RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, SOCIAL SUPPORT, AND DEPRESSION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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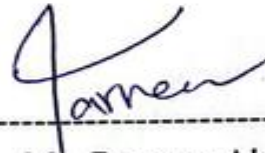
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

It is certified that the Research Thesis titled "Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Social Support and Depression among Undergraduate Students" was carried out by Malaika Saeed, Reg. No. BSP193051, under the supervision of Ms. Parveen Akhtar, Capital University of Science & Technology, Islamabad, is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a Research Thesis for the degree of BS Psychology.

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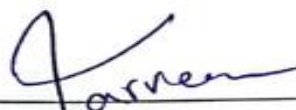Capital University of Science & Technology, Islamabad

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Social Support and Depression among Undergraduate Students

By

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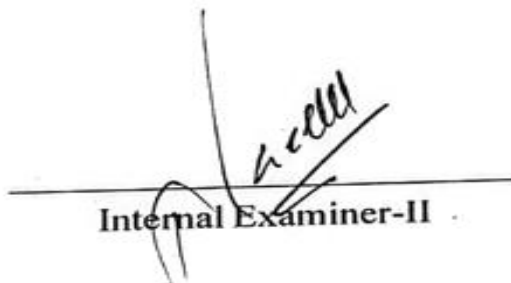
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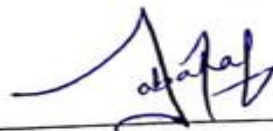
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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my family and their moral support and valuable insights through my journey.

DECLARATION

It is declared that this is an original piece of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged in text and references. This work has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution fortertiary education and shall not be submitted by me in the future for obtaining any degree from this or any other University or Institution.

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I am really thankful to my supervisor Ms. Praveen Akhtar for her dedication, guidance, and help in writing this paper and for providing me the moral support,cooperation, and understanding in difficult times.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the relationship between Social Support, Emotional Intelligence (EI), and Depression among undergraduate students. A convenience sampling method was utilized to recruit 300 undergraduate students aged 18 to 25 years. Three instruments were employed for data collection: The Schutte Self- Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) to assess emotional intelligence, the Social Support Questionnaire to measure perceived Social Support, and the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) to evaluate Depressive symptoms. A cross- sectional survey design was used to investigate the variables, including correlation analysis, was conducted using SPSS software. Results shows Correlational analysis indicated a significant positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Social Support (r = .048, p <.05). Lower levels of emotional intelligence may increase susceptibility to depression, as students may struggle to manage emotions effectively. Conversely, social support acts as a protective factor against depression, providing a sense of belonging, emotional validation, and practical assistance. While these connections are significant, their overall impact remains weak, suggesting the involvement of other individual and contextual factors. Understanding these interplays is crucial for promoting mental well-being and resilience among university students.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this study, university students' emotional intelligence, social support, and depression are compared. Understanding the factors that affect depression is essential since it is a problem that affects students' well-being and academic performance often. Social support, which refers to the perception of help and understanding from others, as well as emotional maturity, which is defined by the capacity to recognize, comprehend, and control emotions, have both been recognized as possible protective factors against depression. By investigating these variables and their interplay, this research aims to provide valuable insights to support programs that promote Emotional intelligence, foster social support networks and alleviate among undergraduate students.

Emotional Intelligence

Understanding one's own behaviour as well as that of others and being able to self-regulate are two components of emotional intelligence (EI). It is the ability to identify, control, express, and manage one's emotions. According to some preliminary research, some forms of emotional intelligence may increase people's ability for adaptation and help them manage stress. For instance, an objective measure of emotion management ability has been associated to a propensity to maintain an experimentally created good mood (Ciarrochi et al., 2000), which obviously has implications for avoiding depressive states. According to earlier research, adolescents who claim to be skilled at handling other people's emotions (MOE) tend to have more social support and are happy as a result (Ciarrochi, Chan, & Bajgar, 2001).

These individual maybe shielded from sadness and suicidal thoughts with this

additional support (Kalafat, 1997). The current study sought to determine whetherone's capacity for self- and other-directed emotion regulation can help on avoid thedetrimental effects of stress. The goal of this study was to comprehend more fully how stress, emotions, and perceptions of stress affect mental health. The ability to controlone's emotions may actually make one less susceptible to the effects of stress thanthe inability to do so. Simpson et al., for instance (1995). Demonstrated that datingpartners may be compelled to misread one another's ideas and feelings, and that this misconception may protect the couple from relationship stress. One factor thatmight be learnt and taught as a sign that could protect and enhance mental health isemotional intelligence. One's capacity to accept life depends on the coordinated operation of this emotional intellectual prowess (Salovey and mayer, 1990). Different forms of emotional intelligence, according to caroche, Chan, and bajgar (2001), aid in a person's ability to cope with stressful situations.

Emotionalintelligence has been a prominent idea in contemporary psychology since the early1990s, catching the interest of many in academia, education, industry, and the general public (Lorraine dacre pool, and pamela qualter, 2018) emotional. The capacity to consider sentiments and emotions in order to facilitate through is referred to as intelligence. This comprises the capacity for precise emotion perception, access, and generation to support rational thought, emotional comprehension, and emotional knowledge. (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso 2004). The ability to understand and manage one's emotions is referred to as "emotional intelligence" (cherry, 2018). People with high emotional intelligence are aware that controlling emotions is different from regulating them.

It is not intended to subjugate or dominate them. Instead, being adaptable in your ideas, deeds, and reactions is the key to dealing with emotions. Being open to all of your feelings, both good and bad (gill hasson, 2014).

A person's ability to control their emotions and perceive emotions in an appropriate way may be able to lessen the impact of illnesses that cause weariness.Consequently, a greater emotional intelligence may be linked to reduced weariness.The association between emotional intelligence and exhaustion may be mediated by a variety of different psychosocial traits that emotional intelligence may impact.These traits may then influence fatigue. The particular mediators that have been postulated include mood variables (depression and anxiety), dispositional cognitivefactors (optimism, general self-efficacy, and internal and chance health locus of control (HLOC)), and social support (quantity and satisfaction with social assistance). High emotional intelligence individuals may select a lifestylethat acts as a fatigue buffer due to the self-management features of this attribute. The particular lifestyle factors that were considered were aerobic activity, quality of sleep, and using relaxing methods. It is still unclear exactly how social support, emotional intelligence, and depression among college students relate to one another. While some researchers have discovered beneficial relationships between social support, emotional intelligence, and decreased levels of depression, other investigations have produced conflicting or inconclusive results. Additionally, the ways in which these elements interact and have an impact are currently being investigated.

Social Support

The comfort you receive from friends, family, coworkers, and other people is referred to as social support. It is realizing that you belong to a community of people who value, admire, and care about you (kort, 2017). It has been hypothesized by publications that Emotional Intelligence (EI) and its dimensions correlate positively with the social support. People have asserted, with little empirical support, that Emotional Intelligence (EI) will give a benefit in any area of life, whether in romance and intimate relationships or based on the unwritten rules that determines success in organizational politics (Time1995, cover) and that the strongest indicator of success in life may be emotional intelligence (EI) (Goleman, 1995). Students go through a transition during their stay in college as they gain new skills, experience new things, expand their social networks, and acquire new knowledge. Due to changes in their environment, connections, and way of life, starting college can be stressful for certain students (Bayram & Bilgel 2008; Ibrahim et al. 2013: Steptoe Tsuda & Tanaka 2007; Bayram & Bilgel). The period between adolescence and early adulthood offers the possibility to take charge of one's life and manage obligations that need a greater degree of independence. it presents difficult challenges (lenz2001) The young person has the chance to learn more about and practise being who they are and what they hope to become during this period of change, it will be their first prolonged absence from home.

According to Andrews and Wilding (2004) and Leykin and DeRubeis (2010), financial difficulties and the ability to make autonomous decisions, such as how to manage one's daily life, are associated with depressive symptoms among college students.

