

Exploring the Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Stress Management among College Students of Janakpurdham

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between stress management and emotional intelligence among college students. A total of 200 undergraduate students from University Campus and R. R. M. Campus of Janakpurdham participated in the study. The sample was selected using incidental and purposeful sampling techniques to ensure accessibility and relevance. A cross-sectional research design was adopted, and data were collected using standardized instruments, namely the Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Stress Source Inventory. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools through SPSS software. The findings of the study revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and stress management among both male and female students. Results indicated that students with higher levels of emotional intelligence experienced lower levels of stress, while those with lower emotional intelligence reported higher stress levels. This inverse relationship highlights the role of emotional intelligence in effectively managing stress in academic settings. The study concludes that emotional intelligence and stress are negatively correlated, suggesting that enhancing emotional intelligence may serve as a valuable strategy for reducing stress among college students. These findings have important implications for student well-being and stress management interventions in higher education institutions.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, stress management, gender differences, self-awareness, empathy, motivation

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Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to identify one's own emotions as well as those of others, to differentiate between emotions and assign the proper labels to them, to use emotional information to inform behavior and thought processes, and to control and/or modify emotions in order to adapt to changing circumstances or accomplish objectives.

Recognizing, comprehending, controlling, and regulating one's own and other people's emotions is a sign of emotional intelligence. This has become a critical characteristic for successful stress management. Stress management is greatly aided by emotional intelligence (EI), which is a vital component of interpersonal connections and well-being, especially in high-stress situations like college life. College students frequently deal with

social difficulties, academic obligations, and life transitions, all of which can raise stress levels. In order to determine how emotional intelligence (EI) can act as a protective factor against stressors that college students frequently face, this study intends to investigate the association between EI and stress levels among college students.

When it comes to achieving success in their personal and professional life, the majority of people believe that emotional intelligence (EQ) is more significant than intelligence (IQ). Today, being able to read others' cues and respond appropriately to them is essential to both professional and personal success. Since the economy has become more global, it is imperative that each person acquire the adult emotional intelligence skills necessary to better comprehend, empathize with, and interact with others; otherwise, they will elude them in their personal and professional lives.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) provided a formal description of emotional intelligence. The ability to keep an eye on one's own emotions as well as those of others, distinguish between them, and use this knowledge to inform one's thoughts and behavior is how they defined it. Stress is an internal state that can be brought on by the body's physical demands, the environment, or social situations that are deemed to be potentially hazardous, unmanageable, or that exceed our capacity to handle daily stresses and life events.

Even though college is an exciting time, stress levels are frequently elevated. The challenging atmosphere created by social expectations, academic demands, and the transition to maturity can have a major impact on students' mental and physical health. One of the main reasons why some students manage to flourish in spite of these demands is that, like their international counterparts, Janakpurian College students deal with a variety of stressors related to their social, personal, and academic life. The difficulties of adapting to a quickly evolving school environment, cultural expectations, familial demands, and restricted access to mental health supports can all make these stressors worse.

This section examines how emotional intelligence helps Janakpurian pupils manage their stress by utilizing regional psychological, educational, and cultural factors. The possibility of raising emotional intelligence in this particular demographic to increase stress resilience is also discussed. Janakpurdham is not an exception to the fact that stress is a prevalent problem among college students globally. Students frequently encounter a variety of pressures, including academic pressure, social expectations, and job concerns, in an academic setting that requires both cognitive talents and social adjustments. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend how people handle stress. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a significant aspect that has been researched in this area. According to the increasing amount of study on the subject, pupils' ability to manage stress may be significantly influenced by their emotional intelligence (EI). This review investigates how Emotional Intelligence (EI) affects stress management among Janakpurian college students.

Emotional intelligence (EI) can specifically help people develop healthy coping strategies, which are crucial for stress management. These strategies include problem-solving, reaching out for social support, and rephrasing negative beliefs. The relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and coping skills was further emphasized by Bar-On (1997), who found that emotionally intelligent people frequently employ adaptive coping mechanisms when under stress.

Many studies have looked at how emotional intelligence helps students in other nations handle their stress, but there isn't much study that focuses on Janakpurian College students in particular. But according to a few research conducted in Nepal, emotional intelligence is crucial for students' stress management. For instance, emotionally intelligent students in Nepal reported reduced anxiety levels and were better equipped to handle academic stress, according to Adhikari and colleagues (2020). This conclusion is corroborated by Shah's (2018) research, which suggested that college students

with high EI may experience less stress and have better psychological health.

