

## **Analysis of Social Self Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence in University Students\***

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the self efficacy and emotional intelligence levels of university students. The participants were 534 (382 females and 152 males) university students. Data were collected using the Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Scale (adapted by Acar, 2001) and the Self-Efficacy Scale (adapted by Palancı, 2004). It was found that there was a positive relationship between social self-efficacy and personal awareness, interpersonal relations, stress management, general mood and adaptability scores. It was also found that personal awareness, interpersonal relations and general mood explain social self-efficacy.

**Keywords:** Social self-efficacy, emotional Intelligence, university students.

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There are a number of methods used to be successful in life. Intelligence (IQ) is essential but not enough for success. While IQ accounts for academic success, it is emotional intelligence that predicts success in life (Goleman, 1995). Intelligence is a skill that encompasses perception, defining, identifying resources and strategies, monitoring solutions and evaluation (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2000). However, some people's failure in life despite having high levels of IQ resulted in the need for redefining the notion of intelligence (Abacı, 2003). Social intelligence was introduced into the literature by Thorndike's definition of social, mechanical and abstract intelligence in 1920 (Somazo, 1990). Emotional intelligence, as a dimension of social intelligence, is defined as the ability of understanding one's own and others' feelings, expressing one's emotions, using and managing them (Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Mayer, Salovey and Caruso 2000). While academic intelligence sets forth the true criteria of human intelligence, emotional intelligence identifies the true criteria for success in life (Goleman, 1995). Emotional intelligence helps us react appropriately by getting acquainted with and evaluating our and others' emotions and reflecting on these emotions in our life (Yeşilyaprak, 2001).

The theories of Mayer, Salovey, Bar-On and Goleman tries to figure out how individuals perceive their own emotions, how they take advantage of these emotions and control them (Emmerling and Goleman, 2003). Among these, the model by Bar-On is composed of the dimensions of personal skills (emotional self-awareness, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-realization, independence), interpersonal skills (empathy, interpersonal relations, social responsibilities), adaptability (problem solving, reality criterion and flexibility), coping with stress (stress tolerance, impulse control), and general mood (happiness and optimism) (Emmerling and Goleman, 2003). When the related literature is examined, it is seen that emotional intelligence correlates with anger, psychological skills, social self-efficacy, stress and life satisfaction (Yılmaz, 2009; Rastegar & Memarpour, 2009, Andrew, Thelwell, Lowther & Devonport, 2009, Chan, 2004; Sea, Öztürk & Hamarta, 2007).

Higher IQ levels might help increase success in life, but some other factors such as social skills, emotional adaptability, motivation, control, determination, effort, and faith are essential as well (Epstein, 1998; Casper, 2001). An individual's perceptions of the properties he/she possesses might be influential in success. Human beings consider whether they possess the essential skills if they have to achieve something. The basic difference between individuals who think that they are skilful enough and those who do not is success or failure in initiating and maintaining a particular behaviour (Selçuk, 2007). This situation is referred to as social self-efficacy in social learning theory (Bandura, 1997). The competence that a person develops

through positive evaluation of his/her real-life experiences can be seen as a belief that activates self-expectation, motivation and cognitive powers (Akkök, 1999; Aysan and Harmanlı, 2003; Bilgin, 1999).

Social self-efficacy is the belief in oneself about fulfilling certain tasks that are essential for particular performance objectives (Bandura, 1997). Those people with higher levels of self-competence do not abstain from struggling and behaving decisively, and they tend to go on with the task despite problems, and therefore they become successful. On the other hand, those with lower levels of self-competence mostly experience stress, nervousness and fear of failure; they are likely to give up if they experience a problem (Bandura, 1997; Gökçakan, 2008; Çokluk Bökeoğlu and Yılmaz, 2008). When individuals perceive themselves as socially incompetent individuals, they might not be accepted by the environment. Therefore, their self-esteem levels might decrease (Bandura, 1997). On the other hand, an individual perceiving him/herself as a person with a higher level of social self-efficacy helps him/her be confident in interpersonal relations (Bilgin, 1996). The present study is to form the bases of psychological counselling and guidance activities intended to develop university students' perceptions of social self-efficacy through emotional intelligence. The purpose in this study was to analyze the social self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of university students.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

The survey model was adopted for the present study and the study sample was chosen randomly from Selcuk University (Konya, Turkey) in 2011. The participants were 534 university students (382 female, 152 male) who took part voluntarily in the research. The mean age of the participants was 20.11 with a standard deviation of 1.41.

