Emotional Intelligence as A Predictor of Educational Adjustment: A Study among Second Year Undergraduate Students

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a significant role in determining students' academic success and adjustment in educational settings. The present study aimed to examine the difference in educational adjustment between high and low emotional intelligence groups and to investigate the predictive role of emotional intelligence dimensions on educational adjustment among second-year undergraduate students in Odisha, India. The study adopted a quantitative ex post facto research design using a survey method. A total of 500 second-year undergraduate students (250 males and 250 females) from Arts, Science, and Commerce streams were chosen through stratified random sampling. Data were collected with the help of the Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) and the Adjustment Inventory for College Students (AICS). The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, an independent sample t-test, and stepwise multiple regression analysis with SPSS. The results revealed a significant difference in educational adjustment between high and low emotional intelligence groups, with higher EI students showing better adjustment. Further, regression analysis indicated that emotional intelligence dimensions significantly predict educational adjustment, with self-awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal relationships emerging as significant predictors hierarchically. Among these, interpersonal relationship was found to be the strongest predictor. The study concludes that emotional intelligence is an important factor in enhancing educational adjustment among undergraduate students.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, self-awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal relationship, Educational Adjustment, Second Year Undergraduate students.

INTRODUCTION

Developing emotional intelligence—one of the positive aspects of mental health—to deal with various life pressures, adapt to diverse situations, manage stress, and achieve academic success is a pressing need of the day. Emotional intelligence would not only help students become well-adjusted or proficient in academics, but it would also allow them to investigate the root causes of failure in other areas of their lives.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a person's ability to know, understand, and control his or her own and others' emotions, as well as to motivate himself and maintain intimate relationships with others. It is a part of social intelligence, including the capability of monitoring one's own and others' emotions and feelings, distinguishing between them, and utilizing the insight to influence one's own cognition and behaviors (J. D. Mayer et al., 2004, p. 5).

Defining emotional intelligence, Goleman (1995) established five components: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills in his book "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than

IQ." These five parts of emotional intelligence are organized into two basic competencies: (a) personal competence, or components, and (b) social competence, or components.

(a) Personal competence comprises the following three components:

i. Self-awareness: Identifying one's emotions, preferences, and resources. It entails understanding the consequences of one's own emotions and accurately assessing one's own weaknesses and strengths.

ii. Self-Management or Regulation: Self-management is the ability to control one's own emotions, desires, and resources. This refers to the ability to control painful emotions like concern and fury, as well as repress emotional impulses. It is distinguished by self-control, conscientiousness, dependability, innovation and adaptation, adaptability, and positive self-direction. In 2001, B.J. Zimmerman explaind that self-regulation is a self-directed process that helps students to convert their cognitive powers into task-related abilities. It is the ability to direct our behavior and control our impulses to reach specified standards, aims, or ideals (Psychology Glossary, 2017).

iii. Self-motivation: A person's ability to motivate themselves to achieve personal goals. Furthermore, self-motivated people are known for being extremely self-directed toward goals, committed to success, looking for ways to improve, appreciating challenges, and excelling at everything they do. In other words, persons with a high level of emotional intelligence are willing to sacrifice instant gratification for long-term success. Motivation is defined by achievement drive, dedication, initiative, and optimism--the persistence in pursuing goals in the face of challenges and setbacks.

(b) Social competence is made up of following two components:

iv. Empathy (Recognizing other's emotions): Empathy is the ability to identify, comprehend, and share another person's thoughts and feelings. This refers to the ability to comprehend the emotional components of others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It is defined as viewing things from another person's perspective by putting oneself in their shoes.

v. Handling Relation (Relationship Management): Handling relationships suggests the capability for properly manage connections along with others by utilizing one's own emotional awareness as well as that of others. It is regarded as the "pinnacle" of emotional intelligence since it requires mastery of the other core skills: self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness. Individuals with high relation management characteristics include non-defensiveness, transparency, proactive engagement, and emotional resilience.