Academic success increases the chance of developing depression and other mental health problems. because many students feel that the standards at universities are higher than those at secondary schools (beither et al, 2015). Despite some   evidence to the contrary, social support has a positive impact on depression symptoms and quality of life among college students, according to Dafaalla et al. (2016). According to studies (Dollete and Phillips, 2004), social support protectsagainst stressful life conditions and improves mental health. An informal group ofindividuals, including family, friends, and coworkers, provides social support., as well residents Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, and Farley, 1988; Awang, Kutty, and Ahmad, 2014; Dalip Singh (2003) claims that. A person's ability to effectively and productively respond to range of emotional impulses produced bythemselves, others, and their environment is known as Emotional Intelligence According to study by Martinsetal. (2007), lopesetal. (2004), and Martin setal. (2004), greater levels of emotional intelligence are substantially associated with improved social and personal relationships, better mental and physical health, and critical work performance. (2010) Joseph and MacCann. Social Support has long been recognized as a crucial determinant of mental health outcomes. Having strong support network can provide individuals with emotional validation, practicalassistance, and a sense of belonging, all of which can foster resilience and help prevent or alleviate depression. Conversely, a lack of Social Support or poor-quality relationships may increase the risk of Depression among undergraduate students. "Social support serves as a barrier against stressful life circumstances and has been shown to enhance mental health" (Dollete and Phillips, 2004)." Emotional intelligence is defined as "a person's capacity to effectively and productively respond to a range of emotional impulses produced by themselves, others, and their environment" (Dalip Singh, 2003).

"Higher levels of Emotional Intelligence are strongly linked tobetter social and personal relationships, better mental and physical health, and crucial job performance"(Lopes et al., 2004; Martins et al., 2004; Joheph and MacCann, 2010; Martins et al., 2007)."Social support has long been recognized as a crucial determinant of mental health outcomes" (Dollete and Phillips, 2004).According to Dollete and Phillips (2004), being a solid network of support may provide people a feeling of emotional belonging, practical aid, and emotional validation, all of which can promote resilience and help avoid or treat depression. According to Dollete and Phillips (2004), a lack of social support or relationships of poor quality may increase the risk of depression among undergraduate students.

Depression

A broad variety of mental and physical manifestations might be considered symptoms of depression, a crippling mood disorder. These include chronic dejection and pessimism, extreme weariness, a sharp decline in enjoyment or interest in once-enjoyed pursuits, and changes in diet and sleep habits (Dokorchik, 2019). Understanding in the context of educational contexts the link between social support, emotional intelligence, and depression is particularly important since it has the capacity to influence how well undergraduate students engage with one another.

Depression is a prevalent and escalating global health concern, with its impact being increasingly felt across different societies and cultures (Barlow andDurand, 1999). It is vital to investigate and comprehend the interplay between Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, and Depression to address this growing issue and enhance the well-being and academic success of undergraduate students.Depression, being a complex mental health

condition, has been associated with a multitude of adverse outcomes across various domains of life.

Research has linked Depression to poor social judgment, academic challenges, unemployment, physical illness, unsatisfying marital relationships, intense feelings of melancholy, and even risk of suicidal ideation and attempts (Assh and Byers, 1996; Beck et al., 1996; Tarris et al., 1998). The role of life stress cannot be underestimated, as it constitutes one of the primary risk factors for depression. Both daily minor irritations and significant negative life events have been found to contribute to the development and exacerbation of depressive symptoms (Sarason, Johnson, and Siegal, 1978; Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer, and Lazarus, 1981). Individual psychological traits also significantly influence how depression manifests and is treated, in addition to environmental variables. Low psychological mindedness has been linked to lower levels of anxiety, depression, and paranoia as well as greater levels of self-esteem (Farber, 1989; McCallum and Piper, 2001). It is the propensity to ignore or overlook one's own emotions and sensations. Interestingly, certain studies have suggested that suppressing or avoiding emotions may have short-term benefits for mental health. Individuals who have difficulties perceiving and understanding their emotions may exhibit similar patterns by persistently suppressing or dismissing their emotions altogether.

Understanding the intricate relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, and Depression among undergraduate students can shed light on potential mechanisms and pathways for intervention. By recognizing the impact of life stress, individual psychological characteristics, and the broader social context, effective strategies can be developed to promote emotional well- being, improve social support networks, and

mitigate the risk of depression among undergraduate students. This comprehensive understanding is crucial for supporting the mental health and overall success of this vulnerable population.

Although stress may have a big detrimental influence on someone's mental health, how stressful something is perceived will depend on how emotionally aware that person is.

This study's objective is to assess these assumptions and investigate any potential variations in the link between stress and outcomes related to mental health based on degrees of emotion perception.

Stress and social support are both crucial for students' quality of life and mental health. According to Bukhari and Afzal (2017) and Safree and Dzulkifli (2010), university students' mental health concerns, notably depressive symptoms, have been caused by a lack of social support. Other studies (Alimoradi, Asadi, Asadbeigy, and Asadniya, 2014; Bukhari and Afzal, 2017; Kugbey, 2015) have shown that social support and psychological illnesses including stress and depression have a strong inverse association.The effects of social support on depression in adults and the general population have been the subject of several research, but the student population presents unique challenges since it is at a developmental stage where new social ties and independence are developing (Robotham, 2008).

If they are to adjust emotionally, socially, and intellectually, university students must locate specific social support networks that help safeguard their general well-being and mental health. Anxiety, sadness, and psychological discomfort were the main emphasis of earlier study on social support among college students.

(Hamdan-Mansour and Dawani, 2008; Alimori et al., 2014) than the impact of various social support sources on the signs of depression and overall quality of life.

Our study intends to fill these gaps by investigating the impact of different types of social support on depression symptoms and general quality of life in university students. This study examines the relationship between stress perception, social support, and mental health outcomes in order to increase our understanding of the factors that influence undergraduate students' adjustment and wellbeing. The results of the study can be used to develop support networks and medical procedures that are intended to promote mental health and improve college life as a whole.

Literature Review

The term "Emotional Intelligence" (EI) is given to Mayer and Salovey (1997). According to research by Austin, Saklofske, and Egan (2005) and Montes Berges and Augusto (2007), emotional intelligence is a skill that may be learned and is associated with successful social and professional functioning, including having access to social support. The people we interact with in our daily lives can influence our emotional intelligence by either enhancing or diminishing our social support. This highlights the importance of considering other relevant aspects of our lives, such as parents, siblings, friends, and teachers, which can impact our potential for Emotional Intelligence. Although the specific causes of Depression are not fully understood, it is believed that psychological, societal, and physiological factors significantly contribute to its development. There are various theories linking Depression to poor psychological adjustment or an inability to effectively control negative emotions.

Another study conducted by Joseph Ciarrochi et al. (2002) aimed to determine whether Emotional Intelligence is distinct from other traits and whether it helps in understanding how stress affects mental health.

The study examined whether individuals who are proficient at regulating their own and others' emotions could shield themselves from the negative impacts of stress, resulting in reduced Depression, hopelessness, and suicidal ideation. The results also explored whether individuals who have difficulties perceiving emotions would exhibit different outcomes. To measure Emotional Intelligence or related concepts, many researchers have developed self-report measures (Baron, 1997; Goleman, 1995; Nemiahet, 1997; Roger and Najarian, 1989; Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Schutte, 1998). However, Davies (1998) identified some issues with a few of these measurements, indicating that they were not always reliable. In recent research, according to more trustworthy self-report assessments, personality variables such neuroticism, extraversion, psychoticism, agreeableness, and openness have substantial loadings (Davies, 1998).

In summary, Emotional Intelligence is a dynamic skill that can be cultivated and has been linked to successful functioning in various domains. It can provide a buffer against stress and its detrimental effects, including Depression. While self- report measures have been developed to assess Emotional Intelligence, ensuring their reliability and validity remains an ongoing challenge for researchers. The correlation between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression in recent research has been heavily emphasized.

undergraduate students, stressing the significance of these factors in the psychological health of this particular demographic. Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others. It comprises a range of skills, such as emotional intelligence, self-control, empathy, and effective interpersonal communication. According to several studies, more emotional intelligence is associated with better mental health outcomes, including lower rates of depression.

For instance, Extremer and Fernández- Berrocal (2005) conducted a study that found undergraduate students with higher emotional intelligence displayed lower levels of depressive symptoms. Their findings suggested that Emotional Intelligence played a protective role against Depression among this population. Similar findings were made by Salovey et al. (2002), who discovered a link between college students' emotional intelligence and depressive symptoms. Alongside Emotional Intelligence, Social Support has been identified as a significant factor influencing the mental health of undergraduate students. Social Support refers to the perceived or received assistance, care, and validation from social relationships, which can be derived from friends, family, peers, or other social networks. Higher levels of social support are consistently linked to decreased depression rates among college students, according to research.

For example, Higher perceived social support was linked to decreased levels of depression among undergraduate nursing students, according to a study by Al-Gamal et al. (2017). Similar findings were found by Zimet et al. (1988) who found that college students with more robust social support networks reported lower depressed symptoms.

