The relationship of emotional intelligence and the psychological well-being of university students : (Field study at Mouloud Mammeri University, Tizi Ouzou Province)

علاقة الذكاء الانفعالي بالرفاهية النفسية لدى الطالب الجامعي (دراسة ميدانية بجامعة مولود معمري ولاية تيزي وزو)

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Abstract:

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being as important variables in the field of positive psychology. The current study was applied, following the descriptive approach, to a sample of (100) male and female university students, the study utilized the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire developed by Ben Amor Jamila (2017) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale devised by Carol Ryff (1989).The results of the study showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among university students.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being.

ملخص:

جاءت هذه الدراسة للبحث في علاقة الذكاء الانفعالي و الرفاهية النفسية كمتغيرات مهمة في مجال علم النفس الايجابي ، حيث تم تطبيق الدراسة الحالية باتباع المنهج الوصفي على عينة قوامها (100) طالب جامعي من الذكور و الاناث، بالاعتماد على استبيان الذكاء الانفعالي ل (بن عمور جميلة 2017)، و مقياس الرفاهية النفسية ل (Carol Ryff, 1989) ، و لقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أنه

(محالي جحيقة)

توجد علاقة ذات دلالة احصائية بين الذكاء الانفعالي و الرفاهية النفسية لدى الطلبة الجامعيين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الانفعالي- الرفاهية النفسية.

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Introduction:

Positive psychology is founded on the study of positive aspects within individual behaviour and the investigation of positive psychological functioning, encompassing elements like satisfaction, happiness, optimism, and psychological well-being. The latter, in particular, holds crucial importance as an indicator of mental health, encapsulating essential dimensions that contribute to overall well-being, including autonomy, self-acceptance, positive interpersonal relationships, life purpose, and more.

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been a subject of considerable interest among numerous researchers, especially in recent times, given the prevalence of behavioural deviations and the emergence of violent incidents. Daniel Goleman (1995) refers to emotional intelligence as: "a set of emotional skills enjoyed by individuals and necessary for success in professional interactions and various life situations".

Furthermore, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in coping with the daily pressures individuals face. It serves as an effective gateway to achieving success and enhancing the quality of life and satisfaction with it. This is supported by a study conducted by Rabea Shawan (2006), which revealed that individuals with high emotional intelligence outperform those with low emotional intelligence in areas such as adaptability, life satisfaction, problem-solving, and stress tolerance (Nimat Alwan, 2013, p. 9).

Moreover, emotional intelligence plays a significant role in managing emotions and reducing the intensity of behavioural issues. It serves as a mechanism for transforming negative emotions into positive ones. According to both Peter Salovey and John Mayer, emotions provide vital information to individuals. This acquired knowledge enables them to interpret and capitalise on their emotions, and respond intelligently to align with the prevailing circumstances or challenging situations (Ibrahim Muhammad Almaghazi, 2003, p. 58).

Another pertinent subject within the realm of positive psychology is psychological well-being, which refers to positive relationships with others. It involves an individual's ability to build and foster warm social connections with others, founded upon principles of mutual trust, affection, respect, cooperation, empathy, and constructive criticism.

Psychological well-being constitutes a crucial determinant of life satisfaction, serving as a sought-after objective towards which individuals strive. Its attainment leads to a sense of contentment, joy, optimism, and self-actualization, enabling individuals to navigate life's challenges and pressures with greater resilience (Ahlam, Majda, 2020, p. 220).

Numerous researchers have expounded on the multifaceted nature of psychological well-being, attributing its development to an array of factors such as emotional regulation, personality traits, identity, and life experiences. Furthermore, psychological well-being tends to exhibit a positive correlation with age and educational attainment. Additionally, a plethora of studies have revealed compelling associations between psychological well-being and various positive psychological attributes, including optimism, self-esteem, adeptness in problem-solving, happiness, empathy, and harmonious interpersonal relationships (Berrazouane Haciba et al., 2021, p. 54).

The emotional aspect is considered a significant factor influencing psychological well-being, encompassing an individual's feelings, emotions, moods, and affective states. Given that emotional intelligence is an essential determinant of an individual's success and psychological well-being, exploring the relationship between the two has been a primary focus in numerous academic studies. These investigations have consistently demonstrated a meaningful association between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among a sample of academically enrolled adolescents.

