

**THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON ACADEMIC  
ADJUSTMENT OF THE FIRST YEAR MANAGEMENT UNDERGRADUATES IN  
SELECTED STATE UNIVERSITIES IN WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The transition to university can be challenging for adolescents, as they face various adjustments in their physical, social, academic, and emotional aspects. The adjustments refer to the process of adapting to demands and constraints, living and working with others through positive interactions and relationships (Akhtar & Alam, 2016). A university adjustment is seen as a complex phenomenon with multiple dimensions: academic adjustment (completing schoolwork and adapting to the academic environment), social adjustment (coping effectively with the new social environment), personal/emotional adjustment (well-being), and goal commitment/organizational commitment (commitment to the university and regular attendance). The Studies have been shown that emotional intelligence positively influences academic adjustment, with a strong correlation between emotional intelligence, student retention and successful transition (Baker & Siryk, 1984, 1986; Baker et al., 1985).

The concept of adjustment has been widely used, but it is complex; difficult to define and has a tendency to be used as an umbrella concept. The psychological process of adjusting to, coping with and managing the issues, challenges, and demands of everyday life are described as an adjustment by Simons et al. (1994, p. 8). The success of the students in the future will depend on how well they adapt to the university atmosphere, which is a key factor in outcome prediction. Similarly, the term "adjustment" was used to describe a person's response to social, psychological, and physical requirements imposed on them by their environment. The University life adjustment is a multi-layered process (Schultz, 2008). A person's academic career, their ability to interact with their environment, and their level of life satisfaction are all impacted by the adjustment.

According to Mayer and Salovey (1990), emotional intelligence is a set of skills and a type of social intelligence. The ability to recognize, differentiate and observe the careful assessment and expression of feeling in oneself and others, the effective regulation of emotion in oneself and others and the use of moods and knowledge to inspire, plan, guide, and achieve in one's life are all examples of emotional intelligence.

The Researches conducted in different contexts have explored the connection between emotional intelligence and adjustment among students. A study in Haryana India has examined emotional intelligence and social adaptation among district students, while another study in Ibadan, Nigeria, has investigated the buffering effect of emotional intelligence on the adjustment of secondary school students in transition. Both studies have found significant relationships between emotional intelligence and adjustment. Additionally, emotional intelligence was found to be a significant predictor of academic adjustment among university students, with positive correlations between emotional intelligence and social and academic adjustment in the first year of university (Baker & Siryk, 1986).

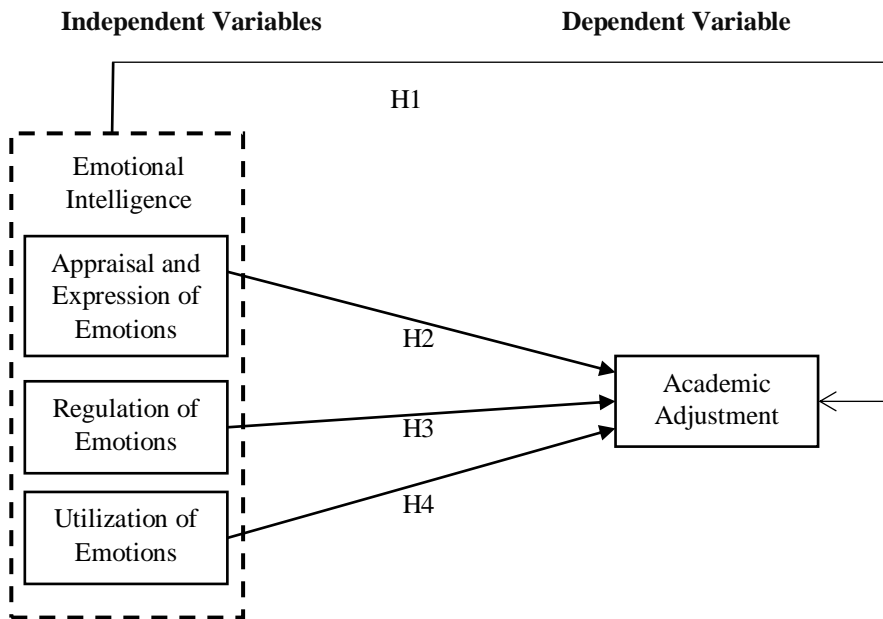
In its entirety, these findings emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence in facilitating successful adjustment during the transition to university. An Early programme that focuses on

emotional intelligence skills may assist students in managing this shift successfully. The relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment is robust, with emotional intelligence playing a significant role in academic, social, and personal well-being adjustment among students.

