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## Investigating the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and English Learning Motivation

Riffat Ahmad \*

Tanveer Kouser †

Khalid Rashid ‡

**Corresponding Author:** Riffat Ahmad (PhD Scholar, Department of Education, The University of Lahore, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: [riffatahmad78@gmail.com](mailto:riffatahmad78@gmail.com))

**Abstract:** *This study had been conducted to explore the relationship of emotional intelligence with motivation for learning English. The population of the study comprised the Government high schools of the Gujranwala division. A multistage technique of sampling had been used to select the sample for the study and 758 students including 412 girls & 346 boys were chosen. Two questionnaires were used by the researchers to collect the data from the sample. English learning motivation scale was developed by the researchers and the emotional intelligence scale by Schutte (2009) was adapted for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation test and Independent Samples t-test were used to make an analysis of the collected data. The results of the study showed a positive significant correlation between motivation and emotional intelligence ( $r = .560$ ). Data analysis showed that boys and girls were the same in their level of emotional intelligence but they were significantly different in the level of motivation. Girls showed more motivation than boys. It was concluded that more emotionally intelligent students were more motivated for learning English and also enlarged their knowledge.*

**Key Words:** Emotions, Emotional Intelligence, Motivation, Motivation for Learning English

### Introduction

Learning a language which is taken as a foreign language is always a challenge for the learners. It needs a great deal of attention, motivation and intelligence to learn a foreign language. English is considered a foreign language in our country so it takes time, great effort and motivation for learning to achieve substantial success and perfection (Kline, 2006). The annual results of high school students are not as satisfactory to achieve the desired competency and they feel hesitation and tension to learn. In our country, all the syllabi of higher classes are in English medium but due to hesitation in learning the students

sometimes feel demotivated so, the learning process may hinder students to perform well and achieve a desired position so, it is vital to be motivated and emotionally intelligent for learning and produce quality education (Mansoor, 2004; Dornyei, 2003). Motivation is given equal importance by teachers and students learn it because they prefer a task which has practical importance in the various fields of life (Garner, 2007). Students feel it a boring and laborious task if they are not motivated to learn it because learning it has great importance in our context because it is vital for getting a job and also for meeting global challenges. Various studies highlighted

\* PhD Scholar, Department of Education, The University of Lahore, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

† Assistant Professor, Department of Education, The University of Lahore, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ Assistant Professor, Department of Education, The University of Lahore, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

the importance of English and also drew attention to be motivated for this learning process (Shahbaz & Liu (2012; Zhao, 2015; Wong, 2012). We also need to learn it and produce a great level of proficiency to achieve the level of the developed countries. Motivation is also one of the factors of the emotional intelligence model and these two variables have been considered important in learning the English language (Teimouri, 2016; Swain, 2013). The innovative aspect of this study was it addressed the motivational and emotional aspects of the English learning process from our high school students' perspective. Gender-based differences were also indicated to address motivation and emotional intelligence. Emotions are considered inevitably essential in all walks of life of an individual. Emotions are taken into account because they shape human reactions. Emotions also affect our power of decision-making. Emotional intelligence has an impact on human learning and relationships. It encompasses all the abilities of a person as recognizing emotions, coping with frustration, controlling emotions, organizing moods and also handling relationships with others. It can be said that intelligence at the emotional level is the capability which refers to the intelligent as well as mature use of emotions (Bahat & Ovsenik, 2020; Mazzella, 2019). Emotional intelligence has been defined capability of a person to recognize emotions, manage them to make decisions and finally make ultimate decisions towards things and matters around him. Emotional intelligence affects the growth of mental health and it is also characterized as the strength and ground for character building of a person (Castaneda et al., 2015; Shelton, 2017). Emotional intelligence is considered a combination of skills in emotional recognition, emotional regulation, emotional management, empathy, social relationship, sense of problem solving and resolution of conflict (Abdullah & Elias, 2004). Emotional intelligence is researched and focused by Salovey and Mayor (1990) in their work but their work was incorporated by Goleman. The concept of emotional intelligence reflects that it is a personal competency to control and manage emotions and also includes social competencies

