

Original Article

Investigating the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Entrepreneurial Intentions

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Abstract: Purpose: This study aims to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intentions, focusing on how key emotional intelligence dimensions influence an individual's intention to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A quantitative survey was conducted using a structured, self-administered questionnaire based on adapted scales. Data were collected from 190 usable responses between March and May 2025 from students at a public university in Bangladesh. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale, and data were analyzed using SPSS version 24.0.

Findings: Multiple regression analysis revealed that self-awareness negatively influenced entrepreneurial intentions, rejecting the first hypothesis. In contrast, managing emotions, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills showed significant positive effects, supporting the remaining four hypotheses. These findings suggest that key emotional intelligence dimensions strongly predict entrepreneurial intentions.

Originality/Value: This study uniquely examines the impact of emotional intelligence dimensions on entrepreneurial intentions within a Bangladeshi university context, enriching the global entrepreneurship literature. It highlights the crucial role of emotional intelligence in entrepreneurial motivation and offers practical insights for enhancing entrepreneurship education through emotional intelligence development.

Contribution: Theoretically, this study adds to the entrepreneurship literature by showing how emotional intelligence shapes entrepreneurial intentions. It also supports prior international findings in a Bangladesh context. Practically, it offers guidance for universities and policymakers to foster entrepreneurship through emotional intelligence-focused training, workshops, and student engagement activities.

Key Recommendation: Entrepreneurial training should include emotional intelligence development, as emotional intelligence enhances confidence, self-awareness, and the ability to handle challenges. Institutions should integrate emotional intelligence-focused programs to better prepare individuals for entrepreneurship, especially those unsure of their potential, making emotional intelligence a key factor in fostering entrepreneurial success.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Entrepreneurial Intentions, Self-awareness, Managing Emotions, Motivating Yourself, Empathy, Social Skills.

I. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is an emotional process and provides an extremely emotional context within which to study it (Cardon et al., 2012). The concept itself has increasingly become popular among academics and policymakers across the globe (Kanonuhwa et al., 2018; Keat et al., 2011). The level of dynamism in the working environment has led to the upsurge of opportunities for new entrepreneurial initiatives, making self-employment lucrative (Mortan et al., 2014). In principle, implanting entrepreneurial intention in the minds of students helps build towards future entrepreneurial behavior (Sun et al., 2015). This stems from the notion that intention is generally a desire to engage in a certain behaviour or activity and quite often results in the execution of the behaviour in question (Ahmetoglu et al., 2011). Thus, intention can be viewed as the initial step in the process of venture creation as uncovered by Yao et al. (2012).

It's evident from the previous explanation that entrepreneurship can solve a lot of issues. In developing and recently industrialised nations like South Africa, this is particularly true. In line with this, Malebana (2016) notes how South Africa needs more entrepreneurial intention studies to guide the development of interventions that could fuel entrepreneurial activity in order to reduce unemployment.



Bahadori (2012) illustrates how studies have generally shown that entrepreneurial intentions are an individual-level phenomenon, influenced by personal factors like emotions. Examining emotional intelligence in the setting of entrepreneurship and business management in general is necessary because, as the importance of emotions in business becomes increasingly clear, attention is gradually turning to the subject of how emotions impact entrepreneurial judgment and behaviour.

Entrepreneurship is of great significance to a country's economic growth and decline in unemployment (Munyo & Veiga, 2024; Ragmoun, 2023). Under the policy background of "mass entrepreneurship and innovation," the research on university students' innovation and entrepreneurship has grown exponentially. Enhancing the emotional intelligence of university students' entrepreneurship and promoting their entrepreneurship and employment to the maximum extent is an important issue for universities to accelerate economic and social development, improve the talent cultivation pattern, and promote the success of university students (Akinyemi et al., 2018).

Public universities are the most important part of Bangladesh's higher education system. University students are the guarantee of entrepreneurial talents for Bangladesh's development (Shahriar et al., 2024). In recent years, Bangladesh has attached great importance to the development of entrepreneurship education among university students. In such an environment, the entrepreneurship of public university students has received more attention.

Based on the theory of planned behavior, entrepreneurial intention is influenced by many factors, but emotional intelligence is emphasized as a key antecedent variable. In recent years, emotional intelligence has become a research hotspot; scholars are increasingly interested in emotional intelligence research (Solih et al., 2024; Saha et al., 2023). A large number of studies have shown that emotional intelligence is closely related to personal, physical, and mental health, subjective well-being, and can predict career adaptability and job satisfaction (Leroy et al., 2009; Lopes et al., 2006).

