

Academic Performance Across Gender, Ethnicity, Personality, and Emotional Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z comprises today's university students and tomorrow's workforce, underscoring the need to understand the determinants of their academic success. This study investigated the impact of demographic variables (gender, ethnicity) and psychological traits (personality and emotional intelligence) on academic performance. A cross-sectional design was employed, targeting students from finance, economics, and marketing programs. Data were collected through an online survey measuring personality dimensions, emotional intelligence, demographic details, and CGPA, with all responses anonymized to ensure ethical compliance. Findings revealed that male students outperformed females, contrasting with previous research but reflecting Malaysian cultural norms and risk-taking behaviors that may enhance learning. Chinese students achieved the highest academic performance, followed by Indians, suggesting cultural values emphasizing effort and family responsibility, as well as minority groups' appreciation for educational opportunities. Personality traits were significant predictors: low Neuroticism correlated with better performance, while Openness showed mixed effects—higher among average performers and lower among top achievers—indicating that broad curiosity may reduce focus on mastery. Emotional intelligence showed no significant link to academic success, reinforcing the dominant role of cognitive ability and personality traits. These findings highlight the importance of demographic and psychological factors in shaping academic outcomes and suggest that interventions should consider cultural context and personality-driven learning strategies.

Contribution/Originality: This study uniquely integrates demographic factors (gender, ethnicity) and psychological traits (personality, emotional intelligence) to predict academic performance among Generation Z within a multicultural Malaysian context. By examining these variables concurrently, it provides empirical insight for culturally responsive and personality-driven strategies to enhance student success in diverse educational settings.

1. Introduction

The current students in the tertiary education institutions consist of Generation Z, a cohort born between the late 1990s and 2010s, representing the future workforce and future leaders (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Due to the frequently described by some researchers as having a distinctive psychological makeup, such as high emotional sensitivity, being emotionally unstable, and different self-perceptions in comparison to the previous generation (Cuartero & Tur, 2021), it is crucial to identify factors that may influence their academic success. Therefore, the examination of the academic performance of this group requires specific emphasis on their psychological and demographic elements.

Academic performance is a key predictor of an individual's future career and financial success, shaped by more than just cognitive ability. It is determined by a complex combination of psychological traits and demographic variables. More studies found a significant impact of stable individual characteristics, such as personality and emotional skills alongside gender and ethnicity on the ability to learn, motivation level, and stress management among students (MacCann, Jiang, Brown, Double, Bucich & Minbashian, 2020). Identifying the elements that contribute to academic achievement is essential for developing effective, customized educational interventions for Generation Z.

Recent meta-analyses have consistently found the predictive power of non-cognitive skills of academic success (Hanafi & Noor, 2016; MacCann et al., 2020). Emotional intelligence has a significant positive association with academic performance even after controlling the traditional intelligence and general personality (MacCann et al., 2020; Perera & DiGiacomo, 2013). The relationship is due to EI mechanism that improves emotion regulation, social relationships, and adversity coping strategy (Cuartero & Tur, 2021; MacCann et al., 2020). Previous research also highlights personality traits such as Conscientiousness as the strongest predictor of academic achievement, reflecting the importance of value and self-discipline (MacCann et al., 2020). Contextual factors such as gender and ethnicity are important as they introduce differences in achievement patterns and may influence how EI impacts performance (Ubago-Jimenez, Zurita-Ortega, Ortega-Martin & Melguizo-Ibañez, 2024; Herrera & Mohamed, 2020; Perera & DiGiacomo, 2013).

The distinct characteristics of Generation Z necessitate an examination of demographic factors and psychological variables simultaneously. A study is needed to precisely map the interplay of these factors, providing actionable insights for educational institutions supporting the success of this emerging generation. Consequently, this study aims to examine the influence of both psychological traits (personality and emotional intelligence) and demographic variables on student academic performance. The following are the objectives of this study:

- i. Examine the differences in academic performance among students of different genders and ethnicities.
- ii. Examine differences in academic performance across personality dimensions.
- iii. Examine differences in academic performance across levels of emotional intelligence.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Generation Z

A blend of digital fluency and financial pragmatism due to socialization and technological advances has shaped Generation Z's core values and life orientation (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018). In comparison to their predecessors, Gen Z prioritizes self-sufficiency and entrepreneurial inclination which lead to future-proofing behavior such as proactive planning and early saving strategies (Dorsey & Villa, 2020). This generation is often sceptical of traditional hierarchy, preferring flat, meritocratic structures and efficient communication (De Witte, 2022). Their unique worldview positions them as independent, self-directed learners who utilize global digital networks to curate knowledge and pursue personal development goals.

