

ACADEMIC SUPPORT, PEER PRESSURE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Wu Shanshan¹
Ooi Kok Loang²

¹City Graduate School, City University Malaysia, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

²Department of Finance, Faculty of Business and Economics, Universiti Malaya, Malaysia.

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Abstract: *This study explores the dynamics of emotional intelligence among higher education students in Shanghai, China, by examining the impact of external influences on EI development. Employing a mixed-methods approach, quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews are utilized to gather comprehensive data. The quantitative component employs standardized measures and custom-designed questionnaires to assess EI and external influences, while qualitative interviews provide rich narratives. Analysis of quantitative data includes correlation, mediation, and regression analyses, while qualitative data undergoes thematic analysis. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of EI in the context of Shanghai's diverse and dynamic higher education environment, shedding light on how external factors shape students' emotional intelligence development.*

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence; Higher Education; External Influences; Shanghai; Student Development*

Introduction

Emotional intelligence, a multifaceted construct encompassing the recognition, understanding, regulation, and effective use of emotions, has garnered significant attention in the realm of higher education. The collegiate experience is a period of academic and personal growth, where students navigate a complex web of challenges and opportunities. Among the myriad factors that influence their development, emotional intelligence emerges as a critical determinant of success and well-being. This study embarks on a journey to unravel the intricate relationships between external factors, including academic support, student peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage, and parental expectations, and the emotional intelligence of higher education students. Moreover, it investigates the mediating role of perceived emotion control, shedding light on the nuanced mechanisms underlying this relationship.

In recent years, the concept of emotional intelligence has gained prominence in educational research and practice, underscoring its relevance in fostering academic achievement, interpersonal relationships, and psychological well-being. Higher education institutions, as nurturing environments for intellectual and personal growth, have recognized the pivotal role of emotional intelligence in students' holistic development. As such, educators and policymakers are increasingly interested in comprehending the intricate interplay between external factors and students' emotional intelligence within the context of higher education.

Background of Study

Higher education, once characterized primarily by academic rigor and knowledge dissemination, has evolved significantly over the years (Cai et al., 2020). Today's institutions of higher learning are increasingly recognized not only as hubs of intellectual growth but also as environments where personal development, emotional well-being, and holistic growth are nurtured. Within this transformative landscape, the concept of emotional intelligence has gained prominence as an influential factor in students' collegiate experiences and outcomes.

Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and effectively use emotions in various contexts. It has been associated with a wide array of desirable outcomes, including academic success, interpersonal relationships, mental health, and life satisfaction (Cai et al., 2020). In the context of higher education, where students face diverse academic, social, and personal challenges, emotional intelligence assumes heightened importance. The transition to college or university represents a period of increased independence and self-discovery, where students navigate not only academic coursework but also the complexities of peer relationships, identity formation, and future career aspirations.

Amidst this multifaceted journey, external factors play a pivotal role in shaping students' emotional intelligence (Cai et al., 2020). Academic support systems, comprising academic advisors, peer mentoring programs, and familial encouragement, provide students with the scaffolding needed to enhance their emotional awareness, interpersonal skills, and coping strategies. Simultaneously, the pressures inherent in the collegiate experience, including academic expectations, peer interactions, and social dynamics, can either bolster or hinder the development of emotional intelligence. The influence of student peer pressure, whether driven by academic competition or social conformity, can impact students' emotional regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution skills.

Experiences of perceived discrimination, rooted in gender, ethnicity, or other factors, can also significantly affect emotional intelligence (Cai et al., 2020). The emotional responses elicited

by these experiences and the coping mechanisms employed by students can contribute to variations in their emotional intelligence profiles. In the digital age, social media platforms have become integral to the lives of college students, introducing new dynamics that may influence emotional intelligence. The impact of social media usage on students' self-awareness, empathy, and social interactions remains an area of exploration, with potential consequences for emotional intelligence development. Furthermore, the expectations and aspirations held by parents regarding their children's academic performance and career trajectories can introduce a layer of emotional complexity. While parental expectations may be well-intentioned, they can also evoke stress and emotional challenges for students, thereby impacting their emotional intelligence.

