



Predicting the Academic Eagerness on the Basis of Emotional Intelligence and Educational Self-efficacy in Students of Hamadan of Islamic Azad University

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to predict academic eagerness based on emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy of university students. The research method was descriptive-correlational and the statistical population was the students of Hamedan Azad University. The sample size was selected on the basis of Cochran's formula in 371 random rank families. The instrument consisted of Fredericks, Blumenfield and Paris (2004), Baran's Emotional Intelligence (1980), and Academic Self-Efficacy and Freeman (1988). Data analysis was done using simultaneous regression method and T2 hoteling with respect to presuppositions. Results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence components (except for optimism) and academic eagerness. The empathy component is the strongest predictor of passion Education is meanwhile, academic eagerness has a relationship with students' optimism score. (2) There is a positive and significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic eagerness. (3) Emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy are predictors of academic eagerness. (3) Emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy can predict academic eagerness, and the share of emotional intelligence is more than academic self-efficacy. (4) There was no difference between men and women in the two variables of self-efficacy and academic eagerness, the only difference was the high emotional intelligence of men. Emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy predict academic eagerness. Given this finding, parents, authorities, and counselors will be provided with the emotional intelligence to ensure academic self-esteem and academic eagerness in the community and to benefit from long-term academic eagerness.

Key words: Academic Excitement, Emotional Intelligence, Academic Self-efficacy, Student, Hamedan Azad University

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important goals of education is providing the conditions for full development of individuals and educating healthy, efficient and responsible people to play role in personal and

social life. However, out of total number of students, few of them can develop their talents and succeed in the educational areas and in fact show good academic performance. One of the most important and influential factors in academic performance of students is their psychological factors, including academic eagerness. Academic eagerness is one kind of eagerness, which refers to the amount of energy spent by learner to perform his or her academic works. It also refers to degree

of effectiveness and efficacy achieved [1]. The other variable investigated in this research is emotional intelligence. The idea of emotional intelligence was first introduced by [2], and then, emotional intelligence was increasingly considered among industrial and organizational psychologists as a psychological factor in predicting employees' behavior. Academic eagerness is predictive of the student's academic achievement in the short to long term [3] quoted by Eslami *et al.*, (2016). Academic eagerness also has important implications for academic, job, and social achievements. Students who have academic eagerness have a higher focus on learning issues and subjects, avoid performing maladaptive behaviors, and perform better than other students in tests [1]. It seems that emotional intelligence to be one of the factors affecting the academic eagerness. High emotional intelligence is correlated with extraversion, flexibility, agreeableness, capability in coordinating different emotions, the identification of these emotions and their effects on the brain and behavior. High emotional intelligence affects the management of life, the efficiency and innovation of people positively and provides the conditions for creativity. It also creates motivation and interest in doing tasks. Coping with crises and challenges, such people can select the best response, and in general, they increase job satisfaction, personal life and interpersonal communication, and as people in the life and work environment experience various emotions, it is important for them to use these emotions intelligently and to consciously allow these emotions to guide their thoughts and behaviors in order to achieve the desired outcomes [4]. In contrast, low emotional intelligence is associated with internal problematic behaviours, low levels of empathy, inability in regulating mood, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual deviations, robbery and aggression. Low emotional intelligence is associated with many harms, including reduced mental health, reduced vitality in life, increased mistakes, negligence, delays in performing daily activities, and job changes.

These positive emotional factors include feeling self-esteem, self-loving, gentleness, sociability, adventure, tolerance and negative emotional factors include pessimism, fear of failure, anxiety, feeling disability, humiliation, fear of punishment, feeling insecurity, escaping from accepting responsibility, feeling guilty [4,5] argue that students with high academic self-esteem foster

self-confidence in a variety of ways, and those who are more confident in their skills participate in more educational activities. Students with low self-esteem avoid performing the tasks completely [6]. In this regard, [7,8] showed no significant difference between the two genders in terms of levels of emotional intelligence. [9] found that students with high self-efficacy obtained high scores in the math test. [10] showed a negative and significant relationship between academic burnout and the academic eagerness. Saklofske, [11] also found that females had significantly higher emotional intelligence than males. [12] showed significant relationship between self-efficacy, metacognition and academic performance. Given what was stated above and as no research has been conducted to predict academic eagerness based on emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy, researchers conducted this study to answer the question of whether emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy can predict students' academic eagerness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method is descriptive-correlational. The research population included all 10887 students of the Azad University of Hamadan. Based on the Cochran formula, the sample size was calculated to be 371 students, which increased to 400 students to ensure adequate number of students will answer the questions. Proportional stratified sampling was used based on the gender, faculty, and academic course of students.