Even so, based on Daniel Goleman's book, Emotional Intelligence (1996), and Working with Emotional Intelligence (1999), Prof. Sarabjit Kaur (2016) has developed an enhanced method to evaluate EI through its seven popular dimensions: *Self Awareness and Appraisal (SAA), Self Regulation and Responsibility (SRR*), *Self-motivation (SM), Self- esteem and confidence (SEC), Empathy and acceptance of others (EAO), Interpersonal Relation(IPR),* and *Social Skills(SS)* that is called sevenfold emotional intelligence scale (SEIS).

In other words, Reuven Bar-On's competency model is crucial in context. This model describes a set of interconnected social and emotional abilities that influence how people comprehend and express themselves, interact with others, and cope with daily challenges and problems (Multi-Health Systems, 2011). His model describes EI in terms of five main factors, with 15 sub-factors: (1) intrapersonal skills, which comprise self-esteem, self-awareness, independence, assertiveness, and self-actualization; (2) interpersonal skills, which encompass social responsibility, interpersonal relationships, empathy, and so on. (3) Stress management involves impulse control and stress tolerance, (4) adaptation includes reality checking and flexibility, and (5) general mood consists of happiness and optimism. Finally, they concluded that emotionally intelligent people are practical, hopeful, adaptive, and capable of problem-solving and dealing with difficult conditions.

According to a closer examination of the aforementioned model, emotional intelligence (EI) affects every facet of our professional and personal growth, enabling us to grow, mature, and accomplish our objectives (I. Faltas, 2017). On the other hand, those who are unable to regulate their emotions are more susceptible to anxiety and

depression, experience mood swings, loneliness, and isolation, and are unable to manage stress. As a result, this harmful mindset affects every other area of life in addition to causing poor adjustment.

Pathak (1990) defines adjustment as a measure of integration; a person's harmonious behavior communicates to other members of society that they are well-adjusted. As an individual, a student's adjustment refers to striking a balance between their goals and satisfaction in academic, extracurricular, co-curricular, and curricular activities. Educational adjustment is crucial for academic achievement. By striking a balance between their academic, intellectual, emotional, social, and other needs and their happiness, students specifically make positive changes in their educational experiences. Additionally, students' good attitudes about ambitions, academic work, and favorable assessment of academic surroundings constitute academic adjustment (Al-Qaisy, 2010). Three concepts—academic lifestyle, academic accomplishment, and academic motivation—are linked to academic adjustment, according to Anderson et al. (2016).

Students encounter several adoption challenges when they are admitted to Degree College and are in a new setting. Therefore, a successful transition from secondary to university education is necessary to increase the likelihood of student achievement and perseverance (S. Rienties et al., 2012). According to Sevinc and Gizir (2014), these issues are mostly related to transitioning to the academic setting, establishing good interactions with professors, seniors, classmates, etc., and dealing with numerous exams and assignments. Even their inability to adapt to a new setting results in their academic failure and early dropout from their second-year degree program.

Second-year undergraduate (UG) students in India frequently experience adjustment problems as a result of a shift where the initial excitement of education has subsided and the strain of specialized academic and career-focused expectations has increased. “Second-year students—often referred to as "sophomores"—often experience a distinct "sophomore slump" marked by academic exhaustion, social changes, and growing concern about the future, whereas first-year students mostly struggle with homesickness and environmental changes” (E. Cossey, 2017). In addition to this, Y.W. Cao and C.M. Mao (2008) showed that academic adjustment changes with time in a U-shape, with the lowest score at the end of the first semester. Out of the three groups of students, first-year students reported greater adjustment, whereas second-year students had the lowest adjustment scores (U. Jillani et al., 2023). Fezile Wagner et al. (2025) claim that second-year students' anxiety is mostly caused by a perceived increase in effort and pressure to perform well academically. It indicates that, among other things, second-year college students' academic adoption is significant.

