



“INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG MBA STUDENTS IN NORTH GUJARAT”

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on academic stress among MBA students in North Gujarat. In recent years, management education has become increasingly demanding due to academic competition, workload, examinations, presentations, internships, and placement pressures. Emotional Intelligence has emerged as a crucial psychological factor that enables students to regulate emotions and manage stress effectively. The study adopts a quantitative and descriptive research design using primary data collected from 253 MBA students through a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, reliability analysis, and ANOVA were applied using SPSS software. The findings indicate that MBA students possess moderate to high Emotional Intelligence and moderate academic stress. Correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and academic stress ($r = 0.372$, $p < 0.001$). Regression analysis confirmed that Emotional Intelligence significantly influences academic stress and explains 18% variation in stress levels ($R^2 = 0.180$). ANOVA results showed no significant difference in academic stress across demographic variables. The study concludes that Emotional Intelligence acts as an important psychological mechanism in helping MBA students manage academic pressure effectively. The research offers valuable implications for educational institutions to incorporate Emotional Intelligence development and stress management initiatives within higher education systems.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Academic Stress, MBA Students, Higher Education, Stress Management, Emotional Regulation



1. Introduction

The modern educational environment has become highly competitive and performance-driven, especially in professional courses such as Master of Business Administration (MBA). MBA students are expected to manage assignments, presentations, projects, examinations, internships, and placement preparation simultaneously. These academic responsibilities often create significant psychological pressure, resulting in academic stress.

Academic stress refers to the mental and emotional strain experienced when academic demands exceed an individual's coping capacity. Excessive stress negatively affects students' concentration, emotional stability, decision-making, academic performance, and overall well-being. In professional education, stress is intensified by peer competition, future career uncertainty, and institutional expectations.

At the same time, Emotional Intelligence (EI) has gained increasing importance in educational psychology and management studies. Emotional Intelligence refers to an individual's ability to understand, regulate, and effectively manage emotions in oneself and others. Students with higher Emotional Intelligence are generally more capable of handling academic pressure, maintaining emotional balance, and responding constructively to stressful situations.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence was popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995), who emphasized self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as key dimensions of Emotional Intelligence. In academic settings, Emotional Intelligence helps students manage anxiety, adapt to challenges, improve interpersonal relationships, and cope effectively with academic demands.

Several recent studies suggest that Emotional Intelligence positively influences academic adjustment, psychological well-being, resilience, and stress management among university students. However, limited research has been conducted specifically on MBA students in regional educational contexts such as North Gujarat. Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the influence of Emotional Intelligence on academic stress among MBA students in North Gujarat.

2. Review Of Literature

2.1 Concept Of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively in various situations. According to Goleman (1995), Emotional Intelligence includes self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills. Mayer and Salovey (1997) conceptualized Emotional Intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions,



integrate emotions into thought processes, understand emotional meanings, and regulate emotions.

Recent studies indicate that Emotional Intelligence has become increasingly important in academic and professional environments because emotionally intelligent individuals are more adaptable, resilient, and capable of managing pressure effectively.

2.2 Academic Stress among Students

Academic stress is a psychological condition arising from academic workload, examinations, deadlines, competition, and performance expectations. University students frequently experience stress due to balancing academic responsibilities and personal expectations. Prolonged academic stress may result in anxiety, depression, burnout, poor academic performance, and emotional exhaustion.

Recent educational environments, especially post-pandemic digital learning systems, have increased academic pressure on students due to technological dependency, online evaluations, and continuous performance monitoring.

2.3 Empirical Review of Recent Studies

Chacón-Cuberos et al. (2019) examined emotional regulation and academic stress among university students and found that Emotional Intelligence significantly reduces academic stress and improves psychological well-being.

Estrada Guillén et al. (2022) studied Emotional Intelligence, resilience, and engagement among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study revealed that students with higher Emotional Intelligence demonstrated better adaptability and emotional stability under stressful situations.

Javaid et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review on Emotional Intelligence and academic performance and concluded that Emotional Intelligence positively influences learning outcomes, emotional regulation, and coping mechanisms among students.

Wei and Song (2024) identified that Emotional Intelligence and resilience significantly reduce academic anxiety and improve student adjustment in higher education institutions.

Zhang et al. (2024) studied academic stress and Emotional Intelligence among university students and found that Emotional Intelligence acts as an important mediator in stress management and academic adaptation.