for handling and controlling relationships (Goleman, 1995). A great contribution of research work in the context of emotional intelligence provides strong empirical support to the research. Recently, the concept of emotional intelligence is being widely studied with different variables to determine its relationship with various important variables such as motivation, anxiety, attitude, self-regulation, achievement and organizational commitment. Emotional intelligence has a powerful effect on students' achievement and academic success. It has a notable effect on interpersonal relationships from a person's perspective to make his daily routine of life a successful and composed one. So, it proves a powerful element in the field of education and psychology (Berenson, Boyles & Weaver, 2008; Afolabi, Ogunmwoyoni & Okediji, 2009).

The changing demands of the current era are needed to bridge the gap between emotional and formal education. Because it is the ultimate reality in the field of education that students must achieve harmony between education, emotions and motivation to adapt themselves to the changing and emerging challenges of the era (Acosta & Clavero, 2015; Asensio et al., 2015). Motivation is defined here as another variable to establish its correlation with emotional intelligence and motivation which is considered an important factor to determine success in the field of learning. Motivation has been defined as interest, attitude and struggle he has towards the learning process (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2014). Gardner and Lambert (1972) made a study to investigate the motivational aspect of language learning named instrumental and integrative motivation which proves a very effective cause to motivate a person to learn a language. Instrumental motivation denoted that a person learns a language to pass a paper or get a good job to make his future safe. From the integrative perspective, a person motivates to learn a language to have more knowledge about the language or to have a rich understanding of the foreign culture. Without having motivation regarding the perspective of second language learning, it may be difficult to get success in the learning process. It is

inevitably important to have a motivational force to drive a person towards the task-achieving process in the learning and teaching field (Pintrich & Schunk, [2002](#)).

### **Objectives**

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1. To explore the relationship of emotional intelligence with English learning motivation.
2. To explore gender base differences in the level of emotional intelligence and motivation.

### **Research Questions**

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1. Is there a significant relationship found between motivation and emotional intelligence?
2. Is there a significant factor-wise relationship found between motivation and emotional intelligence
3. Are boys and girls different in the emotional intelligence level?
4. Are boys and girls different in the motivation level?

### **Significance of the Study**

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The current study has filled the literature gap in the context of the two most important variables named emotional intelligence and motivation for learning English because there have been few studies found that investigate the relationship between these two variables at the secondary school level in Pakistan. It has also shed light on the level of motivation and emotional intelligence on the gender base. This study found a correlation between motivation and emotional intelligence at the secondary school students' level and proves an increase in the existing literature on the perspective of learning English in Pakistan. The findings of the study have proved helpful for the students and their teachers to improve the learning process by knowing about the correlation of these two crucial variables in the context of learning English. Gender base differences are also helpful for teachers and students to develop the emotional intelligence level and motivation for learning English which can boost their

achievement in the teaching and learning process and design significant and useful teaching plans to teach accordingly.

### **Review of the Related Literature**

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The concept of emotional intelligence is derived from the theory of Multiple Intelligence by Howard Gardner ([1983](#)). This theory described that a person does not have a single type of intelligence but is comprised of different types of intelligence named naturalistic, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, logical-mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and linguistic. The interpersonal branch of intelligence means a person has the ability to recognize the feelings and emotions of other people and the intrapersonal type of intelligence means the ability of a person to recognize his or her feelings. Mayor and Salovey (1997) incorporated the work of Gardner and gave the model of emotional intelligence which described it as a combination or subset of cognitive abilities. It is particularly the capability of monitoring his emotional changing, making distinctions among emotions and using these perceived emotions to assist his thinking. Goleman ([1995](#)) made this term popularized to make people know about emotional intelligence and defined it as an ability to motivate himself, manage aggravation, control emotions and regulate mood and feelings. He also created a model of emotional intelligence which comprised five components knowledge about emotions, managing them, motivating, recognition of emotions and handling relations. There are various essential components of emotional intelligence as its key parts named self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation. Researchers and psychologists created different types of models to understand the nature of emotional intelligence as the ability-based model, competencies model and Trait model. These models described emotional intelligence as somehow different but it is the ability to perceive and facilitate emotions, understanding and managing emotions. All these models are slightly different from each other in the way they proposed emotional

