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## ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN MANAGING ACADEMIC STRESS

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### Abstract:

*The future development of the country is in students hands. Because students and young people going to rule the country in future. Now a day's students are facing very high level academic stress. Every year about 25,000 students between 18-20 years commit suicides because of examination and other academic stress. It's time to understand the major academic stressors and how to manage these stressors. This study reveals the major academic stressors and how to manage the academic stress by using emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify emotions to evaluate and create them so as to support thought to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, to contemplatively regulate emotions, so as to promote intellectual and emotional growth. This study is based engineering students in south Tamilnadu, concentrated on 6 districts and researcher collected 510 samples from engineering college students. Structured questionnaire includes Students Academic Stress Scale (SASS) and Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS). Study concludes that emotional intelligence is a key to managing academic stress and creating pleasant environment for the students and supports them to present their best.*

### KEY WORDS:

Emotional Intelligence, Academic Stress, Students Stress.

### INTRODUCTION

Now a day's Emotional intelligence is the one of the major missing parts in the human life. People with high emotional intelligence are likely to be more successful person in real world. Even people with good IQ they not able to succeed. The concept of emotional intelligence captures an extensive collection of individual personal skills, professional skills and dispositions. Emotionally intelligent person is skilled in identifying emotions, how to use the emotions, understanding own & others emotions and regulating emotions. Emotional intelligence is taken as a major factor for career effectiveness, success and satisfaction. It's strongest indicator for human success. Fresh college Students doesn't have experience about college life and having problem with adopting new social environment. Students have many difficulties to achieve their academic goal. Students are working lot more than studies to achieve their goals. There are many stressors that affect student performance as results. Academic stressors don't create anxiety directly to students, but when these stressors associated with student's personal perception and personality will result in academic stress. Academic stress is also called as career stopper. Because in Tamilnadu number of students studying engineering courses is very high compare to other states in India and each year number of level of students doing engineering and other technical courses are increasing. Director of Technical Education and Department of Economics and Statistics report shows that 491

colleges are offering engineering courses in 32 districts in the year of 2010-2011. During 2010-2011, 120,074 students are doing their engineering courses. But the personal ability of study and quality of the education, other study related factors such as faculties, class notes, environments are not up to the level of student's expectations. So Students have to work more to compete with others. These are the some reasons that make academic stress among engineering college students. This study reveals factor that creates academic stress among the engineering college students in Tamilnadu and also includes how emotional intelligence is used by the students to managing academic stress.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mayer & Salovey (1997) Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify emotions to evaluate and create them so as to support thought to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, to contemplatively regulate emotions, so as to promote intellectual and emotional growth. Ravi Bangar (2005) argues that emotional intelligence individual person's capacity to create optimal results in relationship with individual and society. Freeman (1998) defines emotional intelligence as a way understanding and deciding how the individual think, feel and act. Emotional intelligence deals with how a person interact with others and how they understanding themselves. Goleman (1998) states it is capacity of understanding our own feelings and others, for motivating and creating positive relationship with others. Daniel Goleman broke emotional intelligence concepts generally expended into 5 main domains based on specific competencies. Knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating one self, recognizing emotion of others and handling relationships are the major 5 domains of emotional intelligence.

According to Richard Lazarus (1977) stress is defined as a situation that somebody regards as frightening and as possibly exceeding their resources. Lazarus study explains stress is depends on the occurrence and inducing by how people interpret the events and how they responding to that event. Gupta & Khan (1987) say it is a mental distress and frustration related with some academic failures and nervousness of failure or even an awareness of the failures. Stress is depends upon the individual ability like individual students aspiration, attitude, method of learning, mental capacity to learn new things, intelligence, demographic profiles, environmental factors and so on. According to Shah (1988) some time urgency of learn is also possible academic stressor. Most of the times faculties are forced to finished their lessons with in a short span of time. So students are struggling to hope up with their lessons. Students don't have sufficient resources to fulfill their academic demands. So the result of academic demand creates stress among the students. Zeidner (1992) study reveals that students are facing very high academic stress due to academic overload and evaluation process, and facing very less stress due to personal factors and other social factors. Kohlon (1983), Shirom (1986) study on academic stress reported that expectations of parents, lack of support from parents, disagreeable examination system, faculties' attitude, class assignments, fear on class test and examinations are the strong academic stressors. Keinan & Berg (1986) research says that impressive very high self expectation is the major stressor. Some times academic stress leads to suicidal also. Banerjee (2001) study reports that each year about 25,000 students between 18-20 years commit suicides because of examination and other academic stressors. Oginska et al. (2005) study explores the relationship between occupational stress and emotional intelligence. His study concludes person who is having ability to deal with emotions at work, can able to coping with work place stress. Author (2005) research on stress reveals that there is strong relationship exists between age, emotional distress and stress copings. Kleinke, Staneski, & Mason (2005) study says some gender difference exist in academic stress. Low depression males are used humor and disregarded the stressful situation, whereas low depression females are used more self-initiated coping like cutting back activities and exercise. Naidoo et al. (2008) survey shows that relationship between explanatory factors for stress and emotional intelligence. The ultimate aim of this survey is to comparing perceived stress and emotional intelligence with respect to academic demands. The result concludes that less emotional intelligence is related with academic stress. Montes & Berges et al. (2007) conducted study on nursing students and the results shows that emotional information helps to reduce the negative stress problems. Therefore this study will help the students to know about the academic stressors and how to manage the academic stress by emotional intelligence.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. This study aims to explore the major academic stress experienced by the engineering college students in Tamilnadu.
2. To explore the role of emotional intelligence in managing academic stress.
3. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress.

