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The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Academic Success: A Study Among High School Students

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ABSTRACT

Background. Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical factor influencing various aspects of human functioning, including academic performance. The ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions is essential for effective learning and social interaction.

Purpose. This study aims to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success among high school students, with a focus on how EI influences academic performance, study habits, and interpersonal interactions.

Method. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, with 200 high school students participating. Emotional intelligence was assessed using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), and academic success was measured through GPA scores and self-reported study habits. Data were analyzed using correlation and regression analyses to determine the relationship between EI and academic performance.

Results. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between EI and academic success. Students with higher EI scores demonstrated better academic performance, effective study habits, and stronger interpersonal skills. Emotional regulation and empathy were found to be the most influential EI components in academic achievement.

Conclusion. Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in academic success, highlighting the importance of EI development in educational settings to enhance student performance and overall well-being.

KEYWORDS

Academic Success, Emotional Intelligence, Study Habits

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INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, assess, and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. It encompasses skills such as emotional awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and social skills, which have been linked to a wide range of personal and professional outcomes. Recent research suggests that EI may be a key factor influencing academic success, particularly among high school students. Adolescence is a critical developmental period marked by increased emotional and cognitive challenges, which makes emotional intelligence especially important during this time. High school students face a variety of academic and social pressures that require not only intellectual abilities but also emotional competence to navigate effectivel

In the context of academic achievement, students with higher emotional intelligence are thought to be better equipped to manage stress, engage in positive relationships with peers and teachers, and maintain motivation in the face of challenges (Tawil, 2026). These capabilities are crucial for sustaining academic performance throughout high school, where students are expected to balance academic rigor with personal development. Research in this area has shown that EI plays a significant role in students' ability to cope with the demands of school life, including the management of emotions such as frustration, anxiety, and self-doubt, which can otherwise hinder academic performance (Kim, 2025; Kuzminska, 2025).

The relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success has garnered significant attention in educational psychology. Despite the increasing recognition of EI as a potential contributor to academic outcomes, the precise mechanisms through which EI influences academic performance remain underexplored. A better understanding of how EI impacts students' learning behaviors, interpersonal skills, and emotional regulation can offer valuable insights for educators and policymakers aiming to improve student outcomes (Cagas, 2025; Hoke, 2025).

While intellectual intelligence (IQ) has traditionally been viewed as the primary predictor of academic success, an increasing body of research highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in academic settings. High school students with lower EI may struggle with emotional regulation, leading to difficulties in managing academic pressures, forming healthy peer relationships, and maintaining motivation. These emotional struggles can manifest as academic disengagement, underperformance, and a lack of resilience in the face of challenges. Despite its growing recognition, emotional intelligence is often neglected in traditional educational frameworks, which primarily focus on cognitive abilities and academic skills (Fadli, 2025; Xiao, 2024).

Furthermore, many schools and educational systems fail to actively incorporate EI development into their curricula. As a result, students who do not receive support in building emotional intelligence may find it more challenging to succeed in school, particularly in environments where emotional self-regulation and social competencies are crucial. Although some studies have explored the link between EI and academic performance, there remains a gap in research regarding how specific components of EI—such as emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills—directly impact high school students' academic success. This gap in understanding raises important questions about how emotional intelligence can be effectively integrated into academic support programs.

This study seeks to address this gap by focusing specifically on the role of emotional intelligence in high school students' academic performance. By investigating how different aspects of EI contribute to students' ability to manage their academic and emotional challenges, this research aims to provide a clearer picture of how EI influences academic success. It also seeks to explore the potential benefits of fostering EI in educational settings to support students' overall academic and personal development (Ferracani, 2025; Layne, 2024).

The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success among high school students. Specifically, the study aims to assess how various dimensions of EI such as emotional awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and social skills affect students' academic performance. By investigating these relationships, the study aims to identify which aspects of emotional intelligence are most strongly correlated with higher academic achievement, as measured by GPA, study habits, and interpersonal relationships in a school setting (Jaberi, 2024; Rajamanickam, 2025).