Factors related to culture and society can be used to understand the relationship between EI and stress management in Nepalese students. Stress levels might rise as a result of the high expectations that families and communities in Nepal, including Janakpurian pupils. High emotional intelligence probably makes it easier to deal with these expectations and control emotions. Furthermore, social interactions and dependency are emphasized by Nepalese society's collectivist nature, which may have an impact on how students view and handle stress (Joshi, 2021).

Relation between Emotional Intelligence and Stress

Our ability to manage stress should be improved by emotional intelligence for a number of reasons. Empathy, social skills, and self-management are all crucial components of emotional intelligence. We can improve our ability to cope with stress by being self-aware enough to recognize when we are experiencing it to stop reacting before it becomes uncontrollable. Being empathetic and having social skills should help we communicate ourselves more effectively, including knowing when and how to be direct. However, these are talents that must be learned. The key components of emotional intelligence include moods, stress management techniques, flexibility, and interpersonal and intrapersonal connections. All of these factors have a significant impact on students' academic achievement. People today have to deal with a complicated and demanding work environment. When we look around the workplace, we see that there are so many issues that they might cause tension in everyone. A small amount of stress is beneficial. It has the power to inspire and increase productivity. On the other hand, excessive stress or severe reactions to stress are detrimental.

These days, one of the most important things that people lack in their lives is emotional intelligence. Emotionally intelligent people are

probably more successful in the actual world. People who have a high IQ are yet unable to achieve success. Individual personal abilities, professional skills, and temperament are all included in the concept of emotional intelligence. People with emotional intelligence are adept at recognizing, utilizing, comprehending, and controlling their own emotions as well as those of others. Effectiveness, success, and job happiness are all considered to be significantly influenced by emotional intelligence.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the present research are as under:

- o To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress.
- o To compare emotional intelligence and stress of male and female college students.

Literature Review

According to the ability-based model of emotional intelligence developed by Salovey and Mayer (1990), which is referenced in Azman Ismail (2010), an individual's emotional intelligence level will raise their competencies, which can enhance their capacity to reduce stress and promote positive attitudes and behaviors. Emotional intelligence, as defined by Goleman (1998) and quoted by Azman Ismail (2010), emphasizes that an individual's emotional intelligence will boost their skills, which may help them reduce environmental stress and improve leadership effectiveness in an organization. College students frequently report feeling stressed, frequently as a result of social connections, financial limitations, familial expectations, and academic pressure. EI as a buffer against stress, with Mishra et al. (2025) providing technological augmentation strategies and Mishra (2023) offering human capital-building approaches. Among students, EI interventions could significantly lower stress levels, promoting mental well-being and academic success in resource-limited settings like Nepalese colleges.

High levels of stress have been linked to detrimental effects on students' mental health,

academic performance, and general well-being, according to research (Misra & McKean, 2000). Burnout, sadness, and anxiety can all be brought on by stress.

Upadhyaya (2006) found that student-teachers with poor emotional intelligence are less careful, irregular, prefer to take more rest, control others, and lack energy. They are also more anxious and worried about the future, negative feelings, and failures. Emotionally intelligent student-teachers are more capable, self-assured, diligent, supportive, enthusiastic, and positive. Kuruvilla (2008) discovered that (i) there is a strong positive association between academic stress and gender, with boys experiencing higher levels of stress than girls. Emotional intelligence is becoming a valuable competency for both business and life, according to

Lorenzo Fariselli and Joshua Freedman (2008). EQ reduces the detrimental effects of stress, which helps to enhance performance. Reynolds and Odwyer (2008) investigated how middle school principals' leadership effectiveness, coping strategies for stress and emotional intelligence relate to one another. In order to lessen academic stress, social intelligence is essential. College students' interpersonal relationships (irs) and emotional intelligence (EI) were shown to be above average by Hsieh et al. (2014). Significant differences were observed in the EI and IRs of college students by gender, romantic connection, monthly allowance, and family status. Comparing female and male students, the former have higher irs and EI. (3) There Key Elements of Emotional Intelligence and their role in Stress Management.

Table 1
Emotional Intelligence Components and Their Role in Stress Management

EI Element	Description	Role in Stress Management
Self-awareness	Ability to recognize and understand one’s emotions and their impact	Helps identify stress early, allowing for proactive coping strategies
Self-regulation	Managing emotions and impulses to maintain control	Reduces the intensity of negative emotions, preventing stress escalation
Motivation	Using emotions to drive goal pursuit and maintain perseverance	Helps students maintain focus and persistence despite academic pressures
Empathy	Understanding and sharing the feelings of others	Enhances peer support networks, reducing isolation and stress
Social Skills	Building positive relationships and managing social interactions	Facilitates positive group dynamics, reducing interpersonal stress

According to Dubey (2009), female students possess more emotional intelligence than their male counterparts. Stress and emotional intelligence are significantly correlated, according to Kalyoncu et al. (2012). A study on “Academic Stress among School-Going Adolescents in their Social Intelligence” was carried out by Bartwal and Raj (2014). The stud’s findings showed that academic stress levels were equal for male and female pupils. Those with higher levels of social intelligence would be better able to was a positive correlation between the perceived degree of EI and irs. College

students’ interpersonal relationships improved as their emotional intelligence increased.