The pragmatic perspective directly influences Generation Z's perception of academic achievement, which is increasingly viewed through the lens of potential return and immediate value rather than credential prestige. The primary objective of academic involvement is to acquire specialized, marketable skills that facilitate career security and financial independence in a volatile job market (Johnson & Welch, 2020). This perspective has driven a preference for experiential learning, non-monotonous instruction, and adaptable education pathways such as micro-credential, and self-directed learning over conventional four-year degree commitments (Helaluddin, Fitriyyah, Rante, Tulak, Ulfah & Wijaya, 2023). Therefore, Gen Z academic involvement is more intentional and purpose-driven, compelling higher education institutions to redesign courses to prioritize career readiness, practical relevance, and mental wellness support.

2.2. Gender, ethnicity, and academic performance

Demographic factors such as gender and ethnicity provide vital contextual and socio-cultural variables for research on academic achievement among university students. Research consistently highlights the existence of achievement patterns across these groups. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that female students tend to outperform male students in Grade Point Average (CGPA) (Chen, Cheung & Zeng, 2025; Crowther & Briant, 2022) and engagement level (Vera Gill, 2024). The disparity is attributed to differences in the utilization of non-cognitive skills such as effective study planning and social support strategies among female students that can be linked to academic resilience (Vera Gill, 2024). It aligns with gender socialisation theories, which suggest that women tend to dedicate greater effort and resources to educational settings, contrasting with male disengagement driven by traditional masculine norms (Almoslamani, 2022). Concurrently, structural inequalities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields and leadership roles within higher education institutions shape students' academic trajectories (Almoslamani, 2022; Ghavami, Kogachi & Graham, 2020).

Ethnicity is also a critical factor that often intersects gender, resulting in compounded effects on academic outcomes. Students of minority ethnic groups tend to experience systemic barriers including institutional bias, limited access to essential academic resources, and cultural marginalization (Harper & Kezar, 2021). The existing literature suggests that ethnic disparities in academic achievement are often mediated by socioeconomic status and gender (Heaton & Lawson, 1996). Moreover, traditional university governance is inadequate in recognizing the inherent cultural wealth that racially minoritized students contribute to the academic setting (Harper & Kezar, 2021). Addressing these challenges is paramount for Gen Z who value inclusive teaching, equity-driven support, and inclusive leadership (Barhate & Dirani, 2022; van Kessel, Ryan, Paras, Johnson, Zariff & Stallman, 2025).

2.3. Personality and academic performance

Personality is a stable pattern of thoughts, emotions, and behavior encompassing the underlying psychological mechanism that differentiates one individual from another (McShane & Von Glinow, 2021). One of the most widely used frameworks for classifying personality is the Five Factor Model (FFM), which structures personality into five core dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience (McCrea & John, 1992). These five dimensions consist of distinct behavioral and emotional tendencies (John & Srivastava, 1999).

A meta-analysis study synthesized articles from 1995 to 2024 by Chen et al. (2025) found a significant and positive role of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience on academic success. An individual with high conscientiousness tends to have a better impulse control mechanism that facilitates goal-directed behavior (John & Srivastava, 1999). Agreeableness and openness to experience are associated with pro-social behavior and a greater receptivity toward exploring novelty (McCrea & John, 1992; McShane & Von Glinow, 2021). These personality dimensions contribute to cognitive flexibility and problem-solving skills (Leeson, Ciarrochi & Heaven, 2008) which are linked to better academic achievement (Chen et al., 2025). Extraversion tends to be associated with sociability, assertiveness, and positive emotions, reflecting an energetic approach to life (John & Srivastava, 1999). However, a recent meta-analysis study found a small negative correlation between extraversion and academic achievement (Chen et al., 2025) which supports the study by Cooper and Petrides (2010).

