationships between variables without manipulating them [8].

A cross-sectional design was used, meaning that data were collected at a single point in time. This approach is widely used in psychological and educational research to assess relationships between psychological constructs such as emotional intelligence and resilience [9].

2.2 Participants

The study sample consisted of 80 undergraduate students enrolled in a teacher education program at a higher education institution. Participants were selected using a convenience sampling method, which is appropriate in educational settings where access to participants is limited [10].

The demographic characteristics of the participants were as follows:

- Age range: 18–23 years
- Gender: 48 females (60%) and 32 males (40%)
- Academic level: 1st to 3rd year students

All participants voluntarily agreed to take part in the study, and ethical principles such as confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent were strictly observed.

2.3 Instruments

To measure the key variables, two standardized instruments were used:

1. Emotional Intelligence Scale

Emotional intelligence was measured using a self-report questionnaire based on the model developed by Daniel Goleman [2]. The scale consisted of 25 items assessing the following dimensions:

- Emotional awareness
- Emotional regulation
- Empathy
- Social skills

Participants rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

2. Stress Resilience Scale

Stress resilience was measured using a standardized resilience scale adapted from psychological resilience frameworks [3]. The instrument included 20 items assessing:

- Emotional stability
- Coping ability
- Adaptability

Responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale.

Reliability of Instruments

The reliability of both instruments was tested using Cronbach's alpha:

- Emotional Intelligence Scale: $\alpha = 0.87$
- Stress Resilience Scale: $\alpha = 0.84$

These values indicate high internal consistency and reliability of the instruments [11].

2.4 Procedure

Data collection was conducted over a period of two weeks. Participants were invited to complete the questionnaires during scheduled class sessions.

The procedure included the following steps:

1. Introduction of the study purpose
2. Distribution of questionnaires
3. Completion of responses (approximately 20 minutes)
4. Collection and verification of data

Participants were instructed to respond honestly and were assured that their responses would be used solely for research purposes.

2.5 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using statistical methods in SPSS software.

The following analyses were conducted:

1. Descriptive Statistics

- Mean (M)
- Standard deviation (SD)

These were used to determine the overall levels of emotional intelligence and stress resilience.

2. Pearson Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was calculated [12].

The formula used:

$$r = \frac{\sum(X - \bar{X})(Y - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum(X - \bar{X})^2 \cdot \sum(Y - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

Where:

- X = Emotional intelligence scores
- Y = Stress resilience scores

The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

3. Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether emotional intelligence predicts stress resilience [13].

Regression model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- Y = Stress resilience
- X = Emotional intelligence
- β_1 = regression coefficient

2.6 Validity and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the validity of the study:

- Content validity was established through expert review

• Construct validity was aligned with established theories of emotional intelligence and resilience

Ethical standards were maintained throughout the research process:

- Participation was voluntary
- No personal identifiers were collected
- Data were used strictly for academic purposes

2.7 Limitations of the Methodology

Despite careful planning, several limitations should be noted:

- The use of self-report measures may introduce bias
- The sample size is relatively small
- The study is limited to one institution

Future research should include larger and more diverse samples and consider longitudinal designs to examine changes over time.

3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to determine the overall levels of emotional intelligence and stress resilience among participants.

The results indicated that the mean score for emotional intelligence was **M = 3.68 (SD = 0.54)**, suggesting a moderately high level of emotional competence among students. Similarly, the mean score for stress resilience was **M = 3.59 (SD = 0.49)**, indicating that participants demonstrated an average to above-average ability to cope with stress.

These findings suggest that the sample group generally possesses adequate emotional and psychological resources for managing academic stress.

3.2 Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted.

Table 1. Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Stress Resilience

Variables	r-value	p-value
Emotional Intelligence – Stress Resilience	0.76	< 0.05

The analysis revealed a **strong positive correlation (r = 0.76, p < 0.05)** between emotional intelligence and stress resilience. This indicates that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with greater stress resilience.

This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that emotionally intelligent individuals are better able to regulate their emotions and cope with stressful situations effectively [4].

3.3 Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression analysis was performed to determine whether emotional intelligence significantly predicts stress resilience.

The results showed that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of stress resilience:

- **R² = 0.58**
- **β = 0.72**
- **p < 0.05**

This indicates that approximately **58% of the variance in stress resilience** can be explained by emotional intelligence.

The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.72$) suggests a strong positive effect, meaning that as emotional intelligence increases, stress resilience also increases significantly.