Although previous studies have explored the value of emotional intelligence for individual career success, few studies have analyzed the relationship between emotional intelligence and individual differences in entrepreneurship, such as the relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intentions (Miao et al., 2018; Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intentions. The necessity to manage one's emotions towards the development of entrepreneurial intentions is the basic problem. Therefore, from the Bangladeshi perspective, the necessity of entrepreneurs is huge. So, whether one's emotional intelligence may affect their entrepreneurial intentions is the main problem to investigate. The main objective of this study is to identify and evaluate a comprehensive conceptual model of entrepreneurial intentions concerning emotional intelligence. This study examines the relationship between an individual's ambition to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours and the five fundamental components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, emotional regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. By examining these dimensions, the study aims to determine whether each component of emotional intelligence has a positive or negative influence on the development of entrepreneurial intentions. Specifically, the study seeks to explore the relationship between self-awareness and entrepreneurial intentions; to investigate how managing emotions correlates with entrepreneurial intentions; to examine the role of personal motivation in shaping entrepreneurial intentions; to assess the impact of empathy on entrepreneurial intentions; and finally, to analyze how social skills contribute to the formation of entrepreneurial intentions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A) Emotional Intelligence (EMI)

Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize both one's own and others' emotions, and categorized it into experiential (responding to the environment without fully understanding it) and strategic (understanding emotions without necessarily feeling them). Bar-On et al. (2003) Emotional intelligence can be further defined as a collection of feelings, emotions, interpersonal skills, and talents that can help others succeed under pressure or stress. Zampetakis et al. (2009) argued that individuals with high emotional intelligence can regulate their own and others' emotions according to different situations, enabling them to influence others and fostering entrepreneurial intention, highlighting a link between trait emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial behavior as a predictor of such intentions. Additionally, Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2002) mentioned that individuals with high trait emotional intelligence could easily manage their job stress, which leads to the tendency of this individual to get involved in an entrepreneurial activity.

B) Entrepreneurial Intentions (EI)

De Noble et al. (1999) hold that entrepreneurial intention is the entrepreneur's intrinsic cognition, preference, and behavioural tendency to create a new business. Krueger (2000) interprets entrepreneurial intention as a subjective attitude and expectation of potential entrepreneurs about whether they engage in entrepreneurship activities or not. In essence, entrepreneurial intention is a psychological state that directs individuals toward specific business goals, reflecting their willingness to initiate new ventures or create value within existing enterprises. According to Ajzen (1991), an individual's intention to perform a behaviour is strongly shaped by their attitude toward that behaviour and their perceived control over it.

This intention serves as a key motivational force, indicating both the willingness to act and the level of effort a person is likely to invest in carrying out the behaviour. Additionally, it is thought that the more strongly an individual intends to participate in a specific activity, the better they will do in that activity.

C) Emotional Intelligence and Entrepreneurial Intentions (EMI and EI)

An emerging field of research within the overall umbrella of research on entrepreneurship is the possible effect of emotions and feelings of the entrepreneur on their entrepreneurial venture. It has been found that the ability of an entrepreneur to recognize opportunity and to be creative is enhanced by positive emotions (Baron, 2008). In an interesting study done on the passion an entrepreneur displays about his/her business venture, it was found that entrepreneurs who display a strong positive feeling or passion about their entrepreneurial venture have a better chance of success than those who don't display such passionate positive emotions (Baum & Locke, 2004). Bird and Jelinek (1989) observed that the behaviour of a typical entrepreneur was full of emotional energy and passion. While many studies done on the impact of positive emotions on entrepreneurial ability seem to show that the more passionate the entrepreneur is, the more likely he/she is to succeed.

New research indicates that the success of a new business venture has a critical dependence on the ability of the entrepreneur or the business owner to efficiently manage the human side of the business (Barber et al., 1999). It is of supreme importance for a new business venture to attract new clients, and research tells us that emotions play an important role in the decision of a new client to invest (Mulligan & Hastie, 2005). Traditionally, it has been believed that emotions are controlled by a different part of the brain, whereas logic and cognition originate in a different part of the brain, and hence emotions are essentially construed as separate from cognition (Boren, 2010).