Methods

This study is based engineering students in south Tamilnadu, concentrated on 6 districts and researcher collected 510 samples from engineering college students (I, II, III and IV year students). Primary data collected through structured questionnaires (ESI & SASS) and secondary data collected from journals, state government reports, books and internet.

This study includes three parts of structured questionnaires; first part includes personal profile of the students like age, description about the year. Second part includes Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by Schutte et al. (1998). EIS consisting of 33 items and classified into six groups like appraisal of others emotions (7) items, appraisal of own emotions (5) items, regulation (5) items, social skills (5) items, utilizations of emotions (7) items and optimism (4) items. Students are requested to read each statement and decide whether they 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree', or 'strongly agree' with the questions. Third part includes Student academic stress scale (SASS) used to measure academic stress response for following response domains: Physiological, Behavioral, Cognitive, and Affective. Students requested to rate how much they facing academic stress on a 4-point scale with the anchor None of the Time (1), A Little of the Time (2), Most of the Time (3), and All of the Time (4). Student academic stress scale (SASS) consisting of 77 items among 77 items only 50 items has been taken for the study. Cronbach's alpha for EIS is 0.670 and SASS is 0.789, it shows high internal consistency between the items.

**FINDINGS**

**Table 1: Demographic profile**

Profile	Options	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	235	46.1
	Female	275	53.9
Age	19 Years	124	24.3
	20 Years	141	27.6
	21 Years	117	22.9
	22 Years	128	25.1
Year of study	1 Year	127	24.9
	2 Year	135	26.5
	3 Year	125	24.5
	4 Year	123	24.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 showing that most of the respondents are females (53.9 %), remaining 46.1 % of the respondents are male. Most of the students are doing second year engineering (27.5 %) and most of them are 20 years old (27.6 %).

Table 2 shows that correlation between demographic profiles of the students, emotional intelligence and academic stress. This table reveals that gender has positively correlated with academic stress and emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence and academic stress variables are having strong positive correlation.

**Table 2: Correlation Matrix**

Variables	Gender	Age	Year of study	EI	AS
<b>Gender</b>	1	0.020	0.019	0.102*	0.172**
<b>Age</b>	0.020	1	0.991**	-0.019	-0.020
<b>Year of study</b>	0.019	0.991**	1	-0.016	-0.015
<b>EI</b>	0.102*	-0.019	-.0016	1	0.775**
<b>AS</b>	0.172**	-0.020	-0.015	0.775**	1

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).  
 \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 3: Regression Analysis**

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.775 <sup>a</sup>	0.600	0.599	5.89306

**Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	19.773	2.342		8.442	0.000
AS	0.504	0.018	0.775	27.610	0.000

**a. Dependent Variable: EI**

Regression analysis used to find the strength of relationship between dependent variable (Emotional intelligence) and independent variable (Academic Stress). Table 3 shows that coefficient of determination is 0.600; therefore about 60 % of the variation in the emotional intelligence is explained by academic stress. This result clears that academic stress variable significant predictor of emotional intelligence.

**Table 4: Top ranked Academic Stress Events**

Academic Stress Events	Mean	SD
1. I am afraid to speak or discuss in the lecture room	2.908	0.992
2. I feel academic programme is too cumbersome for me	2.861	0.962
3. I have trouble making up my mind about my academic work	2.853	0.963
4. I feel worried about coping with my studies	2.853	0.963
5. I feel some lecturers are too hard for me to understand	2.835	0.961
6. Some courses are too dull and boring	2.827	0.964
7. I have difficulty in eating	2.827	0.964
8. I am not really sure am interested in reading	2.804	0.993
9. I have trouble studying effectively	2.800	0.989
10. I feel lecturers are not considerate of students' feelings	2.796	1.012

Table 5 shows that top ranked academic stress events, in that afraid to speak or discuss in the classroom is the top ranked stressful events with the mean value of 2.908, academic programme is too cumbersome is the second top ranked stressful event with the mean value of 2.861.

**DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION**

The ultimate aim of this study is to reveal the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among the engineering college students. Correlation analysis shows that emotional intelligence is having strong positive relation with academic stress. Regression analysis result clears that academic stress variable significant predictor of emotional intelligence.

There are hundreds of emotions along with their combines and variations. Anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, surprise, disgust, shame and love these are the some emotional examples. It's hard to learn all the emotions, but these entire emotions can learnable over a period of time all the way through environment. This study concludes that cognizant and sincere effort must be shown on understanding our own emotions. Students must possess the ability to choose to display or not to display their emotions. Emotions help to understand the situations in our daily life, using that students can able to handle situations positively. It includes self control, persistence and enthusiasm to motive oneself. Evidence suggests that emotional intelligence is a key to managing academic stress and creating pleasant environment for the students and support them to present their best.

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