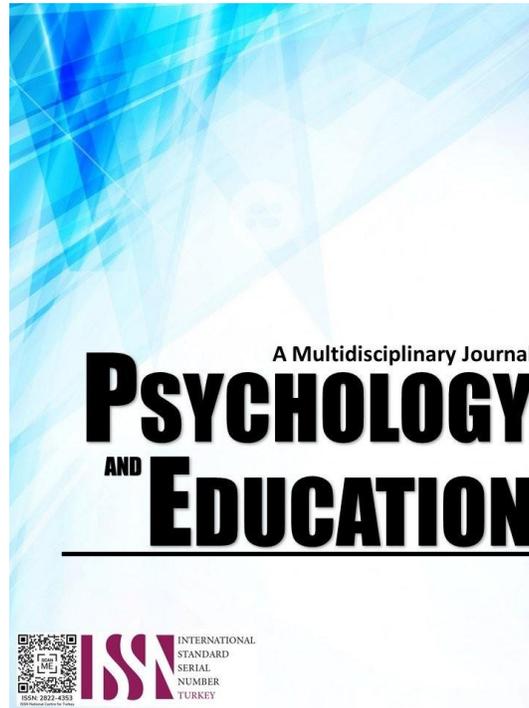


**A QUANTITATIVE STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS
AMONG AWARD-WINNING FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE
STUDENTS AT GOOD SAMARITAN COLLEGES**



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A Quantitative Study on the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Success among Award-Winning First-Year College Students at Good Samaritan Colleges

Vivian Joyce T. Cabilin*

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

Emotional intelligence is widely recognized as an important factor in students' ability to navigate academic challenges, manage emotions, and build effective personal relationships. Grounded in Bar-On's Emotional Intelligence Competencies Model, this study identified the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success among 123 gold and silver awardee first-year college students at Good Samaritan Colleges. The research utilized a descriptive-correlational design to examine participants' emotional quotient based on the Bar-On EQ: Short Version and their general weighted average (GWA). Participants were purposively selected based on institutional criteria for gold (GWA \geq 94%, no grade below 90%) and silver (GWA \geq 90%, no grade below 88%) awardees. Data were analyzed using Spearman's Rho at a 0.05 significance level. Results revealed no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance ($r = -.005$, $p = 0.956$). The majority of participants (88.62%) fell within the "Area for Enrichment" category, indicating underdeveloped emotional and social skills. These findings suggest that high-achieving students may rely more heavily on cognitive ability and study habits than emotional intelligence to attain academic success. Educational institutions are encouraged to integrate emotional intelligence development into student programs to complement academic success and prepare students for real-world challenges.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, academic success, General Weighted Average, Bar-On EQ, Spearman's rho*

Introduction

Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, manage, and regulate emotions, allowing for adaptable thinking and a deeper understanding of their meaning and effects (Nazari & Emami, 2012). Emotional intelligence, as defined by Goleman (1998) is the ability to understand and regulate our own emotions while also recognizing and appropriately responding to the emotions of others. Goleman's (1998) model of Emotional Intelligence consists of four domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Initially introduced in 1998 with five domains, it was refined in 2002 into its current four-domain structure. The self-awareness is composed of emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence components. Meanwhile, the social awareness consists of empathy, organizational awareness, and service. On the other hand, the self-management includes emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism. Moreover, the relationship management includes components such as influence, inspirational leadership, developing others, change catalyst, building bonds, conflict management, and teamwork and collaboration (Goleman, 1998).

Grounded in educational psychology and learning principles, these skills are expected to have a positive correlation with academic success, playing a vital role in preventing academic failure (Howi et al., 2021). Buhay (2020) stated that emotional intelligence, or an individual's emotional and social competence, has been strongly linked to academic performance, especially among students who effectively manage and cope with academic pressures (Buhay, 2020). According to Craggs (2005), the factors influencing academic performance have long been a subject of study, spanning all educational levels. Research highlights various contributors, including IQ, socioeconomic status, motivation, relationships, and personality. While IQ has traditionally been linked to academic success, recent studies suggest it is not a sole or reliable predictor (Craggs, 2005). EQ also plays a vital role in a student's well-being and success in college.

