Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance of Arabic Students in Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated Emotional Intelligence and students' Academic Performance in Arabic Language among Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara state. The research employed a quantitative research method. The population consisted all five hundred and fifty Arabic students and the targeted population were the two hundred SS3 Arabic students in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. The sample for this study were 200 respondents selected from 20 schools with the use of Stratified Sampling Techniques. Two instruments validated by three experts in the Department of Arts Education are used to elicit information from the respondents with indices of 1.00,21.43,0.91 and two distant factors that captures different aspect of emotional intelligence. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method with correlation coefficient of 0.85. The data were analyzed with appropriate statistical techniques which includes Percentages, Mean and ranking order. PPMC to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, the findings of this study revealed that all questionnaire items were above the mean score of 2.5 and were considered high. This means that the Emotional Intelligence of the students in this local government was regarded as high. The level of academic performance of secondary school students in Arabic Language is considered high with 196 students who scored A, B, C and P. Only 4% of the students scored 39-001. There was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on gender and school type. Based on the findings, it was concluded that emotional intelligence and academic performance of students in the said local government was high and recommended among others that teachers should encourage students to write about their thoughts and feelings to help students understand their emotion better. Government should introduce mindful techniques such as Meditation or deep breathing exercise to increase selfawareness

Keywords Emotional Intelligence; Academic Performance; Arabic Students; Secondary School; Ilorin South

Introduction

The term Emotional Intelligence (E I) offers a new way of looking at the fact that people can reason about their emotions and equally employ the same to assists the reasoning. Emotional Intelligence (E I) is defined as the ability to reason with emotion in four areas: perception, integration in thought, understanding and management (Roy & Mahato, 2024). It is an innate ability, which gives us our emotional sensitivity and our potential for healthy learning and developing managerial skills. (Roy & Mahato, 2024).

Defining Emotional Intelligence has come with a lot of arguments. As the field is growing so rapidly that researchers are constantly advancing their own definitions. Some definitions as given by different authorities are given below: According to Salovey and Mayer (2020), Emotional Intelligence (E I) is "the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use its beneath information to guide one's thinking and actions."

Elias (2020) said Emotional Intelligence is the set of academic skills performances that we like to see as being reported on the other side of the report card. Furthermore, Emotional Intelligence could be described as the ability of an individual to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions in ways that promote emotional and intellectual growth. It is an inborn ability (although which can be taught) which gives our emotional sensitivity and potential for emotional management skills that helps us maximize our long-term health, happiness and survival.

Emotional Intelligence covers a spectrum of knowledge by which a person knows how to separate healthy from unhealthy feelings and how to turn negative feelings into positive ones. It is the innate potential or ability possessed by an individual to feel, use, communicate, recognize, remember, learn from, manage, understand and explain emotions more adequately. This list is endless since each psychologist has his or her own definition of the Emotional Intelligence as a psychological construct (Goleman, 1995)

Emotional Intelligence has been considered as an important factor in academic performance (Mohzan, Hasan & Halil, 2023) and this residual quality is more germane to the success of any individual student. Therefore, Emotional Intelligence of a student has an influence on many aspects of his/her academic endeavors (Nwadinigwe & Obieke, 2022).

However, it is of great necessity to establish what each term means. Intelligence is a general description term that can be referred to a hierarchy of mental abilities, from simple perception process and information processing to higher and more general forms of problem solving. Until recent time, the term "Intelligence" has been limited largely to certain kinds of problem-solving involving language and logic. However, people have been able to deal with numerous kinds of contents besides words, numbers and logical relations, for example, space, music, the psyches of other human being and students are part of experience of individuals (Mayer & Salovery, 1997). It is amply evident that human mental functions are highly interconnected (Elias, 2020). Yet, the contest between the school of thoughts that are in favor of exclusively cognitive views of what it means to be intelligence and broader view that accommodate positive role of emotion in the intelligence expression are still in course

Although, having good intelligence may be important in life's success. Emotional Intelligence is a key to aspect of good relationship with others and achieving one's goal in life (Elias, 2019), Empirical evidence have revealed that having good observation of oneself and feeling comfortable to understand others feeling, good social-control and

social decision making may lead to an increased productivity of anybody, Thus, it can be said that to be successful in life, one requires to have effective awareness, control and management of one own emotions, and awareness and understanding of other people around

Gkintoni, Dimakos & Nikolaou (2024) stated that Emotional Intelligence (E I) is a desirable tool to employ to enhance learning, as it contributes to co-orientation between people by achieving effective social functioning and learning effectiveness.

