

EXAMINING THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CAMPUS PLACEMENT SUCCESS AMONG MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

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Abstract *The present study investigates the mediating effect of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success among management students. For study purpose, a sample of 103 final year management students was taken from a selected business school in Chandigarh by using simple random sampling technique. A standardized scale, 'Trait Emotional Intelligence Scale- Short form' (TEI-Que-SF) was used to collect the data. Statistical tools such as independent t-test, linear regression, logistic regression and Sobel's test of mediation were used to draw the inferences. The study found that level of emotional intelligence was significantly higher among placed students than unplaced students. The study further found that there was complete and significant mediating effect of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance. The present study has implications for academic institutions in general and for business schools in specific. Based on the findings, it was suggested that business schools should focus on emotional intelligence aspect of the students which will result in better academic performance and better campus placement success. The present study has contributed to the literature by investigating the mediating effect of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success among management students, that has not been studied so far.*

Keywords: *Academic Performance, Emotional Intelligence, Mediation Effect, Placement Success, Mediation Effect*

INTRODUCTION

In the highly competitive world, success of management students is primarily measured from the success in campus placement. Students' chances of being selected through campus placement depend on a number of factors such as academic performance, communication skills, attitude, ethical values, personality etc. However, sometimes, inspite of having all the factors in the favour of students, they are not selected for job. Reasons may be many, depending upon company's hiring strategy and situation. At present, the new concept added to the companies' hiring strategy is 'emotional intelligence'. Emotional intelligence is becoming more and more popular in the business world where companies have started weighing emotional intelligence of students at the time of hiring them from campuses. Now, the focus has changed from intelligence quotient (IQ) to emotional quotient (EQ), as research studies have shown that emotional intelligence is necessary for the success in any field; academic as well as job/ workplace success (Corning, 2002; Snow, 2001; Bar-On, 2005). The shift in companies hiring strategy is attributed to the notion that emotional intelligence is a strong indicator of how an employee will perform on the job and what will be

his leadership behaviours (Downey, Papageorgiou, & Stough, 2006). The past research has further established that high level of emotional intelligence is associated with lower levels of stress & anxiety and higher levels of job satisfaction (Sherafat mandyari *et al.*, 2012 and George, 2000). However, it would be interesting to know whether emotional intelligence plays any role in the selection of students from campuses. Therefore, the present study has been conducted to assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success among management students. Further, the mediating effect of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success has also been examined.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance

Goleman (2005) states that emotional intelligence (EQ) accounts for 80 percent of success and it outperforms

intelligence quotient (IQ) in predicting academic achievement. He views emotional intelligence (EQ) separate from cognitive intelligence (IQ) and complimentary to academic intelligence. In an attempt to assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance, majority of research studies found positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance. Schutte *et al.* (1998) established that emotional intelligence measured in the beginning of academic year significantly predicted the grades i.e. academic performance at the end of year. A study conducted by Rozell, Pettijohn, & Parker (2002) found mild but significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success, as measured by grade point average. Yahaya *et al.* (2012) found the significant relationship of self-awareness, emotional management and empathy with academic achievement. Petrides, Frederickson, and Furnham (2004) attempted to find the relationship between trait emotional intelligence, academic performance, and cognitive ability among British education students. The study found that emotional intelligence moderated the relationship between academic performance and cognitive ability. Few studies conducted in this field did not find significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance (Newsome, Day, & Catano, 2000; Bastian, Burns, & Nettelbeck, 2005; O'Connor & Little, 2003). The review of previous studies reveals that majority of the studies conducted in this field focused on higher secondary and non-management students which clearly shows the gap in the literature. Therefore, the present study focused on management students and following hypothesis was framed.

H1: There is a positive impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on academic performance (AP) among management students

Emotional Intelligence and Campus Placement Success

The concept of 'emotional intelligence' has attracted large number of researchers across the disciplines, because of its increasing importance in the ever changing socio-economic, cultural and technology environment. The impact of emotional intelligence has been extensively studied on different facets such as academic performance, employee performance (Kulkarni *et al.*, 2009, Shipley *et al.*, 2009), job satisfaction (Khouly *et al.*, 2004), job engagement (Ravichandran *et al.*, 2011) etc. However, studying the impact of emotional intelligence on campus placement success is still unexplored area. Therefore, following hypothesis was framed.