Researchers in this field studied the possibility of an emotional contagion, which means the emotional states in one person can be conveyed to others, and have found that emotional contagion can flow from leaders to followers, and also, interestingly enough, from followers to leaders. Research done by Tee et al. (2013) found that leaders who were in groups that had a positive mood made faster decisions and displayed better performance than compared to leaders who were in negative mood groups. Hence, it is believed that the emotions and feelings of followers can also have an impact on leaders.

III. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

A) Self-awareness (SA)

Self-awareness, a core component of emotional intelligence, refers to an individual's ability to recognize and understand their own emotions, drives, and the effect of their behavior on others (Goleman, 1995). In the entrepreneurial context, self-awareness enables individuals to accurately assess their strengths, weaknesses, and motivations, which is crucial in navigating uncertainty and making informed decisions (Boyatzis, 2008).

Previous research suggests that self-awareness significantly contributes to an individual's confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial activities. Individuals with higher self-awareness are more likely to evaluate opportunities realistically, align ventures with personal values, and persist in the face of challenges - critical traits for entrepreneurial success (Chell, 2008; Zampetakis et al., 2009).

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), intentions are shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Self-awareness contributes to the attitudinal and motivational aspects by helping individuals form a clear vision of personal goals and capacities. This clarity increases their intention to engage in entrepreneurial behavior (Liñán & Chen, 2009).

Furthermore, empirical studies have shown a positive correlation between emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness, and entrepreneurial intention. For instance, research by Mortan et al. (2014) indicated that emotionally intelligent individuals are more inclined toward entrepreneurial ventures. Similarly, studies in developing economies support the idea that self-aware individuals are more proactive and innovative, which enhances their entrepreneurial intentions (Al-Jubari, 2019; Sánchez, 2013). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. Self-awareness has a positive relationship with entrepreneurial intentions.

B) Managing Emotions (ME)

Managing emotions, a crucial element of emotional intelligence, refers to an individual's capacity to regulate, control, and effectively respond to both positive and negative emotions in oneself (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). In entrepreneurship, where individuals often face uncertainty, stress, failure, and high risk, the ability to manage emotions becomes vital in maintaining focus, motivation, and resilience (Baron, 2008).

Entrepreneurs who can regulate their emotional responses are better equipped to handle setbacks, make rational decisions under pressure, and maintain positive interpersonal relationships - all of which are essential for entrepreneurial

success (Shepherd, 2004). Emotionally balanced individuals are more confident in navigating the challenges of entrepreneurship, thereby enhancing their entrepreneurial intentions (Jennings et al., 2015).

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), intention is influenced by perceived behavioral control and personal attitude. The ability to manage emotions is strengthened both by reducing fear of failure and increasing confidence in one's capacity to act, leading to higher entrepreneurial intention (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994).

Empirical evidence supports this link. For example, research by Ahmetoglu et al. (2011) found that individuals with high emotional regulation scores are more inclined to start new ventures. Similarly, studies among university students have shown that managing emotions significantly predicts entrepreneurial intention, especially under high-pressure academic or financial environments (Al-Jubari, 2019; Zampetakis et al., 2009). Based on these theoretical and empirical insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. One's ability to manage emotions has a strong positive relation with entrepreneurial intentions.

C) Motivating Yourself (MY)

Motivating yourself, one of the central dimensions of emotional intelligence, refers to the intrinsic ability to channel emotions towards achieving goals, maintaining persistence in the face of obstacles, and staying committed to long-term objectives (Goleman, 1995). Individuals who are adept at self-motivation are typically proactive, optimistic, and resilient - qualities that are essential in navigating the uncertain and risk-laden journey of entrepreneurship (Boyatzis & Goleman, 2007).

Entrepreneurial intentions are largely driven by internal forces such as the desire for independence, need for achievement, and future orientation (Krueger et al., 2000). These elements are closely tied to intrinsic motivation, which fuels persistence, creativity, and strategic risk-taking - hallmarks of successful entrepreneurial behavior. High levels of self-motivation enable individuals to sustain their efforts despite setbacks, capitalize on opportunities, and remain goal-directed even when external rewards are uncertain or delayed (Zhao et al., 2005).

Empirical research supports the strong link between motivation and entrepreneurial intention. For instance, Mortan et al. (2014) found that internal motivation significantly predicts entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which in turn influences intentions. Similarly, Sánchez (2013) demonstrated that emotionally intelligent individuals with high intrinsic motivation show stronger entrepreneurial tendencies and greater confidence in launching ventures.