It is believed that students with strong emotional intelligence can better navigate the challenges of college life. By effectively managing their emotions, they can stay focused on learning and achieve academic success (Low et al., 2006). The study of Halimi, AlShammari, & Navarro (2021) reinforces the idea that curriculum designers should consider emotional intelligence, allowing educators to better support students in reaching their academic potential as it was found out that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of academic success, directly influencing student performance (Halimi, AlShammari, & Navarro, 2021). Academic institutions are tasked with developing well-rounded individuals, placing significant pressure on administrators to enhance student achievement. While many schools prioritize academic success, Philippine institutions often overlook the importance of emotional and social development (Bance & Acopio, 2024).

At Good Samaritan Colleges, college students take an emotional intelligence test using the Bar-On EQ: Short Version. Consequently, this study was conducted to examine the relationship between their emotional intelligence and academic success.

The current study focuses on identifying the relationship of emotional intelligence and academic success among first-year college students with gold and silver awards for the first semester and who are currently enrolled at Good Samaritan Colleges for the School Year 2024–2025. It included students from the College of Nursing and Midwifery (CNAM), the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP), and the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS). Specifically, participants are consisted of college students with

gold and silver awards for the first semester of School Year 2024–2025 from the following programs: Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology (BSMT), Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology (BSRT), Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy (BSRP), Bachelor in Elementary Education (BEED), and Bachelor in Secondary Education (BSED). However, programs such as the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration – Marketing Management (BSBA) and the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA) are excluded from the study due to differences in the grading computation process, which is not aligned with the courses included in this research.

At Good Samaritan Colleges, gold certificates are awarded to students with semestral general weighted average (GWA) of at least ninety-four percent (94%) and with no grade lower than ninety percent (90%). On the other hand, silver awards are given to students with semestral general weighted average (GWA) of at least ninety percent (90%) and with no grade lower than eighty-eight percent (88%). Therefore, all students who have attained the said grades participated in this study to determine whether their emotional intelligence test results have a relationship with their general weighted average (GWA) for the first semester of School Year 2024–2025.

Research Objectives

This study aimed to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic success among first-year gold and silver awardees at Good Samaritan Colleges. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. identify the general weighted averages (GWAs) of first-year gold and silver awardee students;
2. identify the emotional intelligence levels of these students based on the results of the Bar-On EQ: Short Version;
3. determine the distribution of emotional intelligence scores when participants are grouped according to their GWAs; and
4. analyze whether a significant relationship exists between students' emotional intelligence scores and their academic success, as measured by their general weighted averages.

Literature Review

The role of emotional intelligence in academic success has been increasingly examined in recent years as educational institutions aim to support students' holistic development. While traditional measures of academic performance often emphasize cognitive ability and intelligence quotient (IQ), emerging evidence suggests that noncognitive factors, such as emotional intelligence, may be equally important in shaping academic outcomes. Despite this growing recognition, existing literature presents mixed findings regarding the extent to which emotional intelligence influences academic success, revealing a gap that this current study seeks to address. To ensure students achieve academic success, it is important to nurture their personality through emotional intelligence, particularly in managing stress. This will not only enhance their competence but also help them understand the underlying causes failure (Preeti, 2013).

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence, as initially defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), refers to the ability to perceive, manage, and utilize emotions effectively in oneself and others. It is considered a subset of social intelligence and is critical for navigating interpersonal relationships and emotional challenges. Goleman (1995) further popularized the concept by asserting that emotional intelligence accounts for a significant portion of success in life, beyond what IQ can explain. He emphasized that emotional competencies such as self-regulation, empathy, and social skills can be developed through purposeful instruction, thus making emotional intelligence a teachable and vital component of education.

Studies have supported the link between emotional intelligence and improved academic performance. Students with lower academic performance or those who discontinue their studies tend to experience stronger negative emotions and emotional reactions in stressful situations compared to those who achieve academic success (Natasa et al., 2022). Rode et al. (2007) suggested that individuals with stronger emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle ambiguity and self-directed learning, both of which are inherent in higher education environments. In addition to that, Altwijiri et al., (2021) found out that students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to process and gather information and ways that align well with their academic and social surroundings.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence has been shown to support important academic behaviors. Brackett et al. (2011) reported that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to exhibit better social interactions, reduced conflict, and more effective collaboration, these factors indirectly enhance learning outcomes. Thus, emotional intelligence contributes to a sense of inner harmony and self-confidence, which can help students navigate academic pressures more effectively (Yahaya et al., 2012).

