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EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

The purpose of the present research was to analyse emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in university students and to estimate the relationship between the given variables. The type of research was a correlational research design; 120 university students were sampled. Emotional intelligence was taken with ratter scale which was called the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) whilst psychological well-being was taken with Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well Being Scale (WEMWBS). The hypothesis put forward in the study was that the emotional intelligence and psychological well-being would be distributed in low, moderate, and high in students in the university and that emotional intelligence will positively relate to psychological well-being. The first hypothesis was approved due to the descriptive analyses which revealed that various levels of emotional intelligence of students were low (31.5%), moderate (35.8%), and high (30.0%), as well as psychological well-being levels were low (34.2%), moderate (35.8%), and high (30.0%). The second hypothesis (reliability analysis) supported the claim that both TMMS and WEMWBS had acceptable internal consistency (a =.81 and a =.80, respectively). The third hypothesis was supported because Pearson product-moment correlation analysis found that emotional intelligence and psychological well-being have a significant positive correlation (r = .574, p =.001). On the whole, the conclusions were that the level of the emotional intelligence and the psychological well-being of the university students was mainly moderate and that greater emotional intelligence was related to a psychological well-being. The findings stress value of improving emotional intelligence to ensure the purpose of enhancing the psychological wellbeing of the university students.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, University Students, Emerging Adulthood.

1. Introduction

The period between adolescents and young adults is a very important developmental process. It is a drastic psychological, social and academic change that may have mental health and well-being effects on students. In this period, one will encounter new learning issues, loss of family relations, and change of social circles as well as the strain to mold their future lives. These can make the former opportunities of personal development as well as make a person more vulnerable to stress, anxiety, and emotional instability (Bayram & Bilgel, 2008; Bewick et al., 2010; Nawaz & Iqbal, 2021).

The psychological well-being is influenced at this particular stage of development by the requirements of the academic life, social relationships, and the formation of self-identity. Their well-being can be enhanced through the involvement of the strategies of coping well, believing in oneself, and possessing emotional skills

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(Bajaj and Pande, 2016; Sanchez-Alvarez et al., 2016). Conversely, numerous works indicate that academic stress, financial issues, and an uncertain future could have a detrimental effect on the mental well-being of students (Hamaideh, 2011; Regehr et al., 2013.). A review of 19 countries by Auerbach and colleagues (2018) revealed that the percentage of university students who met the criteria of at least one mental health disorder was approximately 35 per cent. This highlights the importance of supporting emotional and psychological well-being of this group of people. Thus, it is a matter of concern to the teachers as well as mental health professionals to maintain the psychological well-being of young adults.

The psychological wellbeing has grown not just into the simple concept of being happy or not being upset by anything. Researchers distinguish between hedonic and eudemonic well-being, where the former is interested in pleasure and satisfaction, whereas the latter concerns the meaning of life, its sense, and development (Ryan and Deci, 2017). The framework by Ryff (1989) demonstrates that well-being is the whole functioning of an individual and not the momentary emotional conditions. Well-being, as described by Ryff, is not only living without stress or sadness but it is also about living your life with meaning, coping with life problems, becoming a better person, and having positive relationships. According to research studies, high psychological well-being in young adults is associated with improved academic activity, motivation, and social adaptation (Joshanloo, 2019; Keyes, 2013). In the name of enhancing academic performance of students, we should venture into the factoring elements associated with psychological well-being.

Most recently, scholars have come up with emotional intelligence (EI) as a predictive variable of mental health and psychological wellbeing among the youth adults. Emotional intelligence in general refers to the capability to perceive, manage, understand, and employ emotions positively not only in oneself but also in other people (Mayer et al., 2016). The greater the emotional intelligence of students, the greater their ability to cope with academic stress levels, good relationships, and enjoyment of life satisfaction (Bajaj and Pande, 2016; Extremera & Fernandez-Berrocal, 2014; Sanchez-Alvarez et al., 2016). Thus, research into the relationship between EI and psychological well-being among this population can also allow us to recognize the role of emotional skills in bringing positive results in tertiary education.