Kubala and Sipola (2025) highlighted the growing role of Emotional Intelligence in higher education and suggested integrating Emotional Intelligence training into university curricula to improve emotional resilience and academic well-being.



Silitonga et al. (2025) found that Emotional Intelligence and time management significantly influence learning behaviour and reduce academic stress among university students.

Shrestha (2025) concluded that Emotional Intelligence positively affects academic achievement and psychological adjustment among postgraduate students.

Recent literature collectively indicates that Emotional Intelligence is strongly associated with academic performance, emotional regulation, stress reduction, resilience, and psychological well-being among students. However, limited studies focus specifically on MBA students in North Gujarat, thereby establishing the need for the present research.

3. Research Gap

Although numerous studies have examined Emotional Intelligence and academic stress among university students, limited research has specifically focused on MBA students in North Gujarat. Existing studies mainly emphasize academic achievement, psychological well-being, or general student populations rather than management students in regional educational contexts. Furthermore, few studies have investigated the predictive influence of Emotional Intelligence on academic stress using regression analysis among MBA students. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this research gap.

4. Research Objectives

1. To study the level of Emotional Intelligence among MBA students.
2. To assess the level of academic stress among MBA students.
3. To examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and academic stress.
4. To analyse the influence of Emotional Intelligence on academic stress among MBA students.



5. Hypotheses Of The Study

Hypothesis 1

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and academic stress among MBA students.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and academic stress among MBA students.

Hypothesis 2

H₂: Emotional Intelligence significantly influences academic stress among MBA students.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 research Design

The study follows a quantitative, descriptive, and analytical research design. The research aims to examine the relationship and influence between Emotional Intelligence and academic stress among MBA students.

6.2 Research Philosophy

The study is based on positivist research philosophy, which emphasizes objective measurement and statistical analysis of observable phenomena.

6.3 Research Approach

A deductive research approach was adopted because the study tests hypotheses derived from existing theories and literature related to Emotional Intelligence and academic stress.

6.4 Nature of Data

The study uses primary data collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire.

6.5 Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of MBA students studying in management institutes located in North Gujarat.

6.6 Sampling Technique Convenience sampling technique was used to collect responses from MBA students due to accessibility and time limitations.



6.7 Sample Size

The final sample size consisted of 253 MBA students.

6.8 Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

Section	Description
Section A	Demographic Information
Section B	Emotional Intelligence Scale
Section C	Academic Stress Scale

A five-point Likert scale was used ranging from:

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

6.9 Variables of the Study

Type of Variable	Variable
Independent Variable	Emotional Intelligence
Dependent Variable	Academic Stress

6.10 Statistical Tools Used

SPSS software was used for statistical analysis.

Statistical Tool	Purpose
Descriptive Statistics	Mean and standard deviation analysis
Reliability Analysis	Internal consistency measurement



Correlation Analysis	Relationship analysis
Regression Analysis	Influence prediction
ANOVA	Group difference analysis

6.11 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach’s Alpha.

Reliability Test	Value
Cronbach’s Alpha	0.891

The value of 0.891 indicates high internal consistency and reliability of the research instrument.

7. Data Analysis And Interpretation

7.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	120	47.4%
Female	133	52.6%
Total	253	100%

Interpretation

The table shows that out of 253 respondents, 133 respondents (52.6%) are female and 120 respondents (47.4%) are male. Female respondents slightly outnumber male respondents in the study. The study includes a balanced gender representation, ensuring that the responses reflect perspectives from both male and female MBA students.



Table 2: Year of Study of Respondents

Year of Study	Frequency	Percentage
First Year	104	41.1%
Second Year	149	58.9%
Total	253	100%

Interpretation

The majority of respondents belong to the second year of MBA with 149 students (58.9%), while 104 students (41.1%) belong to the first year. Second-year MBA students constitute the larger portion of the sample, indicating higher participation from students with greater academic exposure and experience.

Table 3: MBA Specialization of Respondents

MBA Specialization	Frequency	Percentage
Finance	93	36.8%
Marketing	68	26.9%
Human Resource	57	22.5%
International Business	35	13.8%
Total	253	100%

Interpretation

Finance specialization has the highest representation with 93 respondents (36.8%), followed by Marketing (26.9%), Human Resource (22.5%), and International Business (13.8%). The sample includes respondents from diverse MBA specializations, with Finance students forming the largest group.