intelligence and method of measurement and scoring (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Emotional intelligence has become an area of interest for researchers due to its great importance in the field of education. Students with good and efficient control of emotions and a good sense of emotion regulation have a great level of academic engagement. Emotional skills produce a positive attitude towards goal achievement and also have a high spirit of facing challenges which they face during their tasks. Emotionally strong persons have a good level of motivation because motivation is one of the components of emotional intelligence (Serrano & Andreu, 2016). Emotions are the acts which facilitate the thinking of a person and motivate him towards the goal achievement. These are the feelings which promote motivation, commitment, and guidance for action and thought facilitation which provides a safe ground for future achievement (Imai, 2010).

The present study is going to study the motivation in relationship with emotional intelligence in the context of learning English. There is no fixed definition of motivation for the learning process but many researchers and psychologists gave this concept. It is a motive which drives the behaviour of a person to complete a task. It also motivates a person to initiate, organize and complete a task. There are various types of motivation which play a leading role to make a person successful and prominent in a specific field. A person can be motivated intrinsically or extrinsically. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has been differentiated deliberately and concisely by Deci and Ryan (2000). A person is intrinsically motivated when he or she tries to do a task and feels internal happiness and satisfaction but when the material cause, a sense of avoiding punishment or reward drives the behaviour of a person, this type of motivation is called extrinsic motivation (Barrientos, 2011; Minano & Campo, 2015; García & Jurado, 2019). Motivation and emotional intelligence at different levels are the variables of interest for the researchers to determine the importance and role of these crucial variables in the learning process. Most of the researchers

explore the relationship between motivation and emotional intelligence. Extrinsic motivation prevails most of the time for the person to gain success in the field of learning, especially for learning English (Barca et al., 2011; Barrientos, 2011; Usán & Salavera, 2018; Trujillo et al., 2020). It is always important and crucial for an individual to learn a language to which he or she is not native. Motivation is considered an important key factor in learning English as a foreign language (Jacques & Kline, 2006). There are many theories which address the motivation for language learning named Self-Determination theory, attribution theory, goal theory, and expectancy-value theory which approach the learning process of a person in a second/foreign language context differently (Jones, Arrastia, & Newbill, 2009).

Studies related to motivation from different perspectives indicated that the foreign language learning process is widely affected and concerned with motivation. Teachers also play a significant and crucial role in the context of learning English (Puspitasari, 2019). Motivation and academic success are related to each other but there is a gap in knowledge which needs to be studied that motivation may also have a relation with other crucial and significant variables such as emotional intelligence, engagement in the learning process, achievement and many other variables (Pulido & Herrera, 2017; Puertas et al., 2020). Motivation and emotional intelligence are very important in the perspective of teaching as well as learning. Motivation has a significant and positive correlation with emotional intelligence in teachers when they are noted to be committed to their job (Ates & Buluc, 2015). There are also various studies that existed in the literature related to these variables which have been conducted on middle, secondary and university-level students (Ferrándiz et al., 2012; Clarke et al., 2014). Most of them have been conducted in this context (Duran et al., 2006; Alonso et al., 2016). The results exposed that positive and significant correlation between emotional intelligence and motivation for learning English as a foreign language in different and important non-native contexts