Rationale of the Study

Life in the university is a stressful period. It is usually accompanied by emotional difficulties and mental illnesses. Students during this time experience academic stress, social transformations and additional personal responsibility. These considerations have the ability to affect their emotional and psychological stability (Day et al., 2005; Salovey and Mayer, 1990). The need to learn about the factors that affect the mental health of students is increasingly gaining attention among the researchers.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to be aware of emotions and control them, and that of other people. It is important in stressful coping, emotional control and survival in personal relationships (Asif & Ullah, 2026a; Goleman, 1995; Mayer et al., 2008). Researchers have found that emotionally more intelligent students can deal with emotional problems more effectively and find their way into university life with a better psychological result (Parker et al., 2004).

The key aim of this research is to determine whether emotional intelligence can predict disparity in psychological well-being among students in universities. EI is one of the skills that can be cultivated hence the relationship between EI and the psychological well-being can provide relevant sights to improving emotional well-being in educational settings (Extremera and Fernandez-Berrocal, 2006).

As much as it is indicated that emotional intelligence is positively correlated with psychological well-being, there are still several significant gaps, particularly among the university students in developing or collectivist societies. First, the majority of the studies have been conducted in the Western world, where the cultural norms and systems do not coincide with those of South Asia (Fernandez-Berrocal and Extremera, 2016). These cultural disparities influence the manner in which individuals depict their emotions, deal with stress, as well as their well-being. It implies that the results of Western research do not offer generalizability (Asif & Ullah, 2026b: Koydemir et al., 2013). Secondly, unlike several studies which have examined emotional intelligence in its relation to academic performance or stress management, limited literature has examined its direct and complex association with psychological wellbeing. In such a manner, this research can be a worthy contribution towards offering culture-specialized information in future studies.

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The research is relevant since it contributes to the knowledge that is available both in theory and applications in the field of psychology. The results will be beneficial to the current body of literature as it will collect evidence of the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among Pakistani university students in a cultural context. In practical sense, the findings can assist psychologists, counsellors and learning institutions to understand the importance of emotional intelligence to the mental health of students. The results can be used to develop training initiatives, counselling programs as well as student support programs by universities with emphasis on the development of emotional intelligence in order to enhance psychological health.

Objectives

1. To examine the level of emotional intelligence among university students.
2. To assess the level of psychological wellbeing among university students.
3. To determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing among university students.

Hypotheses

H1. There is a significant difference in level of emotional intelligence among university students.

H2. There is a significant difference in level of psychological wellbeing among university students.

H3. Higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with higher psychological wellbeing among university students.

2. Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) concept has become a crucial concept in the functioning of human behaviour, emotion management, and psychological adjustment. Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity to recognize, comprehend, control, and positively apply emotions in ourselves and towards other people (Mayer et al., 2016). It consists of personal and social spheres of functioning and entails emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and applicability of emotions in making of decisions and stimulating others. In the last two decades, scientists pay more attention to the fact that EI is a significant predictor in terms of psychological health, social success, and well-being (Sanchez-Alvarez et al., 2016).

The EI influences academic performance, stress management, and well-being in educational settings, especially among university students (MacCann et al., 2020). High EI students tend to be more motivated, socially adapted, and emotionally stable that promotes their academic performance and life quality. It is particularly important to know about EI among student groups as further education is associated with emotional difficulties, self-identity formation, and psychological shifts (Zeidner et al., 2012). It is therefore important to understand emotional intelligence as a multidimensional construct to elude variations in psychological functioning and adaptation among the young adults.

The relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and psychological well-being has been explored in various contexts, including higher education. Fatima et al. (2025) investigate the mediating role of EI in the relationship between psychological well-being and academic achievement among Pakistani university students, emphasizing how EI can enhance both emotional resilience and academic success. Additionally, Bukhari et al. (2025a) present an integrated model of EI, stress coping, and teacher well-being, which, despite focusing on educators, offers insights into how emotional intelligence contributes to psychological well-being, a concept directly transferable to students. Bukhsh et al. (2025) explore the protective role of EI in individuals affected by domestic violence, highlighting how emotional strength developed through EI can improve psychological well-being, a concept that can be relevant for university students navigating academic and personal challenges. Furthermore, Bukhari et al. (2025b) examine gender bias and self-efficacy among university students, providing insight into how EI can influence psychological well-being in the context of overcoming stereotypes and developing self-confidence in academic pursuits. Together, these studies underscore the importance of EI in supporting psychological well-being and academic success in diverse contexts.

