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Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Results Self-Evaluated by Students of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City's Students

Tuong Nguyen Van ^{a,*}, Truong Phan Nguyen Dong ^b

^a Education Faculty, University of Social Science and Humanities, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

^b Vinschool Education System, Central Park campus, Academic department, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Abstract

The research was aimed at investigating the relationship between Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City students' emotional intelligence and their academic performance throughout self-reported academic results. By understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic results, the research could give suggestions for educators and lecturers to improve students' academic performances and the quality of the teaching-learning process in the higher education context. The sample of this research was 675 students (aged from 18 to 24) out of 73000 students participating in Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City. The research was administered within the academic year of 2020–2021 with a google survey form. To achieve the objectives of this study, the scale of Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (2004) was administered within this research. The scale could be accounted as the point of view from which VNU-HCM students stated their emotional intelligence. The academic results were self-reported by participants. The results indicated that students with high emotional intelligence reported performing better academically. Students attending a training course on emotional intelligence performed better in emotional intelligence. The results imply that the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City board of managers should cascade more training courses on emotional intelligence for students to improve their academic performance.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, academic results, VNU-HCM students.

* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: tuongnguyen@hcmussh.edu.vn (T. Van Nguyen), v.truongpnd@gmail.com (T.P. Nguyen Dong)

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence is increasingly being recognized as a measure of overall performance across various fields. According to Joshi et al. (2012), in research on the influences of emotional intelligence on academic results of 132 undergraduate medical students. Joshi et al. (2012) discovered that high emotional intelligence determines better academic performance. Emotional intelligence was suggested to be increased along with increases in academic results (Skipper et al., 2013). Besides that, Chew et al. (2013) also stated that emotional intelligence correlated with changes in academic results in a studio of 163 (8 years one and 79 years five) medical students. The research of Chew et al. (2013) suggested that emotional intelligence is associated with more prosocial behavior, better academic performance, and improved empathy towards patients among first- and final-year medical students in Malaysia. Similar results could be found in the research of Oyewunmi et al. (2015) in investigating the correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance of undergraduates from universities in South-West, Nigeria. Oyewunmi et al. (2015) indicated a correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance; affirming that emotional intelligence predicts academic performance. Moreover, Lucila O. Bance and John Ray B. Acopio (2016) claim that the more the academic achievers become emotional-social intelligent, the higher their tendency to exude academic prowess. With all of the evidence on the influences of emotional intelligence on academic results, research was aimed to investigate the status of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City students' emotional intelligence and its influences on students' academic results. The results would highlight the potential implications of emotional intelligence in educational progress and academic success; hence emotional intelligence-based activities should be integrated into a tougher education curriculum.

2. Theory framework

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence was first perceived as a branch of the Intelligence quotient (Mayer, Salovey, 1997). According to Mayer and Salovey (1997), the researchers developed emotional intelligence theory based on the intelligence quotation. In Mayer and Salovey's (1997) theory, emotional intelligence could be demonstrated as individual abilities to accurately acknowledge emotions and access and generate emotions to support thinking. Besides that, Mayer and Salovey (1997) also believed that emotional intelligence was individual capacity in understanding emotions and emotional knowledge, and reflexively regulating emotions to promote emotional development and wisdom. However, this approach to emotional intelligence received much criticism from scholars who believe that emotional intelligence was an independent individual capacity in managing emotion and behaviors. According to Baron (1996) the int of violin Vygotsky's social development theory, emotional intelligence was defined as a range of personal emotional, social abilities, and skills that influenced a person's ability to successfully cope with demands and pressures from an external force environment In Baron (1996), He argued that identified five key conceptual components of emotional intelligence were comprised: Intrapersonal interaction; Interactions involved; adaptability; Stress management; General mood. On the other hand, Davies et al. (1998) believed that emotional intelligence should have been perceived as a psychological process rather than a branch of intelligence quotient or social abilities. According to Davies et al. (1998), emotional intelligence was a psychological process in which individuals manage, resolve, and process emotional information. In Davies et al. (1998) theory, emotional intelligence was categorized into four aspects: Individual capacity in self-assessing and expressing one's emotions; Individual capacity in assessing and recognizing the feelings of others; Self-management of individual emotions; Individual capacity in managing emotions to control behavior. In this study, the research was administered the Davies et al. (1998)'s point of view on emotional intelligence.

