# Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students in Kilifi County, Kenya: A Correlational Study

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**Abstract:** *Poor academic performance in public examinations among secondary school students in Kenya, has been attributed to environmental factors. The main objective of this study was to establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among public secondary school students in Kilifi County. Correlational research design was adopted. The target population was year 2018 form four students in public secondary schools in Kilifi County. Purposive, simple random and cluster sampling procedures were used in the selection of schools and students. The study sample size was 271, comprised of 145 girls and 126 boys. Data was collected using adapted Schutte Self-Report Emotional intelligence Test. Students' academic achievements data was obtained from mean scores of end of second term examination results. Data analysis was done using both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. There was a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of the participants. Emotional intelligence domains were shown to relate significantly to academic achievement of the students. The study recommended that teachers, educators and stake holders in education should work together in enabling development of emotional intelligence of the students to enhance academic achievement. Curriculum developers should also consider incorporating emotional intelligence skills to the curriculum.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional intelligence, Inter personal and Intrapersonal relationship, Academic achievement*

## 1. Introduction

Extensive research has been conducted on variables predictive of academic performance. Many parties have been concerned with the study of these variables among students in learning institutions starting from as low as pre-school to as high as university level. Researchers (Kudari, 2016; Srinivas, & Venkatkrishna, 2016) ; Siringi 2011) who have sought to discover factors associated with academic performance have examined a range of variables such as , social behavior, students' IQ, socio economic status, academic self –concept, motivation, learning strategies, peer-relationship, teacher-student relationship, parental involvement, reduced community support, mismanagement and widespread teachers and students' absenteeism, indiscipline factors and personality as some of the factors leading to poor performance in most schools. Although research on social behavior focuses heavily on environmental factors related to achievement, some investigators have chosen the personality of an individual as a target study. They have submitted that the way and manner an individual perceives himself or herself could affect their academic performance. Other researchers (Maina, 2010; Kudari, 2016; Srinivas, & Venkatkrishna, 2016) argue that underachievers, when compared to their more academically successful peers, are overwhelmed by a range of personal deficits. They are highly anxious, self-derogatory, likely to act defensively in the face of authority; tend to feel rejected, and set unrealistic goals for themselves. Availability of resources and school-related factors has also been associated with poor academic performance among students (Maganga, 2016).

Today, standards of intelligence are still commonly applied to cognitive achievement. The misconception that IQ alone is the predictor of success is still very real. Cherry (2018) noted that it has been previously suggested that IQ is the most important determinant of success in Life; whilst this is not true, emotional intelligence has

nevertheless been related to success. Emerging studies however, are revealing the reality that IQ alone is not a reliable predictor of students' academic achievement. IQ contributes only 20% of academic and success in life (Ghaonta & Kumar, 2014; Goleman, 2009). May be that is why a person with high IQ might still struggle to do 'well'; what then accounts for the other 80%? Goleman (2011) argued that life success is influenced more by an individual's ability to engage the aspects of emotional intelligence. Additionally, Ghaonta & Kumar (2014) contended that IQ alone is inadequate to guarantee success; in fact there is need for emotional intelligence since it is a basic element in scientific and practical life of an individual. Previously most studies have focused on cognitive intelligence and overlooked non-cognitive aspects, most significantly of which are the emotional aspects. Moreover, some of the recent changes occurring in education and assessment practices may increase the importance of non-cognitive qualities, including EI. These observations, have led to realization that individuals from changing inhabitants may require more than intellectual abilities to exist and thrive academically.

