

Good emotional intelligence, good grades

October 4 2005

Virginia Tech scientists in say a student's emotional intelligence indirectly contributes to academic success in information technology.

The research team, led by faculty members of the school's Pamplin College of Business, measured how students in computer science and information systems coped with stressful situations.

Emotional intelligence was defined as "the ability to perceive, assess, and positively influence personal and others' emotions."

The researchers examined the effects of the intrapersonal factors on their grades. More than 600 undergraduates at more than 20 U.S. schools participated in the study.

"One of the study's premises was that meeting the challenges of demanding curricula often requires more than innate intelligence," said France Belanger, an associate professor of accounting and information systems. "To explore this assumption, we measured coping strategies and emotional intelligence -- two intrapersonal variables that are rarely studied in the computing field."

Researchers found although students' emotional intelligence was not directly linked to academic success, students with higher levels of emotional intelligence had more self-efficacy that enhanced academic performance.

The preliminary results are part of a larger study on student recruitment



and retention of minorities in information technology.

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Citation: Good emotional intelligence, good grades (2005, October 4) retrieved 25 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2005-10-good-emotional-intelligence-grades.html

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