Amidst the multifaceted interplay of these external factors and emotional intelligence lies the mediating variable of perceived emotion control (Cai et al., 2020). Perceived emotion control encompasses students' beliefs in their capacity to effectively manage their emotions. It acts as the keystone, elucidating the intricate processes through which external influences shape emotional intelligence. In sum, this study embarks on an exploration of these intricate relationships within the context of higher education. By comprehensively examining the influence of academic support, student peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage, and parental expectations on the emotional intelligence of college students, it endeavors to provide a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted factors contributing to emotional intelligence development. Moreover, the mediating role of perceived emotion control is central to unraveling the underlying mechanisms of these associations.

Problem Statement

Academic support, often heralded as a fundamental pillar of student success, reveals layers of complexity (Hammond, 2021). While institutions endeavor to provide an array of support mechanisms, including academic advisors, peer mentoring programs, and familial encouragement, the challenge lies in ascertaining their true impact on emotional intelligence development. Does academic support extend beyond academic performance to address the nuanced facets of emotional growth and self-awareness? Are these support mechanisms equally accessible to all students, or do they inadvertently exclude certain student populations based on socio-economic factors or academic disciplines? These questions underscore the nuanced and intricate nature of aligning academic support with emotional development.

The college experience, replete with academic demands, social dynamics, and personal growth, brings with it a web of pressures and expectations (Hammond, 2021). Student peer pressure, whether manifesting as academic competition or conformity to social norms, presents a paradoxical challenge. While some students thrive amidst the motivation of peer competition, others find themselves grappling with heightened stress and emotional turmoil. Navigating this emotional tightrope requires a delicate balance—how can institutions harness the positive aspects of peer pressure, such as collaboration and shared growth, while mitigating its potential negative consequences? Unpacking this complex dynamic is essential for creating emotionally supportive academic environments.

Experiences of perceived discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or other identifiers can cast a long shadow over students' emotional intelligence development (Hammond, 2021). These experiences may evoke a range of emotions, from anger to sadness, raising profound questions about students' emotional resilience and coping strategies. Educational institutions must grapple with the challenge of fostering inclusive environments that not only promote emotional growth

but also equip students with the emotional tools to confront a world where discrimination remains a painful reality. Understanding the intricacies of this challenge is essential for creating safe and supportive campus climates.

In today's digital age, the omnipresence of social media platforms introduces a new layer of complexity (Levin & Mamlok, 2021). The impact of social media usage on emotional intelligence is a burgeoning field of study. It sparks concerns about the potential erosion of face-to-face communication skills, the influence of cyberbullying on emotional well-being, and the role of digital interactions in either fostering or hindering empathy. The challenge lies in striking a harmonious balance—a nuanced understanding of how social media may both benefit and disrupt emotional intelligence. This examination is crucial for adapting educational strategies to the digital era.

The influence of parental expectations and aspirations regarding their children's academic performance and career trajectories is an undeniable force (Nguyen et al., 2021). While parental support and encouragement are essential for students' growth, the boundary between constructive support and undue pressure can be perilously thin. The challenge for both parents and educational institutions lies in crafting an environment that empowers students to pursue their aspirations while safeguarding their emotional well-being. Understanding the delicate interplay between parental expectations and emotional development is fundamental for creating a supportive ecosystem.

Amidst the intricate interplay of these challenges emerges perceived emotion control as a central enigma (Toader et al., 2023). Students' beliefs in their capacity to manage their emotions effectively hold the key to understanding how external influences shape their emotional intelligence. However, the mechanisms through which perceived emotion control operates as a mediator remain enigmatic. Exploring this enigma is essential for uncovering the underlying processes that connect external factors to emotional intelligence outcomes and, in turn, for devising targeted interventions.