Theoretical Perspectives and Models of Emotional Intelligence

Among the theoretical approaches applied to the concept of emotional intelligence are a range of

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theoretical frameworks which emphasize diverse components of emotional performances. Three of them are the most dominant models: ability model (Mayer and Salovey et al., 2016), the trait model (Petrides and others, 2016), and the mixed model (Goleman et al., 2013). These models form a foundation on the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing.

The Ability Model. According to the ability model offered by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, EI is a complex of interdependent mental skills employed to perceive the emotional information (Mayer et al., 2016). According to this model there are four hierarchical branches:

- Seeing Emotions: There is the capacity to identify emotions within a person and others.
- The Ability to Use Emotions to think: The ability to employ emotions to give first priority to thinking and in problem solving.
- Getting Emotions, the ability to understand the emotional language and changes.
- Managing Emotions: The skill of controlling personal and other people emotions to enhance good results.

The Trait Model. The traits model that was created by Petrides and others treated emotional intelligence as a cluster of self-perceptions regarding feelings that are at the lower levels of personality (Petrides et al., 2016). It incorporates such dimensions as emotional awareness, self-control, sociability and general well-being. Trait EI is normally measured by self-report questionnaires including the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue).

Trait EI has been identified to have a strong correlation with both the pleasure based and the purpose-based well-being (Sanchez-Alvarez et al., 2016). A high trait EI person tends to be more emotionally aware, optimistic, and empathic, which helps develop a high level of self-esteem and eventually good life satisfaction (Andrei et al., 2016). Conversely, the people who possess low trait EI are easier to get emotionally influenced and are prone to psychological disturbances (Sevdalis et al., 2013). Researchers indicate that the model of trait EI predicts psychological well-being in the long run, indicated as a constant element in the emotional adjustment (Lea et al., 2019).

The Mixed Model. The Goleman-mixed model is a combination of emotional and social capabilities with personality characteristics and sources of motivation. These areas are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (Goleman et al., 2013). Even though the other previous versions of this model date prior to the year 2010, recent revision has characterized it as a competency-based model, which places emotional control and social interaction as key drivers to well-being and performance (Cote, 2014).

The evidence of the mixed model based on the research has shown that emotional and social skills enhance mental health and happiness. Indicatively, emotional self-awareness and empathy have been shown to improve relations, reduce anxiety, and improve the level of happiness (Rahim et al., 2020). Also, the model focuses on the fact that emotional skills can be trained and developed, and this has significant implications to counselling and student development programs within universities.

Integrative Perspectives. New studies have centred on the integrative approach where emotional intelligence combines cognitive, emotional, and behavioural factors (Matthews et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence is regarded as a dynamic process as opposed to a fixed trait, and the focus of emotional, cognitive, and behavioural interactions. Integrative theories related the ability and trait schools of thought and acknowledge that self-perceived and actual emotional processing skills are relevant to the wellbeing of a person.

The theoretical basis of EI is increasing by increasing neuropsychological evidence, which provides connections with brain networks associated with emotion regulation, empathy, and social understanding (Killgore et al., 2020). These results suggest that working with emotional intelligence is closely connected with brain systems that control feelings and interpersonal processes and support the importance of EI in preserving mental health and well-being.

Psychological Well-Being

The concept of psychological well-being (PWB) is a sophisticated concept which shows the overall mental health of the person, his or her level of satisfaction in life, and their fulfilment as a person. It involves more than the lack of mental distress, positive functioning, emotional balance, and meaningful life (Ryff,

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2014). Over the past decade, scholars have emphasized the need to comprehend psychological well-being, in terms of their contribution to both healthy human functioning and life satisfaction, through the prism of positive psychology (Keyes, 2013).