A substantial body of research globally suggests that emotional intelligence provides the basis for various competencies (Anyiro, 2012; Cherniss, 2010; Li, Wei Ting & Wang, 2012; Mwangi, 2012; Nzomo, 2013). In academic settings, emotional intelligence has been positively correlated with student academic performance such as Grade Point Average (GPA) (Kracher, 2009 & Packer, 2009). Azhar, Chew, Faezah, Hassan and Md Zain (2013) asserted that emotional intelligence of a student can help him or her to learn better and perform well academically, citing their possession of interpersonal, intrapersonal and communication skills. According to MacCann (2019) students with high emotional intelligence may be better able to manage negative emotions, such as anxiety, boredom and disappointment that can negatively affect academic performance. These students may manage the social world around them, forming better relationships with teachers, peers, family, all of which are important to academic success. The skills required for emotional intelligence, such as understanding human motivation and emotion, may overlap with the skills required to master certain subjects, such as history and language, giving students an advantage in those subject areas. Further, students pay attention to, use, understand, and manage emotions, and these skills serve adaptive functions that potentially benefit themselves and others. Additionally, high EI helps maintain a state of harmony in oneself and one becomes more self-confident in dealing with the challenges of living and learning in educational institutions. The student also shows cooperative behavior and is regarded as prosocial, less antagonistic and less conflictual at school. Brackett (2011) also affirmed that students who are emotionally intelligent are perceived by their peers and colleagues as friendly and non-antagonistic. MacCann, (2019) therefore, asserted that it is not enough to be smart and hardworking – to have

the added edge for success, students must also be able to understand and manage emotions to succeed at school. Conversely, students with low emotional intelligence may find failure more difficult to deal with, which undermines their academic motivation. Teachers, parents and students should therefore focus on student's emotional skills not just for student's well-being, but for their ability to succeed academically.

Regrettably, young people are unable to cope well in their personal and social lives, in school, since there is a missing critical piece in education to build a holistic and healthy student with well-developed emotional skills. Therefore, many students become less connected to school and this negatively affects their academic performance, behavior and health (Chew, Hassan & Zain, 2013).This could apply to many students in many countries today. In Kenya, education is considered the most important instrument for change and national development (Nzomo, 2013). Success in education is measured in terms of academic performance. However, there is an agonizing and persistent problem of poor performance of students in both Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) and Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE). KCPE is the public examination in primary school level done by class eight pupils who are finishing the primary school cycle, while KCSE is the examination in secondary school level done by form four candidates who are finishing the secondary school cycle. The KCSE examination, acts as a guard of entry to higher institutions of learning, certification, and selecting students during the choice of careers as well as entry into job market. Kilifi County is among the Counties in Kenya where many candidates have attained poor grades in KCSE.

Records on academic performance in Kilifi County public secondary schools , for instance, shows that candidates have attained, a mean grade of D+ in the years 2013, 2014 and 2015 and D Plain in 2016. (County Education Office, 2016).This skewed performance of KCSE in Kilifi is worrying and has led to frustrations and inability to gain admission into tertiary institutions. For diploma course admission a candidate need to attain at least an average grade of C- while for a degree course admission in the university one requires a mean grade of C+ and above. It is therefore clear, in light of the mean scores indicated above, that few students in Kilifi County get a chance to further their education. Consequently, this has led to relatively low level of education in the county, reduced skilled manpower, thus less productivity and slow economic growth in the county. Why do students perform poorly in Kilifi County? Could it be that they lack emotional intelligence? In spite of numerous efforts made by researchers (Karuke, 2012; Otanga, 2016) educators and policy makers in tackling this problem, academic performance of secondary school students remain unsatisfying.

It is for this reason that the researcher realized a great need to design a study to establish the relationship

between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among secondary school students in Kilifi County, Kenya.

