

Standardization and the Impact of Emotional Intelligence Test Subscales on Academic Progress

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/bje.2013/vol12n66782>

Published May 26, 2024

Citation: Shkemi F., Treska V., and Xhomara N. (2024) Standardization and the Impact of Emotional Intelligence Test Subscales on Academic Progress, *British Journal of Education*, Vol.12, Issue 6, 67-82

ABSTRACT: The study aims to assess the underlying structure and psychometric properties of the Emotional Intelligence Test among students of different study programs. The study also aimed to measure the impact of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation on the academic progress of the students. Data was obtained from 946 respondents from the student population. The total sample through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess the underlying structure of the scale. The high levels of subscales of the Emotional Intelligence Test in the sample suggest that screening for Emotional Intelligence is important in different areas as well as in different study programs. Confirmatory factor analysis supported the structure of five subscales of the Emotional Intelligence Scale. The study indicated a linear relationship between self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, self-motivation, and academic progress. The study found that self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation were positive predictors of academic progress; meantime, self-management was a negative predictor of academic progress. The strongest predictor of academic progress was self-motivation which explains 45.3% of the variance; at the same time, the least predictor of academic progress was social awareness which explain 6.5% of the variance.

KEYWORDS: *Intelligence, emotional, test, validation, standardization, academic, progress.*

INTRODUCTION

Côté (2014) explains that emotional intelligence (EI) is a set of abilities that pertain to emotions and emotional information; meanwhile, according to Salovey & Mayer (1990), Emotional Intelligence is a set of skills hypothesized to contribute to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and others, the effective regulation of emotion in self and others, and the use of feelings to motivate, plan, and achieve in one's life.

Emotional Intelligence is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Conte (2005) conducted that emotional intelligence measures vary widely in both their content and in their method of assessment. Emotional intelligence measures tend to use either a self-report personality-based approach, an informant approach, or an ability-based assessment procedure.

Schulze & Roberts (2005) affirm that empirical evidence supports common assumptions about EI relationships with other psychological constructs. Mayers et al. (2008) stated that Emotional intelligence (EI) involves the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought. Antonakis et al. (2009) revealed that interest in emotional intelligence has bloomed over the last few years. That it has become a standard concept in general and applied psychology, as well as in applied business settings, is indubitable.

Ciarrochi & Mayer (2013) explain that the explosion of research on emotional intelligence (EI) in the past decade has provided increasing evidence that EI can be measured reliably and can be useful in predicting important outcomes, such as managerial effectiveness and relationship quality. Zeidner et al. (2008) suggest that almost from its inception, the emotional intelligence (EI) construct has been an elusive one. After nearly 2 decades of research, there still appears to be little consensus over how EI should be conceptualized or assessed and the efficacy of practical applications in real-life settings.

Colfax et al. (2010) explain that effective global business leadership requires a thorough understanding of oneself. There are three dimensions of superior leadership - Cognitive intelligence (IQ), personality, and emotional intelligence (EQ). Together the three dimensions shape the foundation for the quality of such leadership; much like the three legs of a good, strong stool. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is the most recent dimension to be identified. Unlike the traditional dimensions of IQ and personality, which are fixed from a very young age, EQ can be taught. EQ can be improved and developed over a person's lifetime.

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The study aimed to validate and standardize the *Emotional Intelligence Test* into Albanian in a selected sample and to adapt it as an administered test for use in people's career orientation and development, as well as in admission at different positions in multi fields' occupations. Research Questions used in the study include: (1) What is the internal consistency in *Emotional Intelligence Test*? (2) What is the underlying factor structure of the Emotional Intelligence Test? Past research suggests a five-factor structure (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation). Is the structure of the scale in this study, using a community and a student sample, consistent with this previous research? (3) Is there any correlation between self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, self-motivation, and academic progress?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Standardization and the importance of Emotional Intelligence Test

Emotional Intelligence scores change after training and other experiences and are related to pre-existing intelligence (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2004; Watkin, 2000; Mayer et al. 1999). Nelis et al. (2009) showed that emotional intelligence can be improved because the construct refers to the individual differences in the perception, processing, regulation, and utilization of emotional information. Dulewicz & Higgs (2000) showed that competency-based scales- intellectual intelligence and managerial intelligence predicted organizational advancement.

