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Relationship between emotional intelligence and stress among university going students of Kashmir

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Abstract
Emotional Intelligence (EI) is about intelligent use of our emotions. This requires being aware of our feelings and the feelings of others in order to manage our behaviour and relationships effectively. An emotionally intelligent person is the one who can identify, label and manage his emotions thereby exhibiting appropriate behaviour. He learns to live with his emotions as well as release them properly. Historically speaking, the term emotional intelligence was introduced in 1990 by two American university professors Dr. John Mayer and Dr. Peter Salovey in their attempt to develop a scientific measure for knowing the differences between people's ability in the areas of emotions. However the credit for popularizing the concept of emotional intelligence goes to another American psychologist Daniel Goleman through his book *Emotional intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ,* published in 1995. The book begins with the insight that people who have high IQ can nevertheless fail – at school, at work, and in relationships. Goleman's idea is that success in life depends just as much on abilities like self-awareness, self-control, and empathy, which are rooted in the "emotional brain". The major thesis of his book can be summarized by stating that we need a new vision of the study of human intelligence beyond the cognitive and intellectual aspects, a vision that would highlight the importance of the use and management of the social emotional world to understand the course of people's lifetimes. Emotional intelligence in aspiring teachers could be just as important a skill as academic knowledge and knowledge about the methodology. Singh (2006, p.138) claimed that the teaching profession requires emotional competencies such as rapport, harmony and comfort while dealing with groups.
A teacher with high IQ may not necessarily be high in these emotional competencies. Teachers with high EQ seem to exhibit open and free expression of ideas that lead them to creativity and mutual respect. The fact that teaching is a stressful job is well documented. Each phase of the teaching career brings its own level of stress. Student-teachers do not have the benefit of years of experience to help them deal with day-to-day classroom issues. Thus, they are likely to face achievement stress while dealing with various situations.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, stress, demographic, students, behavior

Introductions

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is about intelligent use of our emotions. This requires being aware of our feelings and the feelings of others in order to manage our behaviour and relationships effectively. An emotionally intelligent person is the one who can identify, label and manage his emotions thereby exhibiting appropriate behaviour. He learns to live with his emotions as well as release them properly. Historically speaking, the term emotional intelligence was introduced in 1990 by two American university professors Dr. John Mayer and Dr. Peter Salovey in their attempt to develop a scientific measure for knowing the differences between people's ability in the areas of emotions. However the credit for popularizing the concept of emotional intelligence goes to another American psychologist Daniel Goleman through his book Emotional intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ, published in 1995. The book begins with the insight that people who have high IQ can nevertheless fail – at school, at work, and in relationships. Goleman's idea is that success in life depends just as much on abilities like self-awareness, self-control, and empathy, which are rooted in the "emotional brain". The major thesis of his book can be summarized by stating that we need a new vision of the study of human intelligence beyond the cognitive and intellectual aspects, a vision that would highlight the importance of the use and management of the social emotional world to understand the course of people's lifetimes. Emotional intelligence in aspiring teachers could be just as important a skill as academic knowledge and knowledge about the methodology.

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A teacher with high IQ may not necessarily be high in these emotional competencies. Teachers with high EQ seem to exhibit open and free expression of ideas that lead them to creativity and mutual respect. The fact that teaching is a stressful job is well documented. Each phase of the teaching career brings its own level of stress. Student-teachers do not have the benefit of years of experience to help them deal with day-to-day classroom issues. Thus, they are likely to face achievement stress while dealing with various situations.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has become a very popular concept for psychological, educational and management researchers from the past years. Emotional Intelligence refers to a cluster of traits or abilities relating to the emotional side of life- abilities such as recognising and managing one's own emotions, being able to motivate oneself and restrain one's impulses, recognising and managing others' emotions and handling interpersonal relationships in an effective manner. The term emotional intelligence (EI) has its roots in the concept of Social Intelligence, as identified by Thorndike in 1920. Thorndike defines social intelligence as "the ability to understand and manage people - to act wisely in human relations." Psychologists have proposed a variety of definitions of emotional intelligence *viz*, Peter Salovey and John Mayer initially defined emotional intelligence as: A form of intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (1990). Goleman defines EI as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (1998).