## 1.1. Conceptual Framework
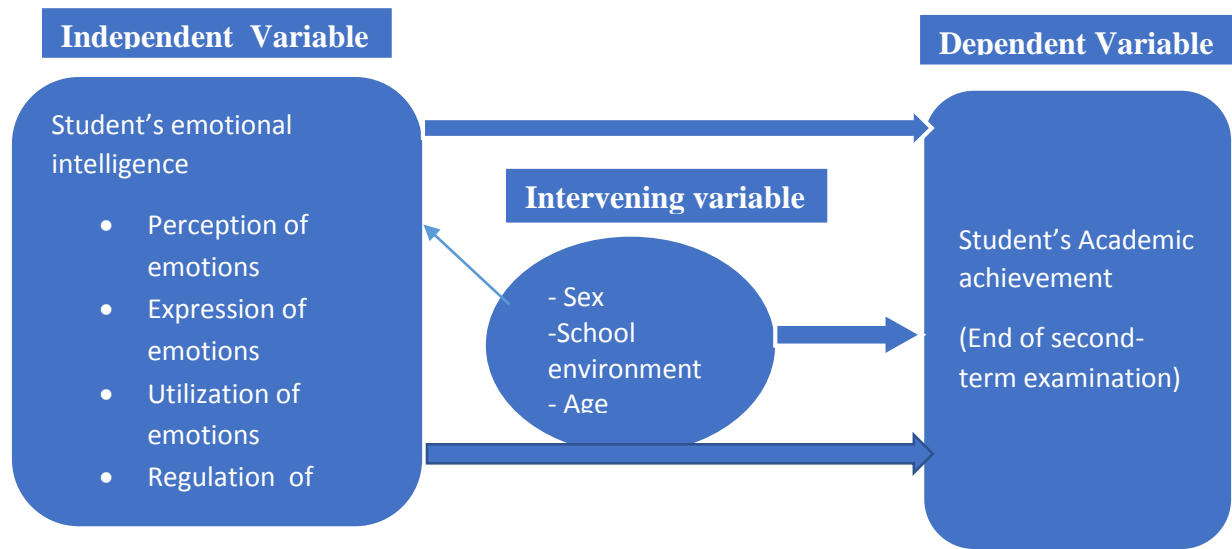


KEY

Shows the correlation direction
Figure 1: Conceptual Frameworks

The conceptual framework shows the study variables were; emotional intelligence, and academic achievement. The anticipated correlation between these variables was also shown where a student's academic achievement might be influenced by their level of emotional intelligence. A student with high emotional intelligence is likely to have high emotional coping skills; this student is likely to be a high academic achiever. On the other hand, a student with low emotional intelligence is likely to have poor emotional coping skills, as a result may be a low academic achiever. Sex, age as well as school environment is likely to influences the relationship between the variables.

# 2. Literature Review

The challenges of educating today's high school students is increasing and it has become necessary to look beyond mere cognitive abilities and knowledge acquisition and find other ways to reach the teenage heart and mind. One such way of reaching students is through the effective domain or what has come to be known as emotional intelligence (EI). Moreover, some of the recent changes occurring in education and assessment practices may increase the importance of non-cognitive qualities, including EI. The concept of emotional intelligence was

popularized through Gardner's publication of his theory of multiple intelligences. Madhavi, and Vijayalaxmi (2010) maintained that Emotional Intelligence (EI) is one's ability to perceive emotions, integrate emotions, understand emotions and regulate emotions in promoting personal growth. Emotional intelligence is a confluence of developed abilities to (1) know and value self (2) build and maintain a variety of strong, productive and health relationships (3) get along and work well with others in achieving positive results; (4) and effectively deal with the pressures and demands of daily life and work. Several studies indicate that EI can be developed and refined in educational context and that the investments in EI trainings can turn to be beneficial both at an individual and society levels; however, for this to happen, individuals must be personally motivated, practice extensively what they learn, receive feedback, and reinforce their new skills. (Ruiz-Aranda, Castillo, Salguero, Cabello, Fernández-Berrocal, & Balluerka 2012; Castillo, R., Salguero, J. M., Fernández-Berrocal, P., & Balluerka 2013). Cote (2014) further stated that EI plays an important role in individuals' success in life; it facilitates our capacity for resilience, motivation, empathy, reasoning, stress management, communication, and our ability to read and navigate a plethora of social situations

and conflicts. EI matters and if cultivated affords one the opportunity to realize a more fulfilled life.