Neuroticism is characterized by emotional instability, anxiety, and a tendency to experience negative emotions (John & Srivastava, 1999; McShane & Von Glinow, 2021). However, some studies do not show a significant relationship between neuroticism and academic achievement (Chen et al., 2025). According to a study conducted by Cuartero and Tur (2021) among university students, emotional instability tends to decrease with age. Therefore, there are significant personality differences across age categories, challenging the view that personality is entirely fixed over a lifetime.

2.4. Emotional intelligence and academic performance

Emotional intelligence is a subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to identify, manage, and utilize one's own and others' emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It involves intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, and general mood components (Bar-On, 2006). Emotions are a fundamental component in the learning process, especially

self-directed learning. Emotional intelligence relates to self-directed learning by improving personal confidence and independent learning ability (Aghazadeh, Ghaffarifar, Katebi & Dehghani, 2025). Nevertheless, emotions can play a dual role in the learning process; they can motivate and facilitate or hinder effective learning.

Research consistently shows that emotional intelligence is positively associated with perceived academic efficacy and achievement (Ahmed, Asim & Pellitteri, 2019; Cuartero & Tur, 2021; Hanafi & Noor, 2016; Alkhayr, Alshaikh, Alghamdi, Alshaikh, Somaa & Bokhari, 2022; Dong, Kalugina, Vasbieva & Rafi, 2022; Quílez-Robres, Usan, Lozano-Blasco & Salavera, 2023). An extensive review by Hanafi and Noor (2016) found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. Their study covered various cultural contexts and multiple types of emotional intelligence assessments. A study conducted among Pakistani management students found a significant association between self-control, sociability, and well-being components of EI and academic achievement (Ahmed et al., 2019). They suggest that self-control and well-being strengthen cognitive abilities that support higher academic achievement. They also emphasize the importance of addressing emotional factors in a healthy balance between emotional well-being and academic performance. A high level of EI in young adults is linked to enhanced general well-being and favorable mental health. These positive outcomes include a lower level of stress, anxiety, and depression in navigating everyday life pressures (Martins, Ramalho & Morin, 2010; Petrides, Mikolajczak, Mavroveli, Sanchez-Ruiz, Furnham & Pérez-González, 2016).

Emotional intelligence has a significant influence on boosting student's self-efficacy, resilience, and motivation which will lead to academic success (Shengyao, Xuefen, Jenatabadi, Samsudin, Chunchun & Ishak, 2024). Students with high emotional intelligence tend to approach difficult tasks with confidence and trust their ability to manage the challenge effectively. Moreover, emotional regulation is a key component of emotional intelligence, equipping students with the ability to effectively manage their internal states and strategically channel motivation towards desired behavior and goal attainment (Côté, DeCelles, McCarthy, Van Kleef & Hideg, 2011). Emotional intelligence is necessary for the academic journey in managing academic stress, navigating challenges, and fostering positive interactions among peers, faculty, and non-academic staff (Mohamed Hashim, Tlemsani, Ndrecaj & Cockrill, 2025). A high level of emotional intelligence determines academic achievement among students and consequently translates into professional effectiveness and value as employees (Hanafi & Noor, 2016).

3. Research Methods

3.1. Research Design and Approach

This study employed a quantitative and cross-sectional design. A quantitative approach was selected for its ability to provide precise, statistically analyzable data, enabling generalization of findings and evidence-based conclusions. A cross-sectional design enabled data collection at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the relationships among gender, ethnicity, personality traits, emotional intelligence, and academic performance. This design is suitable for examining associations, which aligns with the exploratory nature of the study. By adopting this approach, the study aims to contribute empirical insight into the interplay of demographic and psychological factors within a multicultural academic context.

3.2. Population and Sample

The study was conducted at a public university in East Malaysia, selected for its unique multicultural context where diverse ethnic backgrounds and socio-cultural norms may influence students' psychological traits and academic outcomes. The sample comprised students enrolled in finance, economics, and marketing programs as they collectively represent more than 50 per cent of the university's student population. Respondents were selected using convenience sampling due to the accessibility of students within the university. Moreover, this approach is practical given time and resource constraints, allowing efficient data collection from a readily available population. In total, 396 students participated in this study, consisting of 104 males and 292 females.