Research Tool

Academic Eagerness Questionnaire: This scale was developed by [3] and it has 15 items, assessing the three subscales of behavioural eagerness, emotional eagerness, and cognitive eagerness. Iranian researchers reported the reliability coefficient of the scale 0.86 (Abbasi and Dargahi, 2016). The validity of this scale was confirmed by the research and the total reliability was calculated 0.66 using Cronbach's alpha. In the research conducted by [13], total reliability was calculated 0.74 using Cronbach's alpha. **Baron's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire:** This questionnaire was developed by Baron (1980) for the first time. The main test has 117 questions and 15 scales. Baron examined its validity and reliability on 3831 people from Argentina, Germany, India, Nigeria, South Africa (48.8% male

and 51.2% female) and it was purposefully normalized in North America. The results of normalization showed its reliability value 0.87, which is at the appropriate level.

The reliability of questionnaire was calculated 0.74 among male students, 0.68 among female students, and 0.93 for all subjects using Cronbach's alpha. Baron (1997-1999) determined the reliability of 15 scales of the questionnaire between 0.69 and 0.86 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient with mean of 0.76. He also reported its reliability 0.85 and 0.75 using test-retest method after one month and after four months, respectively. Academic self-efficacy questionnaire: The academic self-efficacy questionnaire was developed by Owen and Froman (1988) in order to measure academic self-efficacy of students. This test has 33 items, scored based on a 5-point Likert scale and measures the student's confidence with regard to note taking, asking questions, attention in classrooms, using computer, etc. In order to measure the psychometric properties of self-efficacy questionnaire in Iranian samples, Shokri et al implemented it on 220 students. The internal consistency was obtained 0.91, 90% and 91% for the whole test, for men, and women, respectively. This tool has good internal consistency. The validity of this questionnaire was examined and confirmed using exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis.

External validity: In order to examine the validity of this scale, Owen and Froman (1988) implemented it for 88 students and obtained its validity 90%. The concurrent validity of the questionnaire in the form of correlation with Solberg et al self-efficacy questionnaire was obtained 0.77. For analyzing and testing the research hypotheses, after examining the statistical presumptions, regression analysis and Hotelling's T-squared (T²) were used.

RESULTS

Table 1: Coefficient obtained from regression of predictor variable of academic eagerness

Variable	Non-standardized coefficients		standardized coefficients	t	Significance level
	B	SD			
fixed	8/32	1/12		7/43	0/001
Optimistic	-0/11	0/04	-0/16	-2/26	0/02
Empathy	0/22	0/04	0/35	5/38	0/001

The above table shows that the components of problem solving, happiness, independence and tolerance of psychological stress, self-actualization, emotional self-consciousness, realism, interpersonal relationships, self-esteem and impulse control, flexibility, accountability and self-expression could not predict academic eagerness to be included into regression equation. Optimism and empathy components significantly predicted academic eagerness. The component of empathy is the strongest predictor of academic eagerness, followed by optimism. Considering the negative sign of the beta coefficient of the optimism component, it could be concluded that the academic eagerness is negatively correlated with the students' optimism score. It means that people who have less optimism have more academic eagerness.

Table 2: Coefficient obtained from regression of predictor variable of academic eagerness

variable	Non-standardized coefficients		standardized coefficients	t	Significance level
	B	SD			
fixed	8/46	0/72		11/70	0/001
Academic self-efficacy	0/09	0/008	0/53	12/15	0/001

The result of the above table shows that academic self-efficacy is a predictive of academic eagerness.

Table 3: Coefficient of regression obtained from predictive variable of academic eagerness

variable	Non-standardized coefficients		standardized coefficients	t	Significance level
	B	SD			
fixed	3/34	1/01		3/28	0/001
Academic self-efficacy	0/32	0/04	0/29	6/78	0/001
Emotional intelligence	0/07	0/008	0/44	10/08	0/001

The results of the above table show that academic self-efficacy and emotional intelligence significantly predict academic eagerness. Emotional intelligence is considered as the strongest predictor of academic eagerness, followed by academic self-efficacy. This result shows that the share of emotional intelligence in predicting academic eagerness is higher than that of academic self-efficacy.