(Sontakke, 2016; Usan & Salavera, 2018; Karbalaei & Sanati, 2015). As far as the gender-wise difference in the level of emotional intelligence is concerned there are various studies which study this difference. The studies conducted on the difference in emotional intelligence indicated that female students manage and control emotions well as compared to male students (Khan & Bhat, 2013; Ates, 2015; Kilic, 2018; Hussain & Bharadwaz, 2020). It was also found that girls have higher levels of motivation than boys. This study was conducted at the secondary level students to examine the level of motivation, attitude and anxiety of the students (Shams et al., 2008; Yashima et al., 2009; Kreishan & Yahya Al-Dhaimat, 2013). It was also found a gender-based difference in the level of motivation among higher secondary level students. Girls showed a higher level of motivation than that of boys and were more motivated for learning English (Noreen et al., 2015).

### Method and Participants

The present study used a quantitative approach. The researcher used the co-relational design to identify the correlation between emotional intelligence and the motivation of secondary school students. The difference in motivation and emotional intelligence with respect to gender was also identified in the present study. Students of male and female public high schools which were located under the jurisdiction of Gujranwala division were the population of the present study. The researchers used the multistage sampling technique to narrow down the sample and reached the desired sample. Two districts (Gujranwala & Gujrat) were randomly selected from the six districts of Gujranwala division.

Schools in each district were divided into two strata boys and girls. Six schools were chosen from each selected district (3 boys schools, 3 girls schools) through stratified non-proportionate random sampling. In this way, a total of twelve schools were selected. One section of 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students (where more than one section) was selected randomly. In this way, 758 students (girls, 412 & 346 boys) were the sample of the current study.

### Research Instruments

This study employed two questionnaires to collect the data from the sample. English learning motivation scale was developed by the researcher. The assessing emotions scale developed by Schutte and his colleagues (2009) was adapted for the study. Both of the scales were on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree to rate the response of the participants. A pilot study was also conducted by the researcher to determine the reliability of the scales. Cronbach alpha coefficient of the English learning motivation scale was .830 and the reliability of the emotional intelligence scale was .807.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis was the next step after data collection. Analysis techniques were used according to the objectives and research questions of the study. The collected data were analyzed by using Pearson correlation to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and motivation. Independent Samples t-test was used by the researcher to examine the gender-based difference in the level of motivation for learning English and emotional intelligence. The following tables showed the analysis of the data and its interpretation.

Table 1

*Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Motivation*

	Total Scale of Emotional Intelligence	Total Scale of Motivation	
Total Scale of Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.560*
			.000
N		758	758

Total scale Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.560*	1
		.000	
	N	758	758

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (two-tailed).

The above-mentioned table reveals a correlation  $r = .560$ ,  $p = .000$  between emotional intelligence and motivation for learning English. It shows a moderate positive

correlation between secondary school students' emotional intelligence and motivation towards learning English.

**Table 2**

*Factor-wise Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Motivation*

Factors	EV	EFS	IFC	SELE	EM	IM
PE	.147*	.240*	.365*	.299*	.270*	.180*
UE	.199*	.201*	.199*	.289*	.230*	.181*
MSE	.202*	.190*	.309*	.280*	.265*	.138*
MOE	.210*	.191*	.190*	.210*	.169*	.140*

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (two-tailed).

The above-given table shows the factor-wise relationship. The values of Pearson Correlation showed a positive correlation between all the subscales of emotional intelligence and motivation for learning English which ranges from  $r = .132$  to  $r = .365$  and is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level. All factors of emotional intelligence as the perception of

emotions (PE), managing self-emotions (MSE) and managing others' emotions (MOE) showed a positive significant correlation with all factors of motivation expectancy value (EV), expectancy for future success (EFS), interest in a foreign culture (IFC), self-efficacy in learning English (SELE), extrinsic motivation (EM) and intrinsic motivation (IM).