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in helping individuals manage the social and emotional challenges of their developmental stage (Singh, 2025). Since it greatly influences peer relationships, academic success, and overall well-being, incorporating emotional intelligence education into school programs is a key step toward nurturing a more compassionate and emotionally capable generation.

Students with higher levels of well-being experience fewer negative emotions, demonstrate persistence, and actively seek support to cope with challenging evaluation situations (Nastasa et al., 2022). These findings highlight emotional intelligence's role not only as a support for personal development but also as a potential predictor of academic success.

Academic Success

Academic success is commonly defined as achieving high performance within a formal educational framework and successfully meeting curricular requirements (Anghel, 2023). Student academic success or performance in educational institutions is a central objective in the design of all educational programs. Academic performance is typically assessed through ongoing exams or evaluations, with a widely accepted focus on key elements such as skills, as well as declarative and procedural knowledge (Sanchez- Alvarez, Martos, & Extremera, 2022; Ward et al., 1996).

In general, achievement refers to how effectively individuals demonstrate both the quality and quantity of their performance based on the established facts and acquired knowledge (Pishghadam et. al., 2022; Maramag-Manalastas & Batang, 2018; Lavrijsen et al., 2022).

Although cognitive intelligence has historically been viewed as the primary determinant of academic performance, more recent studies emphasize the role of psychological and social factors. Mihaela (2015) argued that beyond intellectual capacity, emotional and psychological characteristics also significantly influence academic achievement.

MacCann et al. (2020) observed that many institutions still invest disproportionately in cognitive skills while overlooking emotional development. This imbalance raises questions about whether emotional intelligence is sufficiently integrated into academic interventions, particularly for high-performing students.

In the Philippine educational context, the integration of emotional intelligence into academic programming remains limited. Bance and Acopio (2024) observed that while institutions emphasize cognitive achievement, there is less institutional focus on social-emotional learning, especially at the college level. This is particularly concerning given that many students, even high achievers, may struggle with emotional competencies that are essential for long-term success.

Academic Success and Emotional Intelligence

There are a small number of previous studies suggesting that emotional intelligence correlates with academic outcomes. One study was conducted by Laura et. al., (2022) where they have found out that emotional intelligence was not directly related to academic performance at the end of the first-year study.

Sanchez-Alvarez et al. (2020), McCann et al. (2020), and Ganesan & Padmanaban (2018) also investigated through a meta-analysis investigating the effect of emotional intelligence on students' academic achievement. Results indicated that emotional intelligence does have an impact on students' academic performance. However, these findings remain tentative due to the limited inclusion criteria and the narrow scope of the literature search.

In the Philippine educational setting, there is still an insufficient amount of research focusing specifically on high-achieving students. Most studies focus on general student populations, leaving a gap in understanding whether emotional intelligence still plays a significant role among students who already excel academically. Thus, this study addresses that gap by examining whether emotional intelligence continues to correlate with academic success among first-year awardees at Good Samaritan Colleges.

Developing students' emotional competencies is essential not only for academic success but also for preparing them to thrive in real-world environments. Emotional intelligence promotes resilience, adaptability, and leadership, skills that are increasingly valued in both personal and professional contexts. Institutions that prioritize emotional intelligence produce graduates who are not only intellectually competent but also emotionally resilient and socially responsible. According to MacCann et. al., (2020), educational institutions that invest significant time and resources in nurturing students' social and emotional abilities, including emotional intelligence aim not only to support personal growth but also to enhance academic achievement.

By strengthening these attributes, educational institutions can contribute to students' long-term success beyond academic metrics. Investing in emotional intelligence development through mentoring, workshops, and support systems can help bridge the gap between academic excellence and personal well-being.

Methodology

Research Design

The current study used a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the statistical relationship between the emotional intelligence and academic success without manipulating any of them. Descriptive-correlational design is utilized to present a snapshot of current conditions and to identify relationship between variables (McBurney & White, 2009). In the context of this study, the design allowed the researcher to observe and analyze the association between students' emotional intelligence—as measured by the Bar-On EQ: Short Version—and their academic success, indicated by their general weighted average (GWA), without altering any conditions or implementing interventions. This method was ideal since the objective of the study is to examine whether a relationship exists between the emotional intelligence and academic success of gold and silver awardees in an educational setting. By employing this design, the current study described the current emotional and academic profiles of gold and silver awardees and determine whether a meaningful correlation exists, thus providing insights that can inform further institutional programming and student development strategies.