Moreover, motivation has been shown to moderate the relationship between ENI and key entrepreneurial competencies, such as risk-taking, opportunity recognition, and innovative thinking (Zampetakis et al., 2009). Motivated individuals are better equipped to cope with stress, maintain enthusiasm, and pursue their entrepreneurial goals with clarity and commitment. Based on these findings, it is reasonable to hypothesize that:

H3. The dimensions of motivating yourself positively affect entrepreneurial intentions.

D) Empathy (EMP)

Empathy, a vital component of emotional intelligence, refers to the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, enabling effective interpersonal relationships (Goleman, 1995). In entrepreneurship, empathy supports customer-centric thinking, team management, and social awareness - key aspects in identifying needs and creating value (Baron & Markman, 2003).

Empathetic individuals are often better at building trust, understanding market demands, and adapting to stakeholders' perspectives, which positively shapes entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions (Zampetakis et al., 2009). Prior research confirms that empathy enhances communication and social capital, both of which contribute to entrepreneurial success and intention formation (Sánchez, 2013).

Therefore, individuals with high empathy are more likely to develop stronger entrepreneurial intentions due to their ability to connect with others and recognize market opportunities. Hence, the hypothesis that follows was anticipated:

H4. Empathy has a positive relation with entrepreneurial intentions.

E) Social Skills (SS)

Social skills, a key dimension of emotional intelligence, involve the ability to build relationships, communicate effectively, and influence others (Goleman, 1995). In entrepreneurship, strong social skills are essential for networking, negotiating, team building, and attracting stakeholders - critical functions in starting and sustaining a business (Baron & Markman, 2000).

Entrepreneurs with strong social skills are more likely to access resources, identify opportunities through social interactions, and inspire trust among partners and investors (Cross & Travaglion, 2003). Prior studies confirm that individuals

with advanced social competencies tend to show higher entrepreneurial intentions due to their ability to manage social dynamics and lead effectively (Zampetakis et al., 2009; Mortan et al., 2014).

Thus, individuals with strong social skills are more inclined to pursue entrepreneurial activities, making social skills a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intentions. So, the following hypothesis is offered:

H5. Social skills have a strong positive relation with entrepreneurial intentions.

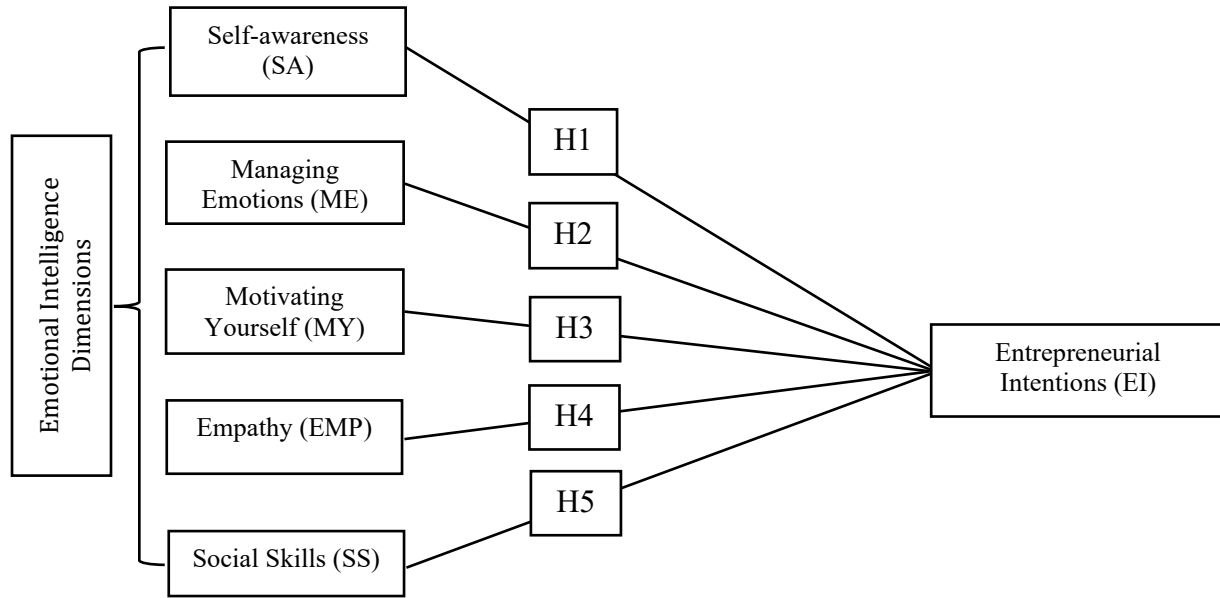


Fig 1: Proposed model (conceptual framework)