Such a model as the one proposed by Ryff (Ryff, 1989; Ryff, 2014) is one of the best known models to describe the psychological well-being. According to this model, PWB is made up of 6 interrelated dimensions:

The six dimensions of psychological wellbeing:

i. Acceptance of Self: Positive attitude towards the self and acceptance of the qualities that you have had and have.
ii. Food Relations with Other: Forging warm, trusting and satisfactory relationships.
iii. Autonomy: To be independent with the capacity to make independent decisions and do not succumb to social influence.
iv. Environmental Mastery: Asking yourself the question of whether you are competent about your environmental control and whether you are competent about your daily tasks.
v. Almost every profession in the world requires the individual to have purpose; to possess a kind of aim, purpose, an idea of what you are doing.
vi. Personal Growth: You should always learn and acquire new skills and work towards achieving your full potential.

There is another approach to well-being that divides hedonic and eudaimonic positions (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Hedonic approach is concerned with happiness, pleasure and satisfaction of life, whereas eudaimonic approach is concerned with self-realization, autonomy and meaning. The current psychological studies tend to integrate these views and demonstrate the way emotional satisfaction and purposeful living positively affect the overall psychological well-being (Disabato et al., 2019).

Psychological well-being in a university is relevant to the academic achievement and the social adaptation of students. Research indicates that students with a high PWB are more motivated, possess improved emotional regulation, and manage head relations (Coffey et al., 2015). Conversely, poor psychological well-being is linked with an increased level of academic stress, loneliness, and low self-esteem (Kern et al., 2015). Due to such effects, it is imperative to learn more about what affects psychological well-being, particularly emotional intelligence, to enhance mental outcomes among the young adults.

Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

The relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being has been studied in many studies. Coherent literature evidence demonstrates that individuals, who possess a higher emotional intelligence, are characterized by elevated subjective and psychological well-being (Sanchez Alvarez and colleagues, 2016; Kotsou and colleagues, 2019). Emotional intelligence is associated with an ability of people to acquire and regulate their emotions, which results in improved coping foundations, reduced stress and higher pleasure in life.

A meta-analysis conducted by Sanchez-Alvarez and others. (2016) (included studies conducted between 2001 and 2015) concluded that there was a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and hedonic as well as eudaimonic well-being. These findings have been corroborated by more recent studies, which indicate that emotional intelligence enhances psychological well-being by means of such aspects as emotion regulation, optimism, and social skills (Andrei et al., 2016; Petrides et al., 2016; Trigueros et al., 2019).

Likewise, Ciarrochi, Deane, and Anderson (2016) discovered that emotionally intelligent people are more likely to resort to more constructive ways of coping, including problem-solving and reinterpreting their thoughts in a way that allows to become more resilient and promotes positive emotions. Empirical evidence also indicates that regulation of emotions has a mediating factor in the connection between emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing. Pakistani universities face leadership and governance crises (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2025). Leadership styles and design-making affect children's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2023).

Kotsou et al. (2019) discovered that the skill to become aware of and cope with emotions improves

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psychological well-being by reducing the negative impact of feelings. The second work by Laborde, Mosley, and Thayer (2018) focused on the physiological side of this association and found out that better control over the nervous system by higher emotional intelligence individuals was associated with lower stress levels and more emotional stability. Moreover, there are also cultural and situational considerations that can influence the strength of such a relationship.

This has led to emotional intelligence becoming a significant predictor of the psychological well-being of university students. It assists them in managing stress, remain in a good mood and ensure healthy operation (Extremera & Fernandez-Berrocal, 2016; MacCann et al., 2020). It is also found that students of universities who have a higher emotional intelligence have greater psychological well-being, academic adaptation, and satisfaction with life (Trigueros et al., 2019; Laborde et al., 2018).

Theoretical Framework

In this study, Mayer and Salovey Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence and Ryff Model of Psychological well-being were used. Combined, the models provide a good baseline of the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. According to Mayer and Salovey (2016), emotional intelligence is a set of cognitive-emotional competencies. It is based on this model that individuals who have a higher emotional intelligence level are able to manage their emotional experiences better, cope with stress, and respond positively to emotionally challenging situations. This skill enhances their general psychological operations. Ryff and Keyes (2016) Model of Psychological Well-Being considers well-being a complex concept. It does not indicate that one is simply not in distress, but the best psychological functioning possible. This model has six dimensions whereby, self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, mastery of the environment, purpose in life and personal growth are the major dimensions. Certain aspects of the model by Ryff, are important to note, which include the fact that an individual experiences greater psychological well-being when he or she holds a positive perception of him / herself, develops important and trusting relationships with others, copes the best with life challenges, achieves meaningful and significant life goals and also, keeps growing psychologically.

