

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

A large body of studies provides evidence that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of academic achievement. The aim of this study was to highlight the contribution of emotional intelligence in explaining individual differences in academic achievement (i.e., grade point average/GPA) among adolescents. The data was obtained by processing the responses of 288 high school students. The participants completed the following five standardized questionnaires: a) a personal data and academic status questionnaire; b) The Self-Reported Emotional Intelligence Test; c) Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale; d) Toulouse Self-Esteem Scale (school-related self-esteem subscale) and e) Student Engagement in School/Four-Dimension Scale. School achievement was operationalized using the GPA obtained at the end of the first semester of the 2014-2015 school year. The data was analyzed using hierarchical multiple linear regression and mediation analysis. The association between the emotional intelligence score and GPA was modest but statistically significant. Instead, emotional intelligence has shown more consistent correlations with school-related self-esteem and school engagement which, in their turn, positively correlated with academic achievement. This data suggests that emotional intelligence may have an indirect effect on academic achievement, i.e. mediated by engagement and school-related self-esteem. The mediation models were tested according to the procedure suggested by Baron and Kenny and the asymptotic z-test proposed by Sobel. Both school engagement and school-related self-esteem fully mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. The theoretical and practical implications of these results are discussed.

Keywords: emotional intelligence; academic achievement; school-related self-esteem; school engagement; mediation models

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