This study is important since student competitions in the Gen-Z age are fierce. Pupils are under tremendous pressure to give their best effort. Even some of them suffer from severe mental disease and are unable to adapt to new circumstances, experience depression, or take their own lives. M.R. Priyadarsan et al. (2025) claim that 76% of female and 70% of male pupils suffered from borderline clinical to extreme levels of depression and identified education (pressure/adjustment) as a major driver of depression among rural adolescents in Odisha. Furthermore, developing students' emotional intelligence is crucial to their academic achievement and adjustment. In addition to helping individuals become well-adjusted, it would also allow them to examine the causes of their failures and generally improve their mental health. Therefore, the goal of the current study is to determine how emotional intelligence influences second-year UG students' educational adjustment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Searching the literature over the last decade has revealed that emotional intelligence (EI) in general and its individual dimensions are critical for student fit. A. Mohanty and G.P. Das (2017) found that emotional intelligence had a substantial role in overall student adaptation and in each dimension of adaptation, including academic adjustment among engineering undergraduates in Odisha. They also discovered that highly emotionally intelligent undergraduates adjusted better overall and academically to their college environment than those with average EI. M Tripathy and B. Sahu (2019) explained that eight family surrounding: cohesion, conflict, expressiveness, independence, acceptance and caring, active-recreational orientation, organization, and together played a significant role in socio-emotional and educational adjustment of adolescent girls.

Few studies at the national level indicate that EI and its dimensions influence academic fit. In 2016, K. Dhiman et al. discovered that adolescents' emotional intelligence influences family, school, and peer adjustment. Also, they proved that students with high emotional intelligence can face life's problems and successfully adapt to them, which suggests that enhancing emotional intelligence in educational settings could lead to better overall adjustment in various aspects of life. According to P. Anthony Raj (2018), there is a strong and positive association between emotional intelligence and emotional, social, and academic adjustment. Similarly, A. Saini and K. Tyagi (2024) found a robust and significant affirmative connection between emotional intelligence and home, health, emotional, social, and educational adjustment. Research also claims that there is an inverse association between EI and total adaptation. Sabeena M.T.P. reported in 2021 that there is a statistically significant weak negative relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment capacity. However, she has suggested that as an individual's mental condition improves, so does their ability to adapt, indicating that enhancing emotional intelligence may lead to better adjustment in various life situations.

The findings on how EI and its components influence educational fit are backed by global research. Y.S. Kim & J.H. Lee (2016) found a substantial association between academic adjustment and emotional intelligence among pupils. They also discovered that self-emotional, use of emotion, and emotional control had a substantial impact on college life adjustment. J. N. Igbo et al. (2016) discovered that emotional intelligence was affirmatively connected with academic and social adjustment and significantly predicted first-year students' social and academic adjustment at school. Similarly, A.M. Chukwu et al. (2018) discovered that emotional intelligence (five components) had a significant combined contribution to school adjustment among junior secondary pupils in Rivers State. Emotional intelligence independent prediction revealed that self-regulation, self-awareness, and social skills strongly predicted school adjustment, although empathy and motivation did not. According to K.C.H. Zhoc et al. (2018), controlling, and assessing self emotion, as well as regulating others emotion was found to be positively linked to self-directed learning, a component of educational adjustment. H. Pong and C. Leung (2023) discovered that the strongest predictive elements in terms of job adaptabilities were students' concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Above all, a substantial positive connection was found between academic adjustment and emotional intelligence, implying that individuals with greater EI are better prepared to face academic obstacles (H. I. Al-Failakawi et al., 2025).

Evidence suggests that, in addition to academic adaptation, EI is associated with home, health, and social and emotional demands among college students. According to Z. Sobhani et al. (2018), there is a substantial connection between the participants' EI with their socioemotional and educational adjustment. Even though the majority of the students had high emotional intelligence (EI), most of them had good emotional adjustment, and a moderate number of them enjoyed social and academic adjustment. According to S. Fernanda et al. (2025), students with high emotional intelligence were more adept at identifying and controlling their emotions, forming positive social bonds, and adapting to academic pressure.

