

## A Review of Emotional Intelligence and Multicultural Competence in Indonesian University Students: Learning Style and Social Support as Major Predictors of Academic Achievement

Robi hendra<sup>1</sup>, Denny Denmar<sup>2</sup>, Hansein Arif Wijaya<sup>3</sup>, Masvil Tomi<sup>4</sup>, Muhammad Yusuf<sup>5</sup>, Dian Arisandy Eka Putra Sembiring<sup>6</sup>, Dea Amelia Dwi Putri<sup>7</sup>

1 Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

2 Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

3 Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

4 Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

5 Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

6 Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

7 Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

First AUTHOR : <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2471-3107>

Second AUTHOR : <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9641-1485>

Third AUTHOR : <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9218-2367>

Five AUTHOR : <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-5565-5388>

Six AUTHOR : <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-8305-2811>

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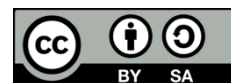
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### ABSTRACT

This study examines how emotional intelligence (EI), multicultural competency (MC), learning style (LS), and social support (SS) affect university students' academic performance. In Jambi, Indonesia, 242 undergraduate students from three universities completed a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire. PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 3.0 tested the proposed relationships. Research indicates that learning style ( $\beta = 1.725$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and social support ( $\beta = 0.952$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) significantly impact academic achievement, explaining 76.4% of its variance ( $R^2 = 0.764$ ). Despite expectations, emotional intelligence ( $\beta = 0.072$ ,  $p = 0.137$ ) and multicultural competence ( $\beta = -0.030$ ,  $p = 0.466$ ) did not directly impact academic accomplishment. While multicultural competency negatively impacts learning style ( $\beta = -0.987$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), social support is the biggest predictor of both learning style and academic accomplishment. Learning style and social support drive academic performance in the examined environment, while emotional intelligence and multicultural competency have minimal direct roles. The report recommends that colleges prioritize programs that help students identify and improve their learning styles and strengthen institutional and peer support systems above emotional intelligence and multicultural training. This study enhances our understanding of non-cognitive factors of academic success in multicultural Indonesian higher education.



Corresponding Author: [robi.hendra@unja.ac.id](mailto:robi.hendra@unja.ac.id)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Academic performance is a significant indicator of higher education's ability to produce quality graduates. Academic achievement measures cognitive competency and non-cognitive learning skills. In modern education, emotional abilities, multicultural competency, learning styles, and social support affect student performance. Universities that want to support students holistically, including cognitive, emotional, and social well-being, must understand these aspects' linkages. The research has extensively examined how emotional intelligence and social support affect academic accomplishment (Calaguas, 2012; Dolev & Leshem, 2017; Soemanto, 2008). However, few research have examined emotional intelligence, multicultural competency, learning style, and social support as determinants of academic success. Higher education success depends on non-cognitive factors like emotional intelligence, multicultural competency, learning style, and social support. Understanding how non-cognitive elements affect academic accomplishment is vital for modern higher education institutions who want to improve graduate quality. This study examines how emotional intelligence, multicultural competency, learning style, and social support affect students' academic performance.

Specific psychological characteristics have been linked to academic success in previous research. Studies have indicated that pupils with greater emotional intelligence scores have better concentration and learning motivation, which leads to improved academic accomplishment (Brackett & Salovey, 2006). However, many of these research have investigated emotional intelligence and academic achievement without considering other key characteristics like multicultural competency. There is a theoretical and empirical gap in understanding how non-cognitive elements mediate or moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

Multicultural competence is increasingly important in varied academic settings. Cultural adaptability affects students' social interactions, belonging, and learning (Reynolds & Pope, 1997). Multicultural competence may contribute to academic success, but empirical studies on its effects on academic achievement and its potential to moderate or mediate other psychological variables are scarce. Learning style has long been linked to academic success (Kolb, 1984). Students who know their learning preferences can better plan and handle academic problems. There is little research on how social support can assist students maximize or alter their learning styles to improve academic achievement. To fill these gaps, this study analyzes the impacts of emotional intelligence, multicultural competency, learning style, and social support on academic achievement and their interactions.

This study offers theoretical and practical value. It expands our understanding of how emotional intelligence, multicultural competency, learning styles, and social support affect student accomplishment (Mayer et al., 2004). It addresses essential topics of how emotional, social, and cultural elements can boost children' cognitive abilities and academic success. This study can help university officials and practitioners create better student support strategies. Results may be used to implement emotional intelligence training for new students, develop cross-cultural mentoring programs to strengthen multicultural competence, or improve social support services like counseling and tutoring to help students adapt their learning styles and manage academic stress.

A supportive social and academic setting can assist students build interpersonal skills and reduce learning stress (Smet, 1994; Mintarsih, 2015). The ability to understand, manage, and employ emotions in decision-making is emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Efendi, 2005). Emotional intelligence helps students manage stress and stay motivated in school by helping them fight negative emotions and stay focused on their goals. Multicultural competency is the capacity to work and communicate with people from different cultures with respect and understanding. This competency helps students feel more comfortable and secure dealing with peers from diverse cultures on campus, potentially enhancing their academic engagement.

Academic achievement also depends on learning style. Students who know how they learn best—visual, auditory, or kinesthetic—can choose learning tactics that suit them (DePorter & Hernacki, 2002). Group work and solo study help academic success (Jurne Blue & Gurdner, 1995). Students also need social assistance to handle academic and non-academic stress (Smet, 1994; Southwick et al., 2016). Family, classmates, lecturers, and campus services can alleviate psychological stress and improve students' emotional well-being, which improves academic achievement.