Construct validity, distinctive and useful of emotional intelligence test is demonstrated using the *16PF*, *Belbin team roles*, *Myers-Briggs* type inventory, and *Type A behavior* (Ciarrochi et al., 2000; Dulewicz & Higgs, 1999), emotional intelligence was positively associated with emotional expressions, social support, satisfaction, and mood management (Ciarrochi et al. 2001); at the same time, emotional intelligence is associated with organizational context and employee dispositions (Côté, 2014).

Managing emotions has direct implications for the quality of the life, especially through the impact that emotion regulation has on relationships with others (Grewal et al. 2006); emotional intelligence is likely to be more important in certain kinds of situations, such as those involving social interaction or significant levels of stress (Cherniss, 2010); and ability model is the best model to elaborate emotional intelligence phenomena (Kanesan & Fauzan, 2019).

Cadman & Brewer (2001), as well as Dulewicz & Higgs (2003) show that emotional intelligence is the common factor that marks individuals as leaders, innovators, and effective managers; emotional intelligence is a set of interrelated abilities involved in perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions (Lopes et al., 2006); and emotional intelligence and the key components can increase human effectiveness and wellness (Bar-On & Parker, 2000)

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Cherniss et al. (2006) argue that emotional intelligence cannot be a valid concept given this multiplicity of views, has not been differentiated from personality, and its competencies should not be taught in schools; furthermore, Schutte et al. (1998) affirmed that emotional intelligence test cannot be measuring a general emotional intelligence factor and the test is not unifactorial; as well as Daus & Ashkanasy (2005) refuted that the measurement of emotional intelligence is grounded in unstable, psychometrically flawed instruments and there is weak empirical evidence that emotional intelligence is related to anything of importance in organizations. Hence, based on the work above, the reliability and standardization of emotional intelligence tests are important.

Emotional Intelligence vs different traits

Emotional intelligence correlates positively with empathic perspective, social skills, cooperative response, affectionate relationships, and marital satisfaction (Schutte et al., 2001); and is a predictor of school success (Zeidner et al., 2002). Warwick & Nettelbeck (2004) affirms that extraversion and agreeableness correlated moderately with total *Trait Meta-Mood* scale ($p < 0.01$), and weakly ($p < 0.05$) with openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism.

Schutte et al., (2002) acknowledged that higher emotional intelligence was associated with a higher positive mood state and the greater state of self-esteem; furthermore, Lopes et al., (2004) and Xhomara (2020) found positive relationships between the ability to manage emotions, individual work and the quality of social interactions and academic success. Brackett et al., (2004) assessed that lowers emotional intelligence was associated with negative outcomes, including illegal drug and alcohol use, deviant behavior, and poor relations with friends; as well as with transformational leadership.

Mittal & Sindhu (2012) and Xhomara (2017) found that successful people are those who have an optimistic attitude, the right kind of flexibility in thoughts, a quick learning attitude, are emotionally balanced, and show a good attendance; emotional intelligence contributes to effective leadership (George, 2000) and in mood management (Matthews et al., 2014). Mayer and Geher (1996) and Clarke (2006), found that the ability to connect thoughts to emotions is related to empathy and lower emotional defensiveness.

Emotional intelligence dimensions were able to predict both academic and social progress (Van der Zee et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence, emotional perception, and emotional regulation uniquely explained cognitive-based performance (Lam & Kirby, 2002). Palmer et al., (2002) examined that emotional intelligence was found to significantly correlate with life satisfaction; whilst Austin (2005) assessed that the interpersonal emotional intelligence was found to be positively and significantly correlated with a task performance. The variance in academic performance can be accounted for by class participation (Xhomara & Baholli, 2022) and moral leadership and a positive school climate (Hasani et al., 2022).