Conceptual Framework

The relationship between the two frameworks reveals that emotional intelligence is an essential source of psychology when these two models are brought together. It has a positive influence in various domains of psychological developing. Emotional intelligence is regarded as the independent variable and it consists of the skills to perceive, to understand, manage, and to be able to utilize emotions. The dependent variable is psychological well-being, which is represented by six dimensions. Individuals who possess high emotional intelligence are more conscious and better able to control emotions. This ability leads to self-acceptance, enhances social bonds with others, enhances coping mechanisms and embraces active participation in life. Emotional intelligence is therefore placed as a significant predictor of psychological well-being, as it gives a strong foundation in analysing their relationship in the current study.

3. Methodology

Research Design

The study used a cross-sectional correlational research design of quantitative nature.

Population

The population of this study consisted of students at Women University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Students of age 18-25 from all the departments and educational level are population of this study.

Sampling Method

The convenient sampling method was used in this study to recruit the proposed study participants. Owing to deficit time and resources this sampling method gave representative sample for the current study.

Instruments

Instruments like standardized psychological scales were used to collect information about participants.

Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS 24). Trait Meta Mood Scale was developed by (Solovey & Mayer, 1995). This scale is made up of 24 items, distributed equally among three subscales: emotional attention (e.g., I usually worry a lot about how I feel), emotional clarity (e.g., I almost always know how I feel), and emotional repair (e.g., I try to think positive thoughts even if I feel bad).Participants were asked to score each of the

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items on a five-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate higher emotional intelligence. TMMS showed excellent internal consistency that is Cronbach's alpha value of 0.81 and all items showed significant corrected total item correlations (Solovey & Mayer 1990).

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS 14). The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS; 14 items) is a self-report tool that measures subjective mental wellbeing in the general population. It measures PWB using five-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate greater mental wellbeing. Psychometric evaluation of the scale shows excellent internal consistency Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$, and strong construct validity. This supports a single-dimensional structure that reflects overall mental wellbeing.

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted by considering all the ethics. Participants were given complete information about the study's goals and procedures. Written informed consent was obtained, and participants were assured of confidentiality, obscurity, and their right to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. The research followed ethical standards, and all data were used strictly for academic purposes.

Procedure

Data was collected during university working hours, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Before collecting data, formal permission was obtained from the university authorities. The study aimed to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among university students because this connection is still not well understood and limits effective ways to improve mental health. Participants were approached during their class times, and questionnaires were distributed. They first received an information sheet with all the necessary details about the research. A brief introduction to the study was also provided, and participants were asked to sign a written consent form if they agreed to take part voluntarily. Those who chose not to participate could continue with other academic activities to avoid distracting the participating group. The instruments used in this study were the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) to assess emotional intelligence and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) to measure psychological well-being. On average, participants took 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaires. All responses were collected and later entered into SPSS 27 for analysis.

4. Results

The results of the present study are organized to address the research objectives and hypotheses sequentially. Descriptive statistics were computed to examine the demographic characteristics of the sample, followed by reliability analyses to establish the internal consistency of the measurement instruments. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to determine the distribution of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being levels among university students. Finally, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, including the examination of subscale-level associations. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 27, with a significance level set at $p < .05$. The findings are presented in the following tables and accompanying narratives.

Table 1

Frequencies (f) and percentage (%) for the demographic characteristics (N=120)

Variables	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	18-21	63	52.5
	22-25	57	47.5
Semester	1-2	16	13.3
	3-4	49	40.8
	5-6	13	10.8
	7	34	28.3
	8	8	6.7

Demographic characteristics show that majority of the participants were young adults and these participants were from different semesters.