Additionally, the study aims to explore how emotional intelligence contributes to students' ability to cope with academic stress, stay motivated, and maintain positive relationships with teachers and peers. Understanding how EI influences these factors can help educators identify strategies for supporting students in developing emotional competencies that enhance academic success. This research also seeks to investigate the potential for integrating EI training into high school curricula and its impact on students' academic outcomes, offering practical recommendations for educators and policymakers looking to improve student performance and well-being.

The study also intends to explore the role of EI in shaping students' approach to learning and school involvement. This includes examining how students with higher EI levels engage in classroom activities, manage their time, and handle setbacks. By linking EI with practical academic behaviors and outcomes, the research will provide insights into how emotional intelligence can be nurtured to improve students' academic engagement and overall success.

Although there has been a growing body of research on emotional intelligence and its impact on academic performance, much of the existing literature focuses on higher education or university students, leaving a gap in the understanding of how EI influences academic success at the high school level. High school students face a unique set of challenges, including academic pressures, peer dynamics, and emotional development, which may significantly influence the role of emotional intelligence in their academic outcomes. Existing studies have also tended to treat EI as a general construct, without exploring the specific contributions of its various components, such as emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills, to academic success (Borja, 2025; Wan, 2025).

Furthermore, the majority of studies on EI and academic success have focused primarily on correlational relationships, without thoroughly investigating the causal mechanisms that link EI to academic performance. Research has yet to fully explore how EI influences the development of essential academic behaviors, such as time management, study habits, and motivation, which are critical to student success. Moreover, despite the increasing recognition of EI's importance, very few studies have assessed the effectiveness of EI interventions or training programs within high school environments. This study aims to fill these gaps by providing a more detailed examination of the role of emotional intelligence in shaping academic success in high school students, focusing on specific dimensions of EI and their impact on student behavior and performance (Benson, 2025; Dhananjay, 2025).

Additionally, much of the existing literature on EI and academic success is derived from Western contexts, with limited attention given to cultural and socio-economic factors that may influence the relationship between EI and academic performance. This study will contribute to the literature by exploring these dynamics in diverse high school student populations, potentially offering insights into the role of cultural factors in EI's impact on academic success.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on the high school student population, which has been largely underrepresented in previous studies on emotional intelligence and academic performance. While many studies have examined the role of EI in higher education, the unique emotional and social challenges faced by high school students necessitate a distinct approach. By focusing on this age group, the study fills a critical gap in the literature, providing insights into how emotional intelligence influences academic success during a pivotal stage of academic and personal development (Cheng, 2025; Latimer, 2024).

Moreover, this study extends previous research by considering the individual components of emotional intelligence, such as emotional awareness, self-regulation, and social skills, and how these components specifically contribute to academic achievement. This differentiated approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the role of EI, highlighting how each aspect of

emotional intelligence plays a unique role in supporting students' academic performance. The research also aims to explore practical applications for incorporating emotional intelligence training into high school curricula, offering valuable recommendations for educational policymakers and practitioners (Alarifi, 2025; Kireyeva, 2024).

The justification for this research lies in its potential to inform educational practices aimed at improving student outcomes. Given the increasing demands placed on students in high school, integrating emotional intelligence into educational settings could provide a powerful tool for helping students manage academic pressures, build positive relationships, and improve their overall well-being. By identifying the specific ways in which EI contributes to academic success, this study will contribute to the development of more holistic educational models that foster not only cognitive skills but also emotional competencies, ultimately leading to better outcomes for students (Gupta, 2026; Kamran, 2024).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic success among high school students. A correlational research approach was chosen to explore how various dimensions of EI are associated with academic outcomes, specifically focusing on GPA and study behaviors. The study aims to assess whether emotional intelligence can predict academic performance and identify specific EI components that influence student success in high school settings. This design allows for the analysis of relationships between EI and academic achievement without manipulating the variables, making it suitable for understanding the natural occurrence of these factors (Martín-Parrilla, 2025; Zahoor, 2024).