3.3. Instruments

The questionnaire used in data collection consists of three (3) sections. The first section has 44 items adopted from the Big Five Inventory (BFI) scale developed by [John and Srivastava \(2001\)](#). BFI scale measures the extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, and openness to experience personality dimensions. A five-point Likert scale ranging from most like me (5) to most unlike me (1) was used to assess responses to items involved. The Cronbach's alphas for all five personality dimensions range from 0.682 to 0.724.

The second section assesses emotional intelligence with 33-items from the Assessing Emotion Scale (AES) developed by [Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar and Rooke \(2007\)](#). The AES scale measures four (4) abilities of emotional intelligence: (1) ability to perceive emotions, (2) ability to manage one's emotions, (3) ability to manage others' emotions, and (4) ability to utilize emotions. Respondents were to indicate their agreement or disagreement using a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha for all abilities of emotional intelligence ranges from 0.78 to 0.822.

The last section of the questionnaire consists of items to collect personal backgrounds of respondents involved. Data collected related to age, gender, ethnicity, current semester of study, and cumulative grade point average (CGPA). CGPA was used to measure academic achievement. Those with CGPA 2.5 and below were categorized as poor, 2.51 to 3.0 as average, 3.1 to 3.5 as good, and 3.51 to 4.0 as excellent.

3.4. Data collection

Data collection was conducted using an online survey distributed through a secure link to respondents. The questionnaire was designed to capture information on personality traits, emotional intelligence, demographic backgrounds, and academic achievement. To ensure adherence to ethical standards, all responses were collected anonymously. Respondents were informed that no personally identifiable information would be disclosed at any stage of the study. Confidentiality protocols were implemented to safeguard respondent privacy and data integrity.

3.5. Data analysis

Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. A multi-collinearity test was conducted on the measure involved. There is no indication

of a critical multicollinearity issue among measurement indicators in this study with VIF values ranging from 1.191 to 1.494.

Descriptive analysis was used to examine the frequency and percentage of gender, ethnicity and academic performance among respondents involved in this study. Due to the different sample size and variation between groups, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis test were employed. Mann-Whitney U test was used to test academic achievement among students of different genders. Kruskal-Wallis test was used for groups of different personality dimensions and emotional intelligence. The smallest group is assigned a rank of one, while the largest number is assigned a rank of N. If the p-value is small, the researcher can reject the idea that the difference is due to random sampling and conclude that the populations have different distributions. If the p-value is large, the data do not give any reason to conclude that the distributions differ.

4. Results

Based on Table 1, a total of 396 respondents were involved in this study comprising 104 males (26.3 percent) and 292 are females (73.7 percent). The majority of the respondents are Malay (37.9 percent), followed by Chinese (31.3 percent), Indigenous ethnics of Borneo (23.5 percent), and Indians (7.3 percent). In assessing academic achievement, cumulative grade point average (CGPA) was used as an indicator. Most of the respondents have average academic performance (45.7 percent), followed by 30.8 percent with good performance, poor performance (11.9 percent), and 11.6 percent with excellent performance.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	104	26.3
	Female	292	73.7
Ethnicity	Malay	150	37.9
	Chinese	124	31.3
	Indians	29	7.3
	Indigenous ethnics of Borneo	93	23.5
CGPA	Poor	47	11.9
	Average	181	45.7
	Good	122	30.8
	Excellent	46	11.6

Table 2 presents the results of Mann-Whitney U test used to examine differences in academic achievement between male and female students. There is a statistically significant difference in CGPA across gender ($Z = -2.07$, $p = 0.039$) with male students ($M = 217.08$) scoring significantly higher CGPA compared to female students ($M = 191.88$).

Table 2: Mann-Whitney U Test Comparing the Mean Rank of Academic Achievement by Gender

	Gender	N	Mean rank	Z	Asymp. Sig. (p)
CGPA	Male	104	217.08	-2.0650	0.039
	Female	292	191.88		

The Kruskal-Wallis test was employed to examine differences in academic achievement among students of different ethnic backgrounds. Based on Table 3, students with Chinese ethnicity scored the highest mean rank ($M = 287.81$), followed by Indians ($M = 175.09$), the indigenous ethnics of Borneo ($M = 160.00$), and Malay (153.00). The results indicated a statistically significant difference in CGPA rank across ethnic groups ($X^2 = 127.14$, $p = 0.001$). The findings suggest that Chinese students had significantly higher CGPA compared to other ethnic groups.