**Table 3**

*The Gender-wise difference in the level of Emotional Intelligence*

Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Male	346	104.65	5.345			
Female	412	110.44	4.166	-10.504	755	.101

$p > 0.05$

Table 1.3 shows the gender-wise comparison of the level of emotional intelligence. The table shows a mean value of 104.65 and  $SD = 5.345$  for males and a mean value of 110.44 and  $SD = 4.166$  for females. P value is .101 which is greater than 0.05 and shows that the difference in emotional intelligence level is not significant according to gender.

**Table 4**

*The Gender-wise difference in the level of English Learning Motivation*

Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Male	345	107.35	7.722			
Female	412	114.11	6.621	-18.195	755	.002

$p < 0.05$

Table 1.4 shows the gender-wise comparison of the level of motivation. The table shows a Mean value of 107.35 and SD=7.722 for males and a mean value of 114.11 and SD=6.621 for females. The p-value is .002 which is lower than 0.05 and shows that the difference is significant according to gender. Girls are more motivated than boys.

## **Findings and Discussion**

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The purpose of the current research was to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and motivation for learning English in secondary school students. The study also aimed to find out the gender differences in the level of emotional intelligence and motivation. The first research question investigated the relationship between two variables emotional intelligence and motivation for learning English. The results of the analysis of Pearson correlation  $r = .560$  showed a positive and significant correlation between emotional intelligence and motivation for learning English at the secondary school level which means students who are emotionally intelligent are more motivated towards the learning process. The finding of the current study is confirmed by several other researchers who also reported the same results that emotional intelligence and motivation are significantly and positively correlated in the learning process (Ates & Buluc, 2015; Usán & Salavera, 2018; Karbalaei & Sanati, 2015; Vuksanovic, 2017; Broc, 2019; Arias et al, 2022; Conde & Almagro, 2013; Domínguez-Alonso et al., 2016). The findings of the study expressed the importance of these two crucial variables in the context of English language learning. The second research question investigated the relationship between factors of emotional intelligence and motivation. A significant positive relationship was found between the factors of emotional intelligence and motivation as various other researchers also found the same (Vuksanovic, 2017; Hassanzadeh & Kafaki, 2014; Ates & Buluc, 2015).

The third research question was designed to explore the level of emotional intelligence of the students. No significant difference between girls and boys in emotional intelligence level. It was found that male and female students had the same level of emotional intelligence. These results are in line with various other research studies found in existing literature (Bhat and Farooq (2017; (Batumlu & Erden, 2007; Hafzoglu, 2007; Walker, 2001). The fourth research question investigated the gender base difference in the level of motivation of students towards learning English and the results showed a significant difference in the level of motivation for learning English. Female students were more highly motivated than their male counterparts towards learning English. The findings of the t-test analysis have alignment with various previous research (Noreen et al., 2015; Yashima et al., 2009; Kobayashi; 2002; Harthy, 2017; Xiong, 2010; Adachi, 2015).

To summarize, it can be concluded that emotional intelligence and motivation have a significantly positive correlation with each other. Boys and girls have the same emotional intelligence level because no difference has been found which can be stated as significant whereas motivation towards learning English has indicated that boys and girls have different motivation levels. Girls have been found more motivated than their male counterparts. Emotional intelligence and motivation are crucial and vital factors for the psychological development of a person, especially in the very sensitive process of learning in a child's life. These factors are inevitable in the learning process. It is necessary to develop emotional intelligence competencies and motivation for learning English in high school students with different innovative and precise instructive ways and also keeping in view the gender differences in the level of motivation and emotional intelligence. Some groundbreaking plans have to be planned to foster the emotional and motivational competencies in the learning process to achieve desirable educational targets. Furthermore, future researchers may concentrate on the importance

of emotional intelligence and motivation towards learning English by using different methods of research and also elaborate on the motivational and emotional factors which may prove helpful for learning English. There is also

still a need to do more research to find the significant role of emotional intelligence and motivation in our context to accelerate the learning process of the English language to meet global challenges.



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