Academic results

According to Regulations on training at the university level of Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City abided by Decision No. 268/QĐ-ĐHQG on the promulgation of university training regulations on July 14th, 2020, the academic records for students in higher education institutes which are members of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City would be as follows.

Table 1. Assessment guidelines for higher education educators at Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (abided by Decision No. 268/QĐ-ĐHQG on the promulgation of university training regulations on July 14th, 2020)

Ranked	Grades on a scale of 10	Grades in scale 4	Letters
Excellent	From 9.0 to 10	4	A+
Very Good	From 8.5 to 9.0	3.7	A
	From 8.0 to 8.5	3.5	B+
Good	From 7.0 to 8.0	3	B
Average good	From 6.0 to 7.0	2.5	C+
Average	From 5.5 to 6.0	2	C
	From 5.0 to 5.5	1.5	D+
Weak	From 4.0 to below 5.0	1	D
Poor	Below 4.0	0	F

In this research, students were encouraged to self-report their latest academic records in the nearest academic semester at Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, counting back from July 2020. However, in reality, the academic records reported by students varied only from 5.5 to 10 (average to excellent ranks) without any recorded failed cases (weak or poor ranked students). To be more convenient for data analysis, the research would categorize and label ranks and scale in the survey as follows.

Table 2. Modified ranks and grades according to assessment guidelines for higher education educators at Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (abided by Decision No. 268/QĐ-ĐHQG on the promulgation of university training regulations on July 14th, 2020)

Ranked	Grades on a scale of 10	Grades in scale 4	Letters
Excellent	From 9.0 to 10	4	A+
Very Good	From 8.5 to 9.0	3.7	A
	From 8.0 to 8.5	3.5	B+
Good	From 7.0 to 8.0	3	B
	From 6.0 to 7.0	2.5	C+
Average	From 5.5 to 6.0	2	C
	From 5.0 to 5.5	1.5	D+

Sample and instrument

Sample

In this study, there were 675 students from most of the university members of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (excluding the Faculty of Medicine and An Giang University). The size of the sample was appropriate since the total population of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City was around 73.000 students. According to Waston (2001), if the total population varies from 50.000 to 100.000 people, the suitable sample size should have ranged from 397 to 398 people. The sample size of this research, as mentioned, was around 675 students.

It would be representative enough for all of the characteristics the research aimed to investigate with Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City students in general. There were 213 male students (31.6 %) and 426 female students (68.4 %). Most students came from the second year with 358 second-year students (53 %) followed by 148 freshmen (21.9 %), 108 third-year students (16 %), and 61 senior-year students (9 %). Besides those figures, there were figures on students' history of joining the course on emotional management training before joining this research. According to Table 3, the figures revealed that most of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City stated that they haven't been in a course on training emotional management (48 %). The percentage of students who reported that they self-trained their emotional intelligence was 42.1 %. Only 1.6 % of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City students attended several courses on training in emotional management. However, there were statistically meaningful differences between students having a different history of joining training courses on emotional management on their opinion on their emotional intelligence. More specifically, the students attending several courses on emotional management training had perceived themselves as having better performances on emotional intelligence than others ($F = 9.250$; $Sig = 0.000 < 0.05$).