Numerous research has shown evidence that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in various settings such as health, administration and education (Anyiro, 2012; Cherniss, 2010; Li, Wei Ting & Wang, 2012; Mwangi, 2012;Nzomo, 2013; Oromo 2015). The findings of most reviewed literature indicate that emotional intelligence can help a student learn better and perform academically (Banat, 2018; Chew, 2013: Ghaonta & Kumar, 2014; MacCann, 2019 Saba, Sana & Hina, 2017). Further, studies have shown connections between higher levels of emotional intelligence and better academic performance in adolescent students. (Amaratunge, Jayawardane, Senanayake, Senarath, Silva & Wijekoon, 2016; Nwadinigwe and Azuka, 2012; Brouzos, Misailidi& Hadjimattheou, 2014). Interestingly, EI is strongly correlated with individual advancement and performance, with evidence suggesting a significant link between one's resilience and one's motivation to achieve (Magnano, Craparo & Paolillo, 2016).

A study by Ramana & Devi (2018) reported a positive relationship in a study on relationship between EI and academic achievement among intermediate students. The positive correlation indicated that emotional intelligence could significantly predict academic achievement of intermediate students. As students gain understanding of emotions their performance in academics also increases. Similar results were reported in a study of Suleman , Hussain , Syed , Parveen R, Lodhi & Mahmood (2019) on association between emotional intelligence and academic success among undergraduates. The findings showed a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic success among undergraduate students. This clearly indicated that if a student is emotionally intelligent, his academic performance will be excellent. Implication is that emotional intelligence is directly related to academic success and the higher emotional intelligence, the higher will be the academic success and vice versa. The study concluded with an assumption that for better academic performance, students' emotional intelligence should be enhanced.

Gwalior and Pradesh, (2013) investigated the role of emotional intelligence on academic achievement on students in India. The findings of the study revealed that academic achievement without emotional intelligence does not indicate future success. The study showed that absence of emotional intelligence indicated a weak personality and that ability to build relations at working place as well as in schools is highly important for quality education. The findings supported Low and Nelson (2006) who observed that EI is crucial to a student's school success and that students with emotional intelligence skills are better able to cope with demanding and complex school experience. Agundokun & Adeyemo (2010) further stated that emotional intelligence enhances development of abilities to know and value self, build and maintain a variety of strong, productive and healthy relationships and to also get along and work well with others in achieving positive results. This ability helps students to be in control so as to adjust in the school environment. Consequently, Collins, Welsh & Furman (2009) noted that it is necessary for students to strive to be in charge of their sentiments. This creates psychological turbulence as these students adjust in their new found academic social environments. Consequently, Collins et al. (2009), observed that emotional intelligence is a critical competency for understanding students' experiences and should therefore be included in the curriculum in all learning levels. This was supported by MacCann (2019) who suggested that programs that integrate emotional skill development into the existing curriculum would be beneficial, as research suggests that training works better when run by teachers rather than external specialists. Increasing skills for everyone, not just those with low emotional intelligence, would benefit everyone."

However, some studies (Arul 2013; Bastin, Burns, & Nettlebeck 2005; Walsh-Portillo, 2011) have shown no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. For instance, Walsh-Portillo (2011) maintained, higher levels of emotional intelligence may not always translate to excellence in academic performance. This was supported by Arul (2013) who conducted a study with an objective of finding out the significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of high school students with reference to the background variables in Kanyakumari District in India.

The area of emotional intelligence is gradually growing, in exhaustive reviewed literature showed mixed results which warrant more research. Considering this, there was, a great need to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement in the particular context of Kenyan to add more information in the existing literature. In addition, most of the studies have been carried out on students in university levels and therefore a need to investigate a relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among secondary school students in Kenya. This empirical study therefore, sought to find out whether academic achievement is related to emotional intelligence levels of high school students in Kilifi County in Kenya.

# 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design
Correlational research design was used in this study. The design was used to establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. According to Jackson, (2014) correlational designs allow researchers to describe the relationship between two measured variables.

**3.2 Study participants**
The study target was extra county secondary school whose total population is 2120. The study sampled 13% equivalent to 271 participants of the population which was comprised of 145 girls and 126 boys. According to Gorard (2001), a sample size above 10 percent is considered appropriate.

**3.3 Research instruments**
Data was collected using two instruments namely; Emotional intelligence scale and document analysis.