Respondents

This study focused exclusively on one hundred and twenty-three (123) gold and silver awardee first-year college students at Good Samaritan Colleges during the first semester of the School Year 2024–2025. It included students from the College of Nursing and Midwifery (CNAM), the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP), and the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS). The study covered both male and female gold and silver awardee students currently enrolled in the first semester of the School Year 2024–2025.

To select participants, purposive sampling was used. The participants of the study were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the objectives of the research which were recognized as students who were gold and silver awardees and were in their first year of college during the School Year 2024–2025.

Instrument

To determine the correlation between emotional intelligence and academic success among gold and silver awardee first-year students from the College of Nursing and Midwifery (CNAM), the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP), and the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS), their general weighted average (GWA) and recent results from the Bar-On EQ: Short Version (which consists of 51 total items) for the first semester of School Year 2024–2025 were used. The study aimed to analyze whether emotional intelligence is correlated with academic performance, providing insights into the role of emotional intelligence in students' success.

Procedure

The researcher wrote a letter to the Office of the Registrar to request the general weighted average of gold and silver awardee first-year students from the College of Nursing and Midwifery (CNAM), the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP), and the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS). Once the general weighted average has been obtained, the researcher collected the Bar-On EQ test results, which were readily available at the Testing Unit of the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) at the Good Samaritan Colleges. The administration of test was held last November to December 2024. The results and interpretation were also obtained on the same period.

An informed consent was obtained from all participants via Google Form and printed copies. Through the form, participants were informed that their personal information such as names and identifying personal information would not appear in any reports, presentations, or publications resulting from this study. The form also emphasized that participation was voluntary and that participants had the right to withdraw any time from participating without any effect on their academic standing.

Participants voluntarily confirmed their agreement to take part in this study. All collected data were handled with strict confidentiality and were used solely for the research purposes. This ensured adherence to ethical research standards.

Data Analysis

To assess the relationship between general weighted average and emotional intelligence, the data of this study were analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software specifically the Spearman's Rho.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results of the current study. This includes the number of participants according to their college departments, general weighted average of participants, emotional quotient test results of participants, and the relationship between the general weighted average and emotional quotient test results of the participants.

Number of Participants according to their College Departments

Table 1 shows that 97 students from the College of Nursing and Midwifery received awards, accounting for 78.86% of all awardees—the highest proportion among the colleges. In contrast, the College of Allied Health Professions has 24 gold awardees, representing 19.51% of the total number. Meanwhile, there are 2 awardees from the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences, representing 1.63% of the total number of participants.

Table 1. *Number of Participants according to their College Departments*

<i>College Department</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
College of Nursing and Midwifery	97	78.86%
College of Allied Health Professions	24	19.51%
College of Education, Arts, and Sciences	2	1.63%
Total	123	100%

General Weighted Average of Participants

The table 2 shows that there are 2 students (1.63%) who achieved a GWA between 96 and 98. Additionally, 42 students (34.15%) received a GWA from 93 to 95. On the other hand, 79 students (64.22%) obtained a GWA between 90 and 92, making up the largest proportion.

Table 2. General Weighted Average of Participants

General Weighted Average	F	%
96 – 98	2	1.63%
93 – 95	42	34.15%
90 – 92	79	64.22%
Total	123	100%

Verbal Interpretation of Emotional Quotient Test Results of Participants

Table 3 indicates that a total of 109 students (88.62%) fall under the Area for Enrichment category in their overall EQ test results using the Bar-On: Short Version. On the other hand, 14 students (11.38%) fall under the Effective Functioning category for their EQ test results.

Table 3. Verbal Interpretation of Emotional Quotient Test Results of Participants

General Weighted Average	F	%
Area for Enrichment	109	88.62%
Effective Functioning	14	11.38%
Total	123	100%

*Area for Enrichment: underdeveloped/extremely underdeveloped emotional and social capacity, with room for improvement/atypically impaired emotional and social capacity, with extensive room for improvement.

*Effective Functioning: extremely/atypically well-developed emotional and social capacity.