Table 3: K-W Test Results Comparing the Mean Rank of Academic Achievement by Ethnicity

	Ethnicity	N	Mean rank	χ^2	Asymp. Sig. (p)
CGPA	Malay	150	153.00	127.135	0.001
	Chinese	124	287.81		
	Indians	29	175.09		
	Indigenous ethnics	93	160.11		
	Borneo				

Table 4 presents the mean rank score for different personality dimensions across academic achievement (CGPA). The results of Kruskal-Wallis test indicated no significant differences across CGPA categories for Extraversion ($\chi^2 = 2.79$, $p = 0.425$), Agreeableness ($\chi^2 = 1.07$, $p = 0.785$), and Conscientiousness ($\chi^2 = 2.45$, $p = 0.484$). However, there are significant differences found for Neuroticism ($\chi^2 = 13.303$, $p = 0.004$) and Openness to experience ($\chi^2 = 9.889$, $p = 0.020$) indicating that these personality dimensions may be associated with academic achievement.

Table 4: K-W Test Results Comparing the Mean Rank Values of Personality Dimensions across CGPA

Personality dimension	CGPA	N	Mean rank	χ^2	Asymp. Sig. (p)
Extraversion	Poor	47	207.61	2.792	0.425
	Average	181	206.11		
	Good	122	190.13		
	Excellent	46	181.46		
Agreeableness	Poor	47	213.49	1.066	0.785
	Average	181	198.72		
	Good	122	194.03		
	Excellent	46	194.18		
Conscientiousness	Poor	47	204.51	2.454	0.484
	Average	181	206.18		
	Good	122	191.06		
	Excellent	46	181.86		
Neuroticism	Poor	47	215.24	13.303	0.004
	Average	181	216.31		
	Good	122	170.84		
	Excellent	46	184.66		
Openness to experience	Poor	47	179.31	9.889	0.020
	Average	181	214.21		
	Good	122	196.95		
	Excellent	46	160.40		

Students with average CGPA had the highest mean rank for Neuroticism ($M=216.31$), followed by poor CGPA ($M= 215.24$), excellent CGPA ($M= 184.66$), and good CGPA ($M= 170.84$). The findings indicate that students with average CGPA exhibit higher Neuroticism compared to those with poor, good, and excellent CGPA. As for Openness to experience, students with average CGPA had the highest mean rank ($M=214.21$), while the lowest mean rank was among students with excellent CGPA ($M= 160.40$). The results indicate that students with average CGPA are more open to new experiences compared to their peers in other CGPA categories.

The mean rank score of emotional intelligence across academic achievement is presented in [Table 5](#). Students with average CGPA had the highest mean rank ($M=206.11$) for the ability to perceive emotions, followed by those with good CGPA ($M=202.16$), poor CGPA ($M= 197.04$), and excellent CGPA ($M= 160.35$). A similar pattern was identified with the ability to manage others' emotions and the ability to utilize emotions, where average and good CGPA groups consistently showed higher mean ranks in comparison to poor and excellent groups. As for the ability to manage one's own emotions, students with poor CGPA scored the highest ($M= 207.64$), while those with excellent CGPA scored the lowest ($M= 181.84$). A Kruskal-Wallis test indicated there is no significant difference across CGPA groups for the ability to perceive emotions ($\chi^2 = 6.071$, $p= 0.108$), the ability to manage one's own emotions ($\chi^2= 2.033$, $p= 0.566$), the ability to manage others' emotions ($\chi^2= 6.268$, $p= 0.099$), and the ability to utilize emotions ($\chi^2= 4.168$, $p= 0.244$).

Table 5: K-W Test Results Comparing the Mean Rank Values of Emotional Intelligence Levels by CGPA

Level of Emotional Intelligence	CGPA	N	Mean rank	χ^2	Asymp. Sig. (p)
Ability to perceive emotions	Poor	47	197.04	6.071	0.108
	Average	181	206.11		
	Good	122	202.16		
	Excellent	46	160.35		
Ability to manage one's emotions	Poor	47	207.64	2.0330	0.566
	Average	181	195.03		
	Good	122	206.41		
	Excellent	46	181.84		
Ability to manage other's emotions	Poor	47	197.12	6.268	0.099
	Average	181	205.39		
	Good	122	203.52		
	Excellent	46	159.50		
Ability to utilize emotions	Poor	47	182.97	4.168	0.244
	Average	181	205.09		
	Good	122	204.43		
	Excellent	46	172.70		