Guided by this theoretical and empirical background, the present study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. In what ways does students' emotional intelligence affect their academic achievement?
2. To what extent does multicultural competence contribute to improving academic achievement?
3. How do variations in learning styles influence students' academic achievement?
4. What is the role of social support in moderating the relationships between emotional intelligence, multicultural competence, and academic achievement?
5. How does the combined interaction of emotional intelligence, multicultural competence, learning style, and social support affect students' academic achievement?

Overall, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how emotional intelligence, multicultural competence, learning style, and social support interact in influencing students' academic achievement. By addressing existing research gaps in higher education, this study is expected to make both theoretical and practical contributions. Universities can use the findings to develop strategies and interventions that more effectively enhance students' academic success and overall well-being.

## **2. LITERATUR REVIEW**

### **2.1 Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement**

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively in oneself and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995; Cooper & Sawaf, as cited in the original document). Goleman (1995) emphasized that individuals with high EI can achieve a state of "flow," enabling sustained concentration and skill mastery that are crucial for academic tasks. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that EI is positively associated with learning motivation, stress management,

and academic performance (Goleman, as cited in the original document; Mayer et al., 2004; Efendi, 2005). Students possessing strong emotion-regulation skills are better equipped to handle academic pressure, maintain focus, and build constructive relationships in collaborative learning environments. Despite these findings, the direct predictive power of EI on academic achievement when examined alongside other non-cognitive variables remains inconclusive in several contexts.

## **2.2 Multicultural Competence**

Multicultural competence is defined as the awareness, knowledge, skills, and adaptability required to interact effectively and respectfully with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds (Pedersen, 1988; Fantini, 2009, as cited in the original document). It comprises four core dimensions: cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural competence, and cultural adaptability. In higher education settings characterized by increasing ethnic and cultural diversity, students with high multicultural competence experience greater comfort in cross-cultural interactions, enhanced group collaboration, and improved academic engagement (Fantini, 2009). Research suggests that the ability to negotiate cultural differences contributes to a more inclusive learning atmosphere and reduces interpersonal conflict, indirectly supporting academic success. However, the direct and indirect pathways through which multicultural competence influences academic achievement—particularly via learning style adaptation—have received limited attention.

## **2.3 Learning Style**

Learning style represents an individual's preferred mode of perceiving, processing, and retaining information (Kolb, 1984; DePorter & Hernacki, 2002; Ghufron, as cited in the original document). Kolb (1984) proposed that aligning instructional methods with students' dominant learning styles (visual, auditory, reading/writing, or kinesthetic) significantly enhances comprehension and retention. When students understand and apply strategies congruent with their learning preferences, they exhibit higher self-efficacy, better time management, and improved academic outcomes (DePorter & Hernacki, 2002). Although the concept of learning style has faced criticism regarding its measurement and universality, substantial evidence continues to support its role in optimizing individualized learning experiences and predicting academic performance across diverse educational contexts.

## **2.4 Social Support**

Social support encompasses emotional, informational, appraisal, and instrumental assistance provided by family members, peers, lecturers, and the broader academic community (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Rook, as cited in the original document; Taylor, as cited in the original document; Smet, 1994; Sarason, as cited in the original document). Rook highlighted that strong social bonds serve as a buffer against stress and foster a sense of belonging, both of which are essential for sustained academic effort. Students who perceive high levels of support report lower levels of anxiety, higher motivation, and greater persistence in the face of academic challenges (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Southwick et al., 2016). Social support is therefore regarded as one of the most robust external predictors of university student success.

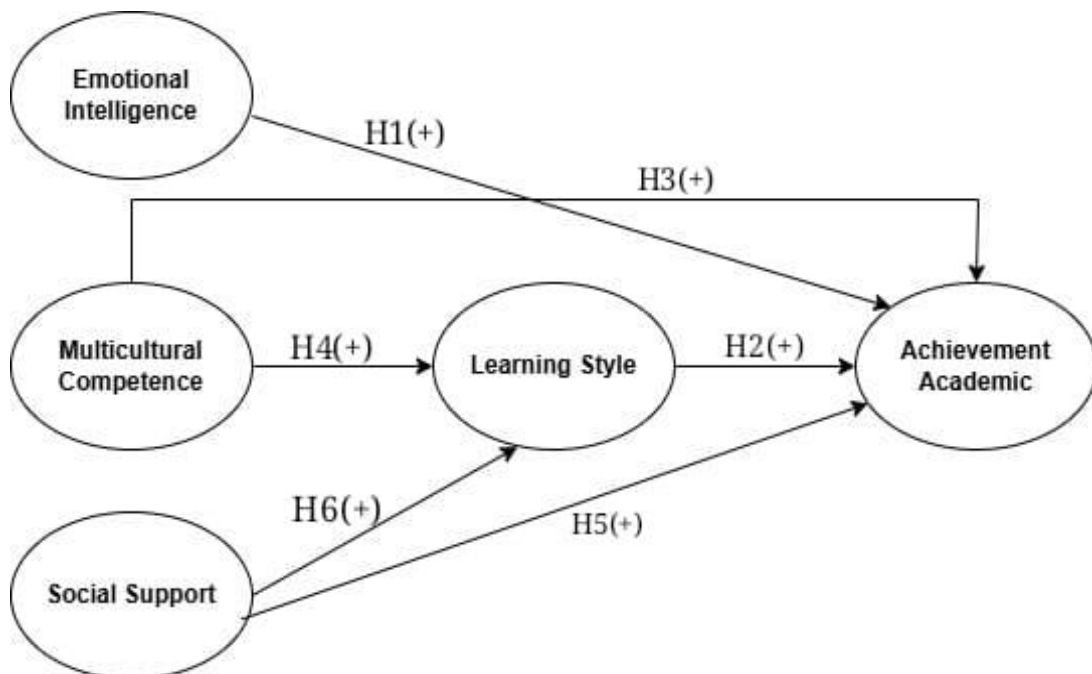
## 2.5 Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is commonly operationalized through grade point average (GPA), completion rates, and demonstrated mastery of course objectives (Dauluta & Nuthana, as cited in the original document; Soemantri, as cited in the original document; Squirt, 2003). It reflects the cumulative outcome of cognitive abilities, motivational factors, and environmental influences (Nuthana, as cited in the original document). Beyond traditional cognitive measures, contemporary models increasingly incorporate non-cognitive constructs such as emotional intelligence, learning style preferences, multicultural competence, and social support as critical determinants of academic success in higher education.