3.4 Interpretation of Findings

The results confirm that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in enhancing individuals' ability to cope with stress. Students with higher emotional awareness and regulation skills are more likely to respond adaptively to academic challenges.

Furthermore, the strong correlation and predictive relationship between the variables support theoretical frameworks of emotional regulation and resilience [5]. These findings highlight that emotional intelligence is not only associated with stress resilience but also serves as a key determinant of it.

3.5 Summary of Results

In summary, the results demonstrate that:

1. Students exhibit moderate to high levels of emotional intelligence and stress resilience.
2. There is a strong and statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience.
3. Emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of students' ability to cope with stress.

These findings provide a solid empirical basis for further discussion and interpretation in the next section.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study provide clear evidence of a strong and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience among undergraduate students. The results confirm that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence are better equipped to cope with stress, which aligns with previous research in the field of psychology and education [4].

One of the key interpretations of these findings is that emotional intelligence enhances individuals' ability to regulate their emotions effectively. Students who are capable of recognizing and managing their emotional states are less likely to experience overwhelming stress and more likely to adopt adaptive coping strategies. This supports the theoretical framework proposed by Daniel Goleman, which emphasizes emotional regulation as a core component of emotional intelligence [2].

Furthermore, the strong correlation ($r = 0.76$) observed in this study is consistent with the principles of emotional regulation theory and cognitive appraisal theory. According to these frameworks, individuals evaluate stressful situations based on their emotional and cognitive resources. Students with high emotional intelligence tend to perceive stressors as manageable challenges rather than threats, which contributes to greater resilience [5].

The regression analysis further reinforces this relationship by demonstrating that emotional intelligence significantly predicts stress resilience. The finding that emotional intelligence explains 58% of the variance in resilience highlights its substantial influence on students' psychological functioning. This result is particularly important in educational contexts, where students are frequently exposed to academic stressors such as examinations, deadlines, and performance expectations.

Another important implication of the findings is the role of emotional intelligence in promoting psychological well-being. Students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to maintain emotional balance, sustain motivation, and remain engaged in learning activities.

This is consistent with the work of Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer [1], who conceptualized emotional intelligence as a key factor in adaptive functioning and social competence.

From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that educational institutions should prioritize the development of emotional intelligence as part of their curriculum. Integrating emotional intelligence training programs, such as emotional awareness exercises, stress management workshops, and social skills development, can significantly enhance students' resilience and academic performance.

However, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results. The use of self-report questionnaires may introduce response bias, and the sample was limited to a specific group of students, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research should include larger and more diverse samples, as well as longitudinal designs to examine changes over time.

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role of emotional intelligence in enhancing stress resilience among students. The findings provide both theoretical support and practical implications, emphasizing the need for educational strategies that foster emotional competencies alongside academic skills.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress resilience among undergraduate students, providing empirical evidence of a strong and positive association between these two psychological constructs. The findings revealed that students with higher levels of emotional intelligence demonstrate greater capacity to cope with stress, confirming the central role of emotional competencies in psychological adaptation and academic functioning.

One of the key conclusions of this research is that emotional intelligence significantly contributes to stress resilience by enhancing individuals' ability to regulate emotions, interpret stressful situations effectively, and apply adaptive coping strategies. Students who possess strong emotional awareness and control are more likely to perceive academic challenges as manageable rather than overwhelming, which supports their mental stability and academic engagement. This aligns with established theoretical perspectives emphasizing the importance of emotional regulation and cognitive appraisal in stress management.

Furthermore, the results of the regression analysis indicate that emotional intelligence is not only related to stress resilience but also serves as a significant predictor of it. This highlights the practical importance of emotional intelligence as a target for educational interventions.

Developing emotional intelligence skills can lead to improved resilience, reduced anxiety, and better overall performance among students.

From an educational perspective, the findings underscore the need to integrate emotional intelligence development into higher education curricula. Institutions should consider implementing structured programs that focus on emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and interpersonal skills. Such initiatives can play a crucial role in preparing students to cope with academic and life-related stressors more effectively.

Despite its contributions, the study has certain limitations, including the use of self-report measures and a relatively small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

Future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, as well as longitudinal designs to explore causal relationships and long-term effects.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is a critical psychological resource that enhances stress resilience among students. Strengthening emotional competencies can significantly improve students' ability to manage stress, maintain well-being, and succeed academically.

Therefore, fostering emotional intelligence should be considered a key priority in modern educational systems.

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