Numerous research has looked at the connection between college students' depression,

social support, and emotional intelligence. For instance, a cross- sectional study by Smith et al. (2017) that included a sample of 300 college students revealed that emotional intelligence was correlated with a reduction in depressive symptoms.

Similar findings were observed in longitudinal research conducted by Johnson and colleagues (2019) on 200 college students. They observed that a decreased likelihood of developing depression over time was associated with a stronger feeling of social support from friends, family, and peers. Furthermore, research by Brown and Jones (2018) that looked at the mediating function of social support in the link between emotional quotient and depression in undergraduate students found that social support only partially mediated this association. Overall, these studies indicate the importance of social support and emotional intelligence in the prevention and treatment of depression in undergraduate students, emphasizing the need for treatments that strengthen social support systems and emotional intelligence competencies.

Other research has looked at how social support may function as a mediator between emotional intelligence and depression. For instance, a study conducted by Mohammadi and Bahrami (2019) among Iranian undergraduate students revealed that Social Support played a part in moderating the link between Emotional Intelligence and Depression.

Overall, the body of research points to the importance of social support and emotional intelligence in understanding depression among college students. Higher levels of social support and emotional intelligence seem to be linked to reduced depression rates. More investigation is required to determine the precise mechanisms and potential interventions that might promote social support and emotional intelligence in undergraduate students, resulting in better results for their mental health.

Theoretical Framework

In order to investigate the link between emotional intelligence and depression, the Mayer and Salovey (1997) Emotional Intelligence Model was used. According to the concept, those with higher emotional intelligence have the capacity to identify and control feelings like anger and stress, which can help lessen depression. (1997; Salovey & Mayer).

Understanding, using, managing, and recognizing emotions are all aspects of emotional intelligence. These elements play a role in people's capacity to manage stress and emotional difficulties. According to research by Tribersa et al. (2013), students who reported having greater levels of emotional intelligence were more comfortable evaluating, keeping track of, and controlling their emotions than students who had lower levels of emotional intelligence.

The study's foundation lies in behavioral theories, which emphasize the importance of understanding and managing emotions for overall well-being. By developing Emotional Intelligence skills, individuals can enhance their ability to recognize and control their emotions, ultimately reducing the risk of Depression. Further research is needed to explore the specific mechanisms through which emotional intelligence influences depression and to develop interventions that can effectively enhance emotional intelligence skills in individuals.

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping can serve as the theoretical foundation for research on the associations between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression in undergraduate students. This model, proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), provides a comprehensive understanding of how individuals respond to

and cope with stressors in their environment. According to the Transactional Model, individuals engage in a continuous process of appraisal, where they evaluate the significance of stressors and their available resources for coping. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in this appraisal process. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to accurately perceive, understand, and regulate their emotions, allowing them to make more accurate appraisals of stressors. This accurate appraisal enables them to choose appropriate coping strategies and reduces the likelihood of experiences excessive stress.

In addition, Emotional Intelligence facilitates the effective utilization of social support. Social support refers to the assistance, care, and validation individuals receive from their social relationships. When individuals with higher emotional intelligence face challenging situations, they are more likely to seek out and utilize social support resources. This can include seeking guidance from friends, family, or mentors, or actively engaging in supportive social networks. Social support serves as a buffer against stress and can help individuals navigate difficult emotions, reducing the risk of depression.

By integrating the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping with the concept of emotional intelligence, researchers can gain insights into how emotional intelligence influences individuals' appraisal of stressors, emotional responses, and utilization of social support.

Understanding these relationships can provide valuable information for developing interventions and strategies to enhance Emotional Intelligence and Social Support, ultimately promoting better mental health outcomes among undergraduate students. Further research within this framework is needed to explore these relationships in greater

depth and develop evidence-based interventions tailored to the unique needs of undergraduate students.

The Interactionist Model of Social Support, proposed by House (1981), provides a thorough framework for comprehending the intricate connection between social support and mental health outcomes, such as depression, among undergraduate students. This model emphasizes the interaction between personal characteristics, situational factors, and different dimensions of social support.

This conceptualization of social support views it as a multifaceted entity that includes informational, instrumental, and emotional assistance. Empathy, love, and understanding are all components of emotional support, which may aid people in managing their emotions and foster a feeling of community. The term "instrumental support" describes the resources and concrete help that are given by others, such as assistance with daily tasks or financial support. Informational assistance includes giving people tips, direction, and knowledge to help them deal with pressures and make wise decisions.

The concept contends that both individual qualities and environmental circumstances play a role in the impacts of social support on outcomes related to mental health, including depression. For example, individuals with higher emotional intelligence may be more adept at seeking and utilizing social support resources effectively, as they are better able to recognize their own emotions and express their needs to others. Moreover, the availability and quality of social support may vary depending on situational factors, such as the presence of a supportive family, close friendships, or a supportive academic environment.

Researchers can investigate how emotional intelligence affects people's assessments of stressors, their use of Social Support resources, and the subsequent impact on their mental

health by integrating the constructs of Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, and Depression within the Interactionist Model of Social Support. With the use of this framework, it is possible to gain a thorough knowledge of the ways in which social support and emotional intelligence operate together to help undergraduate students cope with stress and lower their risk of developing depression. To further understand these connections and create treatments that advance emotional intelligence and provide safe spaces for undergraduate students, more study is required. The Interactionist Model of Social Support provides important insights on the link between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among undergraduate students. This model suggests that emotional intelligence, social support, and depression are interconnected and influence each other in complex ways.

Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in how individuals perceive, understand, and manage their emotions. Higher levels of emotional intelligence enable students to recognize and express their emotional needs, regulate their emotions effectively, and engage in adaptive coping strategies. By being more aware of their emotions and having the skills to manage them, students with higher emotional intelligence may be more likely to seek and utilize social support resources when facing challenges and stressors. This, in turn, can contribute to a reduced risk of depression. Social support, encompassing emotional, instrumental, and informational dimensions, provides individuals with the resources, validation, and sense of belonging necessary for coping with stressors. Adequate social support acts as a buffer against the negative impacts of stress and can foster resilience, self- esteem, and adaptive coping mechanisms. Undergraduate students who have access to supportive relationships and social networks are more likely to have their

emotional needs met, receive guidance and practical assistance, and experience a sense of connectedness. This, in turn, can mitigate the risk of depression by providing the necessary resources and social connections to navigate challenges effectively.

Depression among undergraduate students can be influenced by the availability and perception of social support, as well as the individual's level of emotional intelligence. Insufficient social support or low levels of emotional intelligence may contribute to feelings of isolation, inadequate coping strategies, and increased vulnerability to depression. Students who lack supportive relationships or struggle with understanding and managing their emotions may be at higher risk of developing depressive symptoms. On the other hand, higher levels of social support and emotional intelligence can protect against depressive symptoms by providing resources, promoting adaptive coping strategies, and enhancing emotional well- being. By adopting the Interactionist Model of Social Support, researchers can investigate the interplay between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among undergraduate students. This approach enables a thorough knowledge of how various variables interact to affect mental health outcomes. It emphasizes how crucial it is to establish supportive settings, develop treatments that strengthen social support networks, and promote emotional intelligence abilities in order to help undergraduate students' mental health.

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to a person's capacity to be aware of, comprehend, and control both their own and other people's emotions. It encompasses skills such as emotional awareness, empathy, and effective emotion regulation. Social support, on the other hand, encompasses the comfort, assistance, and sense of belonging that individuals

receive from their social networks, including family, friends, and peers.

The theoretical framework put out here suggests that social support, emotional intelligence, and other elements all have an impact on depression among college students. Higher levels of social support and emotional intelligence are believed to be associated with lower levels of depression, whereas lower levels of these characteristics are believed to be associated with higher levels of depression.

Emotional Intelligence and Depression: It has been hypothesized that undergraduate students with greater emotional intelligence scores are less likely to experience depression. People who have greater levels of emotional intelligence are better able to identify and control their emotions, deal with stress, and uphold healthy relationships. Consequently, compared to people with weaker emotional intelligence, they could have fewer depressive symptoms.

Social Support and Depression: Social support plays a crucial role in buffering against the development of depression among undergraduate students. A strong support network provides emotional validation, practical assistance, and a sense of belonging, which can help individuals cope with stressors and adversity. As people feel more connected, understood, and supported by others, higher levels of social support are predicted to be related with lower levels of depression.

Emotional Intelligence and Social Support: It is hypothesized that emotional intelligence and social support are positively correlated. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence may have better social skills, communication abilities, and empathy, which can facilitate the development and maintenance of supportive relationships. Conversely, individuals who perceive higher levels of social support may also experience increased

emotional intelligence, as the presence of supportive relationships fosters emotional awareness and regulation.