IV. METHODOLOGY

A) Research Design, Data Collection, and Survey Administration

First, the pertinent literature was interviewed and analysed. Next, the sample selection and data collection methods were decided. Based on a modified scale, a survey that can be administered privately will be used. The study took into consideration a predefined and productive questionnaire when constructing the research. The equipment will be used to collect data between March 2025 and May 2025. The following figure illustrates the rationale of the paradigm, survey, method plan, and response format of the sampling approach, all of which are included in the research design phase.

In this study, a descriptive questionnaire survey was employed. It entails providing the respondents with a structured questionnaire intended to extract particular data. A formal questionnaire was used for organised data collection in this study. The procedure was also straightforward because the questions were asked in a predetermined order. According to Malhotra (2004), survey questionnaires can be administered in two major modes: offline interviews and online interviews. In this research self-administered survey was conducted in public universities.

B) Sampling, Scaling, and Measurement

As students are the immediate career chooser, they are most suitable for studying entrepreneurial intention (Krueger et al., 2000). Entrepreneurial intentions usually take students as respondents (Yang et al., 2015; Tiwari et al., 2017; Hockerts, 2017; Peng et al., 2019; Akhter et al., 2022). Though there are criticisms about taking students as samples, they are suitable for the study (Wheeler, 2014). A quantitative survey was administered to understand the dimensions of emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intention. Participation in the survey was voluntary. A total of 198 pieces of feedback were collected from the respondents. About 159 business students and 39 non-business students from a public university in Bangladesh participated in the survey, with an average age of 23. Out of the collected responses, 190 samples were found usable for this study. The responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale where one denotes strongly disagree, and five refers to agree strongly.

To assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intentions, this study employed a structured questionnaire using established and adapted scales from previous research. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"). Internal consistency for each construct was

evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with a minimum threshold of 0.60 considered acceptable for exploratory studies (Hair et al., 1998).

Entrepreneurial intentions were measured using a 6-item scale adapted from Yang et al. (2015), which captures an individual's intent to pursue entrepreneurial activity. The scale included statements such as "I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur." This construct aims to gauge a respondent's readiness and determination to initiate a business venture. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for this scale was 0.634.

Self-awareness construct was measured using a 5-item scale adapted from existing emotional intelligence literature (Schutte et al., 1998; Goleman, 1995). It assessed respondents' awareness of their emotions, traits, and internal psychological cues. A sample item is "Associate different internal psychological cues with different emotions." The Cronbach's alpha score for self-awareness was 0.731, indicating good internal consistency.

Managing emotions was assessed using a 5-item scale derived from the emotional intelligence dimensions developed by Goleman (1995) and operationalized by Law et al. (2004). This construct reflects the ability to regulate emotional responses, especially under stress. A sample item includes "Relax when under pressure in a situation." The reliability coefficient for this scale was 0.571.

Motivating yourself variable was measured using a 5-item scale reflecting self-motivation, goal orientation, and personal drive, adapted from Goleman (1995) and Schutte et al. (1998). A representative item is "'Gear up' at will for a task." This scale recorded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.537, which, while below the ideal threshold, was retained due to its theoretical importance in the emotional intelligence framework.

Empathy was measured using 5 items adapted from Davis (1983) and operational definitions from Goleman's EI framework. This construct captures sensitivity toward others' emotions and social awareness. A sample item is "Know the impact that your behavior has on others." The Cronbach's alpha for empathy was 0.590.

The 5-item scale for social skills was adapted from Goleman (1995) and further supported by the work of Boyatzis and Sala (2004). This dimension measured respondents' confidence in interpersonal communication and conflict resolution. A sample item is "Initiate successful resolution of conflict with others." The reliability score for this construct was 0.666.

Overall, while a few constructs fell slightly below the conventional reliability threshold, the items were retained due to their theoretical significance and relevance to the study objectives. The instruments used have previously demonstrated validity in emotional intelligence and entrepreneurship research, supporting their applicability in this context.