Distribution of Students Based on GWA and EQ Test Verbal Interpretation

The table 4 shows that 2 students (1.63%) obtained a total GWA of 96–98, with both in this range having a total EQ result under the Area for Enrichment (1.83%). Meanwhile, 42 students (34.15%) achieved a total GWA of 93–95, with 38 students (34.87%) in this range falling under the Area for Enrichment based on their EQ results. Additionally, 79 students (64.22%) received a total GWA of 90–92, of whom 69 (63.30%) had total EQ test results classified under the Area for Enrichment.

Table 4. GWA and Verbal Interpretation under the “Area for Enrichment” Category

GWA	F	%	Verbal Interpretation	F	%
96 – 98	2	1.63%	Area for Enrichment	2	1.83%
93 – 95	42	34.15%		38	34.87%
90 – 92	79	64.22%		69	63.30%
Total	123	100%		109	100%

*Area for Enrichment: underdeveloped/extremely underdeveloped emotional and social capacity, with room for improvement/atypically impaired emotional and social capacity, with extensive room for improvement.

Table 5 shows that 2 students (1.63%) obtained a total GWA of 96–98, with no students in this range having a total EQ result under the Effective Functioning. Meanwhile, 42 students (34.15%) achieved a total GWA of 93–95, with 4 students (28.57%) in this range falling under the Effective Functioning based on their EQ results. Additionally, 79 students (64.22%) received a total GWA of 90–92, of whom 10 (71.43%) had total EQ test results classified under the Effective Functioning.

Table 5. GWA and Verbal Interpretation under the “Effective Functioning” Category

GWA	F	%	Verbal Interpretation	F	%
96 – 98	2	1.63%	Effective Functioning	0	0%
93 – 95	42	34.15%		4	28.57%
90 – 92	79	64.22%		10	71.43%
Total	123	100%		14	100%

*Effective Functioning: extremely/atypically well-developed emotional and social capacity.

Relationship between the GWA and EQ Test Results of Participants

Table 6 presents the relationship between the General Weighted Average (GWA) and the Emotional Quotient (EQ) test results. The findings indicate that there is no significant relationship between the GWA and EQ test results ($r = -.005$, $p = 0.956$) of gold and silver awardees among first-year students from the College of Nursing and Midwifery (CNAM), the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP), and the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS). This implies that the GWA of students are not linked to their emotional intelligence.

Table 6. Relationship between the GWA and EQ Test Results of Participants

	r	p	Interpretation
GWA and EQ Result	-.005	0.956	Not Significant

This study examined whether emotional intelligence, measured through the Bar-On EQ: Short Version, correlates with academic success, as indicated by the general weighted average (GWA) of award-winning first-year students at Good Samaritan Colleges. The results indicated no statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance ($r = -.005$, $p = 0.956$). As presented, this finding diverges from a significant body of literature that supports a positive association between emotional

intelligence and academic achievement (i.e., Rode et al., 2007; Brackett et al., 2011; Altwijiri et al., 2021).

A notable factor that may explain this discrepancy lies in the sample characteristics of this study. The participants are high-achieving students who have already demonstrated excellent academic performance, with GWAs ranging from 90 to 98. This limited range of academic variation, often referred to as a restricted range, may obscure potential correlations with emotional intelligence. The participants had almost similar GWA range scores. This low variation can weaken the relationship between GWA and other variables. Since most students are already high-performing, emotional intelligence may not strongly affect their academic success.

Furthermore, 88.62% of the high-achieving participants were found to fall within the “Area for Enrichment” category in their emotional quotient results, suggesting underdeveloped emotional and social competencies. Interestingly, this occurs alongside high academic performance. One possible reason is the institutional context. At Good Samaritan Colleges, academic achievement is highly valued and formally recognized, while emotional and social learning is less emphasized, especially in the college level, as observed by Bance and Acopio (2024). Thus, academic success in this environment may be more closely tied to extrinsic factors such as cognitive ability, test-taking skills, and structured academic support, rather than emotional competence.