**3.4 Data collection procedure**
The researcher presented the research permit to the administration of the sampled schools, then familiarized with the school and established time for administration of the instruments. The researcher then sought consent from the students to administer the research tools. The identified participants were given instructions on the completion of emotional intelligence scale. The researcher made effort to clarify some of the terms in the tools to make them clear for the respondents. The researcher then collected the instruments immediately after the participants filled them in. The response rate was 100%. The data on the students' academic achievement was finally obtained from the school examination records of term two of year 2018.

**3.5 Data analysis**
Quantitative data which was obtained from the scale was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical. Descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendency and percentages were used to describe sample characteristics and was presented frequency tables. Inferential statistical procedures specifically Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression were used to test each hypothesis at $\alpha=0.05$.

# 4. Results and discussion

Results were analyzed in line with the study objectives.

**Overall Emotional intelligence**

*Table 1: Overall emotional Intelligence of the participants by sex*

|  |  | Sex |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Levels | Scores | Male | Female | Total |
| Low | 36-80 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Average | 81-125 | 94 | 125 | 219 |
| High | 126-180 | 26 | 20 | 46 |
| Mean |  | 125.07 | 122.52 | 123.71 |
| Std. Dev |  | 13.59 | 10.75 | 12.20 |

n=271

Table 1 provides a profile of the emotional intelligence levels of the students. Majority of the participants 219 (80.8%) rated themselves within the average category of emotional intelligence while 46 (16.97%) of the participants self-rated as high in emotional intelligence levels. Further the results provide that only 5 (1.84%) participants in this study rated themselves low in their overall emotional intelligence level. Considering that the participants were all form four students who had gone through the three years, had therefore been exposed to more experiences in high school life. This implied that emotional development and experience is enhanced by more years spent at school and increase in age. Cote (2014) asserted that emotional intelligence can be learnt and developed, possibly this explains how students develop their emotional intelligence as their experience in high school increases. The findings of this study supported the findings of Nara (2014) who ascertained that emotional intelligence is affected by experience. Further, these findings supported the results by Makewa and Ngila (2016) who revealed that form four students rated the highest in their emotional intelligence levels while compared to form three, two and one students in a study on emotional intelligence and self-discipline showing that emotional intelligence develops with the increase of experience and advancement of age.

The findings further show that emotional intelligence mean score by sex gave the levels for males as m= 125.08 and female participants as m= 122.52. The male participants in this study had a slightly higher level of mean score on emotional intelligence than females. Additionally, in terms of standard deviation the distribution of male participants was more spread

compared to that of the female participants. This is because the standard deviation of boys (13.59) was higher than that of girls (10.75). These differences may be attributable to both social and biological factors; males and females are socialized differently (Meshkat & Nejati 2017). Further, Saba, Sana & Hima (2017), affirmed that the popular belief is that women are not more emotionally intelligent than men; they are however emotionally intelligent in different ways. Additionally Mashall (2010) asserted that though, the construct of emotional intelligence includes the word emotional, it is not a female issue. This study confirms these statements as the male rated higher in levels of emotional intelligence than females.

While some studies have confirmed the findings of the current study, others expose contradicting results. The findings of a study by Ahmad, Baghash, and Khan (2009), revealed significant differences in emotional intelligence means between males and females in favor of males. Additionally, Saba, Sana & Hima (2017), in a study among medical students, revealed significant difference between male and female on emotional intelligence showing that male students had higher score than females. The findings challenged those by Naghavi & Rezuan, (2011) who stated that women have higher emotional intelligence than men. Moreover, the findings disagreed with those of a study by Nara (2014) on emotional intelligence of secondary school students which revealed that male and female differ in levels of emotional intelligence in favor of female students. Further, the study findings opposed the findings of Oromo (2015), who revealed that female participants appeared to have higher

emotional intelligence levels than male thus, concluded that male and female possessed different emotional abilities. Meshkat and Nejati (2017) reported no significant difference between males and females on total score measuring EI. This is in line with a study carried out in Myanmar, where no significant difference was found between emotional intelligence scores of male and female teachers (Myint & Aung, 2016). However, female students scored higher than males on self-awareness, interpersonal relationship, self-regard and empathy. Chandra, Gayatri & Devi (2017) in a study among medical students in Tamil Nadu, India found females had higher mean in emotional intelligence than males. Moreover, females in Sri Lankan medical school had higher mean EI scores than males (Ranasinghe, Wathurapatha, Mathangasinghe & Ponnamperuma, 2017). A study by Dhani and Sharma (2017) equally found a significance differences in EI scores where female scored higher than male respondents.

**Relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.**

The study aimed to establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. First a correlation analysis was done to test whether the interrelation of EI domains would lead to a difference in academic achievement. The four domains were perception of emotions, expression of emotions, and regulation of emotions and utilization of emotions. The results are presented in a correlation matrix in Table 2

**Table 2:** *Intercorrelation Matrix of the domains of emotional intelligence and academic achievement*

| | | AA | POE | EOE | ROE | UOE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AA** | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig (2 tailed) | 1 | | | | |
| **POE** | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig (2 tailed) | .635*<br>.000 | 1 | | | |
| **EOE** | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig (2 tailed) | .676*<br>.000 | .589*<br>.000 | 1 | | |
| **ROE** | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig (2 tailed) | .520*<br>.000 | .541*<br>.000 | .651*<br>.000 | 1 | |
| **UOE** | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig (2 tailed) | .548*<br>.000 | .595*<br>.000 | .567*<br>.000 | .653*<br>.000 | 1 |

n= 271                    $* p<0.05$

Key:   POE -Perception of Emotions        EOE -Expression of Emotions ROE- Regulation of Emotions
 UOE- Utilization of Emotions AA - Academic achievement

Results from the Table 2 show that there is strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence domains and academic performance. The highest correlation was found between expression of emotions and academic achievement (r=0.676*,n=271 p< 0.05). This implied that the participants who scored highly in this domain performed better in their academics. Valente, (2012) affirmed that emotions that students experience and express in the classroom are associated with learning and academic progress for cognitive, motivational and interpersonal reasons. This was followed by a relationship between perception of emotions and academic achievement (r= 0.635*,n= 271 p< 0.05). This indicated that the higher the students ability to perceive their emotions the higher their academic achievement. Zeider (2003) noted that perception and expression of emotions are the first abilities to develop in early childhood period that means that individual's ability to perceive and express their emotions is higher than it is in utilization and regulation which develop later. Further, Cote (2014) asserted that students' ability to perceive and express their emotions enhances them to relate well with other students and so they consult with easy, this may affect their academic performance positively.

Further results revealed that there was a correlation between regulation of emotions and academic achievement (r=0.520*,n=271, p<0.05). Though this was the lowest correlation it shows that student's ability to regulate their emotions also influences their academic achievement; probably it would be because they are able to manage their emotions and are rarely involved in aggressive interactions. This boosts their interpersonal relationships and they are therefore able to consult with ease. These results are consistent with the findings of a study by Al-dadareen (2016) who did a study of emotions regulation strategies as predictors of academic achievement among university students in Jordan. The findings revealed that there was a significant joint effect and relative effect on academic achievement. Such that those students who employed strategies in regulating their emotions performed better in their academics.

From the results it is also evident that regulation of emotion and utilization of emotion appeared more significant among other domains of EI (r=0.653*,n= 271, p<0.05). This implied that the higher the participants ability to regulate their emotions the higher their ability to utilize their emotions in decision making, problem solving and even interpersonal communications. This was followed by the relationship between expression of emotions and regulation of emotion (r=0.651*, n= 271 p<0.05). This implied that the participants who are able to vent their emotions are able to prevent, reduce enhance and modify their emotional response and that of others. The lowest that was found among the domains interrelationship was between perception of emotions and regulation of emotions (r=.541*,n=271 p<0.05). This had an implication that the participants' ability to identify an emotion enhances their ability to modify and manage the responses of themselves and those of others.

