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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: A REVIEW OF PARKER ET AL. (2004)

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the study conducted by Parker et al. (2004), which examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement during the transition from high school to university. The researchers assessed emotional intelligence using the Emotional Quotient Inventory: Youth Version (EQ-i:YV) and analysed its predictive value on the academic success of first-year university students. Findings indicated that specific components of emotional intelligence, such as intrapersonal skills, adaptability, and stress management, were significant predictors of academic performance. This review examines the study's methodology, key findings, implications, and limitations, thereby contributing to the growing body of literature on emotional intelligence in educational settings.

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INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical construct in understanding individual differences in behaviour, social interaction, and academic performance. Defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions, EI is believed to play a significant role in educational settings. Parker et al. (2004) investigated this role by exploring the predictive relationship between EI and academic success in first-year university students. This paper reviews their study in terms of objectives, methodology, results, and implications.

Review of Literature: Emotional intelligence (EI) has increasingly been recognized as a significant predictor of academic performance. The following review synthesizes findings from 15 key studies conducted between 2000 and 2023 that examine the relationship between EI and academic achievement across diverse educational contexts.

1. Parker et al. (2004) explored EI among 372 first-year university students. They found that intrapersonal skills, adaptability, and stress management significantly predicted academic achievement during the transition to university.
2. Petrides et al. (2004) distinguished between trait and ability EI and reported that trait EI was significantly associated with academic performance, especially in adolescents.
3. Van der Zee et al. (2002) found that emotional competence was a better predictor of academic performance than cognitive ability among Dutch university students.
4. Qualter et al. (2009) studied UK secondary school students and reported that EI influenced academic performance through improved peer relationships and reduced anxiety.
5. Barchard (2003) compared EI tests and found that performance-based EI measures moderately predicted GPA in college students.
6. Mavroveli et al. (2008) showed that trait EI was significantly associated with academic performance in primary school children, even after controlling for IQ.
7. Afolabi (2013) found a significant relationship between EI and academic motivation among Nigerian university students.
8. Saklofske et al. (2012) demonstrated that emotional self-efficacy beliefs and EI traits were predictive of GPA among Canadian college students.
9. Mayer et al. (2008) emphasized that ability-based EI, as measured by the MSCEIT, showed small but significant correlations with academic performance.
10. Goleman (1995) argued conceptually that EI was more important than IQ for success in life and work, sparking broad academic interest in applying EI to education.

11. *Sharma et al. (2016)* conducted a study in India linking EI to both academic performance and self-esteem among college students.
12. *Marquez et al. (2006)* found a positive association between EI and academic achievement in Spanish adolescents, suggesting that EI improves cognitive functioning and motivation.
13. *Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2007)* indicated that personality and EI traits were stronger predictors of university performance than intelligence.
14. *Jiménez & López-Zafra (2011)* showed that emotional regulation and clarity significantly mediated academic performance in Spanish students.
15. *Ramesh & Sancheti (2021)* found a statistically significant correlation between EI and academic performance among Indian postgraduate students, highlighting the importance of emotional skill training in higher education.

METHODOLOGY

Parker et al. (2004) employed a quantitative research design with 372 first-year university students (147 males, 225 females) as participants. The Emotional Quotient Inventory: Youth Version (EQ-i:YV) was used to assess various dimensions of EI, including intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. Academic achievement was measured through students' cumulative GPA at the end of the first year. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine which EI components predicted academic performance.

FINDINGS

The study found that intrapersonal skills, adaptability, and stress management were significant predictors of academic success, accounting for a meaningful portion of the variance in students' GPA. These results suggest that students who can understand and regulate their emotions, adapt to new environments, and manage stress effectively are more likely to perform better academically during transitional periods. Interpersonal skills and general mood were not found to be significant predictors in this study.

DISCUSSION

Parker et al.'s (2004) findings support the hypothesis that emotional intelligence contributes to academic achievement, particularly during major life transitions like entering university. The significant role of intrapersonal and self-regulatory components highlights the importance of self-awareness and emotional regulation in academic settings. However, the lack of significant findings for interpersonal skills suggests that social factors may be less influential on GPA, especially in early university stages. The study encourages the development of emotional skills training as part of university orientation and support programs.

Limitations and Future Research: While the study provided valuable insights, it was limited to one university and used self-report measures that may be subject to bias. Future research could include longitudinal designs, diverse populations, and alternative measures of EI, such as ability-based assessments. Additionally, examining the role of EI in non-academic outcomes like mental health, social adjustment, and career readiness could further expand its educational relevance.

CONCLUSION

Parker et al. (2004) demonstrated that emotional intelligence, particularly intrapersonal skills, adaptability, and stress management, significantly predicts academic achievement in first-year university

students. Their findings underscore the value of emotional competence in academic success and suggest avenues for emotional skills development in educational programs. As EI continues to gain recognition, integrating it into educational practices may foster both academic and personal growth among students. The reviewed studies consistently support the hypothesis that emotional intelligence positively influences academic performance. Whether through self-regulation, motivation, or social skills, emotionally intelligent students tend to adapt better to academic demands. These findings have significant implications for incorporating EI development programs into educational curricula.

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