Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Stress Levels among Graduates

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Abstract- This research aims to investigate the connection between emotional intelligence (EI) and stress levels in people by analyzing if greater emotional intelligence leads to reduced perceived stress. A group of 170 participants was evaluated using standardized assessments of emotional intelligence and perceived stress, namely the Emotional Intelligence Scale and Perceived Stress Scale. Statistical analysis showed a moderate negative correlation between emotional intelligence and stress levels (r = -0.52), suggesting that people with greater EI generally experience less perceived stress. Additionally, a straightforward linear regression analysis indicated that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of stress levels, with an R² value of 0.2736, implying that roughly 27% of the variation in stress levels can be accounted for by emotional intelligence scores. These findings highlight the significance of cultivating emotional intelligence as a possible shield against stress. The research provides important insights for educational curricula, workplace strategies, and mental health programs aimed at boosting emotional resilience and minimizing the negative impacts of stress.

Keywords- Emotional intelligence, stress levels, perceived stress.

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly unpredictable and demanding environment, stress has become a common yet overwhelming part of daily life, especially for young adults grappling with academic pressure, career demands, interpersonal challenges, and personal expectations. Emotional Intelligence (EI), defined as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and effectively use emotions in oneself and others, plays a crucial role in helping individuals manage stress. Popularized by Daniel Goleman and further conceptualized by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, EI encompasses key components such as selfawareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These emotional and cognitive abilities enable individuals to recognize emotional triggers, apply adaptive coping mechanisms, and maintain emotional balance in difficult situations.

Stress, on the other hand, is a psychological and physiological response to perceived challenges or threats, and it can be short-term (acute) or longlasting (chronic). Theories like Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping emphasize the importance of cognitive appraisal and coping resources, while Hans Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) outlines the body's biological response to prolonged stress. Emotional intelligence is believed to influence both how stress is appraised and the coping strategies employed, making it a key factor in stress management. Empirical research supports a strong inverse relationship between EI and stress levelsindividuals with higher EI report lower stress, greater emotional resilience, and better psychological wellbeing. This growing body of evidence underscores the significance of EI as a protective factor and highlights its potential for enhancing mental health through targeted interventions and emotional learning.

II. METHODOLOGY

Aim

The aim of the present study is to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress levels among graduates aged 21-30.

Objectives

- 1. To see if a relationship exists between emotional intelligence and stress levels among graduates.
- 2. To see if emotional intelligence is a predictor of stress levels among graduates.

Hypotheses

1. There would be a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and stress levels among graduates.

2. Emotional intelligence would be a significant

predictor of stress levels among graduates.

Research Design

The present study uses a correlational research design for the purpose of investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress levels. The aim is to establish this relationship and also see if emotional intelligence is a predictor of stress levels. To comprehend the research gaps in the previous and current literature, an exhaustive literature assessment was conducted. For the purpose of this research, snowball sampling was used to gather the said data.

Sample

This particular study has a sample of graduates from the age of 21-30 that will be taken to answer the questions and fill the questionnaire in accordance with their emotional intelligence and stress levels. Snowball sampling was done in this particular study. The total number of subjects was 170.

Description of Tools

The data in this particular study was obtained with the help of Emotional Intelligence Scale and Perceived Stress Scale.

Procedure for Data Collection

For collecting the data, 33 items of the Emotional Intelligence Scale, 10 items of the Perceived Stress Scale, and a demographic form have been used. In order to reach out to individuals from the age of 21 to 30 from various domains, questionnaires were administered in the message box as well as various places to volunteer. They were asked to participate after the explanation of the purpose of the study as well and they were given a set of questionnaires with the inclusion of an explanation about the study, issues related to confidentiality, the contact information of the researcher who is studying the topic, and scales for this study.

Statistical Analysis

Pearson's Correlation was used to measure the strength of the relationship between interpersonal communication and job satisfaction. Linear regression was then used to see if emotional intelligence is a predictor of stress levels. Therefore, inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and linear regression) were used.

III. RESULT

Table 1: Correlation between emotional intelligenceand stress levels

	Total	Correlation
	average	
Emotional	659.33	
Intelligence		
Stress Levels	326.4	-0.5230852695

The correlation coefficient between Emotional Intelligence and Stress Levels is -0.5230852695. This negative value suggests a negative correlation.

Table 2: Linear regression with EI as a predictor variable and stress levels as a predicting variable among graduates.

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.523085
R Square	0.273618
Adjusted R Square	0.269294
Standard Error	6.761953
Observations	170

The two variables have a moderately linear relationship, as indicated by the Multiple R value of 0.523. About 27.36% of the variation in stress levels may be accounted for by EI, according to the R Square (0.2736), indicating a significant but not exclusive contribution.