The relationship between overall emotional intelligence and academic achievement was tested. Results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: R*elationship between overall emotional intelligence and academic achievement of the students***

|  |  | Academic Achievement | Emotional Intelligence |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Academic Achievement** | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .672* |
|  | Sig (2-tailed) |  | .000 |
| **Emotional Intelligence** | Pearson Correlation | .672* | 1 |
|  | Sig (2-tailed) | .000 |  |

n=271                              *Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

To test the relationship between overall emotional intelligence and academic achievement, Pearson product moment correlation was computed. Table 3 shows that there was a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance r =.672*, n=271, p< 0.05. The results gave an indication that the level of emotional intelligence increases with advancement in academic progression of the students. The results implied

that academic success does not only depend on cognitive aspects of intelligence rather it is affected by emotional abilities; such that the students high ability to perceive, express, regulate and utilize their emotions appropriately influences their academic achievement positively. Similarly, Ramana & Devi (2018) reported a positive relationship in a study on relationship between EI and academic achievement among intermediate students. This indicated that emotional intelligence could significantly predict academic achievement of intermediate students. Additionally, Suleman , Hussain , Syed , Parveen R, Lodhi & Mahmood (2019) showed a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic success among undergraduate students. The findings indicated that if a student is emotionally intelligent, his academic performance will be excellent. Emotional intelligence is directly related to academic success and the higher emotional intelligence, the higher will be the academic success and vice versa. Further, Suleman et al, (2019) concluded that it can be assumed that for better academic performance, students' emotional intelligence should be enhanced.. Low and Nelson (2006) affirmed that EI is crucial to a student's school success and that students with emotional intelligence skills are better able to cope with demanding and complex school experiences thus perform better than those with low emotional intelligence. The findings of the current study supported more studies which showed positive associations between emotional intelligence and academic achievement (Amaratunge, Jayawardane, Senanayake, Senarath, Silva & Wijekoon, 2016; Bracket, River & Salovey 2011; Nwadinigwe and Azuka, 2012; Brouzos, Misailidi & Hadjimattheou, 2014, Agundokun & Adeyemo, 2010). The findings of these studies suggested that students who are emotionally intelligent are perceived by their peers and colleagues as friendly and non-antagonistic. This improves the relationship between peers and helps in the intellectual development which leads to superior academic performance. Additionally, Brackett et al., (2011) asserted that emotionally intelligent individuals tend to lead happier and more productive lives; at school, they show better academic performance and maintain a healthy classroom atmosphere in which learning becomes easier. Consequently, low emotional intelligence of a student influences their academic achievement negatively. However, the findings of this study contradict the study findings by (O'Connor & Little, 2003; Rode, Mooney, Arthaud, Near, Ribin & Baldwin, 2007), which indicated that emotional intelligence is not an indicator of academic achievement of a student. Additionally, Walsh-Portillo (2011) maintained that higher levels of emotional intelligence may not always translate to excellence in academic performance. Further, findings by Arul (2013) revealed that there was no significant difference between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of high school students.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Evidence of the existence of a significant positive relationship between student's emotional intelligence and academic achievement was proved; showing that the higher the level of emotional intelligence the higher the students' academic achievement. Among the domains of emotional intelligence, the highest correlation was found between expression of emotions and academic achievement. The levels of emotional intelligence among different sex revealed that male in the study had a higher mean than the female in this study. Majority of the participants self-rated as average in their levels of emotional intelligence.

This study therefore recommended that learners should be exposed to the concept of emotional intelligence through incorporating emotional intelligence related topics in the guidance and counseling programs in order to help them develop their emotional intelligence skills. This can be done through training them, on their emotional perception, expression, regulation and utilization and those of others. Consequently, this will improve their intrapersonal, interpersonal relationships as well as communication skills both at school and out of school, thus increase their academic achievement.

More research is necessary to unpack whether and how emotional intelligence relates to academic achievement in both high school students and primary school pupils in other counties in the country. There is a need to conduct a comparative study on the relationship of the levels of emotional intelligence of students in boarding and day schools and their academic achievement.

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