Stress

The term stress refers to negative emotional experiences with associated behavioural, biochemical, and psychological changes that are related to perceived acute or chronic challenges. We can also define stress as an internal state which can be caused by physical demands on the body (disease conditions, exercise, extremes of temperature, and the like) or by environmental and social situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful uncontrollable or exceeding our resources for coping. Stress, in a broad sense, all those environmental and personal events, which threaten or challenge well-being of a person. The stressors can external, such as environmental (e.g. guilt, frustration, conflict, pressure shock) very often these stressors result in a variety of stress reactions, which may be psychological, behavioural, emotional and cognitive. At the psychological level, arousal plays a key role in stress related behaviours. The emotional reactions to the experience of stress include fear, sadness and anger. The emotional arousal may interfere our dealings with stress. The behavioural and cognitive responses involve coping or active effort, to master, reduce or tolerate the demands created by stress. The outcome of stress demands on the position of particular stressful experience along these dimensions usually more intense, prolonged (or chronic) complex and unanticipated stresses have more negative consequences than less intense,

short-term, less complex and expected stresses. A person's experiences of stress depend importantly on the psychological strength of the person. Thus, people with poor physical health and weak constitution would be more vulnerable than those who enjoy good health and strong constitution. Psychological characteristics like mental, health, temperament, and self-concept are also relevant to the experience of stress. The cultural context in which people live determines the meaning of any event and defines the nature of response that is expected under various conditions. Finally the stress experience will be determined by the resources of the person. These resources can be physical like money, medical facilities, and personal like social skills and the particular style of coping used by the people to deal with stress. All these factors determine the appraisal of a given stressful situation. The physical, environmental and social causes of the stress state are termed stressors. Once induced by stressors, the internal state can then lead to various responses. On the one hand, it can result in a number of physical, bodily responses such as anxiety, hopelessness, depression, irritability, and a general feeling of not being able to cope with the world can result from the stress state.

Stress is a big problem in our society (Allen, 1983). Some 75 percent of bodily disease is said to be stress-related. For example, stress is often a factor in heart disease and cancer, two of the leading causes of sdeath. Furthermore, stress-related diseases cost American industry billions of dollars a year; several billion tranquilizer pills are prescribed in the United States each year; and, although it cannot be quantified, stress seems to be involved in much of our unhappiness, irritability, and dissatisfaction.

Relation between emotional intelligence and stress

The relation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and stress depends on the type of Emotional Intelligence model that is employed in the study, as the definitions of emotional intelligence vary widely in these models. The models include a variety of constructs such as social awareness, self-management, motivation, self-awareness, empathy, assertiveness, self-report etc. In our study we have not followed any particular model of emotional intelligence, however, we have tried to study the different constructs of emotional intelligence such as Intrapersonal awareness (own emotions), inter-personal awareness (others emotions), intra- personal management and Inter-personal management in relation to perceived stress, which were assessed by our measurement tools.

Methods

Eighty-one respondents (100%) of Postgraduate University going students were contacted to answer this online survey via email or WhatsApp application, but only fifty-four (66.67%) were completed and managed to collect. The main objective of this paper is to measure factors contributing to the stress of Policy School students. Therefore, the study was conducted at this school level only; where a policy subjects to them is stress. The questionnaire consists of three sections; demographic information, factors contributed to stress and emotional intelligence coping strategies.

Participants

The study is purely based on a quantitative method. All postgraduate students from Kashmir were requested to

answer the questionnaire that measures "stress and emotional intelligence". The participation was on voluntary basis.

Questionnaire
The questionnaire was prepared on the basis of an initial literature review regarding stress, conflict, and management process. A demographic questionnaire was used to capture information about the sample. Then, an adapted version of the Student Stress Scale (10) was used to measure academic obstacles. Similarly, the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (15) and Goleman's Emotional Intelligence (16) were used to determine the emotional intelligence among the postgraduate students.

The stress section in the questionnaire dealt with eight stressors (consists of 27 items) affecting postgraduate students. The eight stressors which were analyzed were academic workload, performance pressure, self- esteem, time management skills, relationship with lecturers / supervisors, relationship with colleagues, university facilities and study-personal life balancing.

The survey questions were close ended and were designed in the form of statements to be answered with a Likert scale. A five-point Likert scale was used that ranges as "strongly disagree", "disagree", "neutral", "agree" and "strongly agree".