H2: There is a positive impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on Campus Placement Success (CPS) among management students

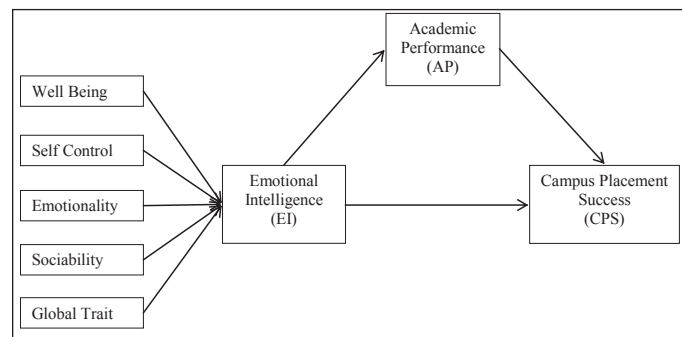
Mediating Effect of Academic Performance on the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Campus Placement Success

Mabekoje, SesanO (2012) investigated the mediating effects of self-efficacy on the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-regulation among school going adolescents. The study found complete mediating effects of self-efficacy on the emotional intelligence and self-regulation relation. Quratul Ain (2013) studied the effect of emotional intelligence on academic performance and extracurricular activities with mediating role of learnability and sociability. It is evident from review of literature that no attempt has been made so far to study the mediating effect of academic performance (AP) on relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement. Therefore, following hypothesis was framed.

H3: Academic performance (AP) mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and campus placement success (CPS) among management students

On the basis of the gaps in review of literature following conceptual model (Fig. 1) was framed.

Fig. 1: Conceptual Model for the Mediating Effect of Academic Performance (AP) on Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Campus Placement Success (CPS)



The conceptual framework has designed to assess the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on campus placement success (CPS) through academic performance (AP) as mediating variable among management students. Three variables used in the conceptual model have been defined as under:

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional Intelligence has been defined by Bar-On (2002) as "a multi-factorial array of emotional and social competencies that determine how effectively we relate with ourselves and others and cope with daily demands and pressures". According to Bar-On, emotional intelligence is very important for success in life and it is the part of

general intelligence which can be improved with the help of training. Further, emotional intelligence is the capability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997)

According to Petrides and Furnham (2001), trait emotional intelligence is a constellation of emotion-related dispositions and self-perceptions situated at the lower levels of personality hierarchies. For the purpose of present study Petrides and Furnham's (2001) trait EI definition has been used. To measure EI, Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEI-Que-SF) (Petrides & Furnham, 2006) has been used which has five dimensions viz. well-being, self-control, emotionality, sociability, and global trait. The scores on 'Well-being' dimension depict the individual's satisfaction and fulfillment of life. Individuals who score high on this dimension are happy and satisfied with life whereas low scores indicate poor self-esteem and not satisfied with life at present. The self-control dimension refers to one's ability to control over their urges and desires. Individuals having high scores on self-control have the capability to manage and regulate external pressures. On the other hand, individuals with a low score are supposed to display impulsive behaviours and are unable to properly manage stress. High level of 'emotionality' dimension indicate the skill of recognizing internal emotions, perceiving emotions, and expressing emotions and using them to form and nurture the close relationships with family and friends. Contrary to it, low emotionality level results in understanding own emotions and conveying feelings to others. The sociability dimension emphasizes on one's social relationships and social influence. Individual having high scores on this dimension are good listeners and effective communicators whereas individuals with a low scores are not very effective at social interaction.

Academic Performance (AP)

Academic performance of the students was defined on the basis of percentage of marks secured in first year of the MBA course. Literature reveals that number of studies have used the academic marks as academic performance (Rode *et al.*, 2007; Adedipe, 1985; Maraichelvi *et al.*, 2013).

