

## The relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept and educational achievement of Tehran students

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### Suggested Citation:

Shams, Z. (2019). The relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept and educational achievement of Tehran students. *International Journal of Learning and Teaching*. 11(1), 028-033.

Received May 18, 2018; revised August 8, 2018; accepted December 2, 2018.

Selection and peer review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Hafize Keser, Ankara University, Ankara, Turkey.

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### Abstract

This study was conducted with the aim of investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept as well as educational achievement of Tehran students. Descriptive correlational research was used as a research design. Selected samples, after receiving information about research goals and giving their consent to participation, collaborated with the researcher. First, using multi-stage cluster sampling, districts 1, 4 and 17 were selected among 22 districts of Tehran randomly. Then, two high schools (one girls' high school and one boys' high school) were chosen from each of districts. Nearly, 200 students were recruited. Emotional intelligence and Tennessee self-concept questionnaires were completed by participants and then analysis of data was carried out using correlation matrix and Multiple Regression. The results showed that self-concept and educational achievement have a significant relationship with emotional intelligence. Also, emotional intelligence could predict self-concept and educational achievement.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, self-concept, educational achievement

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## 1. Introduction

In today's complicated world, everybody needs education. Today, school activities and learning make a great part of human life (Garg and Rastogi, 2009). Among the most important concerns of education professionals, teachers and parents are educational achievement and prevention of academic failure (Poonteng, 2003). Academic failure is the opposite side of educational achievement, which has a profound effect on the person's destiny and also imposes a high costs on family and society. In our country, too, it is currently one of the most important problems of the educational system that wastes tens of billions of national budgets each year, and the potential powers and sources of society, which is actually human resource, remain fruitless (Tamanaifar, SedighiArfai & Salami MohammadAbadi, 2011). Therefore, the education of students is aiming at their educational achievement (Ciarrochi, Dean & Anderson, 2002).

Educational achievement refers to the person's educated or acquired ability in academic subjects which is measured through standardised tests or teacher-made tests (Jalil-Abkenar & Ashouri, 2016). Study on the factors affecting educational achievement is complicated because it is a multidimensional factor, and is subtly connected to the student's physical, social, cognitive and emotional achievement (Mahboobi, Yazdanparast & Talebi, 2014). Many scholars (Berger & Milem, 1999; Johnsin, 1997; Mayer & Salovey, 1997), therefore, argue that Intelligence Quotient (IQ) alone, at its best, explains relatively small amount of variance of educational and life achievement. Actually, main part of successes depend on other factors and, in many cases, destinies of people rely on the skills that constitute emotional intelligence (Aghajani, Narimani & Asiaei, 2008). Emotional intelligence consists of capacity for perception, expression, understanding, applying and management of emotions in oneself and the others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Following Mayer and Salovey, Gardner with his influential model named multiple intelligence played a main role in developing emotional intelligence theory. According to this theory, two types of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences were suggested. Finally, Goleman (1995) stated this concept in the best-selling book of the year called *Emotional Intelligence*. Emotional intelligence is a set of non-cognitive abilities and skills that improve person's ability to cope with stresses and environmental requirements (Bar-On, 1997). However, it's obvious that considering emotional skills without take into account cognitive dimensions such as self-concept does not seem to make sense. Self-concept involves our attitudes, emotions and knowledge about the ability, skill and acceptability of social acceptance. It contains the whole cognitive, perceptual, emotional and evaluation procedures. For long time, sociologists and educators have considered the relationship between positive self-concept and educational performance as an important link and equal to evaluation of academic performance. Self-concept is based on previous judgments and perceptions, others' feedbacks and important person in man's life. One's conception and perception of his ability to learn is one of the accepted types of educational behaviour and performance in terms of educational achievement (Aghajani et al., 2008). In most studies, emotional intelligence has a positive correlation with educational achievement (Parker et al., 2004). In this regard, Parker, Hogan, Eastabrook, Oke & Wood (2006) stated that continuing education is meaningfully associated with high levels of students' emotional and social qualifications. Bar-on (2006) in his study on a group of students found that emotional intelligence was significantly ( $r = 0.63$ ) associated with their final grades. Studies of Brackett and Salovey (2004), Gumora and Arsenion (2003) also show the relationship between emotional intelligence and educational achievement. Parker et al. (2006) also concluded from their study on 667 high school students in Canada that the correlation between emotional intelligence and educational achievement is equal to 0.41, and emotional intelligence significantly predicts educational achievement. Today, most studies try to examine the effectiveness of emotional intelligence and self-concept and its components in various aspects of life, such as social communication and education. It is worth noting that research in this regard has achieved contradictory results. On the other hand, the latest and recent evolution in understanding the relationship between reasoning and emotion is related to emotional intelligence. If educators focus on emotional intelligence and self-concept and establishing an interaction between them and their synchronous progression, they will significantly improve educational performance of students