Emotional Intelligence describes abilities capacities, skills or self-perceived ability to identify assessing and manage the emotions of one's self and that of other people in the society. Emotional Intelligence is considered as one of the most desirable personality qualities today. Some critics of traditional I Q believe that intelligence is more of a result of an individual's opportunities to learn skills and information in a situation. Sternberg and Gardner (2023) had earlier argued that I Q tests measure only a fragmented and restricted aspect of human intellectual ability. Emotions are involved in everything people do, in every action, decision and even in their judgment. However, emotionally intelligent people recognize this and use their thinking to manage their emotions rather than being managed by such emotions or become overwhelmed by them.

Hence, education everywhere in the world is expected to transform individual to become self-educated, independent disciplined among others. It is presumed that education is a catalyst to the development of any nation as such, the standard of education at every stage is a matter of quality inculcated into lives of the receivers who are students. In a layman point of view, Performance can be regarded as the output of personal ability in each task at a given time. It could be the level that an individual could go upon a given task. The performance in different sector has its antecedent label for what is used to measure. (Farah & Irshad, 2018)

Academic Performance however, can be regarded as the observable and measurable behavior of a student in a situation. Take for instance, the academic performance of a student in Arabic Language includes observable and measurable behavior of such student at any point in time during the period of teaching and learning process. An Arabic student performance would consist of his scores at any time obtained from a teacher-made test on that subject. Yusuf (2019) affirmed that academic performance could be as well equated with the observed behavior or expectation of achieving a specific statement of or statement of educational intention in research. He stressed further that academic performance of students consists of scores obtained from their teacher-made test, first term examination, mid semester test and so on depending on their level of education.

In Nigeria, students' academic performance is acknowledged to be discouraging private individual in the field of education some three decades ago (Okesina, 2016). This abysmal situation has become a nightmare and a great concern to many stakeholders in education sector, and it calls for concerted effort to enhance students learning outcomes. Education is also a veritable tool which every nation needs for its survival, the more the

attention a country gives to education the higher its development in all ramification and vice-versa. The roles teachers play in realizing the goals of education cannot be over stressed. It is imperative to enunciate the nature and trend of educational progress in any developing country. Education is a systematic intellectual and moral training, geared towards obtaining knowledge, development of character and mental development that will ensure human survival. This becomes a reality through effective teaching and learning. Teachers are the fulcrum of educational system, and desired productivity expected from them to be actualized, there is need for government to be more committed to providing them different incentives (Samuel, 2015)

Academic performance according to Raheem (2019) is a measure of output in education which is expressed in term of changes in skills and attitudes of the individuals as a result of their experience gained over a period. Mappadang *et al.* (2022) maintained that academic performance is important as a result of educational experiences in schools to represent knowledge, skills and attitudes. Academic performance remains a yardstick to measure educational outcomes and it has been economically, scientifically and technologically paramount to the advancement or development of any nation (Jansen, 2018). Adeoye and Emeka (2016) stated that student academic performance can be regarded as the ability of an individual student to accomplish a set of educational objectives. However, Yusuf (2019), argued that that the term academic performance and academic achievement have been used simultaneously in educational research but with little distinction in their meaning and implication for education.

Academic performance determines the future goals and objectives of students at any level of education. What subject they will specialize in colleges and universities, which educational institutions they will get enrolled into, what career opportunities they would take up and so forth are all subject to their performance. The determinants of academic performance of the students include; class participation, class assignments, home-work assignments, tests, examinations, and participation in competitions or other events, however the pressure of the parents and other individuals upon teachers and school administrators to improve the academic performance has enabled schools to come up with advanced strategies (Kapur, 2019) ascertained.

Raheem (2019) stated further that secondary school education is the engine room of knowledge acquisition through which students meet various subject which in-turns determine the field of study they would likely pursue at tertiary level of education. Secondary school education is of paramount importance to students because it is a linking bridge that connect primary or elementary education and higher education. This stage of education is of no doubt, determines to a large extent, the making of a profession due to its position in educational system. Successive administrations in Nigeria have taken into cognizance the need to reform the secondary school education in order to produce the kind man power that Nigeria economic sector needs and becomes a nation of collective dreams of her founding father. However, whatever reform that could be done in

secondary education, students' academic performance remain only means to determine it effects (Okesina, 2016).