Campus Placement Success (CPS)

Campus placement success was measured on the basis whether student got placed through campus placement drive during the months of December and January. The period has been selected based on the experience of placement cell which indicates that majority of companies with lucrative offers visit the campus for hiring purpose during this period only.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present study was designed to examine the mediating effect of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success among management students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

Quantitative research approach with descriptive-cum-correlational research design was used for the present study.

Target Population

Target population consisted of final year MBA students of a B-school in Chandigarh.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique was used to collect the data from students. The final sample size was 103 students.

Instruments for Data Collection

The instrument used to measure the emotional intelligence (EI) in the present study was Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEI-Que-SF) (Petrides & Furnham, 2006). This scale consists of 30 items which have been based on the long form of trait emotional intelligence questionnaire i.e. 'TEIQue' which measures global trait intelligence (Petrides, 2001). Respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on given items on seven-point-Likert Scale ranging from 'completely disagree' (1) to 'completely agree' (7). TEIQue-SF provides the scores of trait emotional intelligence on five dimensions: 'Well-being', 'Self-control', 'Emotionality', 'Sociability' and 'Global trait'.

Dimensions

Well-Being Dimension: Well-being comprised of questions 5, 20, 9, 24, 12, and 27. The scores on 'well-being' dimension depict the individual's satisfaction and fulfillment of life.

Self-Control Dimension: Self-control comprised of questions 4, 19, 7, 22, 15, and 30. "Self-control" dimension measures an individual's ability to control their behaviour and regulate external pressures.

Emotionality Dimension: Emotionality comprised of questions 1, 16, 2, 17, 8, 23, 13, and 28. ‘Emotionality’ dimension measure the individual’s ability to recognize, perceive and express the emotions.

Sociability Dimension: Sociability is comprised of 6, 21, 10, 25, 11, and 26. ‘Sociability’ dimension focuses on individual’s social relationships and influences.

Questions 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 22, 25, 26, and 28 are reverse-coded. Questions 3, 14, 18, and 29 contribute only to the global trait EI score.

Reliability of Instrument

The reliability of the instrument i.e. TEI Que-SF was calculated by using Cronbach Alpha which was found $>.7$ for all the dimensions i.e. ‘Well-being’ (.859), ‘Self-control’ (.808), ‘Emotionality’ (.822), ‘Sociability’ (.838) and ‘Global trait’ (.762).

Criterion Measure

The level of emotional intelligence has been defined as ‘High’ (Mean Score >4) and ‘Low’ (Mean Score ≤ 4)

Method of Data Collection

For the purpose of data collection, TEIQue-SF was administered to the students online by using service of Google Drive, during the month of February 2014. Data on students’ demographic such as age, gender, work-experience and graduation stream were taken from placement cell of B-school. Data on academic performance (AP) and campus placement success (CPS) were also taken from the placement cell of the B-school. Campus placement success (CPS) variable was treated as dichotomous variable as ‘placed’ (1) and ‘unplaced’ (0)

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS 16.0 version. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the results. To test the mediation, Baron and Kenny (1986)’s four step approach was used in which several regression analyses were conducted and significance of the coefficients was examined at each step. Further, Sobel Test was used to assess the significance of mediation (academic performance). Kolomogorov- Smirnovtest was conducted to check the normality of data (Emotional Intelligence) and data was found to be normally distributed (Kolomogorov- Smirnov = .74, $p > .05$)

RESULTS

Profile of Respondents

Profiles of respondents have been depicted in Table 1. The table shows that sample consisted of 68 percent male respondents and 32 percent female respondents. Stream-wise, 46.6 percent respondents were from MBA (General) followed by MBA-IB (25.2%), MBA-HR (18.4%) and MBA Bio-Tech (9.7%).