Emotional intelligence predicts problem-solving (Schutte et al., 2001; Petrides and Furnham, 2011), prevention of disruptive behaviors (Xhomara, 2019), and leadership skills (Harrod &

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Scheer, 2005). Emotional intelligence and agreeableness play a significant role in success in life and work, research revealed (Matthews et al., 2012; Cherniss, 2010; Schulte et al., 2004).

Williams et al., (2009) found that emotional intelligence correlated moderately with psychopathology, but there were no gender differences. Fernández-Berrocal et al., (2012) showed that the gender differences reported for emotional intelligence are mediated completely by age. Reiff et al., (2001) indicated significant differences in the interaction of learning disabilities and gender on interpersonal skills. Freshwater & Stickley (2004) believed that self-awareness and reflexive practice impact the quality of the experience; however the style of perceiving feelings correlates highly with performance level (Jorfi et al., 2010; Bernet, 1996); achievements, interpersonal skills and empathy are related to transformational leadership behavior (Xhomara, 2022; Butler & Chinowsky, 2006).

According to Feyerherm & Rice (2002), understanding and managing emotion is positively correlated with performance. Ciarrochi et al., (2002) believe that low emotional intelligence correlates positively with mental health. Therefore, the study of the Emotional Intelligence Test as well as the investigation of the relationship between the Emotional Intelligence Test and different traits is of great importance. Based on the research papers examined above, it is hypothesized that:

H # 1: The variance in academic progress is explained by self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation.

METHODOLOGY

Research Context

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to identify and regulate an individual's emotions and understand the emotions the other people. So, the study of emotional intelligence is very important because supports building relationships, reduces team stress, defuses conflict, and improves job satisfaction.

The Emotional Intelligence Test is one of the most powerful tools used by researchers to understand and measure the emotions of different ages and different professions. The researchers first translated the original *Emotional Intelligence Test* (The British School of Excellence, 2022), supported by Goleman (1995, 2000, 2006) into Albanian and validated and standardized it referring to one study sample. The researchers measured internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha of *self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation* scales of the Emotional Intelligence Test. Then, the researchers applied factor analysis to understand the structure of the scale. Finally, the researchers applied correlational and regression tests to measure the relationship between *self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, self-motivation, and academic progress*.

Participants

The target population of the study was compounded by university students. Validation and standardization analyses were conducted using a sample of university students (N=946). 7.1% of the sample study was for business administration, 13.4% for teaching, 10.3% for engineering sciences, 32.9% for social sciences, 21.1% for economics, 11.5% for medical sciences, and 3.6% for another study program. The sample was obtained with the support of the rectors and deans of universities. The Google forms of the *Emotional Intelligence Test* with university students were conducted in the period from November 2022 to February 2023.

Data Analyses

To validate and standardize the Emotional Intelligence Test, psychometric scale parameters, such as Cronbach's alpha, was determined as a first step. The inter-scale correlations inside every category of the Emotional Intelligence Test, such as *self-awareness*, *self-management*, *social awareness*, *relationship management*, and *self-motivation* were made as the second step. The factorial structure of the Emotional Intelligence Test scales to support the procedural, internal, external, and consequential validity elements was then validated using confirmatory factor analysis. Finally, the relationships between *self-awareness*, *self-management*, *social awareness*, *relationship management*, *self-motivation*, and *academic progress* were conducted using correlational and regression analysis. All statistical analyzes were carried out with SPSS 26.0.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Alfa Cronbach output

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items is as a group. It is considered to be a measure of scale reliability. This study is used to measure the reliability of items of the Emotional Intelligence Test.

