

Emotional Intelligence and Student Success

“If you are tuned out of your own emotions, you will be poor at reading them in other people.” — Daniel Goleman

Abstract

Mayer & Salovey, (1997) mention that emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognise, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively in oneself and others.

Research shows that students with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate better academic performance, stronger resilience, and improved interpersonal relationships (Goleman, 1995).

Developing awareness of personal emotions is therefore essential for academic success and well-being.

Introduction

This poster critically discusses how emotional awareness influences EI, how students can control emotions through mindfulness, and what strategies support emotional intelligence during academic study.

Method

Information for this poster was gathered using academic textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles, and educational psychology literature focusing on emotional intelligence, mindfulness, and student performance.

Key theoretical models from Mayer and Salovey (1997), Goleman (1995), and contemporary mindfulness research (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) were analysed and synthesised to develop the discussion and recommendations.

Developing Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is not a fixed trait; it can be strengthened through intentional behavioural and cognitive practices that improve how individuals recognise and manage emotions. One important approach involves building emotional awareness, where individuals routinely pause to identify what they are feeling, why the emotion has occurred, and how it may influence their reactions. This process increases the ability to respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively (Goleman, 1995).

Another key strategy is developing emotional regulation skills, which include techniques such as pausing before responding, reframing negative thoughts into constructive perspectives, and using short relaxation exercises to reduce stress levels. These practices allow individuals to remain calm and focused during demanding academic or interpersonal situations (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

Emotional intelligence also grows through interpersonal learning, particularly by practising empathy. Engaging in attentive listening, considering alternative viewpoints, and recognising the emotional cues of others strengthens relationship management and social awareness (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

Finally, continuous personal evaluation supports long-term emotional development. Reflecting on experiences, recognising behavioural patterns, and acting on constructive feedback help individuals gradually refine emotional responses and improve decision-making. Through consistent practice across these areas, emotional intelligence develops as an ongoing learning process rather than a single skill that is mastered once.

Factors supporting academic success and EI Challenges

Several emotional factors influence academic success, including motivation, stress tolerance, confidence, and resilience. Students who develop emotional self-management strategies demonstrate higher persistence and improved academic outcomes (Duckworth et al., 2007).

Actions to address EI challenges include:

- Establishing consistent study routines to reduce anxiety
- Seeking academic and peer support during stressful periods
- Using time-management tools to avoid emotional overload
- Practising self-compassion to manage academic setbacks

Addressing emotional barriers proactively enables students to maintain motivation and performance across demanding academic periods.

Controlling emotions and developing Mindfulness as a student

From personal academic experience, emotional pressure during assessments, deadlines, and workload demands can negatively affect concentration and performance. Developing mindfulness practices such as short daily breathing exercises, reflective journaling, and structured planning helps regulate stress and maintain focus. Mindfulness training improves attention control, reduces anxiety, and enhances academic persistence (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Practical student-focused techniques include:

- Pausing before reacting to stressful situations
 - Practising 5-minute breathing exercises before studying
 - Writing daily reflections to recognise emotional triggers
 - Breaking academic tasks into smaller goals to reduce overwhelm
- These practices increase emotional regulation capacity and support sustained academic engagement.



Conclusion

Overall, Emotional intelligence is an important factor in academic success and personal growth. By enhancing self-awareness, emotional control, and mindfulness techniques, students can develop their resilience, problem-solving, and academic performance. Reflection and emotional skills development are thus key elements of effective learning strategies for students.

List of References

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Daniel Goleman’s Framework of Emotional Intelligence			
		Recognition	Regulation
Self	Self-awareness	- Being able to put a name to emotions - Recognising behaviour triggers - Identifying personal values - Understanding strengths and weaknesses	- Self-discipline - Confidence setting boundaries - Ability to process and regulate emotions - Acceptance of uncontrollable situations
	Social Awareness	- Cultural awareness - Recognition of workplace dynamics - Picking up on social cues - Experiencing feelings of empathy	- Relationship Management - Conflict management - Influencing/motivating others - Effective communication - Cooperation skills