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Table 2

Cronbach's alpha reliabilities of Trait Meta Mood Scale (TMMS) and Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) (N =120)

Scale	*N*	*M*	*SD*	α	Range		Skewness	Kurtosis
					Potential	Actual		
TMMS	24	72.71	12.51	0.81	24-120	39-109	0.10	0.68
WEM-WBS	14	44.34	9.07	0.80	14-70	23-63	-0.10	-0.14

Note. *N*= Total number of items, *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation, α= Cronbach's alpha

The analysis shows that both scales i.e. TMMS and WEMWBS showed acceptable reliability levels and normal distribution of scores. This confirms that the items on each scale consistently measured emotional intelligence and mental well-being among the participants.

Table 3

Descriptive classification of Emotional Intelligence levels among university students (N=120)

Emotional Intelligence Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Low (TMMS Score ≤ 60)	38	31.5
Moderate (TMMS Score 61–90)	43	35.8
High (TMMS Score ≥ 91)	39	30.0
Total	120	100.0

The findings indicate that the majority of participants fell within the moderate range for emotional intelligence (35.8%), with similar proportions in low (31.5%) and high (30.0%) categories.

Table 4

Descriptive classification of Psychological Wellbeing levels among university students (N=120)

Psychological Wellbeing Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Low (WEMWBS Score ≤ 35)	41	34.2
Moderate (WEMWBS Score 36–55)	43	35.8
High (WEMWBS Score ≥ 56)	36	30.0
Total	120	100.0

Similarly, psychological wellbeing was also distributed across low (34.2%), moderate (35.8%), and high (30.0%) levels, showing a balanced distribution within the sample.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics of TMMS subscales (N=120)

TMMS Subscale	No. of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Potential Range	Actual Range
Emotional Attention	8	24.13	5.28	8–40	12–38
Emotional Clarity	8	24.42	5.01	8–40	13–37
Emotional Repair	8	24.16	4.89	8–40	14–36

The subscale analysis shows that participants reported relatively similar mean scores across the three dimensions of emotional intelligence, indicating balanced emotional functioning.

Table 6

Pearson correlation between Emotional Intelligence (TMMS) and Psychological Wellbeing (WEMWBS) (N=120)

Variables	TMMS Total	WEMWBS Total
TMMS Total	1	.574**
WEMWBS Total	.574**	1

Note. ** = p < .001 (Two tailed), WEMWBS = Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale; TMMS = Trait Meta-Mood Scale.

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The results of correlational analysis showed a significant positive relationship between WEMWBS total scores and TMMS total scores, ($r = .574$, $p < .001$). This indicates that higher emotional intelligence is linked to better mental well-being.

Table 7

Pearson correlation between TMMS subscales and WEMWBS total score (N=120)

Variable	WEMWBS Total
Emotional Attention	.312**
Emotional Clarity	.489**
Emotional Repair	.523**

Note. ** = $p < .001$ (Two tailed)

Further analysis revealed that all three subscales of emotional intelligence were significantly positively correlated with psychological wellbeing. Emotional Repair showed the strongest correlation ($r = .523$, $p < .001$), followed by Emotional Clarity ($r = .489$, $p < .001$) and Emotional Attention ($r = .312$, $p < .001$).

Table 8

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Result	Statistical Evidence
H1	There is a significant difference in level of emotional intelligence among university students	Supported	Low (31.5%), Moderate (35.8%), High (30.0%)
H2	There is a significant difference in level of psychological wellbeing among university students	Supported	Low (34.2%), Moderate (35.8%), High (30.0%)
H3	Higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with higher psychological wellbeing among university students	Supported	$r = .574$, $p < .001$

5. Discussion

The study included 120 university students aged 18 to 25 years, which represents early adulthood. Convenient sampling technique used and standardized psychological scales were used to measure variables. This research reinforces the relevance and significance of examining emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in this group.

Reliability analysis confirms that the tools used in the study are consistent and measure the concepts accurately. The results showed that both scales had good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of TMMS $\alpha = .81$ and WEMWBS $\alpha = .80$. The strong reliability of the scales assures that the participants responded consistently and that the constructs were measured accurately, making the study's statistical findings valid and trustworthy.