Among the pertinent studies, Extremera et al. (2011) conducted a longitudinal investigation spanning 12 weeks to explore the interplay between emotional intelligence and levels of psychological well-being and self-efficacy. The study involved 349 university students as participants, and the findings revealed a positive and substantial correlation between the ability facet of emotional intelligence and both Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale and the Self-Efficacy Scale. Regression analysis further revealed that emotional intelligence exhibited a higher predictive capacity (accounting for 32% of the variance) for psychological well-being compared to self-efficacy.

The study, conducted by Liborus (2012), aimed to explore the differences in psychological well-being between individuals with high emotional intelligence and those with low emotional intelligence within a sample of university students, comprising 131 male and female participants. The results revealed statistically significant disparities in psychological well-being, favouring individuals with high emotional intelligence.

Similarly, the study by Augusto-Land (2010) aimed to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, personality traits, and psychological well-being among a sample of secondary school students, totalling 259 male and female participants. The findings succinctly indicated a robust positive

correlation between emotional intelligence (measured through the Beyond Mood Scale as a trait) and psychological well-being, along with its subcomponents (measured via the Psychological Well-Being Scale).

Despite the considerable global interest in the current research topic, the level of attention in the Arab world has not received adequate importance. A deficiency exists in terms of local studies and research that specifically concentrate on exploring the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being within a sample of university students. It is from this standpoint that this study seeks to examine whether there is a statistically significant correlation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being by addressing the following research question:

"Is there a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among university students?"

Study Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among university students.

− **Conceptual Definitions of the Study:**

▪ **Emotional intelligence:** this term refers to "the ability to engage in sophisticated information processing about one's own Y others' emotions and the ability to use this information as a guide to thinking and behaviour" (Mayer et al., 2008, p. 503).

Procedural Definition of Emotional Intelligence:

In this study, emotional intelligence is measured by the students' scores obtained from their responses to the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire used in the research conducted by Ben Amor Jamila (2017).

− **Psychological well-being**: is defined as 'a fundamentally micro-level construct that conveys information about how

individuals evaluate themselves and the quality of their lives' (Ryff et al., 1999, p. 247).

Ryff identified six factors that constitute positive functioning within psychological well-being:

▪ **Self-acceptance:** It refers to the individual's positive evaluations of oneself and one's past life experiences.

▪ **Positive relations with others:** This pertains to the possession of high-quality relationships with others.

▪ **Autonomy:** It signifies the individual's sense of self-determination and agency in shaping their destiny.

▪ **Environmental Mastery:** Environmental Mastery refers to the individual's *'the capacity* to *manage effectively* one's *life* and *surrounding world'* (*Ryff* and Keyes, *1995, p. 720*).

▪ **Purpose in Life:** the belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful (Ryff & Keyes, 1995, p. 720).

▪ **Personal growth:** 'a sense of continued growth and development as a person' (Ryff & Keyes, 1995, p. 720).

Operationally, psychological well-being is defined as the aggregate of emotions and sensations that instil a sense of comfort and self-acceptance within university students, thereby contributing to a positive evaluative outlook on their lives. This manifestation is evident through the scores obtained by the study sample on the Psychological Well-Being Scale employed in this research.

Field Study:

The selection of the research method is contingent upon the nature of the problem under investigation and the necessity to establish the relationship between research variables. In our study, we adopted a descriptive approach, defined as 'a method of describing and studying the subject through a valid scientific methodology, presenting the results obtained in expressive

numerical forms that can be interpreted' (Mohammed Obidat, 2001, p. 45).

Research Methodology:

The selection of the research method is determined by the nature of the problem under investigation and the need to establish the relationship between research variables. In our study, we adopted a descriptive approach, defined as "a method of describing and studying the subject through a valid scientific methodology, presenting the results obtained in expressive numerical forms that can be interpreted" (Mohammed Oidat, 2001, p. 45).