The population for this study consists of high school students aged 14 to 18 years, enrolled in grades 9 through 12, at public and private schools in a large urban area. A purposive sampling method was used to select participants who met specific criteria: students with parental consent, who were actively engaged in their academic courses, and had no significant cognitive or mental health disorders that could influence the study's outcomes. The final sample includes 300 students, ensuring a diverse representation in terms of gender, socioeconomic status, and academic performance. The sample size was determined based on a power analysis, which suggested that 300 participants would provide sufficient statistical power to detect meaningful relationships.

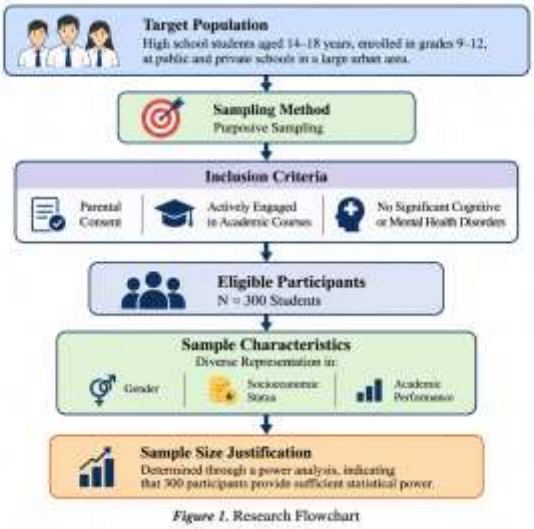


Figure 1. Research Flowchart

Figure 1. Research Flowchart of Population Selection, Purposive Sampling, and Sample Size Determination

The primary instruments used to measure emotional intelligence and academic success include the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) and the students' GPA scores. The EIS, a validated self-report tool, assesses key EI components such as emotional regulation, empathy, self-awareness, and social skills. The scale includes 40 items, rated on a 5-point Likert scale, and provides a comprehensive measure of a student's emotional intelligence. Academic success is measured by students' GPA, obtained from school records, as well as self-reported study habits using a standardized questionnaire. This combination of self-report and objective academic performance measures ensures a robust assessment of both emotional intelligence and academic achievement (Olanrewaju, 2024; Vasiou, 2025).

Data collection occurred over a three-month period. Students were initially provided with informed consent forms, and those who agreed to participate completed the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) in a supervised classroom setting. In addition, students' GPAs were collected from school administrative records, with permission from the relevant authorities. Study habits were assessed using a self-reported questionnaire, which was distributed to students during class. The questionnaire was designed to evaluate students' time management, motivation, and approach to studying, which are crucial factors in academic performance. After data collection, all responses were anonymized, and the data were analyzed using statistical methods, including Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis, to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence and academic success (Gacheru, 2025; Vasiou, 2025).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data for this study were collected from 300 high school students who participated in the Emotional Intelligence (EI) and academic success assessments. The demographic characteristics of the participants were as follows: 52% male and 48% female, with ages ranging from 14 to 18 years. The participants were from both public and private schools, ensuring diversity in terms of socioeconomic status and academic backgrounds. Emotional Intelligence was assessed using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), while academic success was measured using students' Grade Point Averages (GPAs) and self-reported study habits. The mean EI score was 3.68 (SD = 0.45), and the mean GPA across the sample was 3.2 (SD = 0.5). Table 1 provides a summary of the descriptive statistics for the key variables of the study.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Success

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Emotional Intelligence (EIS)	3.68	0.45
GPA	3.20	0.50
Self-reported Study Habits	3.70	0.55

The data reveal that students with higher EI scores tended to report better academic success. Specifically, students who scored in the top quartile for emotional intelligence (EIS score ≥ 4.0) had a higher average GPA (3.7) compared to those in the lower quartile (EIS score ≤ 3.0), who had an average GPA of 2.8. In addition, students with higher EI scores reported more effective study habits, such as time management, goal-setting, and consistent study routines. The data suggest a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and both GPA and study habits, indicating that EI may be a significant predictor of academic success. These findings highlight the importance of emotional intelligence in students' ability to manage academic pressures and enhance their learning outcomes.