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

n=103

Demographic	Frequencies	Percentage
Gender		
Male	70	68.0
Female	33	32.0
Stream		
MBA(General)	48	46.6
MBA(IB)	26	25.2
MBA(Bio-Tech)	10	9.7
MBA(HR)	19	18.4
Work Experience		
Fresher	72	69.90
Up to 1 Year	9	8.73
1-2 Years	11	10.68
2-3 Years	8	7.77
More than 3years	3	2.91
Placement		
Placed	70	68.0
Unplaced	33	32.0
Graduation Stream		
Engineering	77	79.31
Non-Engineering	26	20.69
Age (years)		
Minimum	20	
Maximum	29	
Mean± Standard Deviation	23.38 ±1.5354	

Graduation stream wise, 79.31 percent respondents were from engineering background and 20.69 percent were from non-engineering. Experience-wise, majority of respondents were ‘Fresher’(69.90%), followed by experience of ‘1-2 years’(10.68%), ‘up to 1 year’(8.73%), ‘2-3 years’(7.77%) and ‘More than 3 years’(2.91%). Respondents’ mean age was 23.38 ± 1.5354 years with minimum age of 20 years and maximum of 29 years. Lastly, the sample consisted of 68 percent placed students and 32 percent unplaced students till last week of January 2014.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions and Academic Performance

n=103

Dimensions	Mean	(±) Standard Deviation	Maximum –Minimum	One Sample t-test (Test Value=4)		
				t	df	p-value
Well-being	5.5858	1.01805	2.83-7.00	15.808	102	0.00
Self-control	4.9191	1.05509	2.67-7.00	8.841	102	0.00
Emotionality	5.2731	.99612	2.88-7.00	12.970	102	0.00
Sociability	5.1149	1.06413	2.50-7.00	10.633	102	0.00
Global Trait	5.5898	1.03721	3.00-7.00	15.556	102	0.00
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	5.2754	.93505	3.00-7.00	13.843	102	0.00
Academic Performance (AP)	64.29	5.17596	49.00-76.30			

Significance level:0.01

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance

Descriptive statistics for emotional intelligence, its dimensions and academic performance have been shown in Table 2. On the basis of mean scores, the table shows that level of emotional intelligence among respondents was 'High' (5.2754±.93505). One sample t-test shows that the mean value of EI is significantly more than 4 [t (102)=13.843, p<.01].

Dimension wise, the level of emotional intelligence was highest in case of Global Trait (5.5898 ± .93505) followed by dimensions 'Well-being' (5.5858 ± 1.01805), Emotionality (5.2731 ± .99612), Sociability (5.1149 ± 1.06413) and Self-control (4.9191 ± 1.05509). Further, one sample t-test shows that the mean value of all the dimensions was significantly

more than 4; Well-being [t (102) = 15.807, p<.01], Self-control [t (102) = 8.841, p<.01], Emotionality [t (102) = 12.97, p<.01], Sociability [t (102) = 10.633, p<.01] and Global Trait [t (102)=15.56, p<.01]. Mean score of academic performance was 64.29±5.17596.

Emotional Intelligence Across Placed and Unplaced Students

The level of emotional intelligence across placed and unplaced students has been shown in Table 3. The table shows that level of emotional intelligence was higher among placed students (5.4319) than unplaced students (4.9281). Independent t-test shows that there was significant difference in emotional intelligence between placed students and unplaced students [t (102) =2.601, p<.05].

Table 3: Comparison of Emotional Intelligence Across Placed and Unplaced Students

n=103

Dimensions	Mean Scores		t-statistics		
	Placed	Unplaced	t	df	p-value
Well-being	5.7887	5.1354	2.776	101	.008
Self-control	5.0235	4.6875	1.505	101	.135
Emotionality	5.4137	4.9609	2.174	101	.032
Sociability	5.2676	4.7760	2.211	101	.029
Global Trait	5.7923	5.1406	3.070	101	.003
Emotional Intelligence	5.4319	4.9281	2.601	101	.011

Significance level: 0.05

Table 4: Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance

n=103

Pearson's Correlation Well-being		Emotional Intelligence Dimensions					Academics Performance
		Self-control	Emotionality	Sociability	Global		
Emotional Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	.881*	.898*	.936*	.915*	.889*	.544*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

*Significant at .01 Level

Dimension wise, the level of emotional intelligence was higher among placed students than unplaced students with regard to all the dimensions. Further, independent t-test shows that there was significant difference in emotional intelligence between placed students and unplaced students with regard to dimension 'Well-being' [t (102) =2.776, p<.05], 'Emotionality' [t (102) =2.174, p<.05], 'Sociability' [t (102) =2.211, p<.05] and 'Global Trait' [t (102) =3.070, p<.05]. However, there was no significance difference in the level of emotional intelligence between placed and unplaced students with regard to dimension 'Self-control' [t(102) =1.505, p>.05]. Therefore, it is evident from the above explanation that placed student have higher emotional intelligence level than unplaced students.