(Petrides, Chamoro-Premuzic, Frederickson, Furnham, 2006). Therefore, the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept and educational achievement seems necessary, and most studies on emotional intelligence which indicate the ability of this factor to predict students' educational achievement emphasise the significance and necessity of the present study. However, there are few results with regard to self-concept and emotional intelligence and their impact on educational achievement. Therefore, this study was carried out with aim of investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept and educational achievement in Tehran's students.

## **2. Method**

Descriptive correlational research is used as a research design. Selected samples, after receiving information about research goals and giving their consent to participation, collaborated with the researcher. First, using multi-stage cluster sampling, districts 1, 4 and 17 were selected among 22 districts of Tehran randomly. Then, two high schools (one girls' high school and one boys' high school) were chosen from each of districts. 200 students were recruited. Emotional intelligence and Tennessee self-concept questionnaires were completed by participants and then the data were analysed. To measure educational achievement, students' average grade was used in this study. Because of its more stability and validity than other criteria and showing educational achievement more accurately, the average score of different courses is the most commonly used criterion to determine educational achievement. Data analysis carried out using spss22 software.

### **2.1. Trait meta-mood scale**

This scale designed by Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey & Palfai (1995) consists of 48-items rated on a five-point, Likert-type scale. It has three subscales: attention to feelings (attention), 21 items, which measure the level of awareness of one's own mood, clarity in discrimination of feelings, 15 items, which measure the ability to discriminate feelings; and change in mood (mood repair), 12 items, which measure the ability to hold pleasing moods and change the unpleasant moods (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004). Salovey et al. (1995) have reported Cronbach's alpha as an indicator of the reliability for each component of attention, clarity in discrimination of feelings, and mood repair 0.88, 0.86 and 0.82, respectively. In Iran, too, Ghorbani, Watson M, Davison K and Mack (2002) obtained Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each of the components of attention, clarity in discrimination of feelings and mood repair 0.62, 0.72 and 0.65, respectively.

### **2.2. Tennessee self-concept test**

The questionnaire consists of 84 statements about the physical, emotional, social, family and ethical traits of a person rated on a five-point, Likert-type scale. Subjects select among options ranging from true to completely false, each with a score of 1–5. Mahmoudi (1998) in his research *The Study of the Relationship between General Self-concept and Academic Performance of Primary and Secondary Students* calculated the reliability of it by Bisection method and the Cronbach's alpha formula 0.74 and 0.79, respectively.

## **3. Findings**

The components of descriptive index and correlation matrix of scores of emotional intelligence, self-concept and academic achievement in the participants are presented in Table 1. Also, in Table 2, the results of multivariate regression have been reported to predict self-concept and academic achievement based on emotional intelligence.

**Table 1. Correlation matrix of emotional intelligence with self-concept and academic achievement**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>	1										
<b>Attention</b>	0.42**	1									
<b>Discrimination</b>	0.34**	0.31**	1								
<b>Mood repair</b>	0.33**	0.46**	0.39**	1							
<b>Self-concept</b>	0.32**	0.40**	0.49**	0.48**	1						
<b>Physical self-concept</b>	0.54**	0.50**	0.42**	0.48**	0.45**	1					
<b>Emotional self-concept</b>	0.38**	0.35**	0.43**	0.49**	0.51**	0.64**	1				
<b>Moral self-concept</b>	0.44**	0.47**	0.39**	0.41**	0.48**	0.50**	0.53**	1			
<b>Social self-concept</b>	0.39**	0.40**	0.43**	0.48**	0.47**	0.40**	0.50**	0.52**	1		
<b>Family self-concept</b>	0.40**	0.41**	0.40**	0.44**	0.49**	0.48**	0.49**	0.50**	0.55**	1	
<b>Educational achievement</b>	0.64**	0.59**	0.53**	0.42**	0.48**	0.49**	0.47**	0.49**	0.43**	0.44**	1
<b>Average</b>	44.65**	10.89**	21.10**	17.75**	152.59**	25.97**	25.30**	26.21**	24.87**	27.04**	16.60**
<b>Standard deviation</b>	13.61**	3.16**	4.52**	8.99**	24.14**	5.61**	5.54**	5.54**	5.76**	5.15**	4.35**

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ .

The results of Table 1 show that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and emotional intelligence. Also, a significant relationship between self-concept and attention, discrimination and mood repair subscales was obtained. Moreover, the results showed that physical, emotional, moral, social and family self-concept have a significant relationship with emotional intelligence. Academic achievement has a significant relationship with emotional intelligence and self-concept and its subscales too.

**Table 2. Summary of multiple regression coefficients to predict self-concept and educational achievement based on emotional intelligence**

Predictor variable	Criterion variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Beta	T	Sig
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>					0.40	5.53	0.001
<b>Attention</b>	Self-concept	0.24	0.05	8.31	0.23	4.58	0.001
<b>Discrimination</b>					0.13	2.63	0.009
<b>Mood repair</b>					0.16	2.78	0.004
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>	Educational achievement	0.86	0.74	387.20	0.43	14.13	0.001
<b>Attention</b>					0.47	17.87	0.001
<b>Discrimination</b>					0.59	22.21	0.001
<b>Mood repair</b>					0.33	7.19	0.001

The results of Table 2 show that the total score of emotional intelligence with beta coefficient ( $p = 0.001$ ,  $B = 0.40$ ) could predict self-concept. Also, the subscales of attention with beta coefficient ( $B = -0.23$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), the mood discrimination with beta coefficient ( $B = 0.13$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ) and mood repair with beta coefficient ( $B = 0.16$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ) were able to predict the self-concept. The total score of emotional intelligence with beta coefficient ( $B = 0.43$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) predicted academic achievement. Also, the subscales of attention with beta coefficient ( $B = 0.47$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), mood discrimination with

beta coefficient ( $B = 0.59$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) and mood repair with beta coefficient ( $B = 0.33$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) were able to predict educational achievement.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

In the present research, the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept and educational achievement of teenaged students in Tehran was studied. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement with emotional intelligence. Also, emotional intelligence could predict self-concept and educational achievement. The findings of this study are consistent with the results of studies carried out by Jalil Abkenar and Ashouri (2015), Parker et al. (2004), Gumora and Arsenion (2003) and Petrides et al. (2006). It can be explained by the fact that students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to obtain knowledge and get information easily and more quickly and they love school and spend more time there. Since learning in school is an acquired event and requires knowledge, understanding, putting into practice, analysis, combination and evaluation which in turn involves having a high level of emotional intellectual so that the student desirably can use the cognitive strategies such as reviewing, developing and organising and meta-cognition including planning, monitoring and self-regulation, there is a high probability that higher emotional intelligence will increase the level of educational achievement. In addition, since emotional intelligence can play an effective role in providing a desirable environment for learning and communication so that students can freely express their needs and expectations to gain support from others, their educational achievement won't be unexpected. On the other hand, emotional intelligence is manifested in communication and deals with capabilities, competencies and abilities that direct individual communication with oneself and others and ultimately leads to a sense of self-concept and an increase in educational motivation. As a result, students with higher emotional intelligence are likely to achieve more academic achievement (Jalil-Abkenar & Ashori, 2016). In explaining the other part of the findings, one can say that when students achieve a lasting sense of positive self-concept, they, relying on their own abilities, embark on self-regulating learning activities through organising, planning and self-assessing learning processes, which improve their academic performance. Positive self-concept of people encourages them to use self-regulation and autonomous manners. The importance to understanding and perceiving ability is due to its predictive role to other motivational elements. When a student feels that she/he is capable of completing assignments successfully, she/he becomes more involved in it and, because of sense of ability, she/he endeavours to learning with more confidence. Finally, it can be said that learners who are self-regulating in the process of learning know their values prior to others and believe in their abilities, compare themselves less with others, but judge on their learning by referring to their abilities and criteria. In other words, they have internal performance standards, so inferiority complex is less in them and they attain more positive self-concept (Talebzadeh Novarbian et al., 2011). As already mentioned, high emotional intelligence predicts positive academic and social outcomes as well as positive self-concept in students, so using the results from such studies in educational programs in proper way can lead to significant and positive changes in the educational level of university and school. It can also be said that considering the influential role of teaching on the development of social and emotional skills of students, and the importance of learning these skills to improve their ability to adapt more effectively to self and environment, as well as the crucial importance of youth and its lasting effects on the formation of young person's personality, the need for attention and training in emotional literacy and emotional intelligence skills in the form of training classes in youth is revealed.

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