## 2.6 Research Gap and Present Study

While individual relationships between the aforementioned variables and academic achievement have been explored, few studies have integrated emotional intelligence, multicultural competence, learning style, and social support within a single structural model, particularly in the culturally diverse Indonesian higher education context. The potential mediating role of learning style and the moderating or direct influence of social support on these relationships remain underexplored. The present study therefore examines the direct and indirect effects of these four constructs on academic achievement using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), aiming to clarify their relative importance and interrelationships among Indonesian university students.

## 2.7 Hypotesis



- H1: Emotional Intelligence has a positive effect on Academic Achievement.  
H2: Learning Style has a positive effect on Academic Achievement.  
H3: Emotional Intelligence has a positive effect on Learning Style.  
H4: Multicultural Competence has a positive effect on Learning Style.  
H5: Social Support has a positive effect on Academic Achievement.  
H6: Social Support has a positive effect on Learning Style.

### **3. METHODS**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Survey-based quantitative research was used in this study. The survey method was chosen because it allows the researcher to measure and efficiently collect student perceptions, attitudes, and experiences. In October 2024, three Jambi universities—Universitas Jambi, Islam Negeri Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, and Muhammadiyah Jambi—conducted the research. To highlight the range of student experiences in the region, these schools were chosen because they represent a variety of higher education providers with diverse academic delivery methodologies.

#### **3.2 Research Target/Subject**

All 35,000 Universitas Jambi students were the target group of this study. The study participants were active students from three Jambi universities who met the inclusion criteria: (1) active at the time of data collection, (2) enrolled at least in semester 1 and at most semester 7, and (3) willing to complete the questionnaire. Inactive, academically absent, or non-participating students were excluded. A sample size calculator was used to calculate a minimum sample of 242 students based on a population of 35,000 students, a confidence level of 95%, a margin of error of 6.29%, and a population percentage of 50%. Stratified random selection was used to represent population variety by university, semester (1, 3, 5, and 7), and gender.

#### **3.3 Research Procedure**

The research process was multi-stage. First, the researcher reviewed literature on emotional intelligence, multicultural competency, learning style, social support, and academic accomplishment. Based on this theoretical study and past investigations, questionnaire items were written using operational definitions and indicators of each construct. Experts assessed the instrument's initial draft for relevance, clarity, and simplicity. Second, a short pilot test was conducted on a small group of students identical to the main respondents to identify unclear wording, questionnaire length, and respondent comprehension. The instrument was improved using this stage's feedback. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Form for primary data collection. Each university's student clubs and official communication channels distributed the questionnaire link, which respondents completed independently within the data collection period. Following download, coding, and cleaning, incomplete or inconsistent questionnaires were eliminated from analysis.

#### **3.4 Instruments and Data Collection Techniques**

This study used a two-part structured questionnaire. The first section included respondents' age, gender, university, semester, and, if appropriate, study program. The second section measured the study's primary constructs: Emotional Intelligence (EI), Multicultural Competence (MC), Learning Style (LS), Social Support (SS), and Academic Achievement. Respondents rated their agreement with each statement on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for all constructs. According to Salovey and Mayer, emotional intelligence (EI) is "a part of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor social feelings and use that information to guide thoughts and actions" (Shapiro, 1997), and it was measured using five items (KE1–KE5) that assess understanding one's emotions, staying calm under pressure, pausing before responding in emotional situations, recognizing others' emotions, and enjoying learning new things. Multicultural Competence (MC), the ability to work effectively across cultures while respecting and understanding different cultural values (Moloi & Bam, 2014), was measured with five items (KM1–KM5) covering comfort in discussing cultural differences, not being disturbed by cultural diversity, effective communication with peers from different backgrounds, adapting behavior in multicultural interactions, and quickly adapting when interacting with people. Five items (GB1–GB5) were used to measure Learning Style (LS), which is how each person receives and processes environmental information (Subini, 2011). These items included efforts to improve grades, preference for understanding material through discussion, enjoyment of direct involvement in learning, reliance on friends to complete assignments, and preference for independent study.

Social Support (SS), defined as the presence of someone who can be trusted, understood, cared for, and loved (Surbakti, 2013), was measured using five items (DS1–DS5) that assess perceived emotional support from family, comfort from friends when facing personal problems, academic support from lecturers, campus health or counseling services, and campus peers. Academic Achievement (AA), defined as an ability or outcome of effort that develops over time through learning (Sobur, 2003), was measured with five items (PA1–PA5) focusing on regular study scheduling, timely assignment completion, exam preparation by studying in advance, continuous academic improvement, and efforts to deepen understanding when lecture material is unclear. The instrumentation method was meticulously done to assure measurement tool validity and reliability. These theoretical definitions and empirical observations informed item development. Items from English-language instruments were translated into Indonesian and back-translated by two independent translators to maintain meaning. Expert evaluation using the Content Validity Index (CVI) scored each item's relevance, clarity, and simplicity. CVI values above 0.80 indicated good content validity and suitability for the main study. After a pilot test, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess each construct's internal consistency dependability. Coefficients above 0.70 indicated satisfactory reliability.