Data collection
The data has been collected through online survey sent through emails and links on WhatsApp and social networking sites. The online survey is a convenient way to gather data, since respondents can choose the appropriate time for answering. The online survey provides quick response and large and easy coverage of respondents due to the reach of Internet and smart phones now days. In addition, the researchers have not directly affected the respondents, so the reliability and validity of the study is not compromised by this method.

Statistical Analysis
Data analysis was performed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 24. Dichotomous variables were expressed as frequencies and percentages. Continuous variables for stress and EI were expressed as means and standard deviation. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to examine the link among the continuous variables. Descriptive analysis was conducted to describe the demographic background of the respondents. The obtained results are presented in forms of percentages, means, and standard deviations. Referential analysis through the use of Pearson's correlation, on the other hand, was carried out in order to establish the degree of relationship between the emotional intelligence and stress. All the results are presented in tables and graphs and are accompanied by descriptions explaining the results. Discussion of the results is carried out in order to drawn necessary conclusion, based on the findings of the research.

Results
Socio Demographic Distribution
The survey was carried out in different universities of Jammu and Kashmir. A total of 81 postgraduate students were contacted to answer this online survey via email or WhatsApp application. Since the participation was on voluntary basis, the sample relied on the availability and willingness of students to respond and participate.

Thus, the demographic profile of the overall sample is shown in Table 1. Higher ratio of female students participated in this study (59.1%). The majority of respondents were in the age group of between 30-39 years (59.1%). Among the respondents, 84.1% were Kashmir and 79.5% of them were married. More than half (59.1%) of the respondents were currently Master by taught course, 11.4% were Master by research while the rest (29.5%) were pursuing their PhD degree. It can be mentioned that the universities has more full- time students (72.7%) than part time students (25.5%).

Identifying Stressors
The survey explored 8 possible sources of stress spanning academic workload, performance pressure, self- esteem, time management skills, relationship with lecturers/supervisors, relationship with colleagues, university facilities and study-personal life balancing. All 8 stressors were found to have a direct impact to postgraduate students. A list of all stressors are given in Table 2 and 3. The intensity of stress is diagrammatically represented in Figure 2.
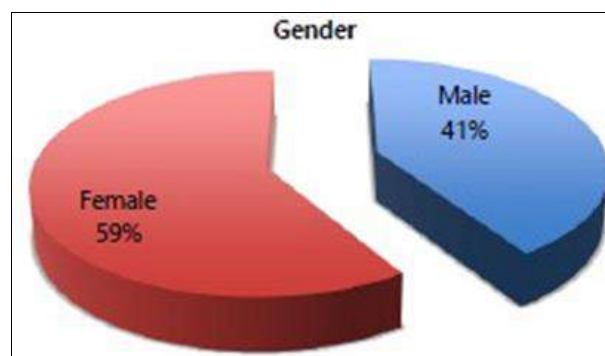

Fig 1: Respondents' Gender

Table 1: Demographic information of respondents (n = 44)

Profile		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	18	40.9
	Female	26	59.1
Age	≤29	3	6.8
	30 - 39	28	63.1
	40 - 49	12	27.3
	≥ 50	1	2.3
State	Jammu and Kashmir	37	84.1
		7	15.9
Marital Status	Single	9	20.5
	Married	35	79.5
	Divorced	0	0
	Widowed	0	0
	Separated	0	0
	Partnered	0	0
Religion	Muslim	40	90.9
	Kristian	3	6.8
	Hindu	0	0
	Buddha	1	2.3
	Other (Please specify)	0	0
Education Level	Master (taught course)	26	59.1
Mode of study	Master (by research) PhD	5	11.4
		13	29.5
	Full- time student Part- time student	32	72.7
		13	29.5

According to the data, the primary stressor for currently enrolled postgraduate students in the Universities of Jammu and Kashmir was the performance pressure related stressor with mean falls at 3.917. The study-personal life balancing related stressors were the next major stressor and stand at a mean of 3.773. This stress is a kind of response student may have when demands and pressures challenge their ability to cope.