### **Measures**

***Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I)***: The EQ-I adapted to Turkish by Acar (2001) was used for emotional intelligence measurement. EQ-I is a 88-item measure that provides an overall score of EI based on five composite scales. Cronbach Alpha coefficients were .92 for overall score and .83 for intrapersonal skills, .77 for interpersonal skills, .65 for adaptability, .73 for stress management and .75 for general mood.

**Social Self-Efficacy Scale (SES)** : The SES, developed by Smith-Betz (2000) and adapted into Turkish by Palancı (2002) was used in order to find out the students social self-efficacy levels. It was found out that Cronbach Alpha internal consistency co-efficient was .89 and for test-retest correlation co-efficient was .68 in the adaptation studies of the scale to Turkish. The Social Anxiety Scale was used for the scale dependent validity of scale as it was in the scale and the scales were negatively correlated ( $r = -.59$ ). However, the scale positively correlated with the Control Anxiety Scale ( $r = .40$ ).

**Data Analysis** The Pearson correlation coefficient technique was used to determine the correlations among the subscales of emotional intelligence and social self-efficacy. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether or not emotional intelligence predicts social self-efficacy.

## RESULTS

The relationships among social self-efficacy and 5 subscales of the emotional intelligence were analyzed by using the Pearson correlation analysis technique and the results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Correlations among Social Self-efficacy and Subscales of Emotional Intelligence

	Personal awareness	Interpersonal relations	Adaptability	Stress management	General mood
<i>Social Self- efficacy</i>	.45**	.23**	.28**	.19**	.36**

\*\*  $p < .01$

Table 1 shows that social self-efficacy is positively related to personal awareness, interpersonal relations, adaptability, stress management and general mood. Multiple regression analysis was performed to predict social self-efficacy by emotional intelligence and the results are given in Table 2.

Table 2 . The Prediction of Social Self-efficacy by Emotional Intelligence

	R	R2	df	F	$\beta$	t
Self-efficacy	.47	.22	5/533	30.14**		
Personal awareness					.43	7.08**
Interpersonal relations					-.16	-2.81**
Adaptability					-.02	-.26
Stress management					.00	-.02
<i>General mood</i>					.19	3.20**

\*\*p<.01

Table 2 shows that self-efficacy is significantly explained by the subscales of emotional intelligence ( $R = .47$ ,  $R^2 = .22$ ,  $F(5/533) = 30.14$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Five subscales of emotional intelligence significantly explained 22% of the total variance in social efficacy. According to results of a  $t$  test that was intended to determine which subscales predict social self-efficacy, it was found that personal awareness ( $t = 7.08$ ,  $\beta = .43$ ), interpersonal relations ( $t = -2.81$ ,  $\beta = -.16$ ), and general mood ( $t = 3.20$ ,  $\beta = .19$ ) were significant predictors of social self-efficacy.

## DISCUSSION

Results of the study indicated that there was a positive relationship between social self-efficacy and personal awareness, interpersonal relations, adaptability, stress management, general mood. These findings indicate that as the levels of personal awareness, interpersonal relations, adaptability, stress management and general mood increase, the level of social self-efficacy increases as well. According to Kirk & Schutte (2008), the perception of self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and positive mood are positively correlated.

According to the results of multiple regression analysis, emotional intelligence significantly accounts for the levels of personal awareness, interpersonal relations and general mood. According to Chan (2004), emotional intelligence accounts for self-efficacy levels at a significant level. Research indicates that there is a significant correlation between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence, and that

emotional intelligence significantly predicts self-efficacy levels (Penrose, Perry & Ball, 2007; Adeyemo, 2007).

The findings of such studies lend support to those of our study. When the findings of the present study are examined, it seems that there is not a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and personal awareness, interpersonal relations, general mood and social self-efficacy. According to these results, increased social self-efficacy in university students and their undertaking and fulfilling a task mean that they develop their skills. Furthermore, self-efficacy accounts for the performance at a job or task (Judge, Jackson, Shaw, Scott & Rich; 2007).

In the literature, it is suggested that efficacy is one of the factors that affect the motivation and mood of students (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003; Connolly, 1989). When the issue is considered with reference to university students who are to start their professional life after higher education, starting a new job and fulfilling a task are essential skills. This is because the final point of educational life might be higher education for some students. Therefore, they have to learn to have self-confidence, in order to be successful. It is suggested that students should be provided with activities and counselling that are intended to improve their emotional intelligence and social self-efficacy levels at universities.

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