C) Demographic Data

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographics	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	1. Male	117	61.6%
	2. Female	73	38.4%
Education	1. Undergraduate	41	21.6%
	2. Graduate	149	78.4%
Place of Birth	1. Rural	78	41.1%
	2. Urban	112	58.9%

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A) Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis will be discussed for the five dimensions of emotional intelligence as independent variables, such as: Self-awareness, Managing Emotions, Motivating Yourself, Empathy, and Social Skills; and Entrepreneurial Intentions as dependent variables. The data is analyzed using SPSS 24.0.

For examining the validity of the constructs, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was applied. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was found to be 0.877, which shows an adequate and acceptable score for principal component analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity was found significant ($\chi^2 = 249.485$, $df = 15$, $p < 0.001$), which indicates that CFA can be computed for the survey data. The total variance explained was 71.23% which refers to acceptable validity. The minimum value of factor analysis was found to be 0.61 (Table 2), which is in the range of a satisfactory score (Jain et al., 2013).

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading
Self-awareness	SA1	.727
	SA2	.755
	SA3	.661
	SA4	.712
	SA5	.534
Managing Emotions	ME1	.662
	ME2	.562
	ME3	.651
	ME4	.702
	ME5	.554
Motivating Yourself	MY1	.577
	MY2	.484
	MY3	.573
	MY4	.676
	MY5	.603
Empathy	EMP1	.564
	EMP2	.682
	EMP3	.720
	EMP4	.651
	EMP5	.759
Social Skills	SS1	.706
	SS2	.585
	SS3	.637
	SS4	.718
	SS5	.597
Entrepreneurial Intentions	EI1	.662
	EI2	.605
	EI3	.673
	EI4	.621
	EI5	.677
	EI6	.681

B) Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to measure the interrelationships among the five independent variables - SA, ME, MY, EMP, and SS; and one dependent variable - EI.

The relation showed a significant positive correlation among associated variables. The highest significant positive correlation ($r=0.724$) has been found between social skills (SS) and entrepreneurial intentions (EI). Motivating Yourself (MY), indicating $r=0.629$, and Empathy (EMP), valuing $r=0.607$, have almost the same positive correlation with entrepreneurial intentions (EI). Managing Emotions (ME) has a minimum positive correlation with entrepreneurial intentions (EI). But here, Self-awareness (SA) has a negative correlation with entrepreneurial intentions (EI).

Table 3. Correlation Analysis

Constructs	SA	ME	MY	EMP	SS	EI
SA	1					
ME	.648"	1				
MY	.250"	.334"	1			
EMP	.345"	.521"	.706"	1		
SS	.048	.242"	.626"	.734"	1	
EI	-.045"	.166"	.629"	.607"	.724"	1

C) Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was applied to test the impact of five predictive variables on entrepreneurial intentions (EI). The study's Durbin-Watson score was 1.637 under the acceptable range of 1.5 - 2.5 (Durbin & Watson, 1950). The variance inflation factors and tolerance were below two and between 0.1 to 1.0, which shows that the model does not have a multicollinearity problem (Kutner et al., 2004).

Table 4. Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Constant	1.012		5.859	.000
SA	-.188	-.198	-3.146	.002
ME	.023	.022	.328	.743
MY	.312	.306	4.514	.000
EMP	.116	.118	1.334	.184
SS	.405	.450	6.033	.000

Note: [R = .776; R-square = .603; Sig. F Change = .000; Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intentions (EI); Predictors: (Constant), SS, SA, MY, ME, EMP]

The findings reveal that Self-awareness ($\beta = -.198$) is a negative determinant of EI. Managing Emotions ($\beta = .022$), Motivating Yourself ($\beta = .306$), Empathy ($\beta = .118$) and Social Skills ($\beta = .450$) are significant determinants of EI.

VI. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A) Discussion

Till now, very few studies have been conducted to measure the impact of emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial intentions. The current study explored the impact of five independent variables of emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial intentions. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis.

The first hypothesis predicted that self-awareness has a positive relation with EI. From the analysis, it has been found that there is a negative correlation between self-awareness and entrepreneurial intentions. Also, the regression analysis shows a negative influence of self-awareness on EI. So, the hypothesis is not supported.

The second hypothesis was about managing emotions. It was assumed that the ability to manage one's own emotions positively influences EI. The survey result does confirm that the dimension of managing emotions has a significant relation with and impact on EI. For this, our hypothesis is accepted. It reveals that potential entrepreneurs should believe that their ability to manage their emotions and hard work will determine success and failure.