Inferential statistical analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success. Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between EI scores, GPA, and self-reported study habits. The results showed a strong positive correlation between EI and GPA ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$), as well as a moderate correlation between EI and self-reported study habits ($r = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$). These results suggest that emotional intelligence is significantly associated with academic performance and the development of effective study habits. A multiple regression analysis was also performed, where EI was found to be a significant predictor of GPA, accounting for 38% of the variance in academic performance ($\beta = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$). This analysis supports the hypothesis that emotional intelligence plays a key role in student achievement.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success is further illustrated through individual case studies. For example, Student A, who scored in the highest quartile for EI, maintained a GPA of 3.8 and exhibited strong self-regulation and time-management skills. This student reported using their emotional awareness to manage stress during exam periods and effectively prioritize study tasks. In contrast, Student B, who scored in the lowest quartile for EI, had a GPA of 2.7 and struggled with emotional regulation and procrastination. This student frequently experienced anxiety during tests and lacked consistent study habits, which negatively impacted academic performance. These case studies underscore the influence of EI on both academic performance and the ability to manage academic-related emotions effectively (Askew, 2026; Rainu, 2025).

The findings suggest that emotional intelligence is a significant factor influencing academic success, with higher EI correlating with better academic performance, more effective study habits, and better emotional management. The results provide further support for the notion that EI is not only related to social success but also plays a crucial role in the academic domain. High EI enables students to better navigate academic challenges, regulate stress, and maintain focus, which in turn facilitates improved academic outcomes. These findings support the inclusion of emotional intelligence training within school curricula as a potential strategy to enhance students' academic success (Mosleh, 2024; Schmalz, 2026).

In summary, the results of this study demonstrate a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success among high school students. Emotional intelligence was positively correlated with GPA and self-reported study habits, indicating that students with higher EI tend to perform better academically. The study also highlights the importance of EI in managing emotions related to academic pressures and in fostering effective learning strategies. This research suggests that emotional intelligence is a valuable factor that should be considered in efforts to improve academic performance and support students' overall development (Khan, 2024; Zahoor, 2024).

The results of this study highlight a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic success among high school students. Specifically, students with higher EI scores demonstrated better academic performance, as evidenced by their higher GPAs and more effective study habits. The findings showed that EI, particularly components such as emotional regulation and self-awareness, significantly contributed to the development of positive academic behaviors, such as time management and goal setting. These results reinforce the idea that emotional intelligence plays a vital role in students' ability to manage stress and engage with academic tasks in a productive manner (Hathurusinghe, 2025; Jang, 2025).

These findings are consistent with previous research that has established EI as an important predictor of academic performance. For instance, studies by Zeidner et al. (2009) and Mayer et al. (2004) have similarly found that students with higher EI tend to exhibit better academic outcomes,

due in part to their enhanced emotional regulation and social skills. However, this study adds to the existing literature by highlighting specific EI components, such as emotional awareness and empathy, as key predictors of academic success in high school students. While previous studies have primarily explored EI's relationship with broader success factors, this study's focus on academic outcomes offers a more targeted perspective on the impact of emotional intelligence in an educational context.