Evidently, the literature indicates that EI may serve as a mediator and can also affect students' academic fit alongside other criteria. In 2016, R. Garg et al. found that a student's high school average had a direct impact on their grade point average, while EI was found to be only indirectly related to the grade point average of first-year students. According to E.O. Okpako and F.V. Ayodeji (2021), neuroticism, conscientiousness, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, extraversion, and openness all have a substantial connection with academic adjustment, accounting for 15.1% of the variation. Furthermore, C. Choi and B. Kim (2025) found that both emotional intelligence and depression were identified as important predictors of school adjustment. M.G.M. Qutishat reported in 2020 that EI and academic adjustment were significantly higher among students who were afraid of failing to obtain a high degree. Furthermore, “higher levels of emotional intelligence and psychological resilience considerably improve work adaptation and reduce psychological stress in nurses” (Man Peng et al., 2025).

Empirically, a few studies found that EI can influence academic adjustment. N. Adibsereshki, M. Shaydaei, and G. Movallali (2016) explained that an EI training program can improve the adaptive behavior along with its components (social skills and communication) among intellectually disabilities. E. C. Khorasani et al. (2023) argued that intervention of emotional intelligence is a highly acceptable and feasible instrument to develop coping skills with academic stress; thus, EI training must be included in university education to enhance pupils' education quality and their ability to study with no academic stress.

The emerging researches suggest that it is more helpful to study the predictive impact of EI and its aspects on academic adjustment of second-year students rather than first-year undergraduate students. In 2021, Ikpe et al. discovered an affirmative and significant connection between emotional intelligence and academic adjustment, confirming that for academic adjustment, emotional intelligence is a prerequisite among second-year university students. According to U. Jillani et al. (2023), emotional intelligence and resilience are major favorable predictors of student adjustment at university. Furthermore, second-year students had the lowest adjustment scores of any category. C. E. Ohuakanwa's (2024) results highlighted self-regulation, self-awareness, and self-motivation as basic components of emotional intelligence and together, significantly contributed to students' academic adjustment where self-awareness and self-motivation had stronger influence on academic adjustment and self-regulation. J. Watson et al. (2025) found that emotional intelligence explained 22.3% of the variance between variable sets. Effectively managing personal and others' emotions fosters healthy relationships, reduces psychological distress, and regulates well-being. These skills ultimately enhance academic adjustment and provide a more positive overall college experience. Emotions and others' emotion appraisal were the strongest predictors of success. Effectively managing one's feelings and recognizing them in others are essential skills for a student's overall academic adjustment (P. Paulino, S. I. Nogueira, and M. Claro, 2025).

The gap that was found after reviewing the literature are detailed as follows: (1) While numerous studies have been conducted over the last decade to determine how EI holistically impacts students' overall adoption, only a few studies (Joshua Watson et al., 2025; C. E. Ohuakanwa, 2024; S. Odedokun et al., 2023; H. Pong & C. Leung, 2023; K.C.H. Zhoc, et al., 2020; A.M. Chukwu, 2018 and Y.S. Kim & J.H. Lee, 2016) have taken into account EI subscales' individual influence on students' adaptation. (2) While numerous studies have been conducted focusing on the overall adjustment of newcomers to a university accounting to EI, only a few studies have been carried out mapping the influence of EI on pupils' educational adaptation during their latter years of studies in a degree course (P. Paulino et al., &H. I. Al-Failakawi, 2025; N.M. Caesarania et al., 2024; Ikpe et al., 2021; S. Larose, et al., 2019; S. Sim & M. Bang, 2016; and N. Mohamed, 2012). Though educational adaptation, a subscale of total adjustment, is a significant determinant in academic success, which is the primary goal of every student at every level, most researchers have investigated it in conjunction with overall adoption rather than evaluating it individually. (3) Furthermore, there is ongoing debate about the differences in adjustment challenges between first and second-year college students. While several researches focused on first-year students judging the year as an adjustment year, a few studies (Y.W. Cao & C.M. Mao, 2008; E. Cossey, 2017; U. Jillani et al., 2023 & Fezile Wagner et al., 2025) found that second-year students also had these challenges.

Because of this paucity, there is an urgent need to investigate whether EI as a whole and its components in isolation have affects on the educational adjustment of second-year college students in Odisha, India.