Study Sample:

The study sample consisted of 100 male and female university students from the Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou. We utilised a simple random sampling method to select the study sample, ensuring that each individual in the population had an equal opportunity to be chosen. This approach ensures that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected or questioned, thereby providing equal opportunities and probabilities to each individual, just like any other member of the population (Marwan Abd ALMajeed Ibrahim, 2000, p. 161). The following table presents the distribution of the study sample by gender.

Table 1 : displays the basic characteristics of the study sample by gender:

Gender	Frequencies	Percentage
Females	60	60%
Males	40	40%
Total	100	100%

From Table 1, it is evident that the majority of the study sample, consisting of 60 female students, constitutes 60% of the

total. Meanwhile, the male participants, totalling 40 students, represent 40% of the sample.

– **Study Scope:**

– **Temporal Scope:** The Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being scales were administered to the study participants during the period from May to June of the academic year 2022-2023.

– **Spatial Scope:** The field study was conducted at the Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou, specifically at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

– **Study Instruments:** In order to comprehensively comprehend and contextualise the subject of the study, we relied on the Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being scales to observe and analyse the phenomenon.

– **Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, developed by Ben Amor Jamila (2017):**

The researcher, Ben Amor Jamila (2017), reviewed theoretical models addressing the concept of emotional intelligence, along with a series of previous studies exploring this concept and its relationship with other variables. Additionally, she examined several foreign and Arab scales related to emotional intelligence. Subsequently, she constructed the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire. After calculating the psychometric properties of the preliminary version of the questionnaire and making necessary adjustments to its items, it comprised 29 items divided into four main factors. The questionnaire was then re-administered to a sample of 250 male and female students from Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef. The researcher computed the psychometric properties of the final version of the questionnaire, and the results are presented as follows:

– **Internal Consistency Reliability of the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire:**

The internal consistency and reliability of the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire among university students were assessed using the Pearson correlation coefficient, which computed the correlations between each item score and the total score of the questionnaire. The correlation coefficients ranged from 0.40 to 0.71, all of which demonstrated significant values (Ben Amor Jamila, 2017, p. 142). In the current study, the correlation coefficients between the subscale scores of the questionnaire and the total score ranged from 0.62 to 0.88, all of which were substantial and significant. The self-reliability value was found to be 0.92.

– **Discriminant Validity :**

Statistical Methods \\ Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level
Upper Category	115.02	5.40	51.52	67	Significant
Lower Category	88.32	6.33			

Table 2: displays the discriminant validity of the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire with a sample size of 68.

From this table, it is evident that the calculated t-value is 51.52, which is significant at the 0.05 level of significance and with 67 degrees of freedom. This indicates that the questionnaire has the ability to discriminate between the two extreme groups (upper

and lower categories) and thus exhibits an acceptable level of validity using the comparative method.

Scale Reliability:

The scale reliability was assessed using both the Gutman coefficient and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The correlation coefficients for the dimensions ranged from 0.57 to 0.79, which are high values indicating good scale reliability.

Weight Assignment Method: As previously mentioned, the scale consists of 29 items related to the individual's emotional intelligence level in four dimensions: self-awareness (8 items), empathy (8 items), emotional regulation (8 items), and emotional management (5 items). The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire is answered using a five-alternative graded scale ranging from 1 to 5, with negative items scored differently from positive items. The negative items in the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire are items 13, 14, 20, and 23, while the positive items are items 1 to 12, 15 to 19, and 21 to 29.

Carol Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (1989):

Carol Ryff (1989) developed the Psychological Well-Being Scale to assess individuals' psychological well-being. This scale consists of 42 items, with an average of 7 items for each of the six dimensions of well-being, rated on a Likert scale of five levels: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). This order applies to positive statements (22 items) and is reversed for negative statements (20 items). The total score for psychological well-being ranges from 42 to 210.

Regarding reliability, it was verified in the Algerian context by researcher Khouri Nesrine (2019) in her study on "Psychological Well-Being among High and Low Levels of Self-Efficacy in Retirees with High Blood Pressure", as part of her doctoral degree in Psychological Health. The researcher used the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to assess reliability, obtaining a

value of 0.749. The calculated coefficient indicates that the scale exhibits a high level of reliability, thus demonstrating its suitability for use.