Khan (2015) shown that boys experience much higher levels of stress than girls. Schoolboys are more stressed than schoolgirls, according to the study’s findings. According to Lee and Cho (2016), male nurses have been under higher stress at work than female nurses, and there are differences between the two groups in terms of the types of stress they encounter. Shah and Sah (2024) in their research show a substantial positive relationship between overall emotional intelligence and

productivity, indicating that employees with higher emotional intelligence typically perform better, fulfill their goals more frequently, and handle their tasks more skillfully.

Following Hypotheses were formulated for the present study:

- o There would be significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Stress among female students.
- o There would be significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Stress among male students.
- o There would be significant difference between male and female students in terms of emotional intelligence,
- o There would be significant difference between male and female students in terms of stress.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design to explore the impact of emotional intelligence on stress management among college students of Janakpurdham. The design was appropriate for measuring and analyzing variables such as emotional intelligence (EI), stress levels, and the relationship between them. The study was both descriptive, as it aimed to explain existing conditions, and correlational, as it examined the association between EI and stress. The sample consisted of 200 undergraduate students from Janakpurdham, equally divided by gender with 100 female and 100 male participants. To collect relevant data, three tools were used. First, a researcher-developed Personal Data Sheet gathered basic demographic information including name, age, and educational background. Second, the Emotional Intelligence Scale, comprising 18 scales with five items each-except for the general health scale, which included subtests on physical, behavioral, and emotional aspects-was used, with responses categorized as very simple, somewhat well, a bit, and not at all. Scoring followed the scale's official manual. Third, the Personal Stress Source Inventory developed by Sanju Thakur and Prita

Yadav from Rm, Janakpurdham, consisting of 35 items with response options of rarely, occasionally, and frequently, was administered, with scoring done according to the provided guidelines. The data collection process took place in two sessions. In the first session, participants completed the personal data sheet, after which they were sequentially given the Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Personal Stress Source Inventory, with short breaks between each tool. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS to calculate EI levels, stress levels of male and female students, degrees of freedom (df), significance levels, means, standard deviations, and t-values. Completed questionnaires were collected three to four days after distribution.

The mean scores of male and female students on the stress measure varied significantly, as shown in Table 4. The t-ratio between the two scores (3.27) is significant at the .01 level of confidence, and the mean score of male students (85.66) is greater than that of female students (80.33). Therefore, hypothesis number four is accepted, and it can be said that male college students experience higher levels of stress than female students.

Although research on how emotional intelligence (EI) influences stress management among college students of Janakpurdham is still in its infancy, some studies and findings offer important new perspectives on the relationship between EI and stress and coping strategies in this demographic. The main conclusions and outcomes of our research on Emotional Intelligence and stress management among college students of Janakpurdham are outlined below.

Emotional Intelligence and Stress Levels
Numerous studies have revealed a strong inverse relationship between Janakpurian college students' reported stress and emotional intelligence. Academic stress was found to be lower among students with higher EI scores, according to a study by Adhikari et al. (2020). Students who were more adaptable at identifying and controlling their emotions reported feeling less anxious and under less pressure to do well in class according

to the study. These results align with international research indicating that emotional intelligence (EI) lessens stress by helping pupils manage emotional difficulties.

Coping Strategies and Emotional Intelligence

It has been demonstrated that the coping mechanisms used by Janakpurian college students are influenced by emotional intelligence. Lower EI students are more

Results and Discussion

Resort to maladaptive coping mechanisms like substance abuse, avoidance, or denial, whereas higher EI students are more likely to employ adaptive and constructive coping mechanisms like problem-solving, seeking social support, and rephrasing negative beliefs. According to a study by Shah (2018), students with higher emotional intelligence were more likely to use proactive coping strategies, which improved their ability to handle academic stress. This supports the Transactional Model of

Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which holds that emotional intelligence improves coping strategies by enhancing emotional control and stress scenario assessments.

Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management

There may be gender disparities in the association between stress management and emotional intelligence, according to certain research. An investigation by Thapa et al. (2022) found that Nepali female students were more likely to report employing adaptive coping methods and had higher emotional intelligence scores than their male counterparts. This discrepancy could be attributed to the maternal roles and emotional expressiveness that are frequently expected of women in Nepalese society. Male students who had slightly lower EI nevertheless benefited from EI in stress management, albeit to a smaller degree, whereas female students with higher EI.