Table 1
Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized		
Cronbach's Alpha	Items	N of Items
.818	.828	30

According to the output, it has resulted in a summary of processing cases 946 for university students. As shown in the above table, there is a value of Cronbach's alpha of 0.828 for university students, which indicates a high level of internal consistency for the emotional intelligence scale with this specific sample. The *Item-Total Statistics* output, as shown in the above table presents that Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient varies from .809 to .826 which is the very high internal consistency of the items of the test (variables) in the scale. This result confirms that the Albanian

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 version of the *Emotional Intelligence Test* has high reliability, and it is suitable to use in multi-direction practice.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is used extensively by researchers involved in the development and evaluation of tests and scales. The scale developer starts with a large number of individual scale items and questions and, by using factor analytic techniques, they can refine and reduce these items to form a smaller number of coherent subscales. In this study, confirmatory factor analysis was used to confirm a specific hypothesis concerning the *Emotional Intelligence Test* structure underlying a set of variables.

Assumptions for confirmatory factor analysis were as follows.

1. Sample size. Ideally, the overall sample size should be 150+ and there should be a ratio of at least five cases for each of the variables. In this particular study, the sample size is much more than 150+; the sample of students is 946.
2. Factorability of the correlation matrix. To be considered suitable for factor analysis, the correlation matrix should show at least some correlations of $r = .3$ or greater. Bartlett's test of sphericity should be statistically significant at $p < .05$ and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value should be $.6$ or above. In this study r correlations in the correlation matrix were $.3$ or above, Bartlett's test of sphericity is statistically significant at $p = .000$, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value is $.849$.
3. Linearity. Because factor analysis is based on correlation, it is assumed that the relationship between the variables is linear (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), cited by Pallant (2010). Checking the scatterplots of some combinations of variables there is no evidence of a curvilinear relationship, so it was safe to proceed with factor analysis and there is an adequate sample size and ratio of cases to variables.
4. Outliers among cases. Checking for outliers in the initial data screening none of them resulted.

Table 2
KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.846
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5301.249
	df	435
	Sig.	.000

The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) value for the Emotional Intelligence Test is $.846$ for the university students' sample. Meanwhile, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value is significant ($p = .000$) for the university students' sample, therefore factor analysis is appropriate. In the Correlation Matrix table, the correlation coefficients were $.3$ and

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Table 3
Total variance explained of the first five components.

Component	Total Variance Explained						Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	
1	5.380	17.934	17.934	5.380	17.934	17.934	3.704
2	2.271	7.571	25.505	2.271	7.571	25.505	2.541
3	1.706	5.685	31.190	1.706	5.685	31.190	3.519
4	1.491	4.968	36.159	1.491	4.968	36.159	2.646
5	1.272	4.240	40.399	1.272	4.240	40.399	2.201

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.

Using Kaiser's criterion, as shown in the above table, only the first five components recorded eigenvalues above 4 (17.934; 7.571; 5.685; 4.968; 4.240). Hence, the first five components explain a total of 40.399 percent of the variance.

From the inspection of the items that loaded on two factors, and the items that gave high loading on more than two factors and where the difference between factor loadings was less than .10 were found items SM 1, SelfM1, SocA1 from students' sample. Meantime, from the examination of their values, it has resulted were non-significant values, therefore these items were not deleted.

As it may be seen from the Pattern Matrix table, all the items load quite strongly (above .4) on the first two components. According to the Pattern Matrix table, 7 items are loading above .3 on Component 1 (SocA3: .767, SocA4: .645, SocA6: .640, RM2: .538, SocA2: .535, RM1: .429, RM6: .303), 6 items loading on Component 2 (SelfM4: -.742, SelfM5: -.738, SelfM6: -.587, SelfM2: -.562, SM1: .449, SelfM1: .374), 7 items on Component 3 (SelfA2: .775, SelfA3: .735, SelfA1: .618, SelfM3: .465, SrlfA6: .447, SelfA5: .434, AelfA4: .430), 6 items on Component 4 (SM5: -.687, SM6: -.662, SM3: -.486, SM4: -.474, SocA1: .343, SM2: -.314), and 4 items on Component 5 (SocA5: .583, RM4: .530, RM5: .527, RM3: .332). The most significant variables that affect components are named after *Support to Others* (Component 1), *Emotional control* (Component 2), *Angriness* (Component 3), *Purpose* (Component 4), and *Feelings sharing* (Component 5).