Objectives:

1. Examining the second year UG students' emotional intelligence influence on their educational adjustment in the State of Odisha, India.

2. Investigating the degree to which the second year UG students' emotional intelligence dimensions independently predict academic adjustment in the State of Odisha, India.

Research Questions:

1. Whether second year UG students' emotional intelligence levels (high/low) influence their educational adjustment in Odisha?

2. How much do second year UG students' emotional intelligence dimensions independently predict their academic adjustment in Odisha?

Hypotheses:

1) **H0:** There will be no statistically significant difference in the mean of educational adjustment scores between high and low emotional intelligence groups among second-year undergraduate students.

H1: There will be a statistically significant difference in the mean of educational adjustment scores between high and low emotional intelligence groups among second-year undergraduate students.

2) **H0:** Emotional intelligence dimensions do not significantly predict educational adjustment among second-year undergraduate students.

H2: Emotional intelligence dimensions significantly predict educational adjustment among second-year undergraduate students.

METHODOLOGY

The present study used a quantitative approach with an ex post facto (causal-comparative) research design. This design was selected because emotional intelligence, the independent variable, already exists in the participants and was not manipulated. The study aimed to examine differences as well as the predictive role of emotional intelligence dimensions on educational adjustment among second-year undergraduate students.

The population comprised second-year undergraduate students from degree colleges in Odisha, India. A sample of 500 students was selected, including 250 males and 250 females, with representation from Arts (167), Science (167), and Commerce (166) streams. Stratified random sampling was used by dividing colleges into coastal, central, and remote regions, from which one government college was randomly selected from each region. Only second-year students who had completed their first year were included in the study.

Emotional intelligence was treated as the independent variable and educational adjustment as the dependent variable. Emotional intelligence was measured using the Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) by Prof. S. Kaur, while educational adjustment was measured using the Adjustment Inventory for College Students (AICS) by A.K.P. Sinha and R.P. Singh.

Data were collected using a survey method through standardized questionnaires. Students were divided into high and low emotional intelligence groups using the median split method. The data were analysed using SPSS with descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test, and stepwise multiple regression analysis to examine group differences and prediction effects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion of the present study are mentioned hypothesis wise as under:

Hypothesis (H1)-1: There will be the difference between high and low emotional intelligence on measure of academic adjustment among second year UG students in Odisha.

Table No. 1: Independent Samples Test Significant Difference Between High and Low EI on the Measure of Educational Adjustment

Group Statistics					t-test for Equality of Means						
	Levels	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Std. Error Difference	95% CI of the Difference	
										Lower	Upper
Edu. Adjust	High	261	18.76	1.240	.077	41.376	498	.000	.098	3.847	4.231
	Low	239	14.72	.899	.058						

The group statistics of the t test (Table- 1.) explain that the academic adjustments' mean (M = 18.76 ± 1.240 including std. error .077) score of high (N= 261) emotionally intelligent students is greater than the academic adjustments' mean (M = 14.72 ± .899 including std. error .058) score of low (N= 239) emotionally intelligent students.

The t-test for equality of means statistics describes that there is the significant difference [t(498)= 41.376, p = .000 < .01] in the scores of academic adoption. The magnitude of mean difference has .098 std. errors in calculation (95% of CI: 3.847 to 4.231 that does not include 0) indicates to the significance level of $p < 0.01$. It confirms that grater the EI of undergraduate pupils; grater will be their academic adjustment and so on. That's why; the null hypothesis is rejected against the alternative hypothesis stating that there exists the significant mean difference between high and low EI of second year UG students' with respect to their academic adaptations.

The first null hypothesis stated that there would be no significant difference in educational adjustment between high and low emotional intelligence groups among second-year undergraduate students. The result of the independent sample t-test rejected the null hypothesis and showed a significant difference, indicating that students with higher emotional intelligence have better educational adjustment than those with lower emotional intelligence.