This result challenges assumptions made in earlier studies that establish emotional intelligence as a predictor of academic success (i.e., Rode et al., 2007; Halimi et al., 2021). However, contrasting findings such as those by Laura et al. (2022) and the meta-analysis of McCann et al. (2020) suggest that the relationship is not universal. The discrepancies may stem from several factors: (1) differences in measurement tools: many studies use the EQ-i 2.0, MSCEIT, or Trait EI Questionnaire rather than the Bar-On EQ: Short Version; (2) cultural or institutional differences: many studies are based in Western cultural contexts with broader emotional development initiatives; and (3) sampling variations: most studies examine general student populations, whereas this study focuses on already high-achiever participants.

Another factor to consider is the length of the study. This study employed a cross-sectional approach, capturing emotional intelligence and academic performance at a single point in time. A longitudinal study may reveal how changes in emotional intelligence correlate with academic trajectories over time. It is also possible that the impact of emotional intelligence manifests more strongly during periods of academic difficulty or transition, conditions not necessarily present in this high-achieving, well-supported student group.

Moreover, although Bar-On EQ: Short Version as a measurement tool is validated, the tool may not capture all culturally relevant expressions of emotional intelligence, especially within a Filipino educational setting. It may also lack sensitivity in differentiating among students who fall into similar emotional quotient classifications but exhibit different emotional regulation strategies or stress coping mechanisms.

Despite the absence of a significant correlation in this study, the role of emotional intelligence in student life should not be disregarded. Research by Jaeger and Eagan (2007) and Brackett et al. (2011) emphasizes that emotional intelligence significantly contributes to interpersonal relationships, stress management, and overall student well-being. These areas are not directly reflected in GWA but essential for long-term success in education and beyond. In high-pressure environments such as college, emotional intelligence can help students against burnout, anxiety, and social isolation.

Given these considerations, Good Samaritan Colleges may still benefit from investing in and enhancing emotional intelligence development programs. Initiatives such as peer mentoring, emotional skills workshops, and counseling services can equip students with the tools needed to thrive not just academically but also emotionally and socially. These supports could especially benefit students whose academic success may address underlying emotional struggles.

In future research, employing mixed-methods or longitudinal designs, incorporating wider student demographics, and using locally validated emotional intelligence instruments may provide a more comprehensive and culturally relevant understanding of how emotional intelligence interacts with academic performance. Such efforts will contribute not only to the refinement of emotional intelligence theory but also to the design of more responsive and inclusive educational practices.

Conclusions

The study found no significant correlation between the general weighted average and emotional quotient test results among high-achieving first-year students from the College of Nursing and Midwifery (CNAM), the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP), and the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS). The findings, with a *p*-value of 0.956, suggest that emotional intelligence does not significantly influence academic performance, as measured by general weighted average (GWA), among the gold and silver awardees of these colleges. This result challenges prior research which often links emotional intelligence with academic success and suggests that, in this specific context, factors such as cognitive ability, disciplined study habits, and strong academic support systems may have had a more pronounced impact on students’ academic achievement.

Although no direct relationship was found between general weighted average (GWA) and emotional quotient (EQ), it is important to recognize that emotional intelligence remains an important component of a student’s overall personal development. It plays a key role in managing stress, fostering social relationships, and supporting emotional resilience. These skills, while not directly measured by academic grades, are essential for long-term success in higher education and beyond. Therefore, while this study does not support a direct correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance among top-performing students, it reinforces the value of

nurturing emotional competencies as part of a holistic approach to student development.

From these results, Good Samaritan Colleges may consider enhancing non-academic support systems such as, but not limited to, peer mentoring, counseling programs, and emotional intelligence workshops. Even if emotional quotient (EQ) may not significantly influence the general weighted average (GWA), it could be instrumental in supporting student retention, enhancing well-being, and equipping students with real-world readiness. Embedding emotional intelligence development into student services and academic programs can help the institution to produce graduates who are not only academically competent but also emotionally resilient, aligned with the institution's core values of nurturing individuals with compassion, competence, and commitment.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The sample size was relatively small and composed exclusively of first-year, high-performing students, known as the gold and silver awardees, which may have restricted the range of academic variability and obscured potential correlations. Additionally, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to observe how emotional intelligence may influence academic performance over time. Future research should consider a longitudinal design to track changes in emotional intelligence and academic outcomes, include a more diverse range of student achievement levels, and explore qualitative dimensions to better understand how emotional intelligence is expressed and developed within the student body.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Vivian Joyce T. Cabilin

Good Samaritan Colleges – Philippines