## METHODOLOGY

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Framework*



The following hypotheses were developed for the study.

*H<sub>1</sub>*: There is a significant impact of emotional intelligence on the academic adjustment of first-year management students in selected state universities in Western province, Sri Lanka.

*H<sub>2</sub>*: There is a significant impact of appraisal and expression of emotion on the academic adjustment of first-year management students of selected state universities in Western province, Sri Lanka.

*H<sub>3</sub>*: There is a significant impact of regulation of emotion on the academic adjustment of first year management students in selected state universities in Western province, Sri Lanka.

*H<sub>4</sub>*: There is a significant impact of utilization of emotion on the academic adjustment of first-year management students in selected state universities in Western province, Sri Lanka.

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The deductive approach is the most appropriate for this study. Individuals are used as the analytical unit in this study. The researcher examined the information gathered from each individual and used each undergraduate's response as an individual data source. The data used in this study were gathered by taking a cross-section of the population at one time, making it a cross-sectional study in terms of time. The method of research used in this study is quantitative.

For this study, the researcher selected three universities with management studies faculties that are prominent in the Western province. The enrolled population for the first-year of 2019/2020 faculties of management studies in Western province is 3080. This consisted of

1348, 716, and 1016 first-year students for the university of Sri Jayewardenepura, the university of Colombo and the university of Kelaniya respectively. A sample of 342 respondents from these three universities was selected using the Morgan table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The stratified sampling approach was employed to choose university students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1**

*Reliability Analysis*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Value	No. of Questions Items
Academic Adjustment	0.833	27
Appraisal and Expression of Emotions	0.780	13
Regulation of Emotions	0.738	10
Utilization of Emotion	0.753	10

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for Academic Adjustment, Appraisal and expression of emotions, regulation of emotions and utilization of emotions were above 0.70, which suggest that the internal reliability of the variables were at a satisfactory level.

**Table 2**

*Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
1	0.729 <sup>a</sup>	0.532	0.528	0.157

a. Predictors: (Constant), Appraisal and Expression of Emotions, Regulation of Emotions, and Utilization of Emotion

R Square value was 0.729 that indicates 72.9% variation in Academic Adjustment is explained by Appraisal and Expression of Emotions, Regulation of Emotions, and Utilization of Emotion at the 0.05 significant level.

**Table 3**

*Coefficients of Regression Model*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	$\beta$	Std. Error			
(Constant)	1.824	0.134		13.597	0.000
Appr. & Expre. of Emo.	0.330	0.056	0.421	5.892	0.000
Reg. of Emo	0.117	0.051	0.156	2.269	0.024
Util. of Emo.	0.146	0.052	0.197	2.796	0.005

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Adjustment

It can be concluded that there is enough evidence to say that, there is a positive impact of appraisal and expression of emotions on academic adjustment among first year management students from selected three state universities in the Western province. The Unstandardized Coefficient value shows the positive impact of regulation of emotions on academic adjustment. As the level of significance is less than the alpha value (in this case, 0.024). It can be concluded that there is enough evidence to say that, there is a positive impact of regulation

of emotions on academic adjustment among first year management students from selected three state universities in the Western province.

The unstandardized coefficient value shows the positive impact of utilization of emotion on academic adjustment. As the level of significance is less than the alpha value (in this case, 0.005). It can be concluded that there is enough evidence to say that, there is a positive impact of utilization of emotion on academic adjustment among first year management students from selected three state universities in Western province.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The Emotional intelligence is an important aspect to determine the academic adjustments and motivation. However, emotional intelligence plays a vital part in students' academic learning. Furthermore, students with greater emotional intelligence are more self-confident in managing academic challenges. Henceforth, the emotional intelligence is considered a significant predictor of students' academic performance in higher education. As a result, this research study mainly focuses on identifying the impact of emotional intelligence on academic adjustment first year students of management in within selected three state universities in the Western province.

Here, the researcher collected data from 347 first year students who are studying in selected three state universities, Sri Lanka. When considering descriptive analysis result, academic adjustment, appraisal and expression of emotions, regulation of emotions, and utilization of emotion had high level among the respondents. Simultaneously, first year management student of selected state universities had strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic adjustment. Further, regression analysis results suggested, first year management student of selected state universities had high positive impact of emotional intelligence on academic adjustment. Hence, it can be concluded that academic adjustment matters can be sorted to a certain extend by improving their level of emotional intelligence.

**Keywords:** Academic adjustment, appraisal and expression of emotions, emotional intelligence, regulation of emotions, utilization of emotion

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