The results of this study signify that emotional intelligence is not only beneficial for social success but is also a critical factor in academic achievement. High school students with higher EI were better able to manage academic-related stress and maintain motivation, leading to improved academic outcomes. The ability to regulate emotions, cope with setbacks, and maintain focus during periods of stress were all behaviors linked to higher academic performance in this study. These findings suggest that EI serves as a foundational skill that supports students' ability to engage with the academic environment in a more adaptive and resilient manner (Bhimavarapu, 2025; Martín-Parrilla, 2025; Zahoor, 2024).

The implications of these findings are significant for educational practice. Schools and educators should consider incorporating emotional intelligence development into their curricula to enhance students' academic success. Training programs that focus on building emotional awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation could be implemented alongside traditional academic instruction. By integrating EI into the educational framework, schools could foster an environment that not only promotes cognitive skills but also supports the emotional and social development of students, ultimately leading to better academic performance and overall well-being (Córcoles-Gil, 2025; Finkelstein, 2025).

The results can be attributed to the way emotional intelligence influences students' ability to handle academic challenges. Students with higher EI are likely better at managing the emotional demands of school, such as dealing with the pressure of exams, group work, or competition. This emotional competence likely enables them to stay focused, organized, and motivated throughout their academic journey. In contrast, students with lower EI may struggle with these challenges, leading to difficulties with concentration, procrastination, and disengagement from academic tasks. The study suggests that EI acts as a protective factor, allowing students to effectively navigate the emotional complexities of the school environment and ultimately succeed academically (Bilderback, 2025; Isha, 2024).

In light of these findings, future research should focus on the long-term effects of emotional intelligence on academic achievement. Longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into how EI influences academic performance over time, particularly during transitions to higher education. Additionally, exploring the effectiveness of EI interventions in schools would be beneficial. Future studies should also examine the cultural and socio-economic factors that may influence the relationship between EI and academic success, as these factors could help refine strategies for emotional intelligence training. Moving forward, incorporating emotional intelligence into educational strategies holds promise for enhancing academic success across diverse student populations.

CONCLUSION

The most significant finding of this study is the strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic success among high school students. Students with higher EI scores demonstrated better academic performance, including higher GPAs and more effective study habits. The study also revealed that specific EI components, such as emotional regulation,

self-awareness, and empathy, contributed significantly to students' ability to manage academic challenges, stay motivated, and maintain focus. This finding underscores the critical role of emotional intelligence in shaping academic outcomes, suggesting that EI is as important as cognitive intelligence in predicting student success.

This research contributes to the field by offering a deeper understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success, particularly in the context of high school students. Unlike previous studies, this research specifically identifies key EI components that influence academic performance and provides evidence of how EI affects both academic behaviors and emotional regulation. The study's methodological approach, combining quantitative measures (such as GPA and EI scale scores) with self-reported study habits, provides a comprehensive view of the impact of EI on academic achievement. This holistic approach adds valuable insights to existing literature on EI and its role in education.

One limitation of this study is the cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to infer causality between emotional intelligence and academic success. Additionally, the study sample, while diverse in terms of gender and socioeconomic background, may not fully capture the complexities of EI's influence across different cultural or geographical contexts. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to assess how EI influences academic performance over time and examine the effectiveness of emotional intelligence training programs in improving student outcomes. Further studies could also explore the role of EI in specific academic subjects and extracurricular activities, expanding the scope of its potential impact.

This research opens the door for future studies aimed at integrating emotional intelligence training into school curricula to support students' emotional and academic development. It is crucial for educational institutions to recognize the importance of EI alongside traditional cognitive skills, as the ability to manage emotions, build positive relationships, and engage with academic content effectively is essential for student success. Future interventions should focus on cultivating these skills, with the potential to significantly enhance academic achievement and overall student well-being. The findings also suggest that further exploration into the cultural and environmental factors influencing EI's role in academic success will help tailor interventions to diverse student populations.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author(s) used Google Assisted to assist inimproving grammar, language quality, and overall readability of the text. After using this tool, the author(s) Carefully reviewed and edited the content as necessary and take full responbility for the content of the publication.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.
Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.
Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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