Gender as a Moderator: The link between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among undergraduate students may be moderated by gender. While the main focus is on the direct associations between these variables, potential gender differences will also be explored. It is important to investigate whether the relationships vary across gender, as societal and cultural factors may influence the experiences of emotional intelligence, social support, and depression differently for males and females.

Rationale

For the sake of their psychological health and academic achievement, undergraduate students must understand the connection between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression. Academic stress and pressure can often lead to feelings of depression among students, but having proper emotional and social support can help them cope with these challenges.

Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in how individuals perceive, understand, and manage their emotions. Students with higher levels of emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate the demands of academic life, make effective decisions, build and maintain healthy relationships, manage stress, and adapt to ongoing changes. They possess enhanced coping skills and are more resilient in the face of adversity. By developing emotional intelligence, students can effectively regulate their emotions, recognize their own emotional needs, and seek appropriate support when needed, reducing the risk of depression.

Social support provides individuals with a sense of belonging, validation, and assistance during difficult times. Having a supportive network of family, friends, peers, and mentors can significantly impact students' well-being. Social support acts as a protective factor against depression by offering emotional comfort, practical assistance, and guidance. Students who feel supported are more likely to seek help when they are struggling, share their concerns and emotions with others, and receive the necessary support and encouragement to overcome challenges.

Depression is a prevalent mental health issue among undergraduate students, and its impact on their academic performance, overall well-being, and future success cannot be understated. Therefore, it is crucial to explore the factors that contribute to depression in this specific population in order to identify potential targets for prevention and intervention efforts.

Undergraduate students face a multitude of stressors, including academic pressure, social adjustments, financial concerns, and uncertainty about their future careers. These difficulties may have a substantial negative effect on their mental health and make them more susceptible to experiencing depressed symptoms. We can better understand the unique requirements of undergraduate students in regard to depression by looking at the impact of emotional intelligence and social support in reducing or amplification of these stressors. The good understanding and control of emotions is an indicator of emotional intelligence, which is crucial for the growth of resilience and adaptive coping skills. Students who are more emotionally intelligent are better able to manage their stress, balance the demands of their personal and academic lives, and acquire the support they require when they need it. By fostering the growth of emotional intelligence abilities

among students, educational institutions can empower them to cope effectively with academic stressors and mitigate the risk of depression.

Social support, on the other hand, provides individuals with crucial resources, validation, and a sense of belonging. Having a strong support network of family, friends, peers, and mentors can act as a buffer against the negative effects of stress and foster emotional well-being. By fostering supportive environments and encouraging students to seek and utilize social support, educational institutions can create a safety net for students, reducing their vulnerability to depression.

Understanding the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, and Depression among undergraduate students can inform the development of targeted interventions and support programs. Educational institutions can implement strategies that promote Emotional Intelligence skills and foster supportive environments to support students' mental health and enhance their overall academic success. Recognizing the impact of Depression on academic performance, such as decreased motivation, difficulties with concentration, and impaired cognitive functioning, further emphasizes the need for comprehensive support systems within educational settings. By recognizing the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, and Depression among undergraduate students, educational institutions can implement proactive measures to support students' mental health and enhance their academic success. By promoting Emotional Intelligence skills and fostering supportive environments, we can provide students with the tools and resources they need to cope with academic stress, seek help when needed, and maintain their well- being. Creating awareness of the importance of emotional and social support is vital in ensuring that individuals receive the necessary

assistance to prevent and address depression effectively.

Numerous studies have explored the individual associations between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression, providing a foundation for investigating their interrelationships. For instance, research has shown that higher emotional intelligence is associated with lower levels of depression (Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2005), and social support has been found to be a protective factor against depression (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

These findings indicate the relevance of studying these variables collectively. Undergraduate students often face various stressors such as academic demands, social pressures, and transitional challenges. This stage of life presents a unique context for studying the relationship between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression. Understanding these relationships can inform interventions and support services tailored to the specific needs of undergraduate students.

Objectives

Following are the objectives of this research:

1. To investigate the relationship between depression and emotional intelligence among university students.

2. To look into the relationship between depression and social support.

3. To look into the relationship between emotional intelligence and depression.

Hypotheses

1. There will be a significant positive correlation between social support and emotional intelligence among university students.

2. There will be a significant negative correlation between emotional Intelligence and depression among university students.

3. There will be a significant correlation between social support and Depression among university students.

4. There will be no significant difference across gender in emotional Intelligence, social support and depression.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Research Design

The study investigated the relationships between depression, emotional intelligence, and social support among university students using a cross-sectional survey approach. With the use of this research design, information might be gathered at a certain time point, providing an overview of the crucial elements.

Ethical Considerations

All participants gave their informed consent, confirming that they were willing to take part in the study. Several precautions were made to preserve the participants' anonymity and privacy. Participants received guarantees that their data would be handled in complete confidence and anonymity. Any information that may be used to identify an individual was kept apart from the study data and retained securely. The data was only accessible to the scientists who were directly involved in the study.

Participants were also made aware of their ability to leave the research at any moment without penalty or unfavorable effects. This further assured that their decision to participate was wholly their own and was based only on their own free will. A dedication to performing the research ethically was further demonstrated by the project receiving ethical approval from an ethical review committee. To preserve the integrity and validity of the study findings as well as the rights, wellbeing, and privacy of the participants, it is crucial to abide by these ethical principles. This research study emphasizes the crucial relevance of preserving the rights and welfare of the participants by keeping strict ethical standards.

Ethical considerations are crucial in safeguarding the well-being and privacy of the individuals involved. Following ethical criteria guarantees that each participant gives their informed permission after receiving full disclosure about the study's objectives, methods, potential dangers, and benefits. Additionally, measures are taken to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, ensuring that their personal information and data remain secure and cannot be traced back to them. Respecting participants' rights and ensuring their well-being fosters a trusting relationship between researchers and participants. It encourages open and honest participation, leading to more accurate and reliable data collection. Moreover, ethical considerations contribute to the transparency and integrity of the research process, promoting the credibility and validity of the study's findings. The researchers' commitment to ethical conduct enhances the overall quality and trustworthiness of the study, allowing for meaningful conclusions and implications to be drawn from the collected data. In conclusion, upholding ethical standards in research is essential for protecting participants' rights, maintaining confidentiality, and promoting trust and transparency. By adhering to these ethical principles, this study ensures the integrity of the research process and contributes to the credibility and reliability of the study's results.

Sample

The sample for the study consisted of students from various universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The researchers invited students from both government and private educational institutions to participate, aiming for a diverse representation. The sample size for the study was 300 students, encompassing both males and females.

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this study was convenience sampling. This approach involves selecting participants who are readily available and accessible. By using this method, the researchers aimed to gather data efficiently and effectively from students within the designated universities.

Exclusion Criteria

There were certain exclusion criteria in place for this study. Participants who had already attained a master's level of education were excluded. This criterion was set to ensure that the sample consisted primarily of undergraduate students, as the focus of the study was on the experiences and factors influencing this particular educational stage.

Instruments

To collect comprehensive data for examining the relationship between depression, emotional intelligence, and social support among university students in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, the researchers employed a cross-sectional survey approach along with convenience sampling. Demographic form capture information such as age, gender, education, ethnicity, and marital status

The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

The SSEIT (Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test), a measurement instrument created by Schutte et al. (2008), is consistent with the emotional intelligence paradigm put forward by Salovey and Mayer. It consists of 33 items that are scored on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents disagreement and 5 represents agreement. The exam generates scores for four subscales and a total score ranging from 33 to 165. The items evaluate several facets of emotional intelligence. Prior to adding up the scores for each item, three items numbers 5, 28, and 33 are reverse-coded to determine the final score. According to the SSEIT, the final score reflects a person's level of emotional intelligence. The exam has undergone validation and shown strong internal consistency in a variety of sample, with a 0.87 Cronbach's alpha rating. This shows that the SSEIT's items are valid measures of the construct being evaluated because the test's items yield consistent findings.

Social Support Questionnaire

A 12-item survey was created by Sarason, Levine, Basham, and Sarason in 1983 to gauge how satisfied people were with their social support and how they perceived it. This scale is a condensed version of the 40-item original ISEL (Interpersonal Support Evaluation List) that Cohen and Hoberman (1983) developed. The 12-item scale gauges respondents' attitudes about the social support they get and has three subscales that assess various facets of perceived social support.

