

# Factors Associated With Emotional Intelligence In Determining The Perception Of Academic Self-Efficacy In Students Attending Formal Education

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## ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, ortaokul öğrencilerinin duygusal zeka ve akademik öz-yeterlik düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Bu araştırmanın gerçekleştirilmesinde nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden ilişkisel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Tarama modeli nicel ve nitel araştırma yaklaşımlarının birlikte kullanılabilirdiği bir modeldir. Araştırmanın kavramsal temelinde literatür taraması yapılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 2019-2020 eğitim-öğretim yılının ilk yarısında Türkiye'deki devlet okullarında öğrenim gören 216 ortaokul öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Veriler bilgisayar ortamında SPSS 18.0 for Windows programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan bu öğrenciler cinsiyetlerine göre değerlendirildiğinde 104'ü (%48.9) kız ve 112'si (51.1) erkek öğrencidir. Ortaokul öğrencilerinin duygusal zeka ve akademik öz-yeterlik düzeyleri arasında ayrı ayrı yaş değişkenine göre anlamlı bir farklılık görülmemiştir. İstatistiksel olarak kız öğrencilerin duygusal zeka düzeylerinin erkek öğrencilere göre daha yüksek olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Kız ve erkek öğrencilerin akademik öz-yeterlik algıları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunamamıştır. Ve son olarak duygusal zeka düzeyinin yüksek olmasının akademik öz-yeterlik algısını azalttığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Öz-düzenleme, duygusal zeka, akademik başarı, algı, eğitim

## Factors Associated With Emotional Intelligence In Determining The Perception Of Academic Self-Efficacy In Students Attending Formal Education

### ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of secondary education students. Relational screening model from quantitative research methods was used in this study. Literature was reviewed for the conceptual basis of the study. The study group of this study included 216 secondary education students attending formal education in state schools in Turkey country in the first term of the 2019-2020 academic year. The data collected were analyzed using SPSS 18.0 for Windows statistical software on the computer environment. When the students participating in this study were analyzed, it was seen that there was 104 female (48.9%) and 112 male (51.1%) students. The data collection tool for this study was a form consisting of Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale. Considering the variable of age, no statistically significant difference was determined between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of secondary education students. It was also concluded that high emotional intelligence level had a decreasing effect on the academic self-efficacy perception of students and female participants had higher emotional intelligence scores. It can be concluded that the emotional intelligence levels of secondary school students did not change in terms of the age variable.

**Keywords:** Self-regulation, emotional intelligence, academic success, perception, education

### 1. Introduction

The definition of intelligence has been discussed regularly and it has been studied a lot in all societies. The studies conducted so far indicated that weaknesses have been experienced in human relationships and

unhappiness have appeared accordingly. In other words, IQ is not solely adequate for achieving success and happiness. After the multiple intelligence theory developed by Gardner, the subject that has recently been studied most is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence serves as a key for us to exist in society, to have a thinking style and personal relationships. The concept of emotional intelligence was defined for the first time by psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) as the individuals' skill of coping with their feelings (Wong and Law, 2002). According to Goleman (2000), emotional intelligence indicates individuals' ability to know the feelings of themselves and others, motivating themselves, and managing their feelings in relationships well. In other words, the concept of emotional intelligence is an important and indispensable part of intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is a concept consisting of skills that can be learned and improved (Yılmaz-Karabulutlu, Yılmaz and Yurttaş, 2011, 78). Intelligence is improvable, and experiences and some other external factors affect the development of intelligence. According to Yavuz (2004), emotional intelligence is not an innate property, but it is a skill that can be developed with experiences and emotional training during childhood. In this regard, it can be said that emotional intelligence is a continuous skill in human life. In addition to this, it can be also said that emotional intelligence is a skill that can be developed with emotional management skills. In this regard, Weisinger (1998) mentioned the followings: "Emotional intelligence can be improved and developed, but it is not a property that is innately present or not. Individuals can develop their intelligence, abilities, and skills through learning and practicing on these. Sense of self, emotional management, and motivating the self are also among these skills." Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined emotional intelligence as "auto-control, effort, persistence, and ability necessary for motivating the individuals." In other words, emotional intelligence is an umbrella term including several concepts inside. Emotional intelligence of individuals will continuously renew through developing these skills.