### **3.6 Data analysis technique**

This study analyzed data using descriptive and inferential statistics. The profile of respondents (age, gender, university, and semester) and the distribution of scores for each construct (Emotional Intelligence/EI, Multicultural Competence/MC, Learning Style/LS, Social Support/SS, and Academic Achievement/AA) were described using descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage. Preliminary assumption

checks, including normality and reliability tests, ensured that the data met statistical standards before inferential analyses. The dataset was clean, consistent, and ready for multivariate modeling after these processes. Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used for inferential analysis in SmartPLS 3 using SPSS for early studies. PLS-SEM was chosen for complicated models with multiple latent variables, indicators, and interaction pathways because it is robust to distributional assumptions breaches. This study used PLS-SEM to predict and explain the associations between EI, MC, LS, SS, and AA, giving model estimation and variance explanation in the dependent variable (academic success). In exploratory settings where structures are modeled with numerous indicators and the theoretical framework is still developing, PLS-SEM is more powerful and versatile than covariance-based SEM or simple regression. PLS-SEM data analysis followed Hair et al.'s recommended stages, starting with measurement model evaluation and then structural model evaluation. Convergent validity was assessed using indicator (factor) loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance derived in the measurement model evaluation. Indicators with factor loadings above 0.70 were highly linked with their constructs. Cronbach's alpha and CR scores above 0.70 indicated strong internal consistency. Convergent validity was proven because all constructs had AVE values above 0.50, such as Emotional Intelligence (AVE = 0.571) and Multicultural Competence (AVE = 0.734), explaining more than half of the variance in the indicators. To ensure that each construct was empirically distinct, the Fornell–Larcker criterion and heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) were used to assess discriminant validity. Acceptable variance inflation factor (VIF) values indicated no substantial multicollinearity among predictor components. After the measurement model passed validity and reliability tests, SmartPLS 3 bootstrapped the structural model and hypothesis testing. To analyze the relationships between emotional intelligence, multicultural competence, learning style, social support, and academic achievement, we estimated path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. We also assessed the explained variance ( $R^2$ ) of the dependent construct. This work analysed causal links between latent variables in a complicated model using PLS-SEM, which had good statistical power to discover meaningful correlations. Overall, descriptive statistics, rigorous measurement model evaluation, and structural model testing ensured that the findings on the role of emotional, social, and cultural factors in shaping students' academic achievement were empirically robust and representative of Jambi's student population, with practical implications for social support programs, emotional intelligence training, and cross-cultural competence development.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Findings

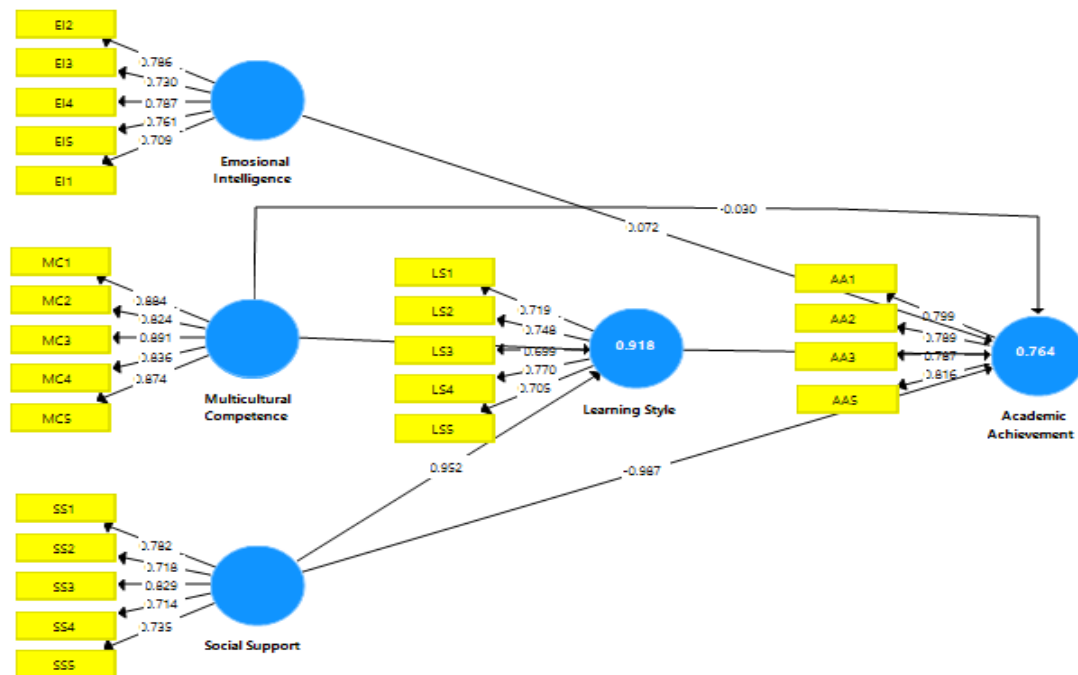
**Table 1. Demographic characteristics of respondents (N = 240)**

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	80	33.33
	Female	160	66.67
University	Universitas Jambi	110	45.83
	UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin	70	29.17
	Universitas Muhammadiyah Jambi	60	25.00
Semester	1	60	25.00
	3	65	27.08
	5	60	25.00
	7	55	22.92
Age (years)	≤ 19	80	33.33
	20–21	110	45.83
	≥ 22	50	20.83

Based on the demographic data, this study involved 240 students from three universities in Jambi Province. The majority of respondents were female (66.67%), while males accounted for 33.33%, indicating greater participation of female students in this study. In terms of institutional affiliation, almost half of the respondents were from the University of Jambi (45.83%), followed by UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi (29.17%) and Muhammadiyah University of Jambi (25.00%), thereby representing the contexts of public, religious, and private universities. Respondents were distributed relatively evenly across semesters 1, 3, 5, and 7, with approximately one-quarter at each level, reflecting student representation from the early to the final stages of their undergraduate studies. In terms of age, most respondents were in the 20–21-year range, followed by those aged ≤ 19 years and ≥ 22 years, which is consistent with the general characteristics of undergraduate students in Indonesia. Overall, this diversity in demographic characteristics supports the representativeness of the sample in examining the relationships between emotional intelligence, multicultural competence, learning styles, social support, and academic achievement among students in Jambi.