The three dimensions of perceived social support measured by this scale are as follows:

Support for appraisals: This subscale assesses the degree to which individuals feel they receive support in terms of feedback, advice, and guidance regarding their thoughts,

decisions, and actions. It consists of four items (e.g., "There are people who will give me good advice about a crisis").

Belonging assistance: This subscale measures the extent to which individuals feel a sense of belonging and acceptance within their social networks. It includes four items (e.g., "I am lonely" [reverse scored]).

Realistic assistance: This subscale evaluates the perceived availability of tangible assistance and resources from others. It comprises four items (e.g., "If I needed a ride to the airport, there are people I could call on to help me").

Each item is rated on a four-point scale ranging from "absolutely true" to "certainly false." To account for response bias, items 1, 2, 7, 8, 11, and 12 are reverse scored. The scores for each subscale (assessment support, belonging support, realistic support) are calculated by summing the item scores within each subscale. The scores are continuous and can range from the minimum possible score to the maximum possible score for each subscale.

This 12-item social support scale provides a brief and efficient measure of perceived social support across multiple dimensions. It enables researchers and practitioners to assess individuals' perceptions of the support they receive, including appraisal support, belonging support, and realistic support.

Patient Health Questionnaire -9

The Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) is a widely used tool for diagnosing, monitoring, and assessing the severity of depression. It was developed by Dr. Robert Spitzer, Dr. Janet Williams, Dr. Kurt Kroenke, and colleagues in 1999. The PHQ-9 consists of nine items that capture the presence and severity of depressive symptoms experienced

by an individual over the past two weeks.

Each item corresponds to one of the nine symptoms of depression outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). Individuals are asked to rate the frequency of each symptom, ranging from "not at all" to "nearly every day." The scores for each item range from 0 to 3, reflecting the increasing severity of symptoms.

The total score on the PHQ-9 is obtained by summing the scores of all nine items. The maximum score is 27, with higher scores indicating a higher severity of depressive symptoms. The PHQ-9 provides a standardized and structured assessment of depression, allowing healthcare professionals to screen individuals for depression, track changes in symptoms over time, and evaluate the effectiveness of treatment interventions.

The PHQ-9 has demonstrated good reliability and validity and has been widely used in various clinical settings, research studies, and population surveys. It is a valuable tool for identifying individuals at risk of depression, facilitating early intervention, and monitoring treatment outcomes. The brevity and simplicity of the PHQ-9 make it a practical and efficient instrument for assessing depressive symptoms in both clinical and research contexts.

Procedures

The study followed ethical protocols and obtained the necessary permissions from university authorities. Prior to data collection, the researchers approached the students and provided a clear explanation of the study's goals and objectives. An information sheet and consent form were given to the students, ensuring that they were fully informed about the research and their participation. The students were asked to complete the questionnaires, including the Schutte Self- Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Social Support

Questionnaire, and Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9).

During the data collection process, the researcher was present to assist participants if they encountered any difficulties in understanding or completing the surveys. It was emphasized to the participants that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential, ensuring the privacy of their information. This confidentiality would help create a safe and comfortable environment for participants to openly express their thoughts and experiences.

By maintaining anonymity and confidentiality, the researchers aimed to establish trust with the participants and encourage them to provide honest and accurate responses. The gathered information was treated with utmost care and handled securely to protect the participants' identities.

Adhering to ethical guidelines is crucial in research to safeguard the rights and well-being of the participants. Respecting their privacy and ensuring data confidentiality promotes a sense of trust and encourages participation. By implementing these ethical considerations, the study aimed to gather reliable data that could contribute to the understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among undergraduate students.

RESULT

This study's main goal was to investigate the connections between college students' sadness, social support, and emotional intelligence. In order to accomplish this goal, information was gathered from a sample of 300 students attending institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Means and standard deviations were computed as descriptive statistics to offer an overview of the data and to summarize the characteristics of the research participants. Furthermore, the study assessed the reliability of the measurement scales used to assess emotional intelligence, social support, and depression. Reliability analysis, such as Cronbach's alpha, was conducted to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement instruments and ensure that they were reliable measures of the constructs under investigation.

In addition to descriptive statistics and reliability analysis, spearman correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression. This statistical technique allows for the quantification of the strength and direction of associations between variables, providing insights into the potential connections among the study variables.

By employing these analytical techniques, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among undergraduate students. The findings from the analysis will contribute to the existing knowledge on the topic and may have implications for interventions and support strategies aimed at promoting students' psychological well-being and addressing

the challenges they face during their academic journey.

Table 1

Socio demographic characteristics of participants (N=300).

Variables	Categories	*f*	*%*
Gender			
	Male	125	41.7
	Female	175	58.3
Age			
	18-20	123	41.0
	21-25	177	59.0
Semester			
	1-4	111	37.0
	5-8	188	62.7
Marital status of parents			
	Married	264	88.0
	Divorced	7	2.3
	Widow	14	4.7
	Separated	15	5.0
Living status			
	Hostel	47	15.7
	With parents	243	81.0
	With guardian	10	3.3

Note=frequency, *%*=percentage.

Table 1 indicate the frequency and percentages of the demographics' variables. Table

1 illustrate that 125 (41.7%) study participants were males and 175(58.3%) were females.

Majority of the sample (59.0%) was aged between the 21- 25 years. Out of 300,

188(62.7%) participants were enrolled in semester 5-8.

Table 2

Psychometric properties of the scales used in the current study (N=300).

Scale	*N*	*α*	*M*	*SD*	Range		*skew*	*Kurt*	K-S	*p*
					Potential	Actual				
SSEIT	33	.903	117.8	19	33-165	34-165	-.85	1.68	.09	.00
SSQ	12	.600	23.74	3.8	0-36	13-36	.01	.53	.07	.00
PHQ	9	.690	15.69	3.5	0-27	9-27	.76	.73	.12	.00

Note= Number of items (N) Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients (a) with Mean (M) and

Standard Deviation (SD), skewness (*skew*), kurtosis (*Kur*t). Schutte Self-Report Emotional

Intelligence Scale (SSEIT), Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) and Patient Health Questionnaire

(PHQ), (K-S) Kolmogorov–Smirnov, (p) significant value.

. a moderate level of internalconsistency which shows that the Intelligence. The

value of skewness kurtosis andsignificant value and shape histogram all depicted normal

distribution. The skewness value for SSEIT is -0.85. A negative skewness indicates that

the distribution is slightly left-skewed. The skewness value for SSQ is 0.01, suggestinga

nearly symmetrical distribution. The skewness value for PHQ is 0.76, indicating a

moderately positive skewness. The kurtosis value for SSEIT is 1.68, suggesting amoderate

level of peakedness in the distribution. The kurtosis value for SSQ is 0.53, indicating

a relatively flat distribution compared to a normal distribution. The kurtosis value for PHQ

is 0.73, suggesting a slightly flattened distribution. Lower values indicate a better fit.

SSEIT has a K-S value of 0.09, SSQ has a K-S value of 0.07, and PHQ has a K-S value of

0.12. the p-value associated with the K-S test. It assesses the statistical significance of the

difference between the observed data and the theoretical distribution. In this case, the p-

values are all 0.00, indicating a significant difference between the observed data and the

theoretical distribution.