Table 4
Component Correlation Matrix

Component Correlation Matrix					
Component	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.000	-.081	.340	-.196	.210
2	-.081	1.000	-.045	.190	-.057
3	.340	-.045	1.000	-.132	.185
4	-.196	.190	-.132	1.000	-.081
5	.210	-.057	.185	-.081	1.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Oblim with Kaiser Normalization.

According to the Component Correlation Matrix table above, there were weak positive correlation outputs between the five factors: *Self-Awareness*, *Self-Management*, *Social Awareness*, *Relationship Management*, and *Self-Motivation* ($r = -.081$, $r = .340$, $r = -.196$, $r = .210$, $r = -.045$, $r = .190$, $r = -.057$, $r = -.132$, $r = .185$, $r = -.081$).

H # 1: *The variance in academic progress is explained by self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation.*

Table 5
Testing hypothesis output

		Coefficients ^a					Correlations		
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients					
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	-.274	.101		-2.698	.007			
	self-awareness	.055	.007	.200	8.261	.000	.405	.260	.159
	Self- Management	-.035	.006	-.154	-6.178	.000	.258	-.198	-.119
	social awareness	.010	.005	.065	1.887	.060	.665	.061	.036
	relationship management	.038	.008	.284	4.872	.000	.760	.157	.094
	Self- Motivation	.060	.007	.453	8.793	.000	.775	.276	.169

a. Dependent Variable: Academic progress

As shown in the above output, the variance explained by self-awareness in academic progress is .200 for the students' sample. The variance explained by self-management is negative and its value is -.154. The variance explained by social awareness is .065. The variance explained by relationship management is .284. The variance explained by self-motivation is .453. Thus, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation are positive predictors of academic progress; meantime, self-management is a negative predictor of academic progress. The strongest predictor of academic progress is self-motivation which explains 45.3% of the

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variance; at the same time, the least predictor of academic progress is social awareness which explains 6.5% of the variance. Hence, there is a linear relationship between self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, self-motivation, and academic progress. Therefore, based on the above outputs, *H # 1: The variance in academic progress is explained by self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation*, is supported. The authors cited in the literature review reach the same conclusion that the self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation impact academic progress.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The 30 items of the Emotional Intelligence Test were subjected to principal components analysis (PCA) using SPSS version 26.0. Before performing PCA, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser Meyer-Olkin value was .849, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser 1970, 1974) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal components analysis using Kaiser's criterion revealed that the first five components recorded eigenvalues above 4 (17.934; 7.571; 5.685; 4.968; 4.240). The first five components explain a total of 40.642 percent of the variance. An inspection of the scree plot revealed a clear break after the second component. The five-component solution explained a total of 40.399% of the variance, with Component 1 contributing 17.934% and Component 2 contributing 7.571%. To aid in the interpretation of these two components, oblim rotation was performed. The rotated solution revealed the presence of a simple structure (Thurstone 1947), with both components showing several strong loadings and all variables loading substantially. The interpretation of the five components was consistent with previous research.

There were weak positive correlations between the five factors. The results of this analysis support the use of the Emotional Intelligence Test items as adequate scales to measure the emotion dimensions in different professions, as well as in different study programs at the university level. It found a linear relationship between self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, self-motivation, and academic progress. The study found that self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation are positive predictors of academic progress; meantime, self-management was a negative predictor of academic progress. The strongest predictor of academic progress was self-motivation which explains 45.3% of the variance; at the same time, the least predictor of academic progress was social awareness which explain 6.5% of the variance.

The validated and standardized *Emotional Intelligence Test* in Albanian may be used as an administered test in people's career orientation and development, in admission at different study

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programs and positions in multi fields occupations in the Albanian context. The results suggest possible applications for researchers, psychologists and managers of study programs at universities and multi fields occupations as a routine test or as a selection tool in enrolling and admission into different positions. The results of the study also suggest that self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation impact academic progress. Therefore, supporting self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and self-motivation is considered a support to academic progress as well.

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