The present study examined the descriptive distribution of emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing among participants. As presented in Table 3 and Table 4, the findings indicate that the majority of participants fell within the moderate range for both emotional intelligence (35.8%) and psychological wellbeing (35.8%), with relatively similar proportions observed across low, moderate, and high categories. This pattern suggests a balanced distribution of emotional and psychological functioning within the sample.

Further examination of emotional intelligence subscales (Table 5) revealed that participants scored comparably across emotional attention ($M = 24.13$, $SD = 5.28$), emotional clarity ($M = 24.42$, $SD = 5.01$), and emotional repair ($M = 24.16$, $SD = 4.89$), indicating balanced emotional competencies.

The main aim of the study was to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among university students. As shown in Table 6, the findings revealed a significant positive correlation between the two variables: $r = .574$, $p < .001$. This suggests a moderately strong positive relationship, indicating that students with higher emotional intelligence generally have higher psychological well-being. In practical terms, this means that individuals who can understand their emotions, regulate them effectively, and use emotional information well are more likely to experience satisfaction in life, emotional stability, and positive mental health.

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Additionally, as presented in Table 7, all three subscales of emotional intelligence demonstrated significant positive correlations with psychological wellbeing. Emotional Repair showed the strongest association ($r = .523$, $p < .001$), suggesting that the ability to regulate and repair negative emotional states is particularly important for mental wellbeing among university students.

6. Conclusion

The study concluded that emotional intelligence acts as a psychological resource. It helps students handle academic stress, social challenges, and emotional demands better. Students with high emotional intelligence are more capable of coping with negative emotions and maintaining emotional stability, which benefits their mental health. On the other hand, lower emotional intelligence may hinder effective emotional control and diminish psychological well-being.

In Pakistan's cultural context, where social connections and emotional balance are highly valued, emotional intelligence may play a vital role in supporting university students' psychological well-being. The findings suggest that fostering emotional intelligence could help students improve their mental health and handle the demands of university life more effectively.

In summary, this study confirms that emotional intelligence is significantly associated with psychological well-being in university students. The findings highlight the need to include emotional intelligence training and programs in educational environments to support students' mental health and overall psychological development.

7. Limitations

Data collection happens at one specific time. This limits the ability to see changes in emotional intelligence or psychological well-being over semesters or throughout university life. Long-term data could offer better insights into how these traits develop over time.

The study relies on self-reported scales. These depend on how honest, cheerful, and self-aware participants are when they respond. Emotional intelligence and well-being are complicated ideas that might not be fully captured through self-assessment tools alone.

Even though standardized scales are used, they were originally created in Western settings. Using them in the Pakistani cultural context may affect how participants understand questions about emotions, family relationships, and well-being.

Factors like recent stressful events, academic workload, relationships with peers, or financial issues may affect students' psychological well-being. These factors are not controlled in the current study.

8. Recommendations

First, to address the limitation of cross-sectional data, future studies should use a longitudinal research design. Tracking emotional intelligence and psychological well-being across multiple semesters or academic years would offer valuable insights into how these traits develop and influence one another over time.

Second, because the study relied on self-reported measures, future research should include multi-method assessments, such as peer reports, teacher evaluations, or behavioural observations. This would minimize biases linked to self-perception and give a better understanding of students' emotional intelligence and well-being.

Third, since standardized scales were originally produced in Western contexts, future studies should consider adapting them culturally or developing local instruments. Making sure that items are culturally relevant and suitable for Pakistani university students would boost the validity of the findings and improve the generalizability of the results within local settings.

Finally, future research should measure or control for outside factors such as academic stress, peer relationships, financial issues, and recent life events. Including these variables in the analysis would clarify the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being and reduce potential confusing effects.

Additionally, educational institutions and mental health professionals could create intervention programs and workshops that focus on building students' emotional intelligence skills, such as emotional regulation, empathy, and stress management. These programs could be added to the university curriculum to improve students' psychological well-being and academic performance.

Authors Contributions

All the authors participated in the ideation, development, and final approval of the manuscript, making significant contributions to the work reported.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Ethical Approval

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Data Availability

The datasets generated during and analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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