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance

Relationship of emotional intelligence with its dimensions and academic performance has been shown in Table 4.

The table shows that all the dimensions of emotional intelligence were strongly correlated with emotional intelligence viz. Well-being[r (101)=881, p<.01], Self-control [r(101)=.898, p<.01], Emotionality [r (101)=.936, p<.01], Sociability [r(101)=.915, p<.01] and Global Trait[r(101)=.889, p<.01]. It was further found that emotional

intelligence was positively correlated with academic performance [r(101)=.544, p<.01].

Impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Academic Performance (AP)

The impact of emotional intelligence on academic performance was measured by Linear Regression. Results are shown in Table 5.

A regression result shows that emotional intelligence (EI) has positive and significant impact on academic performance (AP) [β =.544, t (6.523), p<.01]. Further, EI also explained a significant proportion of variance in AP [R^2 = .296, F(1, 102) = 42.42, p < .01]. Therefore, hypothesis H1: There is a positive impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on academic performance (AP) among management students, is accepted. In the conceptual model, it shows the direct effect of emotional intelligence on academic performance.

Impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Campus Placement Success (CPS)

The impact of Emotional intelligence (EI) on campus placement success(CPS) was measure with help of logistic regression. Results are shown in Table 6.

Table 5: Impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Academic Performance (AP)

n=103

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	P-value
	Beta	Standard Error	Beta		
Constant	48.412	2.476	-	19.552	.000
Emotional Intelligence	3.011	.462	.544	6.513	.000

R=.544, R^2 = .296, Adjusted R^2 =.289, F=42.42, p=.000

Table 6: Impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Campus Placement Success (CPS)

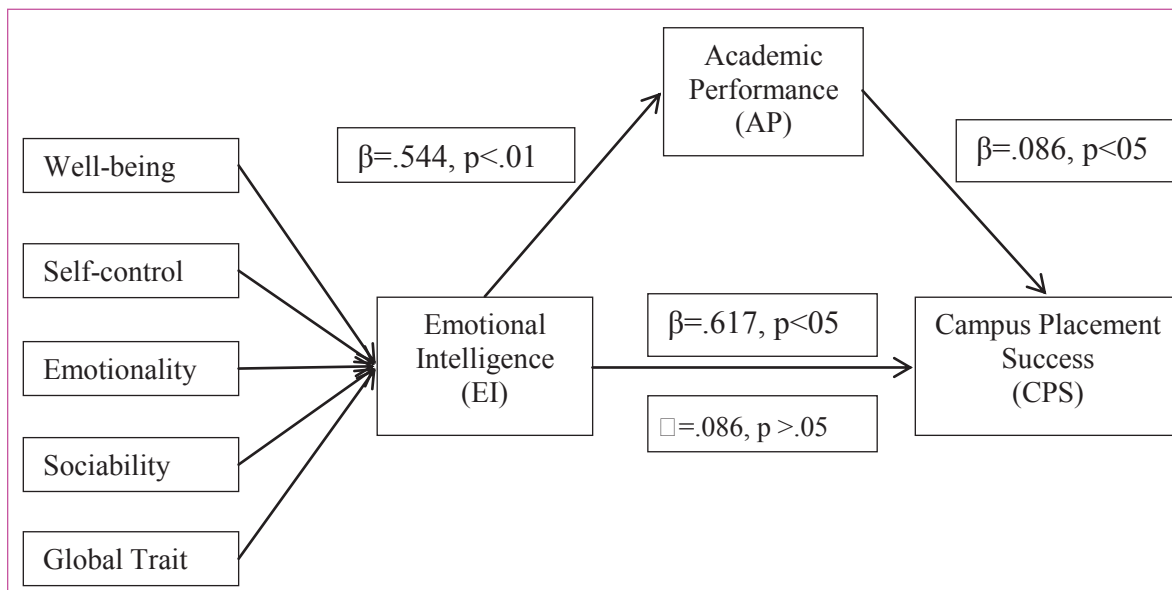
Model	Beta	Standard Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp (B)
Constant	-2.403	1.306	3.387	1	.050	.090
Emotional Intelligence	.617	.252	5.994	1	.014	1.854