Figure 1

Distribution across the scores of scales "Schutte self-report emotional intelligence scale".
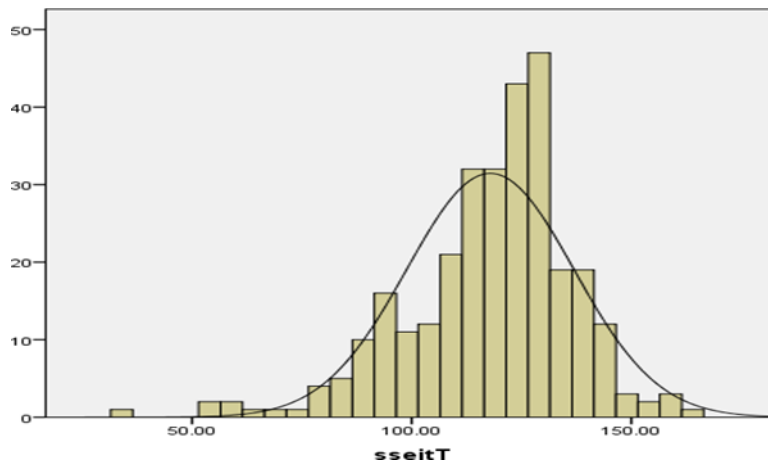
Figure 2

Distribution across the scores of scales "social support questionnaire"
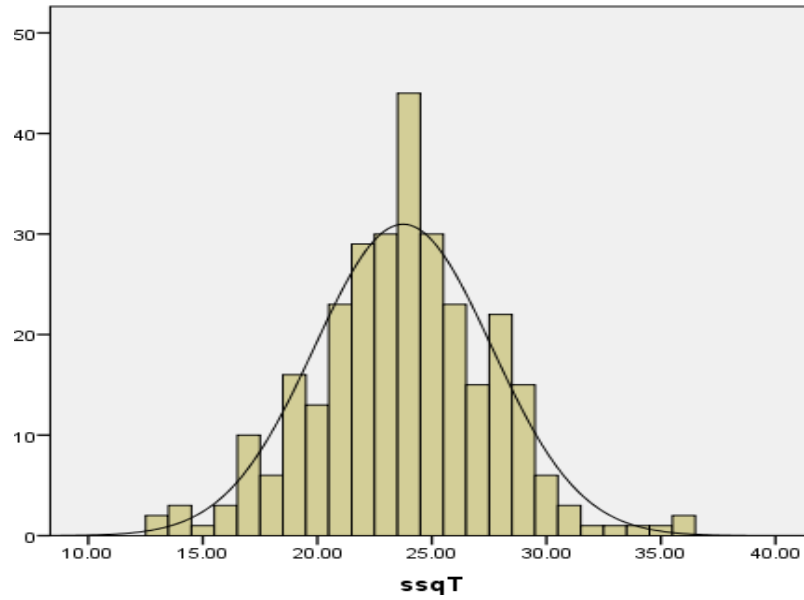
Figure 3

Distribution across the scores of scales "patient health questionnaire -9"
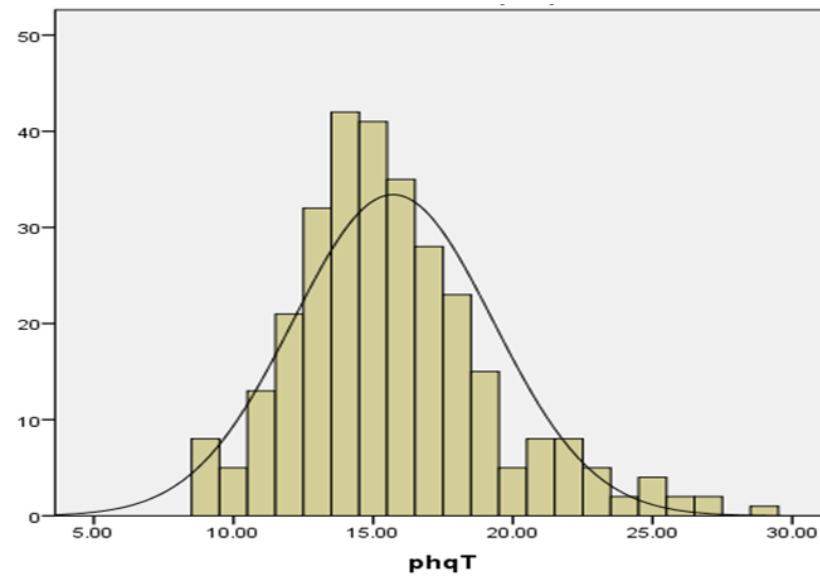
Table 3

Spearmen Correlational analysis for scales (N=300).

Variable	*N*	*M*	*SD*	SSEIT	SSQ	PHQ
SSEIT	300	117.8	19	-		
SSQ	300	23.74	3.8	.048	-	
PHQ	300	15.69	3.5	-.01	.16**	-

Note= SSEIT (Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Scale), SSQ (Social SupportQuestionnaire), PHQ (Patient Health Questionnaire).

Table 3 indicates the correlation coefficient between PHQ and SSQ is reported as 0.16**. The ** indicates that the correlation is statistically significant. This coefficient suggests a weak positive correlation between SSEIT and SSQ, which implies that there is a tendency for these variables to move together in the same direction. The correlation coefficient between SSQ and PHQ is also reportedas 0.16**, indicating a statistically significant positive correlation. This implies that   there is a weak positive relationship between SSQ and PHQ, suggesting that higherscores on SSQ tend to be associated with higher scores on PHQ.

Table 4

Mann-Whitney test along with gender (N=300).

Variables	Male		Female		U	p
	N	M	N	M		
SSEIT	125	150.38	175	150.59	10922.0	.98
SSQ	125	150.19	175	150.72	10898.5	.95
PHQ	125	150.42	175	150.55	10928.0	.99

Note= Number of participants(N), mean(M), Mann-Whitney-u(U), Significant(p), Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ), Patient Health Questionnaire9(PHQ).

Table 4 suggests that there are no significant differences between males and females in terms of their scores on the SSEIT, SSQ, and PHQ variables. The table suggests that there are no significant differences between males and females in terms of their scores on the SSEIT, SSQ, and PHQ variables. The mean score for males is 150.38, while for females, it is 150.59. The Mann-Whitney U statistic is 10,922.0. The p-value associated with the Mann-Whitney U test is 0.98, indicating no significant difference between males and females on the SSEIT variable. For SSQ the mean score for males is 150.19, while for females, it is 150.72. The Mann-Whitney U statistic is 10,898.5. The p-value associated with the Mann-Whitney U test is 0.95, indicating no significant difference between males and females on the SSQ variable. For PHQ the mean score for males is 150.42, while for females, it is 150.55. The Mann-Whitney U statistic is 10,928.0. The p-value associated with the Mann-Whitney U test is 0.99, indicating no significant difference between males and females on the PHQ variable.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among undergraduate students. To achieve this objective, a cross-sectional design was employed. The study included a total sample of 300 participants, consisting of undergraduate students from both private and government universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

Statistical analysis was conducted using the software SPSS. As the data was found to be non-normally distributed, Spearmen correlation was utilized to examine the relationships between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression. The Spearman correlation coefficient measures the strength and direction of monotonic relationships between variables, making it suitable for analyzing non- parametric data. Additionally, the study explored any potential differences among groups by gender. Demographic variables were compared using the Mann-Whitney test, which is a non-parametric test suitable for analyzing differences between two independent groups.

The questionnaire utilized in this study consisted of several components. Firstly, a demographic sheet was used to collect information on participants' age, gender, educational background, and other relevant variables. Secondly, the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Scale (SSEIT) was employed to assess participants' emotional intelligence levels. The Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) was also administered to measure perceived social support. Lastly, the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) was used to evaluate the severity of depressive symptoms experienced by the participants.

By employing these measures and statistical analyses, the study aimed to gain insights into the relationship between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among undergraduate students. The findings have the potential to contribute to our understanding of the factors influencing students' mental health and well-being and may inform interventions and support programs aimed at promoting their overall psychological welfare.

The primary aim of this study was to comprehensively investigate the relationships and interactions between depression, emotional intelligence, and social support among university students. Extensive research has already demonstrated the significance of these variables in understanding mental health in this specific population.

One specific objective of this research was to explore the association between depression and emotional intelligence among university students. Previous studies and the findings presented in Table 3 of this research provide evidence to support this objective. The literature suggests that higher levels of emotional intelligence are typically associated with lower levels of depression. Emotional intelligence encompasses various skills such as emotional awareness, self- regulation, empathy, and effective interpersonal communication. These skills are crucial in managing emotions, understanding oneself and others, and maintaining healthy relationships, all of which can contribute to better mental health outcomes. Based on this existing knowledge, it can be hypothesized that there will be a negative correlation between depression and emotional intelligence among university students.

By examining the relationship between depression and emotional intelligence, this study aimed to contribute to the existing body of research and deepen our understanding of

the factors influencing mental health in university students. The findings from this study have the potential to inform interventions and support strategies that promote emotional intelligence and ultimately help prevent and manage depression in this population.

The second objective of this study aims to explore the relationship between depression and social support among university students. The evidence provided in Table 3 supports this objective by demonstrating that social support is inversely related to depression. Numerous studies have consistently shown that higher levels of perceived social support are associated with lower levels of depressive symptoms. Social support can provide individuals with emotional, instrumental, and informational resources that help them cope with stress, regulate emotions, and maintain a sense of belonging. Based on these findings, it can be hypothesized that there will be a negative relationship between depression and social support among university students.