Scatterplot for Emotional Intelligence and Stress Levels

IV. DISCUSSION

The present study aims to explore is to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress levels among graduates aged 21-30. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a critical component of stress management since it influences how people view, interpret, and react to emotionally taxing circumstances. Higher EI people are typically more self-aware, more skilled at controlling their emotions, and more empathetic toward others, all of which support more constructive coping mechanisms in times of stress. On the other hand, people with lower EI could find it difficult to control their emotions, which could result in increased stress and unhelpful reactions. Emotionally intelligent people are better able to handle the stresses that are frequently encountered in social, professional, and academic settings, according to the inverse association between EI and stress. Therefore, crucial strategies are recommended to assist students in dealing with academic stress.

Leveraging contemporary psychological theories and empirical evidence indicating that emotionally intelligent individuals are more adept at coping with stress, this study examined whether this correlation is genuine within a graduate student population. The findings indicated a moderate negative correlation (r = -0.52) between Emotional Intelligence and Stress Levels. This finding indicates that with higher EI, levels of stress are likely to diminish. The dynamics and direction of this relationship align with previous studies, which have shown that individuals with elevated EI tend to be more skilled at identifying, comprehending, and managing their emotions, ultimately enabling them to handle stress more effectively. The regression assessment also confirmed this connection. The regression equation indicates that for every one-unit increase in EI, there is an estimated 1.31 unit reduction in stress levels. The R-squared value of 0.2736 indicates that approximately 27.36% of the variation in stress ranges can be accounted for solely by Emotional Intelligence. Although this effect is reasonable, it holds statistical significance, indicating that EI is a strong predictor of stress levels in graduates. The Adjusted R-squared (0.2693) reinforces this understanding, indicating that the mannequin maintains its relevance despite considering the diverse range of predictors employed. The standard error of 6.76 implies a moderate level of predictive precision, showing that the accurate stress rankings differ, on average, by approximately 6.76 devices from the figures anticipated using the regression model. With a sample size of one hundred seventy graduates, these effects enhance realistic statistical power, increasing the reliability of the results.

The scatterplot visualization further supports the statistical findings, showing a decreasing trend between EI and stress. Although the data points are somewhat spread out, the downward slope of the trendline is clear, indicating the inverse relationship found in both the correlation and regression analyses. At a conceptual level, the results correspond well with established theories of Emotional Intelligence. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend

to have enhanced emotional awareness and improved coping mechanisms, allowing them to navigate academic, personal, and professional stresses more efficiently. Graduates with lower emotional intelligence may also struggle more with managing emotions and stress, resulting in experiencing heightened levels of stress. In spite of these significant results, it is important to clearly understand the limits of the research. The R-squared value is significant, but it shows that more than 70% of the variation in stress levels is not accounted for by EI alone. This indicates the existence of additional contributing factors, including personality traits, social support systems, environmental stressors, and coping strategies, which have not been thoroughly investigated in recent studies. Moreover, since the study was cross-sectional and relied on self-reported information, it is prone to biases and does not support causal conclusions. In summary, this research offers empirical guidance for a moderate, negative correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Stress Levels in graduates. The results emphasize the achievable benefit of EI as a safeguard against stress and highlight the importance of enhancing emotional skills as part of graduate wellness programs.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summary, the results of this study emphasize the important impact that Emotional Intelligence (EI) has on controlling stress levels in graduates. The purpose of this study was to investigate and determine a definitive connection between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and stress levels in graduates, as well as to analyze if EI can act as a predictor of experienced stress. To assess the two psychological constructs, standardized measures were utilized - the Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). An inverse connection was noted between EI and stress levels found through data analysis, with a negative correlation coefficient of -0.523. This highlights the notion that people with greater emotional intelligence are more capable of managing stressful scenarios due to improved self-awareness, emotional control, and efficient coping strategies. These results underscore the significance of developing EI skills as a component of mental health and wellness programs, particularly in educational and early career contexts. Enhancing emotional skills can foster resilience and lessen the effects of stress, ultimately contributing to better psychological

outcomes for young adults facing transitional phases in life.

The research concludes with empirical findings indicating a moderate negative connection between EI and stress, with both correlation and regression analyses validating the proposed relationship. The opposite relationship of this correlation, combined with the proportion of variability in stress levels accounted for by EI scores, highlights the interrelatedness of these two concepts. From both psychological and educational perspectives, this connection is important, as it highlights the potential of Emotional Intelligence to serve as a protective factor against stress in young adults. Future studies might explore the fundamental mechanisms behind this connection, including possible mediators such as coping strategies or resilience, and moderators like gender, academic stress, or social support. Grasping the EI-stress relationship can be crucial in developing efficient emotional skills training and stress-reduction programs focused on improving the mental health and performance of graduates.