Another stressor for high stress among the postgraduate students were the academic workload related stressors (mean 3.710). Stressors such as the amount of material to study, understanding content, doing research, and writing for assignment or thesis contribute to student stress. Time management skills stressors have greater impact to the respondents with the mean of 3.664. Relationship with lecturers or supervisors and relationship with colleagues were other stressors which affected students' lives. The items in the questionnaire are based on a 1 to 5 point Likert scale. However, in this study, respondents' responses with a Mean score of 0.00 to 2.99 are considered low where respondents will be more to disagree with the manifestation of EI. Those with a mean score of 3.00 are neutral, while responses with a mean score of 3.10 to 5.00 are considered high and they are more agreed with the manifestation of EI.

Table 2: Manifestation of stress among postgraduate students according to the Main Stressors

Stressor	Means	SD
Academic workload	3.710	0.790
Performance pressure	3.917	0.821
Self- esteem	3.386	0.937
Time management skills	3.644	0.936
Relationship with lecturers/ supervisor	2.950	1.083
Relationship with colleagues	2.835	1.071
University facilities	2.937	0.763
study-personal life balancing	3.773	1.103
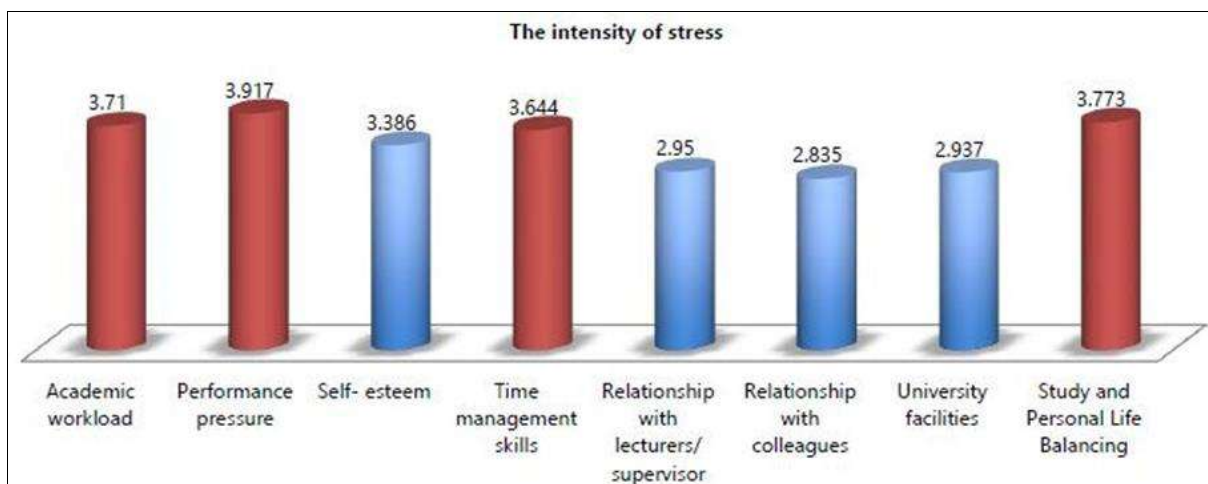
Fig 2: The intensity of stress

Table 3: Manifestation of stress among postgraduate students

Stressor	Means	SD
Academic workload		
The amount of material to study	3.59	1.168
Difficulty in understanding materiav content	3.64	1.014
Doing research (for research project or assignment)	3.77	0.937
Writing assignments/ thesis	3.84	0.888
Performance pressure		
Meeting the demand from lecturers/supervisors	3.82	0.947
Presentations/ Viva	4.00	1.078
Tests! Examinations/ Assessments	3.93	0.846
Self- esteem		
language competency	320	1.133
Fear of making serious mistakes	3,41	1245
Worrying about grades or achieving milestones	3.55	1210
Time management skills		
Lack of time to review what has been learnt/ studied	3.77	1.118
Meeting deadlines for assignments/ progress reports	3.91	1.053
Not being able to effective N manage time	325	1241
Relationship with lecturers/ supervisors		
lack of support from lecturer/ supervisor	2.82	1334
Lack of communication from lecturer! supervisor	2.82	1299
Understanding the expectations of lecturers/ supervisor	3.43	1.108
Difficulty in maintaining relationship with lecturers/ supervisor	2.73	1.169
Relationship with colleagues		
Working with uncooperative colleagues	3.00	1.312
Working with incompetent colleagues	3.05	1219
Relationship problems with colleagues	2.57	1246
Competition among colleagues	233	1.107
Universities facilities		
Inconvenient timetabling	3.07	1208
Availability of the academic materials in library	3.07	1246
Availability of campus facility	2.98	1.110
Social life in campus (sports! clubs)	2.64	0.967
Study-personal life balancing		
Dealing with family responsibility	3,77	1.138
Juggling work, study and personal life (life balancing)	3.77	1.179