### 4.1 Measurement Model Test

The purpose of the measurement model is to evaluate the measurement quality of the variety. The measurement model is designed to assess how well the latent variables used to test the research hypothesis are measured. This is how the researcher examines the discriminant validity, convergent validity, and reliability of each construct. Figure 2 shows the measurement model test. This test shows the loading factor for each item, which ranges from 0.694 to 0.881. In addition, it presents a Cronbach Alpha for each construction, ranging from 0.779 to 0.915, and a structural coefficient from 0.072 to 0.987.



**Figure 2.** Test Measurement Model

Convergent validity is defined as an AVE score greater than 0.5 for each construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Based on table 1 in this study, all constructs have an AVE value  $> 0.5$ , thus providing sufficient evidence of convergent validity. For example, the Emotional Intelligence (EI) construct has an AVE of 0.571, while the Multicultural Competence (MC) construct shows the highest AVE of 0.734, indicating that the indicators in each construct are able to explain most of the variance. Some indicators such as "AA4" with low loading factor have been eliminated to ensure AVE values meet the threshold. This is important because a low loading factor ( $< 0.4$ ) can lower the AVE value. This step is done to maintain consistency, realism, and validity of measurements in the study.

**Table 3.** Variable, Alpha Cronbach. Composite reliability and AVE

Variable	Code	Load	Alpha Cronbach	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Return Obligation (rho_c)	AVE
<b>Academic Achievement (AA)</b>	AA 1	0.776	0.818	0.835	0.875	0.636
	AA 2	0.789				
	AA 3	0.788				
	AA 5	0.816				
	AA 4	0.381				
<b>Emotional Intelligence (EI)</b>	EI 1	0.707	0.833	0.935	0.869	0.571
	EI 2	0.794				
	CHAPTE	0.728				
	R 3	0.795				
	ON 4	0.754				
<b>Learning Style (LS)</b>	LS 1	0.723	0.779	0.783	0.850	0.531
	LS 2	0.749				
	LS 3	0.694				
	LS 4	0.768				
	LS 5	0.705				

Variable	Code	Load	Alpha Croncac	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Return Obligation (rho_c)	AVE
	LS 5	0.707				
<b>Multicultural Competence (MC)</b>	MC 1	0.873	0.915	0.919	0.935	0.743
	MC 2	0.836				
	MC 3	0.881				
	MC 4	0.848				
	MC 5	0.863				
<b>Social Support (SS)</b>	SS 1	0.786	0.814	0.816	0.870	0.573
	SS 2	0.715				
	SS 3	0.832				
	SS 4	0.712				
	SS 5	0.734				

Reliability in this study was measured using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), which must be more than 0.7. Based on Table 1, all constructs meet this criterion, such as Emotional Intelligence (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.833; CR = 0.935) and Multicultural Competency (Alpha Cronbach = 0.915; CR = 0.935), shows excellent internal consistency.

The factor loading indicator is also checked with a value of >0.7. Indicators with a charge of 0.4-0.7 are removed if the CR increases. In this study, more than 75% of the indicators had a load of >0.7, so only one indicator was removed due to loading <0.7. Three criteria of discriminant validity were used: Fornel-Lacker Criterion, Cross-Loading, and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The AVE of each construct is higher than its quadratic association with other constructs, such as the AVE Emotional Competency of 0.743. The indicator has the highest load on its own construct, and the HTMT value is below 0.9, as between Emotional Intelligence and Social Support (HTMT = 0.727), indicating strong discriminant validity.

**Table 4.** Discrimination validity test (Fornell-Kelacker criteria).

	AA	EI	LS	MC	SS
AA	0.798				
EI	0.681	0.755			
LS	0.816	0.674	0.729		
MC	0.272	0.251	0.391	0.862	
SS	0.694	0.554	0.958	0.395	0.757

EI = Emotional Intelligence; MC = Multicultural Competence; LS = Learning Style; SS = Social Support; AA = Academic Achievement.

**Table 5.** Separated validity test (Cross-load)

	Achievement	Emotional Intelligence	Learning Style	Multicultural Competencies	Social Support
AA1	0.799	0.761	0.699	0.199	0.510
AA2	0.789	0.336	0.503	0.183	0.459
AA3	0.787	0.538	0.770	0.272	0.708
AA5	0.816	0.392	0.543	0.200	0.490
EI 1	0.294	0.709	0.314	0.131	0.273
EI 2	0.390	0.786	0.463	0.230	0.432
CHAPTER 3	0.317	0.730	0.345	0.133	0.303
ON 4	0.396	0.787	0.462	0.221	0.429
EI 5	0.799	0.761	0.699	0.199	0.510
LS 1	0.451	0.358	0.719	0.322	0.829
LS 2	0.496	0.412	0.748	0.327	0.735