Table 3. Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City students' history of joining courses on Emotional Management training

No	History of joining the course on Emotional Management training	Percent (%)	M (StD)	F	Meaningful level
1	Haven't ever been (M1)	48	4.95 (0.85)	9.250	Sig. (ANOVA) = 0.000 < 0.05 M4>M1 (p=0.00) M4>M2 (p=0.02) M4>M3 (p=0.00) M2>M1 (p=0.00)
2	Self-research and training through books, media medium (M2)	42.1	5.24 (0.77)		
3	At least joined a course on training emotional management once (M3)	8.3	5.01 (0.89)		
4	Joined several courses on training emotional management (M4)	1.6	5.83 (0.75)		

Instruments

The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence scale (2004) was administered as the main measurement for assessing Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City students' emotional intelligence status and its correlation with academic results. The scale was designed to include 4 factors of emotional intelligence according to Davies et al. (1998), which are: Self Emotion Appraisal; Others' Emotion Appraisal; Regulation of Emotion; Use of emotions. The factors could be interpreted as follows.

- Self-Emotion Appraisal: the ability to assess and understand inner feelings and have the ability to express emotions outwardly naturally.
- Others' Emotion Appraisal: the ability to recognize, understand the emotions of others.
- Regulation of Emotion: the ability to be able to regulate one's emotions, to be able to help oneself overcome psychological stress quickly.
- Use of emotions: the ability to be able to direct emotions in one's activities or increase self-efficacy.

The scale would be at a 7-point Likert scale format in which 1 completely disagrees – 7 completely agrees. The scale was manufactured to calculate the average score, there were no inverse sentences. The high score would indicate that the respondents believe that they have a high ability on this factor. Each level is separated by 0.8 points in the case of 5 – a point Likert scale and 0.86 points in the case of a 7-point Likert scale (the range of levels will be defined as $(n-1)/n = 0.8$) and the significance of the mean values is determined as follows:

- 1,00–1,86: responders completely disagree with statements on their expression about emotional intelligence within recent time;

- 1,86–2,72: responders sometimes disagree with statements on their expression about emotional intelligence within recent time;
- 2,72–3,58: responders disagree with statements on their expression about emotional intelligence within recent time;
- 3,58–4,44: responders partially agree with statements on their expression about emotional intelligence within recent times;
- 4,44–5,30: responders agree with statements on their expression about emotional intelligence within recent time;
- 5,30–6,16: responders sometimes agree with statements on their expression about emotional intelligence within recent time;
- 6,16–7,00: responders completely agree with statements on their expression about emotional intelligence within recent times;

3. Results

Reliability and validity of the Emotional Intelligence scale

The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (2004) was translated, piloted, and compatible with the context of Vietnamese students. In this study, the process of compatibility and translation was implemented in 4 phases:

- Step 1: Translating from English to Vietnamese and back by different experts;
- Step 2: The translation was evaluated by a 3rd expert;
- Step 3: Interviewing, piloting with 50 students;
- Step 4: Finalizing the official version of the scale in Vietnamese.

The scale of emotional intelligence’s data revealed the Cronbach Alpha index for factors, respectively: 0.797 (Self Emotion Appraisal); 0.791 (Others’ Emotion Appraisal); 0.820 (Use of emotions); 0.864 (Regulation of Emotion). Exploratory Factors Analysis indicated that Initial was 1.104 (> 1), KMO index was 0.875 (> 0.05), (Sig = 0.00 < 0.05), total variance explained of 68.44 > 50 %. Besides that, the Exploratory Factors Analysis showed that there were 4 factors extracted with factor loading that varied from 0.547 to 0.855 (> 0.5).