Research Objectives

- RO 1:** To examine the impact of academic support systems on students' emotional intelligence among students in Chinese higher education.
- RO 2:** To determine the impact of student peer pressure on students' emotional intelligence among students in Chinese higher education.
- RO 3:** To examine the impact of perceived discrimination experiences on students' emotional intelligence among students in Chinese higher education.
- RO 4:** To identify the impact of social media usage on students' emotional intelligence among students in Chinese higher education.
- RO 5:** To examine the impact of parental expectations on students' emotional intelligence among students in Chinese higher education.
- RO 6:** To determine the mediating role of perceived emotion control in the complex relationships between external influences (academic support, peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage, and parental expectations) and students' emotional intelligence development in Chinese higher education.

Research Objectives

- RQ1:** What is the impact of academic support systems on students' emotional intelligence in Chinese higher education?
- RQ2:** What is the impact of student peer pressure on students' emotional intelligence in the context of Chinese higher education?
- RQ3:** What is the impact of perceived discrimination experiences on the emotional intelligence of students in Chinese higher education?
- RQ4:** What is the impact of social media usage on the emotional intelligence of students in Chinese higher education?
- RQ5:** What is the impact of parental expectations on the emotional intelligence of students in Chinese higher education?
- RQ6:** What is the impact of perceived emotion control in mediating the complex relationships between external influences (academic support, peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage, and parental expectations) and the development of emotional intelligence among students in Chinese higher education?

Hypotheses

- H1:** There is a significant impact of academic support systems on enhancing students' emotional intelligence in Chinese higher education.
- H2:** There is a significant influence of student peer pressure on students' emotional intelligence in the context of Chinese higher education.
- H3:** There is a significant impact of perceived discrimination experiences on students' emotional intelligence in Chinese higher education.
- H4:** There is a significant effect of social media usage on the emotional intelligence of students in Chinese higher education.
- H5:** There is a significant impact of parental expectations on the emotional intelligence of students in Chinese higher education.
- H6a:** There is a mediating role of perceived emotion control in mediating the complex relationships between external influences (academic support, peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage, and parental expectations) and the development of emotional intelligence among students in Chinese higher education
- H6a:** There is a mediating role of perceived emotion control in the relationship between academic support systems and students' emotional intelligence in Chinese higher education.
- H6b:** There is a mediating role of perceived emotion control in the relationship between student peer pressure and students' emotional intelligence in the context of Chinese higher education.
- H6c:** There is a mediating role of perceived emotion control in the relationship between perceived discrimination experiences and students' emotional intelligence in Chinese higher education.
- H6d:** There is a mediating role of perceived emotion control in the relationship between social media usage and the emotional intelligence of students in Chinese higher education.
- H6e:** There is a mediating role of perceived emotion control in the relationship between parental expectations and students' emotional intelligence in Chinese higher education.

Literature Review

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a vital aspect of personal and professional success, attracting considerable attention in the realm of higher education (Shafait & Huang, 2022). The nurturing of emotional intelligence in college and university settings has become a critical objective, with educators and institutions recognizing its profound impact on students' academic performance, interpersonal relationships, and well-being (Dong, W. X., & Loang, 2023). This literature review explores the multifaceted landscape of emotional intelligence in higher education, shedding light on key facets and influential factors that shape the emotional intelligence development of students.

Emotional intelligence, as defined by encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and effectively use one's emotions and those of others (Kanesan & Fauzan, 2019). In the higher education context, this involves students' capacity to navigate the emotional challenges inherent in academic pursuits, social interactions, and personal growth. The development of EI contributes to students' adaptability, resilience, and success during their academic journey and beyond.

Academic support systems within higher education institutions play a pivotal role in fostering emotional intelligence (Cai et al., 2020). Academic advisors, tutoring services, counseling centers, and mentorship programs provide students with valuable resources to enhance their emotional growth. These support mechanisms offer a safe space for students to discuss academic and personal challenges, develop self-awareness, and build emotional resilience. Studies have shown that students who actively engage with academic support services tend to exhibit higher emotional intelligence, better coping skills, and improved academic performance (Loang, 2023).