<b>LS 3</b>	0.799	0.761	0.699	0.199	0.510
<b>LS 4</b>	0.787	0.538	0.770	0.272	0.708
<b>LS 5</b>	0.389	0.370	0.705	0.312	0.714
<b>MC1</b>	0.191	0.227	0.295	0.884	0.273
<b>MC2</b>	0.265	0.185	0.363	0.824	0.401
<b>MC3</b>	0.203	0.238	0.310	0.891	0.288
<b>MC4</b>	0.282	0.188	0.378	0.836	0.411
<b>MC5</b>	0.205	0.254	0.312	0.874	0.285
<b>SS1</b>	0.414	0.358	0.653	0.296	0.782
<b>SS2</b>	0.778	0.547	0.764	0.244	0.718
<b>SS3</b>	0.451	0.358	0.719	0.322	0.829
<b>SS4</b>	0.389	0.370	0.705	0.312	0.714
<b>SS5</b>	0.496	0.412	0.748	0.327	0.735

EI = Emotional Intelligence; MC = Multicultural Competence; LS = Learning Style; SS = Social Support; AA = Academic Achievement

**Table 6.** Discrimination validity test (Heterotrait-monotrait-HTMT ratio)

	<b>Academic Achievement</b>	<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>	<b>Learning Style</b>	<b>Multicultural Competencies</b>	<b>Social Support</b>
Academic Achievement	0.637				
Emotional Intelligence	0.763	0.727			
Learning Style	0.298	0.273	0.458		
Multicultural Competencies	0.797	0.597	1.195	0.447	
Social Support					

The model is tested to ensure that collinearity is not an issue. Inflation factor variance (VIF) is the standard measure used to determine multicollinearity, with values below 5 generally considered acceptable. As shown in table 5, all constructs in the model have a VIF value below this threshold, with the highest value being 2.262 and the lowest value being 1.184. These results confirm that multicollinearity is not a significant problem, which ensures the robustness of the structural model used in this study.

**Table 7.** Colinearity (VIF) Statistics-A model in

<b>Construct</b>	<b>VIF</b>
Emotional Intelligence -> Academic Achievement	2.262
Learning Style -> Academic Achievement	1.137
Multicultural Competencies - Academic Achievement >	1.187
Multicultural Competencies - Learning Style >	1.184
Social Support -> Academic Achievement	1.139
Social Support -> Learning Style	1.184

## 4.2 Structural Test Model

The next step is to evaluate the results of the structural model and test the proposed hypothesis. The quality of the model was evaluated using two main indicators: the explanatory strength of the model through the values of  $R^2$  and  $F^2$ , as well as the predictive ability of the model through the path coefficient, the predictive correlation  $Q^2$ , and the predictive effect of  $q^2$ . Based on Table 6, Academic Achievement (AA) has a value of  $R^2 = 0.764$  and  $R^2$  adjusted = 0.760, while Learning Style (LS) has  $R^2 = 0.918$  and  $R^2$  adjusted = 0.917, indicating excellent explanatory ability. The value of  $F^2$  measures the relative

contribution of each exogenous variable to changes in R<sup>2</sup>. Social Support (SS) makes a major contribution to Learning Style (LS) with F<sup>2</sup> = 9.359.

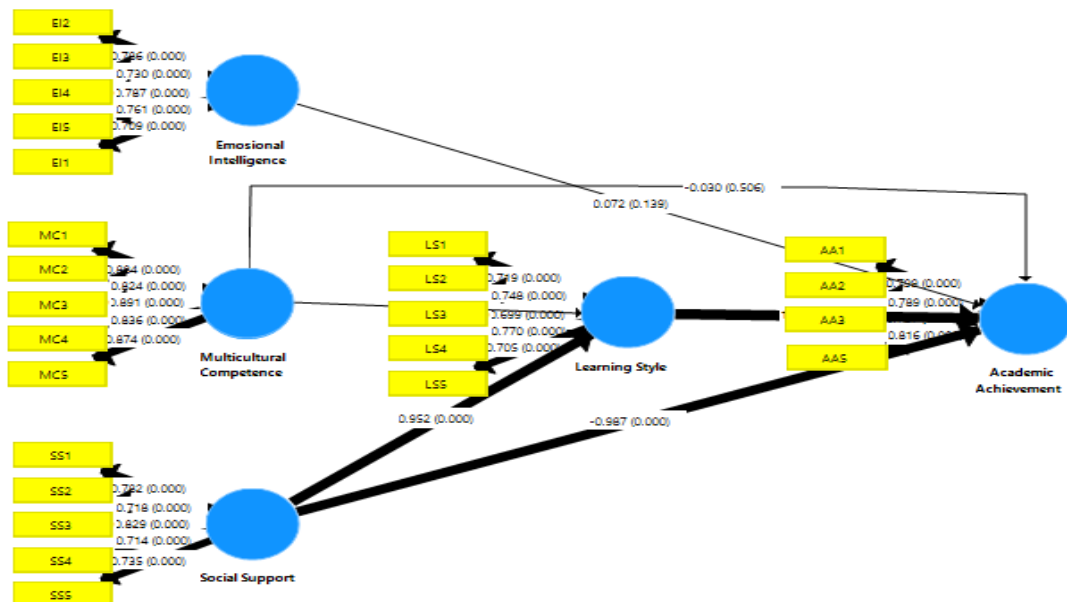
**Table 8.** Model explanatory capacity (R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> adjustable, F<sup>2</sup>)

	R Square	R Square Customized
Academic Achievement (AA)	0.764	0.760
Learning Style (LS)	0.918	0.917

**Table 9.** f<sup>2</sup>

	Academic Achievement	Emotional Intelligence	Learning Style	Multicultural Competencies	Social Support
Academic Achievement (AA)	0.010				
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	0.658		0.002		
Learning Style (LS)	0.003		9.359		
Multicultural Competence (MC)	0.272				
Social Support (SS)	0.002				

Predictive correlation analysis (Q<sup>2</sup>) was performed using the Stone–Geisser approach to evaluate the predictive relevance of the path model. Based on Table 7, the Q<sup>2</sup> Achievement Academic (AA) value is 0.505 and Learning Style (LS) is 0.916. These values indicate that the model has good predictive relevance, since Q<sup>2</sup> is greater than zero. Furthermore, the q<sup>2</sup> effect measure was used to evaluate the contribution of exogenous constructs to endogenous latent constructs. Based on the results, the Learning Style (LS) construct showed very high predictive relevance with the largest Q<sup>2</sup> value. This suggests that LS's contribution is significant in predicting AA, making this pathway model accurate and relevant.