5. Conclusion

In this study, male students demonstrated superior academic performance compared to female students. This result deviates from the consensus of prior research, which generally reports a trend where female students achieve higher academic outcomes than their male counterparts ([Parajuli & Thapa, 2017](#)). Considering the cultural and contextual setting of this study, the results are not unexpected. It is a sociocultural

expectation in Malaysia that men are often associated with the role of primary family providers (Boo, 2021). It can only be fulfilled by securing a stable and well-paying career which is commonly attainable with strong academic performance. Moreover, the tendency toward more risk-taking behavior among men may contribute to their academic performance (Deveci & Aydın, 2018). The risk-taking behavior in an academic setting can manifest in challenging task engagement and exploring unconventional problem-solving approaches that enhance learning experience and foster resilience (Duell & Steinberg, 2018). As a result, it translates into better academic outcomes compared to more risk-averse counterparts.

Students of Chinese ethnicity academically outperform other ethnic groups in this study. It was followed by the Indians, an indigenous ethnic group of Borneo, and the Malays. The Chinese are commonly known for their hard work and effort orientation. They believe that success comes from effort rather than innate ability (Chen & Wong, 2015). In Chinese culture, children have a family obligation to repay their parents' sacrifice through academic and career achievement. Therefore, success is not just for individuals but a family obligation and is tied to financial security. In this study, Indian students were reported to have better academic performance compared to Bumiputera students. As a minority group in Malaysia, Indian students may place greater value on the opportunity of pursuing higher education in public institutions. These institutions offer more affordable fees and access to a broad range of scholars, which makes it attractive to those from minority communities (Nagappan & Mukherjee, 2023).

Students with average and poor CGPA scored higher in Neuroticism, while those who performed well academically (good and excellent CGPA) reported having lower-level Neuroticism. Neuroticism is associated with a tendency to be anxious, insecure, self-conscious, depressed, and temperamental (McShane & Von Glinow, 2021). Therefore, a higher level of neuroticism makes students sensitive to stress and hinders them from achieving higher academic achievement. Students who perform well academically (good and excellent CGPA) appear to manage their emotions more effectively, which could contribute to their stronger academic outcomes.

The results for Openness to Experience reveal a nuanced relationship with academic performance. Although Openness is typically linked to curiosity and cognitive engagement, which can enhance learning (Komarraju, Karau & Schmeck, 2009), this study found the highest scores among students with an average CGPA and the lowest among those with an excellent CGPA. This pattern suggests that highly open individuals may prioritize broad intellectual exploration over focused mastery, potentially limiting top academic achievement (De Raad & Schouwenberg, 1996). Conversely, students with an Excellent CGPA may adopt a more targeted approach, emphasizing depth in their field. These findings underscore that while traits like low Neuroticism consistently support academic success, the role of Openness appears complex and context dependent.

No significant relationship was observed between the four levels of emotional intelligence (EI) and academic achievement. This finding supports prior research questioning the predictive validity of ability-based EI models, such as the Mayer and Salovey (1997) framework, in academic contexts—even when cognitive ability and personality traits are controlled (Mayer, Roberts & Barsade, 2008). While EI is valuable for social and interpersonal functioning, its impact on standardized academic measures such as CGPA appears minimal. These results suggest that cognitive ability and

personality factors, particularly Conscientiousness and aspects of Openness, remain the dominant predictors of academic success, leaving little variance attributable to ability-based emotional processing.

Future research should examine how gender roles and risk-taking behaviors influence academic motivation across different contexts, as well as the impact of cultural and socioeconomic factors on academic performance among ethnic groups. Further studies are needed to clarify how Openness affects learning strategies and whether balancing breadth and depth improves outcomes. While emotional intelligence showed no direct effect, its potential indirect role in stress management and teamwork warrants investigation. Finally, longitudinal research is recommended to track how personality traits and emotional intelligence evolve and their cumulative impact on academic and career success.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

This study adhered strictly to all ethical standards governing research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, who were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. Participants were also informed that the study posed minimal risk and that they retained the right to withdraw at any time without any adverse consequences.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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