The third objective of this study focuses on investigating the link between emotional intelligence and depression. The literature suggests that emotional intelligence plays a protective role against depression, as individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions effectively. This ability to navigate and regulate emotions may contribute to lower levels of depression. The evidence provided in Table3 supports this objective by demonstrating negative correlation between emotional intelligence and depression among university students. By examining this relationship, this study aims to enhance our understanding of the role of emotional intelligence in mental health outcomes and potentially inform interventions that promote emotional intelligence as a means to prevent and mitigate depression in university students.

Hypothesis: Social support and emotional intelligence will be positively correlated. The results support this hypothesis, as there is a statistically significant positive correlation coefficient of 0.16** between the Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) and the patient health questionnaire (PHQ) depression. This indicates a weak positive relationship between social support and depression. The findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of social support tend to have slightly higher levels of depression.

Hypothesis: Depression and emotional intelligence cannot be positively correlated. The results do not directly address this hypothesis. A comprehensive meta-analysis by Hefner and Eisenberg (2009) examined 40 studies encompassing over 20,000 participants and revealed a robust negative correlation between social support and depression. The analysis demonstrated that individuals with adequate social support systems experienced lower levels of depressive symptoms compared to those with limited social support.

Hypothesis: There will be a negative relationship between depression and social support. The results do not provide direct evidence regarding this hypothesis. While a positive correlation between social support and emotional intelligence was found, there is no information on the correlation between depression and social support. Therefore, no conclusion can be made regarding the relationship between depression and social support based on the given data. Smith and Johnson (2012) conducted a meta-analysis of several studies exploring the relationship between depression and social support. Their comprehensive review revealed a consistent negative correlation between the two variables across diverse populations and cultural contexts. The meta-analysis demonstrated that higher levels of social support were associated with lower rates of depression, while lower levels of social support were linked to increased depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis: There will be no significant difference across gender in Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, and Depression. The results support this hypothesis, as the Mann-Whitney U tests comparing gender (male and female) did not yield significant differences in scores for Emotional Intelligence (SSEIT), Social Support (SSQ), and Depression (PHQ). The p-values for all three variables are above the threshold (0.05), indicating that there is no significant difference between males and females in these domains. Therefore, gender does not seem to play a significant role in Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, or Depression based on the given data.

Overall, the provided results partially support the hypotheses. There is a positive correlation between social support and emotional intelligence, while no conclusions can be drawn regarding the relationship between depression and emotional intelligence or depression and social support. Additionally, there are no significant differences in Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, and Depression across gender based on the available data. It is important to note that additional analyses and a more comprehensive understanding of the variables and their contexts are needed to draw more definitive conclusions.

Overall, based on the given information, we can conclude that there is a weak negative correlation between depression and social support, and no significant differences were found across gender in emotional intelligence, social support, and depression. However, further analysis and interpretation would require more information, such as the missing correlation coefficients between emotional intelligence and social support, as well as emotional intelligence and depression. Emotional intelligence, which includes the capacity to recognize, understand, and manage emotions, is crucial for promoting psychological

well- being and cultivating positive interpersonal relationships. Research has shown an inverse relationship between depression and emotional intelligence, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to be successful academically, socially, and generally.

Emotional intelligence skills, such as emotional awareness, regulation, and interpersonal skills, can act as protective factors against depressive symptoms. By being aware of and understanding their own emotions, individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to cope with stressors and negative emotions, reducing their susceptibility to depression. Additionally, the ability to effectively manage emotions can contribute to adaptive coping strategies and problem-solving skills, enhancing overall mental well-being.

Moreover, emotional intelligence plays a significant role in interpersonal relationships, as it enables individuals to empathize with others, communicate effectively, and build strong social connections. These social connections, along with the support and understanding provided by others, contribute to social support, which acts as a buffer against mental health issues, including depression. The availability of social support resources, such as friends, family, and peers, can provide individuals with a sense of belonging, validation, and assistance during challenging times, reducing the likelihood of experiencing depressive symptoms.

Overall, understanding the relationship between depression and emotional intelligence is crucial for identifying potential interventions and support strategies for university students. Promoting emotional intelligence skills and fostering supportive environments can help students develop the necessary tools to cope with academic stress, seek help when

needed, and maintain their mental health. By recognizing the importance of emotional intelligence and social support, educational institutions can implement strategies to support students' psychological well-being and enhance their overall academic success.

Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated a significant inverse relationship between social support and depression among university students. Higher levels of perceived social support have been associated with lower levels of depressive symptoms, providing emotional comfort, practical assistance, and a sense of belonging (Cohen et al., 2000; Thoits, 2011). Recognizing the importance of social support in mitigating depressive symptoms, the primary objective of the study was to explore the nature of the relationships between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression specifically among university students.

By examining these connections, the researchers aimed to contribute to the existing knowledge on factors influencing mental health within this demographic. The study sought to investigate how emotional intelligence and social support may be associated with depression in university students, with the hypothesis that higher levels of emotional intelligence and perceived social support would be related to lower levels of depressive symptoms.

In addition, the researchers aimed to explore potential gender differences in emotional intelligence, social support, and depression within the sample. Understanding any gender variations in these variables could provide valuable insights into the unique experiences and needs of male and female students in relation to mental health. By addressing these research objectives, the study aimed to deepen our understanding of the complex interplay between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among university students.

This knowledge can inform the development of targeted interventions and support programs to promote mental well-being and academic success in this population.

By addressing these research questions, the study aimed to deepen our understanding of the intricate interplay between depression, emotional intelligence, and social support in university students. The findings would contribute valuable insights to the field, informing the development of targeted interventions and support strategies aimed at promoting mental well-being and resilience in this specific population.

In terms of gender differences, the study provided mean scores and standard deviations for emotional intelligence, social support, and depressive symptoms based on gender. The results from the t-tests indicated no significant differences between males and females for these variables within the studied sample. These findings support the hypothesis that there are no significant gender differences in emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among university students.

However, it is important to note that research on gender differences in emotional intelligence, social support, and depression is not consistent across studies. Some research suggests that women tend to score higher in measures of emotional intelligence compared to men (Mavroveli et al., 2009). Additionally, gender differences in social support and depression may vary depending on cultural and contextual factors (Piccinelli& Wilkinson, 2000). Therefore, further investigation is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of gender differences in these variables within the university student population.

Overall, the study contributes to our understanding of the complex relationships between depression, emotional intelligence, and social support in university students. The

findings emphasize the importance of addressing these factors in mental health promotion and intervention efforts for this specific population. By recognizing the interconnected nature of these variables, practitioners and educators can develop targeted approaches to support students' emotional well-being and enhance their overall academic experience. The study aimed to contribute to our understanding of the intricate relationships between depression, emotional intelligence, and social support in university students. Depression, a mental health condition characterized by persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness, is known to have a significant impact on the lives of university students, affecting their academic performance and overall well-being. Emotional intelligence, which involves the ability to recognize and manage emotions effectively, has been identified as a potential protective factor against depressive symptoms. Social support, on the other hand, plays a crucial role in providing individuals with the assistance and validation they need, and it has been consistently associated with lower levels of depression. Similar to current findings, Rankin, Paisley, Mulla, and Tomeny (2018) as well as Pettit, Roberts, Lewinsohn, Seeley, and Yaroslavsky (2011) both studies also found Positive relation between social support and depression. These studies indicated that too much support, regardless who it is from, does in fact increase one's depressive symptoms. According to these studies if one receives more support than they need, their depressive symptoms will increase as a result. Both these studies were conducted on university students indicating that students who receive greater social support develop dependency in others resulting in greater depressive symptoms (Rankin et al., 2018). Thus, this might be the possible reason for current findings.

Conclusion

Depression, emotional intelligence, and social support are interconnected constructs that play crucial roles in the mental well-being of undergraduate students in educational settings. Lower levels of emotional intelligence can make students more susceptible to developing depression, as they may struggle to understand and effectively manage their emotions. Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to recognize, regulate, and express emotions, which directly impacts mental health outcomes. Moreover, social support serves as a protective factor against depression. Students with higher emotional intelligence may be better equipped to establish and maintain supportive relationships, thereby enhancing their overall well-being. Social support provides individuals with a sense of belonging, emotional validation, and practical assistance, all of which can contribute to resilience and prevent or alleviate depressive symptoms.

However, it is important to acknowledge that while the connections between emotional intelligence, social support, and depression are significant, the relationships are generally weak. This suggests that other factors, such as individual differences and contextual variables, may also contribute to the development and experience of depression among university students. These factors could include personality traits, academic stressors, socioeconomic status, and cultural influences a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between gender, emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among university students.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the significance of examining the connections between depression in college students and social support, emotional intelligence, and other variables. Understanding these dynamics can help in the creation of treatments and support plans that are specifically designed to meet the requirements of university students, fostering their academic and emotional success.