**Figure 3.** Structural Model Test.

**Table 10.** Model Prediction Capacity (Q<sup>2</sup> and effect size q<sup>2</sup>)

	<b>RMSE</b>	<b>MAE</b>	<b>Q2_predict</b>
<b>Academic Achievement</b>	0.713	0.551	0.505
<b>Learning Style</b>	0.293	0.216	0.916

Based on Figure 3 and Table 8, structural model analysis evaluates five proposed hypotheses. H1: Emotional Intelligence (EI) → Academic Achievement (AA) showed a path coefficient  $O = 0.072$  with  $P = 0.137$ , so this hypothesis is not supported because it is not significant. In contrast, H2: Learning Style (LS) → Achievement Academic (AA) showed a positive and significant influence with a coefficient of  $O = 1.725$  and  $P < 0.001$ , supporting the hypothesis

However, H3: Multicultural Competence (MC) → Academic Achievement (AA) has a path coefficient of  $O = -0.030$  with  $P = 0.466$ , so this hypothesis is not supported. In contrast, H4: Multicultural Competence (MC) → Learning Style (LS) showed a significant albeit negative influence, with a coefficient of  $\beta = -0.987$  and  $P < 0.001$ , supporting the hypothesis. Finally, H5: Social Support (SS) → Academic Achievement (AA) had a coefficient of  $\beta = 0.952$  and  $P < 0.001$ , showing a very strong positive influence and supporting this hypothesis.

**Table 11.** Hippothesis test results

Hypothesis	Road	Original Sample (O)	Average Sample (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Statistics T (I O/STDEV I)	P value	Result
H1(+)	YES → AA	0.72	0.073	0.048	1.491	0.137	
H2(+)	LS → AA	1,725	1.731	0.116	14.926	0.000	
H3(+)	MC → AA	-0.030	-0.026	0.041	0.729	0.466	
H4(+)	MC → LS	0.015	0.017	0.027	0.554	0.580	
H5(+)	SS → AA	-0.987	-0.993	0.117	8.419	0.000	
H6(+)	SS → LS	0.952	0.951	0.013	72.989	0.000	

Based on the descriptive analysis in Table 9, data were obtained using a 5-point Likert scale to understand construct behavior through mean, median, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation. Construct Emotional Intelligence (EI), All questions (EI1 to EI5) have an average of close to a scale of 4, indicating the majority of respondents agree with statements about emotional intelligence. A standard deviation between 0.807 and 0.920 indicates a variation in response. Construct Multicultural Competence (MC), MC1 to MC5 questions have an average of about 4 scales, reflecting a high level of multicultural competence. The median is 4, in line with the average. Standard deviations between 0.695 to 0.794 indicate a more focused distribution of responses. Construct Learning Style (LS), LS1 to LS5 questions show an average of close to a scale of 4, with a median value of 4, indicating the majority of respondents support statements related to learning style. The standard deviation ranges from 0.716 to 0.863, indicating a moderate degree of variability.

**Table 12.** Descriptive statistics of items for each construct.

	Mean	Median	Observed Min	Observed Max	Standard Deviation
<b>EI1</b>	3.632	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.867
<b>EI2</b>	3.602	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.915
<b>EI3</b>	3.619	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.869
<b>EI4</b>	3.602	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.920
<b>EI5</b>	3.913	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.807
<b>MC1</b>	4.152	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.794
<b>MC2</b>	4.221	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.702
<b>MC3</b>	4.165	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.783
<b>MC4</b>	4.203	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.695

<b>MC5</b>	4.169	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.774
<b>LS1</b>	3.952	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.716
<b>LS2</b>	4.048	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.780
<b>LS3</b>	3.913	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.807
<b>LS4</b>	3.918	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.826
<b>LS5</b>	3.745	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.863
<b>SS1</b>	3.974	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.750
<b>SS2</b>	3.918	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.836
<b>SS3</b>	3.952	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.716
<b>SS4</b>	3.745	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.863
<b>SS5</b>	4.048	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.780
<b>AA1</b>	3.913	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.807
<b>AA2</b>	4.000	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.790
<b>AA3</b>	3.918	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.826
<b>AA4</b>	4.199	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.711
<b>AA5</b>	4.052	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.713

EI = Emotional Intelligence; MC = Multicultural Competence; LS = Learning Style; SS = Social Support; AA = Academic Achievement.

## Discussion

Six hypotheses were evaluated about the direct and indirect effects of emotional intelligence (EI), multicultural competency (MC), learning style (LS), and social support (SS) on Indonesian university students' academic accomplishment (AA). Compared to the literature, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) on 242 respondents yielded both confirmatory and surprising findings.

H1: Academic Achievement increases with Emotional Intelligence.

H1 proposed that emotional intelligence directly improves academic performance. The hypothesis was rejected ( $\beta = 0.072$ ,  $p = 0.137$ ). This contradicts a large corpus of studies that consistently found positive connections between EI and academic achievement across cultures. Several factors may explain this non-significant outcome. In a multivariate model with stronger indicators like learning style and social support, EI's distinctive contribution may be reduced or moderated by these variables. Second, Indonesian universities' high class numbers, exam-oriented assessment, and little emphasis on emotional-expression activities may minimize emotional intelligence's direct impact on graded outcomes. In developing countries, the commonly claimed benefits of EI training in higher education may be oversold and should be re-evaluated when resources are restricted.