Discussion

The main focus of the present study was to examine the relationship between stress and emotional intelligence (EI) among postgraduate students in the Universities of Jammu and Kashmir. It was determined that there was a strong negative correlation between stress and EI. It indicates that students with higher EI in Universities have less stress levels whereas, those with lower EI, experience more stress. Postgraduate students experience stress as they work hard and struggle with their academic life. Entering this life, they have expectations of being stressed and tried to some degree and most students report their struggle was worth it to them towards the end as the stress can prepare them to deal with life events later on.

Academic workload was the major stressor for postgraduate students in Universities of Jammu and Kashmir. Postgraduate students are depressed due to the amount of material to study, lack of time in reviewing what has been studied, doing research and it was also a stressor when it comes to the writing part. Gazder *et al.*, stated that stress due to work demand cause emotional disturbances to a person. However, according to Friedman, and also previous researchers highlighted that stress associated with the adjustment to and academic demands of university students is pertinent, as it has been reported as the most common health factor affecting academic performance amongst university students. This was followed by study- personal life balancing at the mean of 3.773. It can be described as stress arising when one's juggling in between those events.

The results of the survey suggested that postgraduate students are also receiving high stress in performance pressure related stressors. This stress arises from meeting the lecturers' or supervisors' demand, presentations or viva and when the students need to sit for tests, exams or assessments. Surprisingly, all respondents said that presentations or viva was the most stressful event for them (mean 4.00). Many people feel nervous when speaking publicly. Sometimes, it is not only a stressful event but also nerve- wrecking and intimidating.

The postgraduate students also experienced stress when they were worried about grades and achieving milestones. As postgraduate students, they don't need to be scared of failure. However, the results suggested that it was one of the main stressors (mean 3.410). In addition, the respondents find their academic experience to be more stressful when they have to meet the deadlines for assignments or progress reports. This may be attributed by work overload and short durations given to complete a specific task.

Post-graduate studies require a long-term collaboration between students and lecturers or supervisors. It has been proven that supervising and guiding by the supervisors and lecturers will lead students to great success. For instance, as a research student, having a close relationship will help to stimulate their development and research experience. Furthermore, a strong relationship that develops between a student and lecturers or supervisors may also result in the establishment of a strong network in the future. Among all

the stressors, university facilities and relationship with colleagues seems to be the least contributing stress factors.

Conclusion

Although much remains to be learned, the current research offers strong support for the view that stress is a part of students' life; it is neither good nor bad. The challenge is how to manage it. There is no doubt that the findings of this study have a number of implications that require attention in eliminating or reducing the stressors among postgraduate students. Therefore, a number of mitigation measures may be considered.

Stress often occur among students; affect both the physical and mental well-being, as well as both their performance in university and at home. The objective of this study was to analyze the consequence of different types of stressors on students' wellbeing. Eventually, researchers examined the effects of academic workload, performance pressure, self-esteem, time management skills, relationship with supervisors, relationship with colleagues, university facilities, and study-personal life balancing on students' stress level. The results clearly indicated the following: (a) The main factors contributed to academic stress among postgraduate students at Universities were performance pressure, study-personal life balancing, academic workload, and time management skills; (b) Genders are not differing much on how they respond to stress and emotional intelligence; (c) The relationship between stress and emotional intelligence are not significant due to the small sample size; (d) Emotional intelligence can be used as a coping mechanisms to manage stress among postgraduate students.

Several conclusions can be drawn from these outcomes. First, academic stress is a difficult concept to define because it involves individual judgments and different evaluations. Second, evaluations will likely continue to vary because it is unlikely that all researchers will agree upon the same set of assumptions, measures, and datasets to use when quantifying academic stress. Third, there are many more factors contributing to academic stress that need to be considered in future research. Fourth, dean of the school, supervisors, lecturers, and researchers must make extra effort to understand students' difficulties. Fifth, there are several ways that the investigation of students' stress and coping mechanisms could be expanded and improved. Among them are to create a framework that guide students on how to overcome their difficulties.

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