The other ways by which students' academic performance could be established are cumulative evaluation, termly assessment and periodic test which carried out from school-to-school base on purpose and need of students. Erun and Zahoor (2021) opined that students' academic performance has always been area of interest of several researchers. They affirmed further that students' academic performance is affected by different factors such habit, learning skills and academic interaction. Other factors such as student emotional intelligence play a significant role. From the above submission, the researcher observed that there is paucity of studies in which the area of interest of researcher as none of the studies mentioned above has been conducted on Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance of Secondary School Arabic Language Students in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State which present study intended to investigate, hence, the need for this study. As for the problem of this research work, the researcher identified that I. there are challenges that could hamper students' academic performance as well as their achievement while in the school such as negative peer group pressure, overloaded academic activities, teachers-students relationship, low level of teachers' experience, non-interest of the students, nonchalant attitude of government, inadequate of teaching materials and host of others. The ability of student to cope under the pressure of these multifarious challenges could be difficult. Unfortunately, majority of students lack these social skills which is ardently needed to succeed in their academic pursuit.

The system of Nigeria education seemly deep-rooted in Intelligent Quotient (I Q) measure while little search light on other important area of knowledge which involves emotional and social intelligence skills which psychologists held view that they evolve from broader domain of Intelligence (Mohzan, Hasan & Halil, 2013) and the above source affirmed further that the narrower of students' performance in academic activity based only on their level of Intelligence Quotient that has been outdated in many nations around the world, having realized that individual ability is not limited to his/her IQ measure alone (cognitive) but a matter of other measure parameters such as Emotional Intelligence (E I).

However, difficulty arises when teachers and other relevant stakeholders are confronted with measure of Emotional Intelligence of any student. This challenge hangs largely on what should be measured and when and how it should measure constitute a greater challenge in many schools. Little of these constructs are well known by majority of teachers and guidance counselors who are saddled with responsibility of evaluating students in their respective schools.

II The main purpose of this to examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic performance (A P) of Arabic secondary students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state. Specifically, the study intends to examine the:

- 1. Level of Emotional Intelligence (E I) of Senior Secondary School Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state
- 2. Level of Academic performance (AP) of Senior Secondary School Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State
- 3. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on school type.
- 4. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on gender.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the conduct of this study:

- 1. What are the levels of Emotional Intelligence (E I) of Senior Secondary School Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?
- 2. What are the levels of Academic Performance (A P) of Senior Secondary School Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State?
- 3. What is the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on gender?
- 4. What is the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on school type?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on school type.

Methodology

The research for this study was descriptive survey of correlational type. A descriptive design type describes the situation of an affair as they exist and the use of a questionnaire method by concerned researcher. This study therefore describes the emotional

intelligence and academic performance of secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State The population of this study involves all the senior secondary schools in the local government. There are 55 private and public secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government. 20 schools offering Arabic Language were selected with the use of purposive sampling techniques in both private and public school. 10 Arabic students were selected in each of the 20 schools through stratified random sampling techniques. This makes a total of 200 respondents. Questionnaire was used to elicit relevant information from the students based on their emotional intelligence. This was subjected to appropriate statistical tool which include frequent count, the percentage and inferential statistical tools.

For the purpose of this Study, a questionnaire entitled "Emotional Intelligence" checklist was adopted by the researcher. The checklist consists of two Sections, Section A and B. Section A asked for demographic data of the respondents which includes: name of the school, gender and school type. Section B on the other hand, consist of items on emotional intelligence of Students. Four-point Likert-Type Rating Scale format was used to score item of the instrument after being answered by the respondent.

Strongly agree attracts 4 points, agree attracts 3 points, disagree attracts 2 points and strongly disagree attracts 1 point. Validity of the instrument was established by two Arabic lecturers in the department of Arts Education, University of Ilorin. The content validity has 1.00 which is excellent, the reliability for internal consistency has 21.43, correlation of Emotional intelligence and Academic Performance was 0.91 which is of strong positive value p<0.005 and two distinct factors were suggested by factor analysis confirming the questionnaire captures different aspect of emotional intelligence. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method of which the instrument was administered twice at an interval of four weeks to same group of twenty (20) respondents who are not part of school within Ilorin South LGA.