On the other hand, the concept of self-efficacy suggested by Bandura (1997) continues to be a concept that reveals its effect on all areas. Whether individuals can fulfill a task assigned for them successfully or not can be determined through the self-efficacy perception (Bong, 1995). Because self-efficacy perception related to the possibility of fulfilling a task should be high to fulfill that specific task. Schuzlt and Schuzlt (2007) mentioned that individuals with high self-efficacy could manage the events better because their belief in their success was higher. Planning the events and management power are correlated directly with the perception of self-efficacy.

Several factors play a role on the development of self-efficacy, and experiences of individuals have the biggest effect according to the studies (Bandura, 1997; Miller, 2010; Wuebbels, 2006; Zimmerman, 2000). Individuals develop or decrease their self-efficacy perception levels due to the results they obtain from their own experiences. On the other hand, the perspectives of individuals towards their own skills should also be considered in order to increase the quality of education (Yılmaz, Gürçay and Ekici, 2007). According to Fırat Durdukoca (2010), individuals' beliefs on their self-efficacy perceptions influence their mood. In this regard, the experiences and the mutual interactions encountered in the concepts of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy brought about the question of whether there is a relationship between these two concepts or not. When the related literature was reviewed, it was seen that the concept of emotional intelligence was discussed within the framework of many variables such as socio demographical properties, critical thinking tendencies, leadership properties and scientific attitude (Dutoğlu and Tuncel, 2008; Erdoğan, 2008; Erkuş and Günlü, 2008). However, it was also seen that the number of studies conducted for determining the relationship between self-efficacy level and emotional intelligence was not adequate. Therefore, self-efficacy level of secondary education students, though not applicable for all grades, was investigated academically, and the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy level was discussed within the scope of this specific study.

Through the results to be obtained from this study, the factors affecting the self-efficacy levels of secondary education students and the level of these effects will be investigated more comprehensively. In addition to this, it is thought that the investigation of the academic dimension of emotional intelligence concept will contribute to the literature and the studies to be conducted on intelligence.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of secondary education students. In line with this general purpose, the following questions were investigated:

- Is there a significant difference between emotional intelligence levels of the secondary education students and their ages?
- Is there a significant difference between the academic self-efficacy perceptions of secondary education students and their ages?
- Is there a significant difference between the emotional intelligence levels of the secondary education students and their genders?
- Is there a significant difference between the academic self-efficacy perceptions of the secondary education students and their genders?
- Is there a relationship between academic self-efficacy perceptions and the emotional intelligence levels of secondary education students?

## 2. Research Methodology

### *Research Design*

Relational screening model from quantitative research methods was used in this study. Screening model is a research model in which both qualitative and quantitative research approaches can be used together. Literature was reviewed for the conceptual basis of the study. The literature review is the investigation, synthesis, and summary of the literature related to the research problems (Balci, 2013). Literature review plays a significant role in terms of providing a contribution to the literature.

### *Participants*

The study group of this study included 216 secondary education students attending formal education in state schools in Turkey country in the first term of the 2019-2020 academic year. When the students participating in this study research were analyzed, it was determined that the study group consisted of 104 female (48.1%) and 112 male (51.9) secondary education students. Special importance was placed on balancing the distribution of male and female students. The ages of the participants varied between 10 and 15 years old. 24 (18.3%) of the participants were at the age of 10, 28 (21.4%) participants were at the age of 11, 44 (33.6%) participants were at the age of 12, 34 (26.0%) participants were at the age of 13, and 1 (0.8%) was at the age of 15.

### *Data Collection Tools*

The data collection tool for this study was a form consisting of three sections. The first section consisted of questions related to the variables of gender and age for determining the personal information of the participants.

The second section included Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (developed by Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, and Dornheim and revised by Austin, Saklofske, Huang and McKenney, and adapted into Turkish by Tatar, Tok, and Saltukoğlu in 2011) for determining the emotional intelligence levels of the participants. The scale was a Likert-type scale and consisted of 41 articles. In this scale, 21 items (3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 34, 35, 39, 40, and 41) were scored reversely. The participants were requested to read the items correctly and mark the one that was the most suitable for them. The Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was determined to be 0.82 by Tatar, Tok, and Saltukoğlu (2011).