Table 4: Results of Hotelling's T-squared (T2) on variables based on gender

Variable	test value	F	Hypothesis Df	Error Df	Significance level	
group	T2	0.01	1.87	3	380	0.13

The table above provides multivariate analysis on scores of emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy, and academic eagerness based on gender. According to the above table, it can be stated that Hotelling's T-squared (T2) statistic is not significant ($p > 0.05$, $F_{3,380} = 1.87$). The data of this table show that the hypothesis of the research on the difference between academic achievement and academic self-esteem scores of students by gender cannot be confirmed. The score of academic self-esteem score and academic self-efficacy was not significantly different in two genders and only the score of emotional intelligence showed significant difference between the two genders. In other words, there was no difference between men and women in the two variables of self-efficacy and academic eagerness. The only difference was seen in emotional intelligence.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to predict academic eagerness based on emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy of students of Islamic Azad University of Hamadan. The analysis of the results showed a positive and significant relationship between the components of emotional intelligence (except for the component of optimism) and academic eagerness. The results of this study are in line with those of studies conducted by Pirani *et al.* (2016), [14, 15] [16,17,18]. In explaining this result, it can be stated that emotional intelligence creates a set of behavioural tendencies in the person. These people can easily overcome their negative emotions. People with higher emotional intelligence are more extroverted and have higher positive emotions such as feeling high energy, acceptance, and feeling of mastery on the environment, pleasure, eagerness, and higher self-esteem. In contrast, lower emotional intelligence is associated with experience of boredom, lack of emotion, lack of interest, and lack of pleasure. Other results showed a positive and significant relationship between academic eagerness and academic self-efficacy and emotional intelligence. That is, these two variables explain 0.36% of the variance of the academic eagerness variable. Academic self-efficacy and emotional intelligence

is significant predictor of academic eagerness. Emotional intelligence is considered as the strongest predictor of academic eagerness, followed by academic self-efficacy. This result shows that the share of emotional intelligence in predicting academic eagerness is higher than that of academic self-efficacy. This result of research is in line with that of the studies conducted by Zohrevand (2010), [13] Farazandeh *et al* (2012), Pirani (2015), Islami *et al* (2016), [12, 19]. Analysis of the results using Hotelling's T2 formula showed that the research hypothesis on difference between academic achievement and academic self-efficacy scores of students based on gender cannot be confirmed. Only the emotional intelligence score was found to be significantly different between the two genders. In other words, there was no difference between men and women in the two variables of self-efficacy and academic eagerness. The only difference between two genders belonged to emotional intelligence. The reason for non-difference between two genders in the variable of academic eagerness can be explained by the fact that the removal of gender role beliefs, for example, allocating the medical fields of study only for men or allocating the job of teacher for women, and providing conditions for continuing education for both genders without any restrictions, admitting students in any field of study, regardless of gender, provide the eagerness for both genders, and thus, no difference was seen between two genders in this regard. In addition, the importance of education for both genders and the achieving a social position, the desirability of the university environment and the content of the courses for both genders can be another cause of equal level of eagerness in both genders.

Similarly, with regard to academic self-efficacy, when male and female students are very similar in terms of success in academic performance and both genders believe that difficult assignments can be easily solved, there is no need to attribute academic self-efficacy to male and female gender. Second part of the result which revealed that performance of emotional intelligence was higher in men than that in women is consistent with results of the research conducted by Dehshiri (2003) and Shaklofsk *et al.* (2007) who found emotional intelligence of women is higher than that of men and also Molaei and Asayesh (2011) and [8,7] who found no difference between male and female students in the emotional intelligence. In explaining this result, it could be stated that the

male students investigated in this study have higher communication skill, the ability to control emotions in others and flexibility in their emotions, and put more emphasis on important for emotional responses. Accordingly, having high level of emotion in dealing with issues, their attention to subtle social signs reflecting the needs or desires of others, having high level of empathy and, finally, their skill in perceiving, regulating and using emotions are among the factors leading to high emotional intelligence score in males compared to that in female students. However, it should be noted that the studied sample group was selected from Azad University of Hamadan. Therefore, we should treat with caution in generalization of the results and the use of tools for other regions and cities with regard to cultural and racial diversity. In addition, some respondents may respond conservatively and do not express their actual views.

In line with the results of the research, it is suggested A) classes to be held for educating the emotional intelligence given its important role in academic eagerness and its importance in life situations, B) The university educational system authorities are recommended to hold educational courses to strengthen the students' emotional intelligence to provide the conditions to enhance the academic eagerness, as one of the effective components in the education system. Thus, it is necessary to strengthen the students' eagerness and motivation by holding educational workshops and scientific seminars, C) As academic self-efficacy is associated with academic eagerness, the academic eagerness of students can be enhanced by increasing academic self-efficacy through appropriate methods of teaching, educating and enriching the educational environment by shifting toward student-centred teaching method, encouragement and punishment, changing the educational environment, changing the content of textbooks, and paying attention to students' interest.

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