The two set of scores obtained at the two occasions were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation - co-efficient (PPMC) The result obtained therefore determined the reliability of the instrument. However, a correlation coefficient of 0.85 was obtained. The other instrument was adopted Arabic questions which was given to the students to answer. The modality for scoring the test ranges from 1-4 (1,2, 3, 4). The average mean score is 2.50. (that is, 10/4). Hence, the mean score of 2.50 and above was considered as the high level of emotional intelligence while the mean score of less than 2.50. was considered as low level of emotional intelligence among secondary school students in Ilorin South Local Government.

Results

This section presents the results of data obtained on the respondents in frequency counts and percentages.

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	167	83.5
Female	33	16.5
Total	200	100

Table 1 presents the percentage distribution of respondents based on gender. The table sow the distribution of respondents by gender, the table shows that 167 (83.5%) of 42 the respondents were male while 33 (16.5%) of the respondents were female. This indicates that male respondents participated more than female in the study.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on School Type

Family Type	Frequency	Percentage	
Public school	176	88	
Private school	24	12	
Total	200	100	

Table 2 presents the percentage distribution of respondents based on type of school, that is public and private schools. The table indicates that 176 (88%) of the respondents were from public schools while respondents from private schools were just 24 representing 12%. The analysis revealed that majority of the respondents were from the government schools.

Table 3: Mean and Rank Order on the Respondents' Perception on level of Emotional Intelligence

Items No.	As a student emotional intelligence give the following	Mean	Rank
1	Gives students ability to monitor one's own	2.88	$11^{\rm th}$
2	It improves competencies and skills	3.15	5 th
3	Assist in self-regulation	2.91	10^{th}
4	It improves self-motivation	3.18	3^{rd}
5	Ability to listen to others	2.80	12^{th}
6	It improves social skills	3.59	1 st
7	Gives the students best potential	3.17	4^{th}
8	Improve channel of problems solving	2.97	9 th
9	Assist in choosing best carrier	3.58	2^{nd}
10	Improve ability to cope with pressure	2.78	13^{th}
11	Assist students to influence people to certain task	2.72	15 th
12	Improve students' faculty of thinking	3.07	7^{th}
13	Ability to regulate someone emotion	2.74	14^{th}
14	Helps to build strong relationship among peers	3.01	8 th
15	Assists students in nurturing various training program	3.09	6 th

Table 3 presents the mean and rank order of respondents' expression on the level of emotional intelligence of the Arabic students. It is clear from the findings of the study that, emotional intelligence of the students improves social skill of the students and was ranked 1st with mean score of 3.59, followed by assist students in choosing best career which was also ranked 2nd with mean score of 3.58. emotional intelligence improves self-motivation with mean score of 3.18 and was ranked 3rd. It also gives the students best potential had mean score of 3.17 and was ranked 4th. It improves competencies and skills had a mean score of 3.15 which was ranked 5th. On the other hand, questionnaire items 1, 5, 10, 13 and 11 were the list items and were ranked 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th with weighed mean score of 2.88, 2.80. 2.78. 2.74 and 2.72 respectively. That is

gives students ability to monitor one's own, ability to listen to others, improve ability to cope with pressure, ability to regulate some's one emotion and assist students to influence people to certain task. This mean that all items were tested positive and one can conclude that emotional intelligence of the students was above the mean score of 2.5 and was considered high, this mean that emotional intelligence of the students in this local government was regarded as high and give the students a lot of advantages.

Table 4: Students Who Participated in Arabic Language Text

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S/N	Subjects	Number	Grade A	Grade C	Grade P (%)	Grade F	Grade A,	N-Value	
		present & %	(%)	(%)		(%)	C & P (%)		
	Arabic language Studies	200 (99%)	30 (15%)	86 (43%)	80(40%)	4 (2%)	196(98%)	1.25	

Table 4 revealed the total number of students who participated in the test which are 200 students. With the above results, the level of academic performance of secondary school students in Arabic Language is considered high with 196 students who scored A, B, C, and P. Only 4% of the students scored from 39-001. Analysis above shows that the students performed better in a standardized test conducted for them.

Research questions 3 & 4 have corresponding hypotheses and thereby tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 5: Emotional Intelligence and Students' Academic Performance based on Gender

Gender	N	X	SD	Cal r-value	P-Value	Decision
Male	167	51.2000	2.93893	0.5396	0.002	H ₀₁ rejected
Female	33	51.6500	5.07659	0.5475	0.013	

Source: Field work, 2024

Table 5 presents the result of Pearson Bivariate Correlation on relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Students' Academic Performance of Arabic Students based on Gender. In this test, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance of male students is 0.5396, while that of the female students is 0.5475, which signifies positive linear correlation. The significance test has the null hypothesis that there is no positive or negative correlation between the two variables in the universe based on gender (r=0). The results show a very high statistical significance with p-value of 0.002 and 0.013 respectively, which are less than 0.05 significance level. Thus, we can reject the null hypothesis of no significant relationship based on gender and assume that emotional intelligence and students' academic performance are positively, linear associated based on gender and therefore, emotional intelligence will significantly influence both the male and female students' academic performance. To the lay man view, hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic Students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara State based on Gender.