Table 2

Strength of Association between Emotional Intelligence and Stress among Female Students

Group	Level of EI	Low Stress	High Stress	Chi- square	df	Level of Significance
Female students	High	38	18	4	1	0.05
	Low	12	32			

With respect to stress and emotional intelligence, Table 1 indicates that the obtained Chi-square is 4 and the df is 1, indicating that

Hypothesis No. 1 is accepted at the 0.05 level of confidence.

Table 3

Strength of Association between Emotional Intelligence and Stress among Male Students

Group	Level of EI	Low Stress	High Stress	Chi- square	df	Level of Significance
Male students	High	10	22	51.84	1	0.001
	Low	40	28			

The results of Table No. 2 indicate that the Chi-square value of 51.84 and the df of 1 for Stress and Emotional Intelligence are significant at the 0.001

level of confidence indicating that Hypothesis No. 2 is accepted.

Table 4*Mean, SD and t-value of emotional intelligence of male and female students*

Group	N	M	SD	t(df-198)	p
Male	100	125.79	15.25	14.72	0.01
Female	100	162.30	19.45		

There are notable differences between male and female college students on the emotional intelligence test, as shown in Table 3, Female students' mean score (162.30) is higher than that of male students (125.79). At a confidence level of .01, the obtained t-value (14.72) between these

two scores is highly significant. The conclusion that female students possess greater emotional intelligence than male students is thus supported by the acceptance of hypothesis No. 3 handled stress better and used healthier coping strategies.

Table 5*Mean, SD and t-value of Stress of male and female students*

Group	N	M	SD	t(df-198)	p
Male	100	85.66	21.22	3.27	001
Female	100	80.33	17.55		

Impact of EI Training on Stress Management

Training in emotional intelligence has the potential to lower stress levels among Janakpurdham college students, despite the fact that it is still in its infancy. Students' coping skills have been demonstrated to increase with Emotional Intelligence (EI) programs that emphasize social skills, empathy, and emotional control. According to a study by Koirala and colleagues (2020), students who took part in an Emotional Intelligence training program showed a notable decrease in stress levels and an increase in the application of constructive coping mechanisms. This implies that emotional intelligence (EI) can be improved through skill development in addition to being a personal attribute.

Discussions

According to the current study, stress and emotional intelligence are significantly correlated in both male and female students. Stress is low when emotional intelligence is high and high when emotional intelligence is low. The results of several earlier studies by Salovey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (1998), Upadhyaya (2006), Lorenzo

Fariselli, Joshua Freedman (2008), Kalyoncu et al. (2012), and Bartwal and Raj (2014) are thus supported by the fact that there is a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and stress.

On the emotional intelligence test, there are also notable differences between male and female students. Compared to male pupils, female students had a higher mean emotional intelligence score. This conclusion is also supported by earlier research by Dubey (2009), Hsieh et al. (2014), and Khurshid (2020). This study also reveals a noteworthy disparity in stress levels between male and female students. Male students' mean scores are greater than female students' mean scores. This result is in line with research by Lee and Cho (2016), Khan et al. (2015), and Kuruvilla (2008).

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a key factor in how students feel and manage stress, according to the results of several researches on the subject among college students in Janakpurdham. Emotionally intelligent pupils are more likely to exhibit psychological well-being, use more

flexible coping mechanisms, and report feeling less stressed. Cultural expectations, social interactions, and academic constraints are all major sources of stress for Janakpurian students, and EI plays a significant role in negotiating these issues.

Additionally, as emotional intelligence and stress management are positively correlated, students may gain a great deal from include emotional intelligence training in curricula. In the end, these programs may promote mental health and academic performance by assisting students in developing resilience, enhancing emotional control, and improving their capacity to handle the demands of college life. Research in this field frequently looks at the relationship between EI and students' coping mechanisms for stress in both personal and academic settings. Based on the aforementioned facts, debates, and results, it can be said that stress and emotional intelligence are negatively correlated in college students, both male and female. Compared to male college students, female students exhibit stronger emotional intelligence. Additionally, male college students experience higher levels of stress than their female counterparts.

Teachers can make a big difference in kids' stress levels. They have to create classes that are both effective and engaging, meet the needs of every student, and monitor and evaluate their development. Making the classroom a comfortable place can help students learn more easily and get ready for tests. Students with poor emotional intelligence experience more stress than those with strong emotional intelligence, according to the study. Thus, in order to lessen stress, educational institutions and instructors should implement programs that aid in the development of students' emotional intelligence.

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