The influence of peer pressure on students' emotional intelligence is a nuanced aspect of higher education (Gunasekera et al., 2021). While peer interactions can motivate and inspire personal growth, they can also introduce challenges related to social conformity and stress. Research indicates that students who experience positive peer pressure characterized by collaboration, empathy, and emotional support tend to exhibit higher emotional intelligence (Loang and Ahmad, 2023). Conversely, those subjected to negative peer pressure, such as competition without empathy, may face emotional hurdles. Higher education institutions must promote a positive peer culture that encourages emotional growth and effective communication among students.

Experiences of perceived discrimination based on factors like gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic background can significantly impact students' emotional intelligence (Daratsianou et al., 2022). Such experiences often elicit a range of emotions, from anger and frustration to sadness and self-doubt. Research suggests that students who have faced discrimination can develop emotional resilience and empathy when provided with adequate support and resources. Institutions should prioritize creating inclusive environments that not only address instances of discrimination but also equip students with the emotional tools to navigate and overcome such challenges (Suresh & Loang, 2024).

In the digital age, the role of social media in shaping emotional intelligence among college students is a subject of increasing interest (Yegen & Monndal, 2021). Social media platforms offer opportunities for connection and self-expression but also introduce potential pitfalls, such as cyberbullying and addiction. Research findings are mixed, with some studies suggesting that

heavy social media usage may negatively affect emotional intelligence by reducing face-to-face interactions and empathy. Conversely, others argue that social media can be a platform for emotional expression and support. Balancing the positive and negative impacts of social media on emotional intelligence is a vital consideration for higher education institutions.

The influence of parental expectations on students' emotional intelligence is a delicate balance (Nguyen et al., 2020). While parental support and encouragement are crucial for personal growth, excessively high expectations or undue pressure can hinder emotional development. Studies emphasize the importance of open communication between students and parents regarding academic and career aspirations. Institutions can also offer resources and guidance to help students manage parental expectations in a healthy and emotionally intelligent manner.

Perceived emotion control emerges as a key mediating factor in the relationship between external influences (academic support, peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage, and parental expectations) and students' emotional intelligence development (Nguyen et al., 2020). The extent to which students believe they can manage and regulate their emotions influences how external factors shape their emotional intelligence. However, the specific mechanisms and processes through which perceived emotion control operates as a mediator remain a subject of ongoing research.

Nurturing emotional intelligence in higher education is a multifaceted endeavor, influenced by academic support systems, peer dynamics, experiences of discrimination, social media usage, parental expectations, and perceived emotion control (Nguyen et al., 2020). Understanding and addressing these factors are essential for institutions seeking to create emotionally supportive environments that empower students to thrive academically and emotionally. This literature review offers insights into the complex interplay of these elements within the context of higher education, laying the groundwork for further research and practical interventions.

Underlying Theory

Daniel Goleman's theory of Emotional Intelligence has revolutionized our understanding of human behavior and personal development, particularly in the realms of education, psychology, and leadership (Cavaness et al., 2020). His groundbreaking work has illuminated the significance of emotional intelligence as a critical factor in individual success, both in personal life and professional endeavors. This comprehensive overview delves into the core tenets of Goleman's EI theory, shedding light on its relevance, components, and real-world implications.

Self-awareness involves recognizing and understanding one's own emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and their impact on behavior. It is the foundational element of EI, as it enables individuals to navigate their emotional landscape effectively. Self-regulation entails the ability to manage and control one's emotional responses, particularly in challenging situations. It empowers individuals to remain calm, composed, and adaptable, even in the face of adversity.