Table 4. The reliability testing and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the instruments evaluated by Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City’s students

No	Scales	No item	Cronbach’s Alpha		EFA		
			Cronbach’s Alpha	Variable-total correlation	KMO	Eigenvalues and Total Variance extracted	Factor loading
1	Emotional Intelligence Scale (15 items)						
1.1	Self Emotion Appraisal	3	0.797	0.592-0.695	0.875 (Sig. = 0.00)	1.104 (68.44 %)	4 factors, factor loading from 0.547 to 0.855
1.2	Others’ Emotion Appraisal	4	0.791	0.396-0.693			
1.3	Use of emotions	4	0.820	0.558-0.732			
1.4	Regulation of Emotion	4	0.864	0.667-0.781			

The differences between Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City’s students ‘Emotional Intelligence with different Academic

The figures from Table 5 also introduce the academic results of students at Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City. To be more specific, most of the students reported that they had a good and very good record in their studies (54.8 %, 31.3 %), followed up by several students who ranked average results with 11.9 %. The number of excellent students only accounted for 2.1 % equivalent to 14 students in the total sample. There were no students reported with weak or poor study records within the sample.

Table 5. Academic results of VNU-HCM students in the academic year 2019–2020

No	Academic results of VNU-HCM students in the academic year 2019-2020	Number of students	Percent (%)
1	Average	80	11.9
2	Good	370	54.8
3	Very good	211	31.3
4	Excellent	14	2.1

According to Table 6, the data introduce the status of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City’s students’ emotional intelligence status. The figure revealed that students at Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City believed that they performed well in emotional intelligence ($M = 5.10$, $StD = 0.83$) This could be interpreted as VNU HCM students believed that they performed emotion intelligence precisely within survey time. There were statistical differences between different ranked students in self-reporting their emotional intelligence ($Sig = 0.113 > 0.05$). Moreover, the data showed that students with different academic records would have different opinions on their emotional intelligence ($Sig. (Levene's Test) = 0.113 > 0.05$). To be more specific, the data revealed that students with excellent, very good, and good academic results believed that they performed emotional intelligence better than others.

Table 6. Differences between Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City students’ emotional intelligence with different academic results

No	VNU HCM students’ Emotional intelligence	VNU HCM students’ academic results					F	Meaningful levels
		Excellent (A)	Very good (B)	Good (C)	Average (D)			
1	Self-Emotion Appraisal	5.11 (1.06)	5.15 (1.04)	5.23 (1.00)	6.40 (0.55)	6.849	Sig. (Levene's Test) = 0.113 > 0.05	
2	Others’ Emotion Appraisal	4.78 (1.12)	5.14 (0.97)	5.16 (0.99)	6.00 (1.07)	6.798	Sig. (ANOVA) = 0.00 < 0.05 A > D (p=0.00);	
3	Use of emotions	4.84 (1.08)	5.16 (1.10)	5.43 (1.00)	6.32 (0.54)	11.341	A > C (p=0.00); A > B (p=0.00);	
4	Regulation of Emotion	4.65 (1.20)	4.77 (1.16)	4.98 (1.14)	6.32 (0.82)	9.835	B > D (p=0.00); B > C (p=0.03);	
Total		4.85 (0.89)	5.05 (0.81)	5.20 (0.79)	6.25 (0.80)	13.755	C > D (p=0.02)	

4. Discussion

The results of this research were similar to other research on emotional intelligence and academic results of students in higher education institutions. This study also supported the empirical evidence found by Petrides et al. (2006) and Skipper and Brandenburg (2013) that emotional intelligence is related to the academic performance of students. This research also suggested that the development of emotional competencies amongst university students would

result in their better academic performance. The research also proposed that an emotional intelligence program be developed to address the academic achievers' challenges in their academic potential. Besides that, emotional intelligence should have included improving aspects of university students' behavior towards social situations (sociability and personal relations) that are needed to boost their good attitude towards interaction. Besides that, the number of students attending training courses on emotional intelligence at Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City was limited (less than 10 %). However, the research also revealed that students who attended a training course on emotional intelligence stated that they practiced emotional intelligence better than before.

5. Conclusion

This information implies that the Board of Managers of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City should have had more orders for university members, faculties, and lecturers to develop and encourage university students in a training course on emotional intelligence. Lecturers could also organize class activities and lesson plans to deliver knowledge and promote training emotional intelligence for their students.

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