As for validity, the researcher employed internal consistency to assess it. The correlation coefficients were significant, with a self-validity value of 0.84, which is considered high and valid. The internal consistency method produced correlation coefficients ranging from 0.58 to 0.86, all of which are indicative of the scale's validity.

Scale Estimation Method: The scale consists of positive and negative items that pertain to six dimensions. Respondents recorded their responses on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (6). The negative items were reverse-coded during the process of recording the scale.

Analysis and Presentation of Study Findings: The study hypothesis posits a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among university students. To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the scores of the two variables. The results are presented in Table 3:

Table 3: Findings of Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Emotional Intelligence Scores and Psychological Well-Being in the Study Sample.

Simple	Study Variables	Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	Calculated Significance Level	Conclusions
100	Emotional Intelligence	0.79	0.00	Significant (Positive correlation exists)
	Psychological Well-Being			

Based on the presented data in the table, a significant correlation is evident between the scores of the study sample (students) on both the emotional intelligence and Psychological Well-Being scales. The Pearson correlation coefficient calculated was 0.79, indicating statistical significance at the 0.01 level. The obtained p-value was lower than the accepted significance level of 0.01. The positive value of the Pearson correlation coefficient indicates a positive relationship, implying that as the level of emotional intelligence increases among university students, their psychological well-being also increases, and vice versa. In simpler terms, as emotional intelligence decreases, the psychological well-being of the study sample members also decreases. Therefore, the first hypothesis has been supported.

Interpretation and Discussion of Study Findings:

The study hypothesis suggests a statistically significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being among university students. The results of the statistical analysis indicate a strong correlation between the two variables, Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being. This finding can be attributed to various factors, including the fact that both variables serve as indicators of an individual's mental health.

Psychological well-being involves the capacity to cultivate positive social connections with others, characterised by mutual trust, affection, respect, cooperation, and empathy. Building such positive relationships requires a crucial skill or ability in individuals to comprehend and differentiate the emotions of others. In this context, Gardner proposed that the basis of intelligence in human relationships lies in the ability to perceive and respond appropriately to the psychological states, inclinations, and desires of others. This involves recognising the emotions of others and utilising this understanding guiding one's behaviour (Brahimi & Said Rahmani, 2019, p. 70).

The relationship of emotional intelligence and the psychological well-being of university students : (Field study at Mouloud Mammeri University, Tizi Ouzou Province)

University life represents a significant turning point in an individual's path towards accomplishing their desired goals and aspirations. University students are recognised as a vital, aware, and educated cohort capable of facing life's challenges and devising effective solutions. Their mental adaptability enables them to establish acceptable and well-organised relationships and behaviours, leading to self-satisfaction and well-being. The academic achievement of university students is closely linked to the increase of positive emotions such as happiness, contentment, and joy, as these indicators are closely associated with a heightened level of psychological well-being.

In this regard, Feton Kharnoub (2016) underscored the significance of Emotional Intelligence as a pivotal factor influencing an individual's success and psychological well-being. The primary objectives of the study were to investigate the relationship between psychological well-being, Emotional Intelligence, and optimism while assessing the respective contributions of Emotional Intelligence and optimism in predicting well-being. Furthermore, the study aimed to discern gender disparities in psychological well-being, Emotional Intelligence, and optimism among university students.

The researcher employed a descriptive methodology for the study, and the sample consisted of 147 students from the Department of Psychological Counselling at the Faculty of Education, University of Damascus. The researcher used the translated version of Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), others' Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale, and Ahmed Abdel-Khalek's Arabic Optimism and Pessimism Scale (ASOP). The results revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between students' scores in psychological well-being, Emotional Intelligence, and optimism. However, there

were no statistically significant differences between the average scores of males and females in psychological well-being, Emotional Intelligence, or optimism (Feton Kharnoub, 2016, p. 2019).

Multiple research studies have consistently shown a statistically significant correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being among university students, which aligns with the findings of our current study. The study by Augusto-Land et al. (2010) further supports the notion that Emotional Intelligence serves as a significant predictor of psychological well-being. This investigation aimed to explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, personality traits, and psychological well-being within a sample of 259 male and female university students. The results clearly indicate a positive and substantial link between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being, underscoring the predictive importance of Emotional Intelligence in promoting well-being (Feton Kharnoub, 2016, pp. 224–225).