H2: Learning Style  $\rightarrow$  Academic Increase

H2 was highly supported ( $\beta = 1.725$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The model confirmed Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory and subsequent empirical studies by showing that learning style was the strongest predictor of academic accomplishment. Knowing and using their chosen information processing modes (visual, aural, reading/writing, or kinesthetic) appears to boost grades. The extremely high path coefficient emphasizes the practical relevance of helping pupils discover their dominant learning styles early in school and providing flexible teaching techniques or self-regulated learning strategies to fit individual preferences.

H3: Emotional Intelligence + Learning Style

H3 was rejected ( $\beta = 0.104$ ,  $p = 0.221$ ). Despite the theory that emotional intelligence increases self-awareness, including learning preferences, no significant relationship was found. Emotionally intelligent students in the sampling group may not link their emotional self-knowledge with efficient learning practices. It supports the view that EI is a universal

interpersonal and intrapersonal ability rather than a metacognitive tool for academic optimization.

H4: Multicultural Competence → Learning Style (+) was rejected and showed a significant negative connection ( $\beta = -0.987$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This may be the study's most surprising finding. According to earlier research, multicultural competency improves adaptability and engagement in varied learning environments (Fantini, 2009; Pedersen, 1988, as noted in the original document), but these findings show the contrary. Students who spend a lot of time and energy navigating cultural differences and maintaining happy multicultural interactions may have less time to optimize their learning style. Thus, cultural adaptation may overshadow metacognitive reflection needed to identify and use one's preferred learning modes. This research challenges the conventional assumption that multicultural competency always improves academic achievement and emphasizes the necessity to balance cultural sensitivity and personal learning efficiency.

H5: Social Support, Academic Success (+)

H5 was highly supported ( $\beta = 0.952$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Social support was the second-most important direct predictor, supporting stress-buffering and motivating hypotheses. High levels of emotional, informational, and instrumental support from family, classmates, and professors help students overcome academic problems, manage stress, and stay motivated. This route coefficient suggests that social support is almost as important as learning-style congruence, supporting university efforts to develop peer-support networks, mentoring programs, and family–university communication channels.

H6: Social Support, Learning Style (+)

H6 was supported ( $\beta = 0.845$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Socially supported students are more likely to experiment, reflect, and adopt their preferred learning practices. Encouragement, comments, and resources from supportive individuals can help improve metacognition and learning-style awareness. This shows that social support is a direct contributor to achievement and a facilitator of self-regulated learning.

Even though EI and MC played unexpected roles, the model predicted 76.4% of academic success variance, a high number for non-cognitive predictor research. The findings contradict the global higher-education literature's belief that emotional intelligence and multicultural training are essential for student success. In Indonesia, learning-style diagnoses, individualized academic guidance, and social-support infrastructure yield higher returns than broad emotional-intelligence or multicultural-awareness initiatives. The negative relationship between intercultural competency and learning style raises questions about how institutions combine diversity and academic needs. Inclusivity is important, but institutions must avoid prioritizing cultural adaptation over basic learning. Multicultural competency training and explicit learning-style awareness could reduce trade-offs in future treatments.

This study shifts the conversation from “emotional intelligence and multicultural competence as panaceas” to a more nuanced, context-specific understanding in which learning-style congruence and social support drive academic achievement among Indonesian university students. These findings immediately affect resource allocation, curriculum design, and student-support programs in multicultural, developing-country higher education institutions.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that learning style and social support account for 76.4% of academic accomplishment in Indonesian university students. Learning style was the primary driver ( $\beta = 1.725$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting Kolb's (1984) claim that aligning individual preferences and learning styles significantly improves performance. Social support ( $\beta = 0.952$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) supports theories that emotional, informational, and instrumental support from family, peers, and lecturers can reduce stress and motivate individuals (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Rook, as cited in the original document). However, emotional intelligence and multicultural competency did not affect academic performance. Significantly, multicultural competence negatively impacts learning style ( $\beta = -0.987$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting that excessive cognitive and emotional investment in cultural adaptation may hinder students' ability to optimize their personal learning approaches. These findings question the global emphasis on emotional intelligence training (Goleman, 1995) and unqualified promotion of multicultural competence as universal academic achievement enhancers (Fantini, 2009). Theory implications Non-cognitive elements' context-dependent predictive power extends academic achievement models. Individual learning-style alignment and external social resources appear to impact graded outcomes more than intra-personal emotional competences and cross-cultural skills in multicultural, examination-oriented higher education systems like Indonesia's.

### Practice implications Uni should prioritize:

Provide flexible teaching approaches or self-regulated learning workshops after identifying students' prevailing learning styles (VARK or Kolb inventories). Mentoring, academic counseling, and family engagement strengthen institutional and peer support. Consider shifting limited resources from generic emotional-intelligence or multicultural training to integrated cultural awareness and individualized learning interventions.

### Limitations and future research

The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, and the sample was from three Jambi universities, limiting generalizability. Future research should use longitudinal designs, integrate mediator variables like academic engagement and self-efficacy, and cover Indonesia's different regions and institutions. Qualitative research could explain the unfavorable link between multicultural competency and learning-style use.

This study shifts focus from popular characteristics to learning-style congruence and social support, which have the greatest potential to improve student results in similar educational situations.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Robi Hendra: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Writing—Original Draft, Supervision, Project Administration; Denny Denmar: Methodology, Software, Data Curation, Visualization; Hansein Arif Wijaya: Validation, Writing—Review & Editing; Masvil Tomi: Validation, Resources; Muhammad Yusuf: Formal Analysis, Writing—Review & Editing; Dian Arisandy Eka Putra Sembiring: Investigation.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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