The third section of this form included Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (developed by Jinks and Morgan in 2003 and adapted into Turkish by Hüseyin Öncü) for collecting data regarding the self-efficacy beliefs of the participants influencing their school success. This scale was a Likert-type scale and consisted of 21 articles. In this scale, 7 items (12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18) were scored reversely. The highest score was determined as 84 and the lowest score was determined as 21 for this specific scale. The high scores obtained from this scale indicated a high belief towards academic self-efficacy perceptions of the students. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was determined to be 0.80 by Öncü (2012), and the measurement performed for the equivalence of both languages (English and Turkish) was calculated to be 0.95.

### *Data Analysis*

The data collected were analyzed using SPSS 18.0 for Windows statistical software on the computer environment. Normality test was primarily performed for analyzing the data. Subsequently, t-test was performed to investigate the emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of the secondary education students in terms of gender variable. One-way ANOVA test was performed to investigate the emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of the secondary education students in terms of age variable. Correlation analysis was performed for investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy of the students, and the Pearson correlation coefficient was determined.

## 3. Research Results

In this section, the findings obtained from the sub-problems determined for investigating the relationship between the emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of the secondary education students were presented in tables, and the findings were interpreted by categorizing under sub-titles according to the research questions. In order to determine whether the emotional intelligence levels of secondary education students changed according to their ages or not, One-way ANOVA test was applied. Table 1 represents the result of the descriptive statistics of the findings. The analysis results are represented in Table 2.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics Results of the Difference between the Emotional Intelligence Levels of Secondary Education Students in terms of Age Variable

	N	Average	Std. Deviation
10	2	2.7073	.00000
11	56	3.1781	.33195
12	88	3.0743	.49109

13	68	3.1252	.40836
15	2	2.6707	.01725
TOTAL	216	3.1101	.42761

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the age group with the highest emotional intelligence score average is 11 and the lowest age group is 15. However, considering these averages, it is also seen that the number of students in each age group is not the same. Therefore, it should be remembered that these averages may vary.

**Table 2.** Findings Related to the Difference between the Emotional Intelligence Levels of Secondary Education Students in terms of Age Variable

Variance source	s.d	Sum of squares	Sum of squares	F	P
Between Groups	1.098	4	,275	1,516	,199
Between groups	38.215	211	,336		
A TOTAL	39,313	215			

s can

be seen in Table 2, no significant difference was determined between the emotional intelligence levels of secondary education students in terms of age variable because the p-value was above 0,05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the emotional intelligence levels of secondary school students did not change in terms of the age variable. It can be also said that age variable may have influenced the results because the ages of the participants were close to each other. In order to determine whether the academic self-efficacy levels of secondary education students differ in terms of age variable, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted. The descriptive statistics results and findings are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistics Results of the Difference between Academic Self-efficacy Points of Secondary Education Students in terms of Age Variable

	N	Average	Std. Deviation
10	2	2.4286	.00000
11	56	2.5425	.39505
12	88	2.3734	.32625
13	68	2.3739	.40836
15	2	2.1905	.00000
TOTAL	216	2.4162	.37354

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that the age group with the highest average of the scores obtained from the academic self-efficacy scale is 11 and the lowest age group is 15.

**Table 4.** Findings Related to the Difference between the Academic Self-efficacy Levels of Secondary Education Students in terms of Age Variable

Variance source	s.d	Sum of squares	Sum of squares	F	P
Between Groups	,846	4	,320	2.348	,056
Between groups	29,176	211	,136		

TOTAL 30,023 215

As can be seen in Table 4, no significant difference was determined between the academic self-efficacy perceptions of secondary education students in terms of age variable because the p-value was above 0,05. Again, it can be also said that ave variable may have influenced the results because the ages of the participants were close to each other. The findings of the independent samples t-test analysis conducted for the difference between the emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of secondary education students are presented separately below.