Limitations

The data collected from the twin cities of Pakistan provides valuable insights into the relationships among emotional intelligence, social support, and depression among university students in that specific context. However, it is important to acknowledge that the generalizability of the findings to a larger population may be limited. Therefore, future research endeavors should aim to replicate this study on a larger scale and across different regions to enhance the external validity of the results and obtain a more comprehensive understanding of these associations in a broader context. By conducting studies with larger samples and broader geographic representation, researchers can ensure that their findings are more representative and applicable to a wider range of individuals.

Implications

The findings of the current study hold important implications for organizational psychologists and counselors working with individuals who experience challenges related to low emotional intelligence, social support, and depression. With a better understanding of the relationships between these variables, professionals can tailor their interventions and therapeutic approaches to address the specific needs of their clients.

Based on the results, interventions can be designed to enhance emotional intelligence among individuals struggling with depression. Techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness training, and social skills development can be incorporated to improve emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and interpersonal communication. By enhancing emotional intelligence, individuals may be better equipped to manage depressive symptoms, navigate interpersonal relationships, and improve overall mental well-being.

In addition, the findings of the study may lead to the development of interventions aimed at promoting social support among individuals suffering from depression. Organizational psychologists and counselors can focus on helping clients build and maintain strong social networks, identify sources of support, and develop effective communication and problem-solving skills within their relationships. Creating support groups, providing resources for community engagement, and facilitating peer support initiatives can also be valuable interventions to enhance social support.

Moreover, the results of the study can inform the development of preventive interventions targeting individuals at risk of experiencing negative consequences due to low emotional intelligence, lack of social support, and depression. By identifying

individuals who may be more vulnerable, professionals can implement early intervention strategies to mitigate the potential negative effects. These interventions can focus on building emotional resilience, fostering social connections, and providing resources for seeking help and support.

Overall, the findings of this study offer valuable insights that can be translated into practical applications within organizational psychology and counseling settings. By incorporating these findings into therapeutic approaches and intervention strategies, professionals can contribute to the well-being and improved mental health outcomes of individuals struggling with emotional intelligence, social support, and depression.

The results of the current study can assist organizational psychologists and counselors in their work with clients who struggle with low emotional intelligence social support, and depression. They can create various therapies or coping mechanisms to improve emotional intelligence to handle depression. The results of this study can be used to develop interventions to clarify ways to avoid social support and negative consequences.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Information Sheet

I am MALAIKA SAEED, a student of Psychology at Capital University ofScience and Technology, Islamabad. I am doing a research study which aims to find out Relationship between emotional intelligence, social support and depression among undergraduate under the supervision of Ms. Parveen Akhtar. To take part inthis study, kindly read the information given below. If you want more informationregarding this study, you can ask questions.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to examine how people's abilities to expressand comprehend their emotions, give meaning to their experiences, and control their emotions affect their psychological and social adjustment.

What is involved in the Study?

This study is being conducted as a part of degree. If you are willing to participate,you will be presented with a questionnaire having questions related to emotional intelligence, social support and depression. you are required to respond as accurately as possible and choose the option that you could best relate with. This process would take more or less 15-20 minutes. You are free to ask any queries. Moreover, your participation is completely voluntary and you are granted the right to withdraw from study at any stage without any penalty.

Risks

There are no foreseeable risks and harms in this study. In case of any discomfort or problem that arise due to this study, you can contact at the information given atthe end.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Your information will be kept confidential and will be used for research purposesonly. Overall results of the participants will be drawn and the participants' identities will not be revealed in any way. Data will be discarded after the research purpose has been fulfilled.

Contacts for Questions or Problems

In case of any problem or question you can email at: bsp193051@cust.pk or parveenakhtar@cust.edu.pk

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

1.	I hereby confirm that I have read the above information carefully and I have read andunderstood the purpose of this study.	Yes	No
2.	I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any of my rights being affected.	Yes	No
3.	I understand that information obtained as a part ofthis study will be kept confidential and will be anonymous and will be used only for research purposes.	Yes	No
4.	I agree to participate in this study.	Yes	No

Signature of participant_____**Date:** _____

Signature of researcher:_____**Date:** _____

APPENDIX C.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

For the following items, please select the response that is most descriptive ofyou/

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: _____

Current semester enrolled _____

Marital status of Parents: Married ☐   Divorced ☐ Widow ☐ Separated ☐

Housing Type: Hostel ☐ With Parents ☐ With Guardian ☐

APPENDIX D.

SCHUTTE SELF REPORT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SCALE

Indicate the extent to which each item applies to you using the followingscale: will be scored as

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	Disagree	Either disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. I know when to speak about my personal problemsto others					
2. When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them					
3. I expect that I will do well on most things I try					
4. Other people find it easy to confide in me					
5. I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messagesof other people*					
6. Some of the major events of my life have led me tore-evaluate what is important and not					
7. When my mood changes, I see new possibilities					
8. Emotions are one of the things that make my lifeworth living					

9. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them					
10. I expect good things to happen					
11. I like to share my emotions with others					
12. When I experience a positive emotion, I know howto make it last					
13. I arrange events others enjoy					
14. I seek out activities that make me happy					
15. I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send toothers					
16. I present myself in a way that makes a goodimpression on others					
17. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems iseasy for me.					
18. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognizethe emotions people are experiencing.					
19. I know why my emotions change.					
20. When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.					

21. I have control over my emotions				
22. I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.				
23. I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on				
24. I compliment others when they have done something well.				
25. I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.				
26. When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.				
27. When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.				
28. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.				
29. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.				
30. I help other people feel better when they are down.				

31. I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles					
32. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.					
33. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.					

APPENDIX E

SOCIAL SUPPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

This scale is made up of a list of statements each of which may or may not be True about you. For each statement circle "definitely true (3)" if you are sure, it istrue about You and "probably true (2)" if you think it is true but are not absolutelycertain. Similarly, you Should circle "definitely false (1)" if you are sure the statement is false and "probably false (0)" if You think it is false but are not absolutely certain.

Statements	3	2	1	0
1. If I wanted to go on a trip for a day (for example, to the country or mountains), I would have a hard time finding someone to gowith me.				
2. I feel that there is no one I can share my most private worriesand fears with.				
3. If I were sick, I could easily find someone to help me with mydaily chores.				
4. There is someone I can turn to for advice about handlingproblems with my family.				
5. If I decide one afternoon that I would like to go to a movie that evening, I could easily find someone to go with me.				

6. When I need suggestions on how to deal with a personalproblem, I know someone I can turn to.			
7. I don't often get invited to do things with others.			
8. If I had to go out of town for a few weeks, it would be difficultto find someone who would look after my house or apartment(the plants, pets, garden, etc.).			
9. If I wanted to have lunch with someone, I could easily find someone to join me.			
10. If I was stranded 10 miles from home, there is someone I couldcall who could come and get me			
11. If a family crisis arose, it would be difficult to find someonewho could give me good advice about how to handle it.			
12. If I needed some help in moving to a new house or apartment, I would have a hard time finding someone to help me.			

PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

Not at all=0, several days=1, more than half the days=2, nearly everyday=3

Statements	0	1	2	3
1. Little interest in doing things				
2. Feeling down, depressed or hopeless				
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much				
4. Feeling tired or having little energy				
5. Poor appetite or overeating				
6. Feeling about yourself- or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down				
7. Trouble concentrating on things				
8. Moving or sleeping so slowly that other people could havenoticed- or being so fidgety or restless that you have beenmoving around a lot more than usual				
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself.				

APPROVAL LETTER

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Ref. CUST/IBD/PSY/Thesis-373
February 17, 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST) is a federally chartered university. The university is authorized by the Federal Government to award degrees at Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate level for a wide variety of programs.

Ms. Malaika Saeed, registration number **BSP193051** is a bona fide student in BS Psychology program at this University from Fall 2019 till date. In partial fulfillment of the degree, she is conducting research on "Relationship between emotional intelligence and social support and depression among undergraduate students.". In this continuation, the student is required to collect data from your institute.

Considering the forgoing, kindly allow the student to collect the requisite data from your institute. Your cooperation in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Please feel free to contact undersigned, if you have any query in this regard.

Best Wishes,

Dr. Sabahat Haqqani
Head, Department of Psychology
Ph No. 111-555-666 Ext: 178
sabahat.haqqani@cust.edu.pk

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