Cox & Snell $R^2 = .062$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .088$

Table 7: Indirect Impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Campus Placement Success (CPS) when Academic Performance is controlled

Model	Beta	Standard Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp (B)
Constant	-6.763	3.071	4.851	1	.028	.001
Emotional Intelligence	.407	.287	2.011	1	.156	1.502
Academic Performance	.086	.053	2.580	1	.04	1.089

Cox & Snell $R^2 = .087$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .122$

Fig. 2: Pathways for the mediating effect of Academic Performance (AP) on Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Campus Placement Success (CPS)

Logistic regression shows that Emotional Intelligence (EI) has positive impact on Campus Placement Success (CPS). [$\beta = .617$, $Wald(1) = .014$, $p < .05$]. In other words emotional intelligence has significantly predicted the placement. Therefore, hypothesis H2: There is a positive impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on campus placement success (CPS) among management students is accepted. It shows the direct effect of emotional intelligence on campus placement success in the conceptual model.

Mediating effect of Academic Performance (AP) on the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Campus Placement Success (CPS)

Mediation effect of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and campus placement success (CPS) was measured when academic performance was simultaneously regressed on emotional intelligence and campus placement success. Results are shown in Table 7.

The table shows that the relationship between Campus Placement Success (CPS) and Academic Performance (AP) was significant while controlling for Emotional Intelligence (EI) ($\beta = .086$; $wald = 2.58$; $p < .05$). The relationship between campus placement success and emotional intelligence was no longer significant after adjusting for academic performance ($\beta = .407$; $Wald = 2.011.96$; $p > .05$).

Hence, all four of Baron and Kenny's (1986) (Tables 5,6 and 7) conditions were met, demonstrating a complete mediation effect. By this, the hypothesis H3: Academic performance (AP) mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and campus placement success (CPS) among management students is accepted. A Sobel test was performed indicating a significant and complete mediation effect ($z = 2.06$; $p < .01$). The findings are presented in Fig. 2,

DISCUSSION

This present study has assessed the impact of emotional intelligence on campus placement success and further examined the mediating effects of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success. Firstly, the study found positive and significant impact of emotional intelligence on academic performance among management students. This finding of the study is in conformity with the findings of earlier studies available in the literature. Studies conducted by Schutte *et al.* (1998), Rozell, Pettijohn, & Parker (2002), Yahaya *et al.* (2012), Petrides, Frederickson, & Furnham (2004) establish the same relationship. However, findings of the study are in contradiction with the findings of studies conducted by Newsome, Day, & Catano (2000); Bastian, Burns, & Nettelbeck (2005) and O'Connor & Little (2003). Secondly, study found that emotional intelligent has significant impact on campus placement success. Although, in literature no similar study is available where impact of emotional intelligence on campus placement success was assessed but this finding is in conformance with findings of other studies where impact of emotional intelligence was investigated with other job related constructs (Kulkarni *et al.*, 2009; Shipley *et al.*, 2009; Khouly *et al.*, 2004; Ravichandran *et al.*, 2011). Finally, the study established a significant and complete mediating effect of academic performance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success. It indicates that academic performance was a mediator for the relationship between emotional intelligence and campus placement success. This means that it is not merely a students' emotional intelligence that would help them in campus placement, but it is students' higher academic performance also which will help them to be successful in campus placement.

CONCLUSION

The present study found emotional intelligence as a significant predictor of academic performance and campus placement success among management students. Therefore, B-schools should focus on emotional intelligence aspect of students' overall development which will result in good academic performance of students as well as good placement. This can be achieved by conducting regular workshops for the students on emotional intelligence and sensitizing them about the importance of emotional intelligence in academic performance and placement. Further, emotional intelligence development should be the central to students' success in B-schools. Lastly, by incorporating emotional intelligence into existing educational programs, we can promote our students achievement in the present and secure their success for the future.

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