This finding is supported by previous studies and theories on emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman suggested that emotionally intelligent individuals are better at managing emotions, coping with stress, and maintaining positive relationships, which helps in better adjustment in academic life. Similarly, John D. Mayer and Peter Salovey described emotional intelligence as the ability to understand and regulate emotions, which supports effective adaptation in different situations.

Empirical studies also support this result. Research by A. Mohanty and G. P. Das found that students with higher emotional intelligence show better academic adjustment. Similar findings were reported by J. N. Igbo and Y. S. Kim, who observed a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic adjustment. In contrast, though Sabeena M.T.P. reported in 2021 that there was a statistically significant weak negative relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment capacity, she claimed that as a person's mental state improves, so does their ability to adapt. This explains that higher level of EI leads more adjustment capacity among students while resulting in a very negligible reduction in adjustment quality.

Hypothesis (H2) 2: Emotional intelligence dimensions do not significantly predict educational adjustment among second-year undergraduate students.

Table 2a. Multiple linear (stepwise) regression (**Model Summary**) to analyze the holistic as well as individual contribution of emotional intelligence seven dimensions to Academic Adjustment among undergraduates students (N = 500).

Model	R	R Square	Change Statistics		
			R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	.855[a]	.730	.730	1348.063	.000
2	.916[b]	.839	.109	337.115	.000
3	.921[c]	.848	.009	30.090	.000
4	.922[d]	.850	.001	4.366	.037
a. Predictors: (Constant), IRP; b. Predictors: (Constant), IRP, SRR; c. Predictors: (Constant), IRP, SRR, EAO d. Predictors: (Constant), IRP, SRR, EAO, SAA & e. Dependent Variable: Edu Adjust					
Key: IPR = Interpersonal Relationship, SRR = Self Regulations and Responsibility, EAO = Empathy and Acceptance of others, &SAA = Self-awareness and Appraisal, &Edu Adjust = Educational Adjustment,					

The model summery Table 2a, shows that the IPR component of EI, includes F = 1348.063, Sig. F = .000 ($p<0.05$) and alone can bring (R^2 = .730) 73% of change in criterion, is the strongest contributor among the dimensions. It is followed by the component of SRR, that explains F = 337.115, Sig. F = .000 ($p < 0.05$) and alone can bring (R^2 = .109) 10.9% of variance. The component of SRR followed by EAO indicates F = 30.090,

Sig. F = .000 ($p < 0.05$) and alone can bring ($R^2 = .009$) 0.9% of change in criterion. Following the component of EAO, SAA includes F = 4.366, Sig. F = .037($p < 0.05$) that alone can bring ($R^2 = .001$) 0.1% of change in criterion and it is the weakest contributor to educational adaptation. Furthermore, adding the contribution power (R^2) of these four dimensions of EI is accounted for ($R^2 = .849$) 84.9% of variation in total in academic adjustment. This means the other three domains: SEC, SM & SS have no contribution to students' educational adaptation.

Table2b. Multiple linear (stepwise) regression (**Coefficients[a]**) to analyze the holistic as well as individual contribution of EI dimensions to Academic Adjustment among UG students (N = 500).

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		ß	Std. Error	Beta		
1	IRP	.393	.011	.855	36.716	.000
2	SRR	.135	.007	.463	18.361	.000
3	EAO	.081	.015	.231	5.485	.000
4	SAA	.041	.020	.100	2.089	.037

a. Dependent Variable: Edu Adjust

Key: Edu Adjust = Educational Adjustment, IPR = Interpersonal Relationship, SRR = Self Regulations and Responsibility, EAO = Empathy and Acceptance of others, & SAA = Self-awareness and Appraisal

The unstandardized coefficients (ß) in Table- 2b indicate to what degree the dependent variable varies with an independent variable when all other independent variables are held constant. It confirms that for each one unit increase in IPR (ß = .393), there is an increase of .393 unit score in academic adjustment, for each one unit increase in SRR (ß = .135), there is an increase of 0.135 unit score in academic adjustment, for each one unit decrease in EAO (ß = .081), there is an increase of .081unit score in criterion variable, and for each one unit increase in SAA (ß = .041), there is an increase of .041unit score in academic adjustment of students.