The third hypothesis was based on the prediction that motivating yourself positively influences EI. The survey result confirms the significant positive correlation between the motivating yourself dimension and EI. And the regression analysis has found that the relation between the two variables is significant. Thus, our hypothesis is accepted. It means that respondents who can motivate themselves may be induced to become entrepreneurs in the future.

The fourth hypothesis was formulated based on the assumption that empathy has a positive relation with EI. The survey result states that empathy has a significant influence on EI and confirms the proposition. The work is consistent with prior studies of Hockerts (2017) and Peng et al. (2019). It means that people who have a higher score on empathy are more likely to be entrepreneurs in the future. The results imply that a certain degree of other-orientation is necessary for someone to have the capacity to become an entrepreneur. Additionally, the study confirms that empathy has a direct impact on EI.

According to the last hypothesis, social skills have a favourable impact on EI. According to the results of the correlation analysis, risk-taking propensity and EI are positively and significantly correlated. The premise that social skills significantly improve EI is supported by the regression analysis. Social skills have been found to be a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intents in the research of entrepreneurial intention.

B) Theoretical Implications

The findings of this research study are supposed to contribute to the entrepreneurial intentions study in different ways. This study shows how emotional intelligence can influence entrepreneurial intentions as a career choice through the conceptual framework. Personal emotional intelligence can be used to better comprehend the intended process of being an entrepreneur, according to the study. This study adds to the body of research on entrepreneurship that focusses on motivational factors at the person level. The results provide more support for earlier research done in other nations.

C) Practical Implications

This study provides a clear explanation of the factors that motivate students to pursue entrepreneurship. Governments and academic institutions should work to alter students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship if they wish to inspire them to pursue it. University-level training and education programs, which provide students with the groundwork for their jobs, should be given more priority. To make it a more appealing career choice, improvements in educational teaching methods could be implemented based on the significance of students' autonomy and independence. To improve students' emotions, empathy, and self-awareness, role-playing, talent-development activities, and business plan seminars might be planned. More enterprise-

related events and workshops might be held by universities to help students become more emotionally intelligent. Activities that encourage students to become future entrepreneurs include hosting a competition for company ideas, operating a small business on campus, and giving them opportunities to participate in volunteer work. Even though they might not be interested in starting their own business, these activities might raise the number of potential entrepreneurs and those who are aware of the idea.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intentions, offering valuable insights into how emotional abilities influence the desire to pursue entrepreneurship. The findings suggest that individuals who can effectively recognize, regulate, and use their emotions are more likely to believe in their entrepreneurial potential and take steps toward starting a business.

By focusing on emotional intelligence dimensions beyond traditional socio-demographic or personality traits, this research highlights emotional intelligence as a key factor in shaping entrepreneurial motivation. The results reinforce the idea that emotional competencies such as managing emotions, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills can provide a psychological advantage in the entrepreneurial journey.

The study's implications are significant for educators, institutions, and policymakers aiming to foster entrepreneurship. Integrating emotional intelligence training alongside conventional entrepreneurial education may better prepare aspiring entrepreneurs for real-world challenges. Moreover, for individuals uncertain of their capabilities, developing emotional intelligence could enhance self-belief and increase the likelihood of entrepreneurial action.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is not only relevant but potentially essential in nurturing entrepreneurial intentions. It provides a foundation for resilience, confidence, and decision-making traits crucial to entrepreneurial success.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study, while insightful, has several limitations. The sample was limited to university students from mixed disciplines and academic levels, which may have influenced the findings. Future studies should focus on more homogeneous groups, such as final-year business students, for more precise insights.

Data were collected through self-reported measures, which may introduce bias. Future research should incorporate multiple data sources and consider longitudinal designs to better understand the causal relationship between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial intentions.

The cultural context was limited to Bangladesh. Replicating this study in culturally diverse countries would help determine whether cultural factors influence the emotional intelligence–entrepreneurial intention link.

Lastly, limited empirical research exists on the intersection of emotional intelligence, entrepreneurial intentions, and self-efficacy. Future studies should explore these links further, especially in low-resource countries where entrepreneurship can be a key solution to unemployment.

Declarations

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Data availability: Data is available upon request.

Informed Consent: All participants voluntarily gave informed consent after being provided with detailed information about the study.

Conflict of interest: The authors do not have any conflicts of interest among them.

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