Table 4: Type of College of Respondents

Type of College	Frequency	Percentage
Government	20	7.9%
Private	233	92.1%
Total	253	100%



Interpretation

Out of 253 respondents, 233 students (92.1%) belong to private colleges, while only 20 students (7.9%) belong to government institutions. The majority of respondents are from private management institutions, reflecting the dominance of private MBA colleges in North Gujarat.

Table 5: Area of Residence of Respondents

Area of Residence	Frequency	Percentage
Urban	169	66.8%
Rural	84	33.2%
Total	253	100%

Interpretation

A majority of respondents, 169 students (66.8%), belong to urban areas, while 84 students (33.2%) belong to rural areas. The study indicates greater participation from urban students, suggesting better accessibility of MBA education in urban regions.

Table 6: Reliability Analysis

Reliability Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.891

Interpretation

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.891 indicates a high level of internal consistency among the questionnaire items used in the study. The research instrument is highly reliable and suitable for further statistical analysis.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	3.4857	0.747
Academic Stress	3.3291	0.806



Interpretation

The mean score of Emotional Intelligence is 3.4857, indicating moderate to high Emotional Intelligence among MBA students. The mean score of academic stress is 3.3291, indicating a moderate level of stress. MBA students possess relatively good emotional capabilities while simultaneously experiencing moderate academic pressure.

Table 8: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value	Result
Emotional Intelligence & Academic Stress	0.372	<0.001	Significant
Age & Emotional Intelligence	0.206	<0.001	Significant
Emotional Intelligence & Study Hours	0.116	>0.05	Not Significant
Age & Academic Stress	0.041	>0.05	Not Significant
Academic Stress & Study Hours	0.008	>0.05	Not Significant

Interpretation

The analysis reveals a moderate and statistically significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and academic stress ($r = 0.372, p < 0.001$). A weak but significant relationship exists between age and Emotional Intelligence. Other relationships were found to be statistically insignificant.

$$r = 0.372, p < 0.001$$

Emotional Intelligence is significantly associated with academic stress, whereas study hours and demographic factors show limited influence on stress levels.

Table 9: Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta (β)	R	R ²	p-value
Emotional Intelligence → Academic Stress	0.425	0.425	0.180	<0.001



Interpretation

The regression analysis indicates that Emotional Intelligence significantly influences academic stress. The R^2 value of 0.180 indicates that Emotional Intelligence explains 18% variation in academic stress among MBA students.

$$\text{Academic Stress} = 1.730 + 0.459(EI)$$

Emotional Intelligence is an important predictor of academic stress, although additional factors also contribute to students' stress levels.

Table 10: ANOVA Analysis

Demographic Variable	p-value	Result
Age Group	0.072	Not Significant
Year of Study	0.902	Not Significant
Area of Residence	0.624	Not Significant
MBA Specialization	0.398	Not Significant

Interpretation

The ANOVA results indicate that academic stress does not significantly differ across age group, year of study, area of residence, or MBA specialization. Academic stress is experienced similarly among MBA students regardless of demographic background or specialization.

8. Major Findings

1. MBA students possess moderate to high Emotional Intelligence.
2. Students experience moderate academic stress.
3. Emotional Intelligence has a statistically significant relationship with academic stress.
4. Emotional Intelligence significantly influences academic stress.
5. Academic stress does not significantly differ across demographic variables.
6. Emotional Intelligence explains 18% variation in academic stress.



9. Suggestions

1. Educational institutions should conduct Emotional Intelligence development programs.
2. Stress management workshops should be organized regularly.
3. Counselling and psychological support services should be strengthened.
4. Institutions should maintain a balanced academic workload.
5. Universities should promote supportive and collaborative learning environments.

10. Limitation Of The Study

1. The study is limited to North Gujarat.
2. Convenience sampling limits generalizability.
3. Self-reported responses may contain bias.
4. The study considered only Emotional Intelligence and academic stress.
5. Cross-sectional design restricts long-term analysis.

11. Future Scope

Future research may:

- Include larger geographical areas.
- Use longitudinal designs.
- Compare professional courses.
- Incorporate additional psychological variables.
- Apply advanced statistical models such as SEM.

12. Conclusion

The study concludes that Emotional Intelligence significantly influences academic stress among MBA students in North Gujarat. Students with higher Emotional Intelligence are better equipped to regulate emotions, adapt to academic challenges, and cope with stress effectively. Although Emotional Intelligence explains only part of academic stress, it remains an important



psychological factor contributing to students' emotional resilience and academic adjustment. Educational institutions should therefore emphasize Emotional Intelligence development alongside academic training to improve students' well-being and academic effectiveness.

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