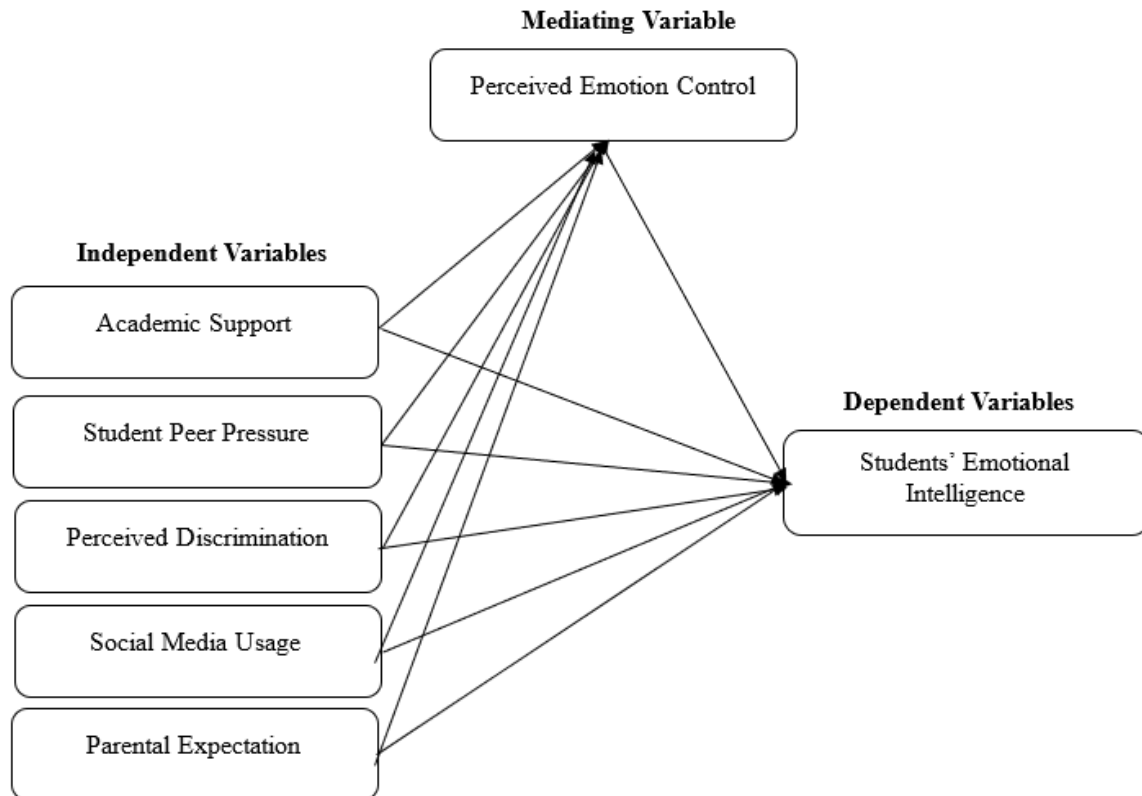
Motivation in the context of EI refers to the drive to achieve goals and pursue personal passions. It encompasses factors like self-discipline, resilience, and the ability to harness one's emotions to fuel productive efforts (SANDUA, 2023). Empathy involves the capacity to understand and share the emotions of others. It enables individuals to connect with and relate to people on a deeper level, fostering effective communication and collaboration. Social skills encompass the ability to build and maintain healthy relationships, communicate effectively, resolve conflicts,

and navigate social dynamics. These skills are crucial for successful interpersonal interactions and leadership.

Goleman's EI theory holds immense relevance in the context of higher education. The development of emotional intelligence among students is increasingly recognized as a critical aspect of their holistic growth (SANDUA, 2023). Academic success is not solely determined by cognitive abilities; emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in students' capacity to manage stress, build positive relationships, and adapt to the demands of higher education. Educators have a significant role in fostering emotional intelligence among students (Zhoc et al., 2020). They can create a classroom environment that promotes self-awareness and self-regulation, encouraging students to reflect on their emotions and manage them constructively. Additionally, educators can model empathy and social skills, providing students with real-life examples of emotional intelligence in action. Goleman's EI theory has practical applications across various domains. In leadership, individuals with high emotional intelligence are often more effective in inspiring and motivating teams, resolving conflicts, and making informed decisions. In healthcare, emotional intelligence is crucial for healthcare professionals to provide empathetic and patient-centered care. Moreover, it has implications in the workplace, where EI can enhance teamwork, leadership, and organizational culture.

Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence theory has left an indelible mark on our understanding of human behavior and personal development. Its core components, including self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, underscore the importance of emotional intelligence in navigating life's complexities (SANDUA, 2023). In higher education, educators and institutions have a vital role in nurturing students' emotional intelligence, preparing them not only for academic success but also for fulfilling, emotionally resilient lives. Goleman's theory continues to inspire research, education, and practical applications, reaffirming the enduring relevance of emotional intelligence in today's world.

Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework of this study draws upon Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence theory, which provides a comprehensive understanding of how emotional intelligence is developed and its impact on individuals within the context of higher education (SANDUA, 2023). This framework serves as the theoretical foundation for examining the multifaceted interplay of factors that influence the emotional intelligence development of students in higher education settings.

At the heart of the conceptual framework lies the concept of emotional intelligence. This construct, as defined by Goleman, comprises self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (SANDUA, 2023). It serves as the focal point for understanding how individuals perceive, manage, and utilize emotions, both their own and those of others. Within the context of higher education, emotional intelligence is viewed as a pivotal factor influencing students' academic success, interpersonal relationships, and well-being.

Academic support systems within higher education institutions offer resources and guidance to students, helping them develop self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation (SANDUA, 2023). These systems create a conducive environment for fostering emotional intelligence. Peer interactions, characterized by both positive and negative pressures, significantly impact students' emotional intelligence. Positive peer interactions encourage empathy and social skills, while negative pressures can challenge emotional regulation.

Experiences of perceived discrimination, based on factors like gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic background, can elicit a range of emotions (SANDUA, 2023). These experiences

test students' emotional resilience and empathy, influencing their emotional intelligence. In the digital age, social media platforms provide opportunities for emotional expression and connection but can also introduce challenges. Social media's impact on students' emotional intelligence is explored, considering its potential benefits and detriments. Parental expectations, when balanced with support, can contribute to students' motivation and self-discipline. However, excessive expectations or pressure can hinder emotional development, making it essential to examine this influence.

Intricately woven into the framework is the mediating role of perceived emotion control (Tanpoco et al., 2023). Perceived emotion control represents students' belief in their capacity to manage and regulate their emotions effectively. It operates as a mediator between the external influences and the development of emotional intelligence. By understanding the role of perceived emotion control, this framework seeks to elucidate how students' beliefs about their emotional regulation abilities shape the impact of external factors on their emotional intelligence. The conceptual framework posits that the interplay of these external influences and perceived emotion control significantly impacts students' emotional intelligence within the higher education context. It emphasizes the complexity of these relationships and the need for a comprehensive examination of how academic support, peer dynamics, perceived discrimination, social media, and parental expectations collectively influence emotional intelligence development.

Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study is a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews (Kinnebrew et al., 2021). This comprehensive research design aims to provide a holistic understanding of emotional intelligence among students in higher education, allowing for both quantitative data analysis and qualitative insights into the experiences and perceptions of participants.

Shanghai is renowned for its excellence in education, both at the national and international levels (Kinnebrew et al., 2021). The city consistently ranks among the top regions in international assessments of student performance, such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Its educational infrastructure is characterized by well-established universities, colleges, and institutions, making it an ideal setting to explore emotional intelligence within the higher education landscape. The emphasis on academic achievement and holistic development aligns with the study's focus on EI, which encompasses interpersonal and intrapersonal skills beyond academic prowess.

Shanghai boasts a diverse student population that encompasses individuals from various provinces of China and numerous international students from around the world (Tian & Liu, 2021). This diversity contributes to a rich tapestry of experiences, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds. By concentrating on Shanghai, the study can capture a wide range of student profiles, enabling a more comprehensive exploration of how emotional intelligence develops across different demographics. Understanding how students from diverse backgrounds navigate the challenges and opportunities of higher education is pivotal to the research objectives.

As a bustling urban center, Shanghai presents a unique set of stressors and challenges that students may encounter during their academic journey (Zhang, 2020). The fast-paced lifestyle, high academic expectations, and the competitive nature of the city's job market can place significant demands on students. Exploring how students in Shanghai manage these urban stressors and how emotional intelligence plays a role in their well-being and success provides

valuable insights that may have implications for students in similar metropolitan environments worldwide.

Quantitative Component: Questionnaire Method

The quantitative component of this study involves the administration of structured questionnaires to collect numerical data on emotional intelligence, perceived emotion control, and external influences among higher education students (Mamat & Ismail, 2021). This component is rooted in the principles of quantitative research, which allows for the systematic examination of relationships and patterns within a larger sample.