Table 6: Environmental Factor and Students Academic Performance in Arabic Language Based on School Type

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School Type N X SD Cal r-value P-Value Decision	on

Public	176	51.0600	4.58663	0.5210	0.005	H_{03}
Private	24	51.7000	3.12495	0.5582	0.026	Rejected

Source: Field work 2024

Table 6 presents the result of Pearson Bivariate Correlation Coefficient on relationship between emotional intelligence and students' academic performance of Arabic Students based on School type. In this test, the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance of public-school students is 0.5210, while that of private students is 0.5582, which signifies positive linear correlation. The significance test has then null hypothesis that there is no positive or negative correlation between the two variables in the universe based on school type (r=0). The results show a very high statistical significance with p-value of 0.005 and 0.026 respectively, which are less than 0.05 significance level. Thus, we can reject the null hypothesis of no significant relationship based on school type and assume that emotional intelligence and students' academic performance are positively, linear associated based on school type and therefore, there was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic Students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on school type.

Summary of the Findings

The study investigated emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in Arabic Language in Ilorin South Local Government, Kwara State. The following findings were highlighted:

- 1) All questionnaire items were above the mean score of 2.5 and was considered high. This means that emotional intelligence of the students in this Local Government was regarded high and gives the students lot of advantages.
- 2) Research question 2 revealed that the level of academic performance of secondary school students in Arabic Language is considered high with 196 students who scored A, B, C and P. Only 4% of the students scored 39-001.
- 3) There was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary school Arabic students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on school type.
- 4) There was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary Arabic Students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on school type.

Discussion

The study investigated emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in Arabic Language among secondary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. For instance, the level of emotional intelligence of Arabic students was regarded high. This correlates with the submission of Elias (2021) who said emotional intelligence could be described as the ability of an individual to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional meanings, and to reflectively regulate emotions in ways that promote emotional and intellectual growth. It is an ability (although which can be taught) which gives our emotion sensitivity and potentials for emotional management skill that helps us maximize our long-term health, happiness and survival.

The level of academic performance of Arabic Students in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara state was high. This is agreed with Crires (2015), who lamented that academic performance could be poor or good. A child is said to be performing well in his academic when he is scoring above 50 while children who score below 39 are said to be performing poorly. Crires stressed further, that the concept of academic performance refers to the achievement by individuals of objectives related to various types of knowledge and skills. These objectives are socially established based on age, prior learning capacity of individuals with regards to education, socialization and qualification. Studies conducted on academic achievement notably focus on students' progress and individual, institutional and organizational factors of achievement, along with social relationship interactions that determine, facilitate or hinder academic achievement.

There was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary Arabic Students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on gender. This is also in line with Obieke (2023). In his empirical studies which revealed that emotional intelligence is closely correlated with learners' academic achievement in schools (Nwadinigwe & Obieke, 2023). Their results independently, have shown that Emotional Intelligence could significantly predict the academic performance of students either male or female. Mohzan et al., (2016) studied the effect of Emotional Intelligence (E I) on academic achievement among 278 bachelor degree learners of Education Faculty in Universiti Teknologi Mara (UTM), Malaysia. The result revealed that there was a significant relationship between the overall emotional intelligence and academic achievement of students. Maraichelvi and Rajan (2018) in their study, also found that there was a close relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance of students.

There was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (E I) and Academic Performance (A P) of senior secondary Arabic Students in Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state based on school type. This agrees Preeti (2019) who established in his result while studied into the role of emotional intelligence on students' academic achievement, that teaching emotional and social skills at school would not only positively influence academic achievement of students during their years of study when these important skills were taught but would also have long term achievement impact in respect of the type of school. It is found by the above authority that academic performance without emotional intelligence in any school does not indicate future success, while its absence (emotional intelligence) indicates the weak personality and inability to build good relationship at

working place as well in schools. In other words, emotional intelligence is highly important for quality education and social growth.

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