**Table 5.** Findings Related to the Difference between the Emotional Intelligence Levels of Secondary Education Students in terms of Gender Variable

Gender	Subjects (N)	Arithmetic Mean (x)	Standard Deviation (SS)	Degree of Freedom (Sd)	T Value	Significance Level (p)
Female	104	3.1752	.32867	214	2,174	.031
Male	112	3.0497	.49627			

As can be seen in Table 5, there was a .1255 difference favor of female students in terms of the averages of male and female students obtained from the emotional intelligence scale. In order to determine whether this difference was statistically significant, a t-test was conducted by using SPSS 18.0 software and it was found to be 2.174. As the p-value was  $.031 < .05$  when calculated with a 95% confidence interval, it can be said that the difference between the emotional intelligence levels of female and male students was statistically significant. In line with this result, with a 95% confidence interval, it can be said that the emotional intelligence levels of female students were higher than male students.

**Table 6.** Findings Related to the Difference between the Academic Self-efficacy Perceptions of Secondary Education Students in terms of Gender Variable

Gender	Subjects (N)	Arithmetic Mean (x)	Standard Deviation (SS)	Degree of Freedom (Sd)	T Value	Significance Level (p)
Female	104	2.4286	.40471	214	.467	.641
Male	112	2.4048	.3435			

As can be seen in Table 6, the academic self-efficacy perception score averages of male and female students are examined, it is seen that the average of female students is 2.4286 while the average of female students is 2.4048. In order to determine whether this difference was statistically significant, a t-test was conducted by using SPSS 18.0 software and it was calculated to be .467. As the p-value was  $.641 < .05$  when calculated with a 95% confidence interval, it can be said that no statistically significant difference between the academic self-efficacy perceptions of female and male students was found. The analysis results related to the sub-problem of “Is there a significant difference between the academic self-efficacy perceptions and the emotional intelligence levels of the secondary education students?” are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Correlation Analysis Results for the Relationship between the Emotional Intelligence and Academic Self-efficacy Levels of Secondary Education Students

	Emotional intelligence	Academic self-efficacy
Emotional intelligence	r	.157

	p		.021
Academic self-efficacy	r	.157	1
	p	.021	

(N: 216)\*. The correlation is statistically significant with a 0.05 significance level.

When Table 7 is examined, as the p-value was  $.021 < .05$ , it is seen that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between the emotional intelligence levels and academic self-efficacy perception levels of secondary education students. Pearson correlation coefficient was found to be .157. In line with these analysis results, it can be said that the academic self-efficacy perception of the secondary education students increased as their emotional intelligence levels increased.

#### 4. Discussion

This study was conducted with a study group of 216 secondary education students attending state schools in Turkey country in the first term of the 2019-2020 academic year. In this study, it was aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy levels of secondary education students. The five sub-problems were investigated by using the data obtained from this study. SPSS 18.0 for Windows software was used when analyzing the data.

According to the results of this specific study, no significant difference was determined between the emotional intelligence levels of secondary education students in terms of age variable because the p-value was above 0,05. In a study conducted by Gürbüz and Yüksel (2008), a statistically significant difference was determined in the emotional intelligence of participants according to the age variable. However, this might have been caused by the fact that the age range of the participants in that study was too wide (18-41). In this study, it was predictable that there was no statistically significant difference as the age levels of secondary school students were close to each other.

According to the results of this specific study, no significant difference was determined between the academic self-efficacy perceptions of secondary education students in terms of age variable because the p-value was above 0,05. Again, it was possible to predict that there was no statistically significant difference as the age levels of secondary school students were close to each other.

According to the results of this specific study, there was a .1255 difference favor of female students in terms of the averages of male and female students obtained from the emotional intelligence scale. In order to determine whether this difference was statistically significant, a t-test was conducted by using SPSS 18.0 software and it was found to be 2.174. As the p-value was  $.031 < .05$  when calculated with a 95% confidence interval, it can be said that the difference between the emotional intelligence levels of female and male students was statistically significant. In line with this result, with a 95% confidence interval, it can be said that the emotional intelligence levels of female students were higher than male students. In a study conducted by İşmen (2001), it was determined that females obtained higher scores in total in the emotional intelligence scale than males. Similarly, in the studies conducted by Katyal, Awasthi (2005); Sevindik, Uncu and Güneş Dağ (2012), it was concluded that female participants had higher emotional intelligence scores. In an emotional intelligence scale used in a study conducted by Gürbüz and Yüksel (2008), it was determined that female workers had higher scores in interpersonal relationships, adapting to the conditions and environment, and stress management sub-dimensions among other workers. In a study conducted by Babaoğlu (2010), it was determined intelligence was associated with males, leaders, and commanders while emotion was associated with females, mothers, artists, and poets. Therefore, females were more likely to act with their emotions than males with the effects of the roles in their life. This characteristic of females was reflected in the research results, and they had higher scores in terms of emotional intelligence than males.