Standardized Measures

To assess emotional intelligence and perceived emotion control, standardized self-report measures are employed (Bru-Luna et al., 2021). These established instruments, including the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal and the Perceived Emotional Control Scale, offer validated and reliable means of quantifying emotional intelligence and perceived emotion control.

Survey Questionnaires

Custom-designed survey questionnaires are also utilized to gather data on external influences, such as academic support, peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage patterns, and parental expectations (Brereton, 2019). These questionnaires are tailored to capture the nuances and specifics of each external factor, contributing to a comprehensive quantitative analysis.

Qualitative Component: Interviews

In addition to the quantitative surveys, the qualitative component of this study involves in-depth interviews with participants. (De Leeuw et al., 2020). Qualitative research methods allow for a deeper exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and narratives related to emotional intelligence and its development within the higher education context.

Participant Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are conducted with a subset of participants to delve into their subjective experiences and insights. These interviews provide a platform for participants to share their personal stories, challenges, and reflections related to emotional intelligence and the external influences they encounter.

Open-Ended Questions

The interviews are guided by open-ended questions that encourage participants to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in their own words (Dahlin, 2021). This qualitative approach allows for rich and nuanced data collection.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, ethical considerations remain a top priority. Informed consent is sought from all participants, ensuring that they are fully informed about the research objectives and their rights as participants (Brittain et al., 2020). Participants are assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, both in the surveys and interviews. Ethical approval is obtained from the relevant institutional review board to ensure that the research adheres to ethical guidelines and safeguards the rights and well-being of participants.

Data Collection Procedures

The quantitative component of data collection primarily involves structured surveys distributed electronically to a carefully selected sample of higher education students in Shanghai (Xu, 2021). To ensure representation across demographic variables, a stratified random sampling strategy is employed. These surveys encompass both standardized measures and custom-designed questionnaires (Al-Bargi, 2022). Established instruments such as the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal and the Perceived Emotional Control Scale are employed to assess emotional intelligence and perceived emotion control reliably. Custom-designed questionnaires are tailored to explore the impact of external influences, including academic support, peer pressure, perceived discrimination, social media usage, and parental expectations. These questionnaires are meticulously crafted to capture the intricate nuances of each external factor, thereby facilitating a comprehensive examination of their influence on emotional intelligence.

In parallel with the quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews are conducted with a subset of participants (Cahapay & Anoba, 2020). These semi-structured interviews are characterized by open-ended questions that empower participants to express their experiences, perceptions, and narratives related to EI and external influences. The interviews are audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim to ensure data accuracy (Rutakumwa et al., 2020). Thematic analysis techniques are applied to the qualitative data, seeking to identify recurring themes, patterns, and rich narratives that complement the quantitative findings.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis techniques utilized in this study span both quantitative and qualitative approaches, each contributing to a holistic understanding of EI and its interplay with external influences (Bouteraa et al., 2023). Quantitative data derived from the surveys are subjected to rigorous statistical analysis. This analysis encompasses several key steps, beginning with descriptive statistics that offer an overview of sample characteristics, emotional intelligence scores, perceived emotion control levels, and external influence ratings. Pearson's correlation coefficient is employed to explore relationships among emotional intelligence, perceived emotion control, and external influences. Regression-based mediation analysis is conducted to unveil the mediating role of perceived emotion control, shedding light on the mechanisms through which external factors impact EI. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis is utilized to determine the relative contributions of various external influences in predicting emotional intelligence scores.

Qualitative data arising from the interviews undergo thematic analysis, a systematic approach that progresses through distinct phases (Dawadi, 2021). Initially, transcripts are thoroughly reviewed and familiarized with to establish a comprehensive grasp of the content. Subsequently, initial coding identifies key concepts, ideas, and recurring themes within the data. These codes are then organized into overarching themes that encapsulate the essence of participants' experiences and perspectives. Finally, data interpretation integrates these themes into the context of the research objectives, providing qualitative insights into the study's core focus.

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