

Research Paper

The effect of emotional intelligence and achievement goals on the motivation to progress in social studies course with regard to the mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is the effect of emotional intelligence and progress goals on the motivation to progress in social studies course, considering the mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm. The current research is applicable in terms of purpose, and descriptive-correlative in terms of nature, with the path analysis approach. The statistical population consisted of 1300 middle school students of Karbala province, 297 of whom were selected by cluster random sampling using Morgan's table. To collect research data, five standard questionnaires of emotional intelligence from Golman (2001), achievement goals from Middleton and Midgley (1998), academic self-efficacy from Morris (2001), academic enthusiasm from Fredericks et al., (2004), and achievement motivation from Hermance were used. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed, and the reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient in a preliminary study for emotional intelligence questionnaire equal to 0.91, achievement goals 0.82, academic self-efficacy 0.87, academic enthusiasm 89.0, and motivation to progress 0.78. Data analysis was done using Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis and path analysis in SPSS and Lisrel statistical software. The results showed that the effect of emotional intelligence on motivation to progress was positive and significant directly and with a mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm. Also, the results showed that the effect of progress goals on the motivation to progress was positive and significant directly and with the mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm.

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Extended abstract

Introduction

What has been determined is that the motivation to progress is initially influenced by the individual's experiences in the family. That is, the more successful experiences a person has in his family, the higher his motivation. By entering school and gaining more experiences, success and motivation to progress affect each other in this situation. In other words, an increase in success increases the motivation to progress, which, on the other hand, leads to more success (Bubulj & Simic, 2011). Studies show that emotional intelligence is a very good predictor of academic performance. Emotional intelligence is an important and constructive factor in some educational situations and especially for academic progress (Cherniss, 2019). Emotional intelligence means that a person has control over his behaviors, feelings and instincts despite being motivated to act (Friese & Hofmann, 2009). There are numerous factors that lead to progress and especially the motivation for academic progress; factors such as personality traits, motivational traits, situational traits, etc. But it is widely assumed that progressive goal orientation is one of the main elements of progress (Chamandy & Gaudreau, 2018). Bandura considers self-efficacy as one of the cognitive processes through which we develop many of our social behaviors and many personal characteristics. Individuals' behaviors depend on their belief that they can successfully perform a certain action (Bandura, 2001). A person's beliefs about their own abilities positively affect behavior in different ways, including their choices; and make a person follow or stop the course of action (Abeniki, 2016). Studies show that an important psychological construct that plays a prominent role in increasing achievement motivation is academic enthusiasm (Datu & King, 2018). Academic enthusiasm is a concept that has a positive relationship with positive outcomes such as academic performance, strengthening positive behaviors and academic satisfaction, and has a high negative relationship with the intention to drop out of school (Bajorand, 2017). Based on what was discussed, the main goal of the research is to answer the question of whether emotional intelligence and progress goals have a significant effect on the motivation to progress in social studies courses, considering the mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm.

Theoretical Framework

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence shows the understanding of one's feelings from people's feelings and as a result a better understanding and a better life without living with people, which leads to a better relationship with others at all levels and a higher level of self-esteem and personal value. Emotional intelligence is the result of the interaction of emotional and social abilities, which affects cognitive processes through intelligent behavior (Mitrofan & Cioricaru, 2014).

Progress goals

The concept of progress goals indicates a consistent pattern of beliefs, documents and emotions of a person, which causes a person to be oriented to situations in different ways and to be active in that field, and finally to provide an answer that satisfies for his sake and, consequently, to provide him with happiness (Akin, 2012).

Academic self-efficacy

Academic self-efficacy means a person's confidence in the ability to successfully perform academic self-regulation behaviors. That is, it refers to the level of setting metacognitive, motivational and behavioral strategies in different stages - for example, planning for assignments, organizing class work and completing them on due time (Amoon, 2021).

Academic enthusiasm

Academic enthusiasm is the voluntary expression and application of the learner in teaching and learning activities and processes. Researchers believe that people express and use themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role playing (Pirāni et al, 2018).

Progress Motivation

Progress motivation expresses the individual's desire and interest towards doing things, setting up a productive work environment, overcoming problems, increasing the amount of work, competing in choosing better and more through increasing effort and surpassing others; and in other words, the desire to do something better and more efficient than what has been done before (Alci, 2015).

Sabihabdollah Alharishavi et al, (2024) investigated the effect of learning and motivational strategies on the self-efficacy of physical education and sports science students with the mediating role of academic achievement goals and enthusiasm. The results showed that the effect of learning and motivational strategies, academic achievement goals and academic enthusiasm on students' academic self-efficacy was positive and significant. It was also found that the mediating role of academic achievement goals and academic enthusiasm in the effect of learning and motivational strategies was positive and meaningful on academic self-efficacy.

Kazemi et al, (2022) conducted a research titled the effect of spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence on creativity with the mediating role of students' self-actualization. The results showed that there was a significant direct and indirect relationship between spiritual intelligence and creativity with the mediating role of students' self-actualization. Also, a significant direct and indirect relationship was observed between emotional intelligence and creativity with the mediating role of students' self-actualization.

Research methodology

The current research is applicable in terms of purpose, and descriptive-correlative in terms of nature, with the path analysis approach. The statistical population consisted of 1300 middle school students of Karbala province, 297 of whom were selected by cluster random sampling using Morgan's table. To collect research data, five standard questionnaires of emotional intelligence from Golman (2001), achievement goals from Middleton and Midgley (1998), academic self-efficacy from Morris (2001), academic enthusiasm from Fredericks et al., (2004), and achievement motivation from Hermance were used. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed, and the reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient in a preliminary study for emotional intelligence questionnaire equal to 0.91, achievement goals 0.82, academic self-efficacy 0.87, academic enthusiasm 89.0, and motivation to progress 0.78.

Research findings

Data analysis was done using Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis and path analysis in SPSS and Lisrel statistical software. The results showed that the effect of emotional intelligence on motivation to progress was positive and significant directly and with a mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm. Also, the results showed that the effect of progress goals on the motivation to progress was positive and significant directly and with the mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm.



Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of the effect of emotional intelligence and achievement goals on the motivation to progress in social studies course, considering the mediating role of academic self-efficacy and academic enthusiasm. The results of this research are in agreement with the results of Suter et al, (2022), Esteban et al, (2022), Okwuduba et al, (2021), Ashkoti et al, (2022), Sayadi & Soleimani (2022), Mazlounian & Khazaei (2021), Khadivi et al, (2021), and Amiri (2020). Okwuduba et al, (2021) showed that the effect of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotional intelligence and self-directed learning on academic performance is positive and significant. (Kazemi et al, 2022). It was found that the effect of emotional intelligence on creativity is positive and significant with the mediating role of students' self-actualization.

Based on the results, the following suggestions are made:

- 1- It is suggested that the training of emotional intelligence skills should be included in the educational program of the students in order to increase their academic performance.
- 2- It is suggested to provide a platform and conditions in educational spaces to discover and strengthen self-confidence and confidence in students. In this regard, successful students in various fields should be encouraged and appreciated by teachers and officials.