According to the research results, the academic self-efficacy perceptions of female and male participants were 2.4286 and 2.4048 respectively. In order to determine whether this difference was statistically significant, a t-test was conducted by using SPSS 18.0 software and it was calculated to be .467. As the p-value was  $.641 < .05$  when calculated with a 95% confidence interval, it can be said that no statistically significant difference between the academic self-efficacy perceptions of female and male students was found. When the studies related to this subject were examined, it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the academic self-efficacy perceptions of the participants in terms of gender variable (Yalmanlı and Aydın, 2014; Gerçek, Yılmaz, Köseoğlu and Soran, 2006; Akbaş and Çelikkaleli, 2006; Üstüner, Demirtaş, Cömert and Özer, 2009). The finding of those studies is in parallel with the findings of this specific study. Academic self-efficacy increases with individuals' successful experiences while it decreases because of the individual experiences with failure. In other words, whether female or male, each individual shapes his/her own academic self-efficacy. The important thing here is not the gender, it is the experiences they get.

When the related literature was reviewed, it was seen that the relationship of emotional intelligence with different variables was investigated. In a study investigating the relationship between occupational burnout and emotional intelligence (Güllüce and İşcan, 2010), it was determined that these two variables were inversely correlated. In a study conducted by Deniz and Yılmaz (2004) to investigate the relationship between

coping with stress techniques and emotional intelligence levels of undergraduate students, it was determined that there was a negative correlation between the personal skills sub-dimension and avoiding the problems sub-scale. According to the results of this specific study, as the p-value was  $.0 < .05$ , it is seen that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between the emotional intelligence levels and academic self-efficacy perception levels of secondary education students. The conclusion of these studies suggests that emotional intelligence is a factor affecting human life. In this study, the Pearson correlation coefficient was found to be .157 and the p-value was found to be  $.021 < .05$ . In other words, it was determined that there was a statistically significant relationship between the emotional intelligence levels and academic self-efficacy perceptions of participants. Nowadays, emotional properties such as being able to express emotions, empathy, independence, adaptation, being admired, solving interpersonal problems, persistence, compassion, kindness and respecting are the basic properties that individuals should have on their way to success, and it can only be achieved with a high emotional intelligence level (Doğan and Demiral; 2007). When these qualities are examined, it can be said that they can affect the academic success and academic self-efficacy perceptions of the individuals. According to Dağlı (2006) and Kavcar (2011), there is a relationship between academic success and emotional intelligence. On the other hand, one of the factors affecting the success of students in their lessons is self-efficacy level. Considering self-efficacy levels when developing curricula and organizing educational activities for helping students experience a successful learning process has significant benefits (Öncü; 2012). In a study conducted by Yalnız (2014), it was determined that there was a positive relationship between the academic self-efficacy levels and positive affection of undergraduate students. In other words, the academic self-efficacy levels of individuals with positive thinking skill have a tendency towards being high. However, the academic self-efficacy perceptions of individuals with high emotional intelligence are lower. This is closely related to critical thinking. The individuals who can think critically can use their control mechanisms more efficiently because they can make more objective evaluations. The concept of emotional intelligence does not mean being under the control of feelings, but it means managing the feelings reasonably and logically, and establishing the relationships more successfully (Somuncuoğlu; 2005). Thus, it can be said that the self-efficacy perceptions of individuals who can control their emotions are also controlled. In other words, they perceive their academic success more reasonably even it is very high.

## 5. Conclusion and Implications

In line with the results of this specific study, the following recommendations were made:

- In-class and out-of-class activities can be performed in order to develop the academic self-efficacy of the students. In these activities, it should be aimed to reinforce the students' self-confidence by achieving positive results and the experiences should be planned accordingly.
- The students should be encouraged by their teachers and parents to learn how to manage their feelings in a way that makes the utmost contribution to him/her. It may be useful to cooperate in coordination with the Guidance departments in schools if necessary.
- The awareness of others can be increased by establishing cooperation and organizing seminars for teachers, school administrators, and parents about the emotional development and academic self-efficacy of students.

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