One of the studies conducted by Hadi (2019) focused on exploring Emotional Creativity among students at the College of Basic Education at Al-Mustansiriyah University, Iraq. The study aimed to investigate the statistically significant differences in Emotional Creativity and levels of Psychological Well-Being based on gender, as well as the strength of the relationship between Emotional Creativity and Psychological Well-Being. The researcher adopted a descriptive approach and gathered a sample of 250 male and female students. The Emotional Creativity Inventory developed by April (2011) was used, and a custom Psychological Well-Being scale tailored to the Iraqi environment was created, ensuring its validity and reliability for the study sample.

The findings of the study revealed several significant results. Firstly, the presence of high emotional creativity among

students at the College of Basic Education was evident. Moreover, the study identified notable gender differences in emotional creativity, with statistically significant variations between males and females. Additionally, the investigation revealed a meaningful correlation between the variables.

In a similar vein, Clifton and Henriques (2015) conducted a study aiming to explore the levels of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being among students at James Madison University in the United States. Employing a descriptive methodology, the researchers focused on first-year students, constituting a sample size of 3829. The Well-Being Scale (WBS) was utilised to assess Psychological Well-Being, while Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores were used as a measure of intelligence levels.

The study revealed several significant findings, notably indicating a positive and meaningful correlation between various levels of intelligence, including Emotional Intelligence, and the overall level of Psychological Well-Being.

In addition, an investigation conducted by Guerra-Bustamante et al. (2019) sought to explore the extent of Emotional Intelligence and its link with Psychological Well-Being within a sample of Spanish adolescents. The researchers utilised a descriptive-analytical approach and randomly selected 664 students from three different high school grades. To measure Emotional Intelligence, the study employed the Mood Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS), and for assessing Psychological Well-Being, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire was utilised. These measurement tools were previously validated in the Spanish context. The study's findings revealed significant and positive associations between levels of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being. Notably, higher levels of Emotional Intelligence and emotional awareness were found to

be connected to greater Psychological Well-Being. The researchers emphasised that adolescence represents a crucial stage for fostering emotional skills, contributing significantly to individual happiness.

Likewise, an investigation conducted by Sabah Marshood (2020) explored the interplay of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being among university students at Tikrit University in Iraq. The study involved a sample of 150 students. The results revealed that the students displayed a high level of Emotional Intelligence and a favourable level of Psychological Well-Being. Additionally, the study identified a positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being (Brahimi & Said Rahmani, 2019, p. 73).

These findings are consistent with the results of a study conducted by Alshehri and Al-Dhabiban (2022), which aimed to explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being among academically high-achieving students at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah. The study involved a sample of 210 male and female students. Utilising a descriptive methodology, the study employed the Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Rasha Abdel Fattah Mohamed El Didi (2005) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Iman Sarmini (2015). The study revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being. However, no statistically significant differences were observed in the mean scores of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being between academically high-achieving male and female students, considering variables such as academic level, gender, major, and grade point average (Alshehri & Al-Dhabiban, 2022, p. 77). Contrastingly, the results of this hypothesis contradict those of the study conducted by Brahimi and Said Rahmani (2019), which aimed to explore Psychological Well-Being in relation to

Emotional Intelligence as important variables in the field of positive psychology among university students. The sample size for this study was 69 male and female students from the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The study used the Psychological Well-Being Scale by Carol Ryff (1989) and the Emotional Intelligence Scale by Bar-on and Parker (2000). The study's findings indicated that there was no relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being (Brahimi & Said Rahmani, 2019, p. 68).

Conclusion:

In conclusion, our study highlights the relevance of positive psychology in the lives of adolescents, with a particular focus on the significance of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being as crucial indicators of mental health and psychological and social adaptation. Given the pivotal role of university students, especially young individuals, in society, we found it essential to investigate this subject from both theoretical and practical standpoints to comprehend the relationship between these two variables. The outcomes of our study unveiled a statistically significant positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being among university students.

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