The standardized (B) coefficients reveals that IPR predicts educational adjustment the most favorably with a value of B= .855, t = 36.716, Sig = .000 and found to be the strongest predictor among other domains of EI. This was followed by SRR, which contributes to educational adjustment positively with a value of B = .463, t = 18.361, Sig = 0.000. Following the SRR, the EAO predicts educational adjustment positively with a value of B = .231, t = 5.485, Sig = .000. Followed by EAO, the SAA also predicts educational adjustment positively with a value of B= .100, t = 2.089, Sig = .037 and found to be the weakest positive predictor among other dimensions of EI. Further, the calculated probability (Sig.) of IPR = .000, SRR = .000, EAO = .000, and SAA = .037 are found to be statistically significant as they are less than their critical probability (P) .05. Hence, the null hypothesis (H0)-2 is rejected favouring that only four dimensions: IPR, SRR, EAO and SAA of EI significantly contribute to educational adjustment individually while other three: SEC, SM, and SS do not.

The second null hypothesis stated that emotional intelligence dimensions would not significantly predict educational adjustment among second-year undergraduate students. The result of stepwise multiple regression rejected the null hypothesis and showed that emotional intelligence four dimensions of EI significantly predict educational adjustment individually. The findings revealed that interpersonal relationships, self-regulation, empathy, and self-awareness are significant predictors of educational adjustment. Among these, interpersonal relationships emerged as the strongest predictor, indicating that students who maintain better social interactions and relationships adjust more effectively in academic settings.

This result is supported by the theoretical work of Daniel Goleman, who emphasized that social competence and emotional regulation are key components of successful adaptation in personal and academic life. Similarly, John

D. Mayer and Peter Salovey highlighted that the ability to understand and manage emotions in oneself and others contributes to better decision-making and adjustment.

Empirical findings by J. N. Igbo and A. M. Chukwu also support that emotional intelligence dimensions significantly predict academic and social adjustment. Further, studies by H. Zhoc found that emotional regulation and social awareness are strongly linked with better learning adaptation.

Based on all these results, it is summarized and noted that there is the significant mean difference between high and low EI students on the measure of their educational adjustment among second year UG students in the state of Odisha. The components of EI: Interpersonal Relationships, Self Regulation and Responsibility, Empathy and acceptance of others, and Self Awareness and Appraisal independently and significantly predict educational adjustment among second year UG students in the state of Odisha.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study explain that the difference between high and low EI students on the measure of their educational adjustment is significant among second year UG students in the state of Odisha. Four components of EI such as Interpersonal Relationships, Self Regulation and Responsibility, Empathy and acceptance of others and Self Awareness and Appraisal significantly independently predicts educational adjustment among second year undergraduate students. Of these components, Interpersonal Relationships was found as the strongest predictor while Self Awareness and Appraisal significantly was found to be the weakest one. This means the student whose relationship with faculties of college or university is so sound, he is so healthy in adapting to education. Furthermore, considering only these components predicting power all together, it is concluded that the dimensions of EI individually predict academic adjustment while the rest three domains of EI: self-esteem and confidence, self motivation, and social skills do not have any predicting role in educational adjustment among second year undergraduate students in the State of Odisha.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a cross sectional design was employed in this study, it is suggested that future studies should employ longitudinal designs to establish causal directionality more accurately. Secondly, with reference to the findings, it is recommended that; as the levels of EI have the power of influence on educational adjustment, the administrators of colleges and universities should include measure of EI as one of the criteria even for second year students so that they can easily handle the academic challenges and pressures which they face during their course. Lastly, since students' adjustment levels can fluctuate throughout their academic journey, and because components such as interpersonal relationships have been identified as the independent, significant, and strongest contributor to students' educational adaptation, proactive measures from counselors and administrators are required to maintain student well-being, academic adjustment, and success. College and university counselors should employ targeted interventions including social-emotional learning, peer support systems, and safe environments. Similarly, administrators should prioritize policy and infrastructure, which include comprehensive orientation, social facilities, task management, safety policies, and critical assistance.

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