

## The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Personal Growth and Attitude Towards Marriage of Young Girls and Boys: The Mediating Role of Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Styles

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### Article Info

### ABSTRACT

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to identify the strategies and outcomes of the e-learning model within the education ecosystem of Iraq's primary education sector. The research aimed to explore the essential strategies for effective e-learning implementation and assess the individual, organizational, and social outcomes of such educational approaches.

**Methodology:** This research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative research based on grounded theory and quantitative descriptive-survey research. The study sample included administrators, teachers, and technology experts selected through purposive criterion-based sampling. In the quantitative phase, a sample of 381 primary school teachers and administrators in Iraq was selected. Data collection instruments included semi-structured interviews for the qualitative phase and a researcher-made questionnaire for the quantitative phase. AMOS23 software was used for confirmatory factor analysis to assess construct validity.

**Findings:** The findings revealed three main e-learning strategies: human development (including student preparation and teacher empowerment), systemic development (encompassing hardware and software development), and learning space management (comprising process management and physical reorganization). The quantitative analysis confirmed that all factor loadings for these categories were above 0.3, indicating robust model fit. The study also identified significant individual, organizational, and social outcomes of e-learning, such as enhanced teacher and student capabilities, improved classroom management, and positive environmental impacts.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that e-learning strategies, particularly in human and systemic development and learning space management, are crucial for enhancing the quality of primary education in Iraq. Empowering teachers and students, developing robust hardware and software infrastructures, and effectively managing learning environments are essential.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Personal Growth, Attitude Toward Marriage, Decision-Making Styles, Problem-Solving Styles

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, emotional intelligence skills have become recognized as crucial for leading a successful and adaptive life. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand, appreciate, and effectively express emotions, as well as the capacity to utilize emotions to enhance reasoning and comprehension. "Controlling emotions is considered crucial for promoting emotional and cognitive development (Toscano-Hermoso, Ruiz-Frutos, Fagundo-Rivera, Gómez-Salgado, García-Iglesias & Romero-Martín, 2020). The term "emotional intelligence" was created to describe the capacity to comprehend and control emotions in a beneficial manner that helps rather than hinders us. Three main models outline the idea of emotional intelligence: the skill model includes four components, the emotional competencies model, and the emotional and social intelligence model (Amado Alonso, León-del-Barco, Mendo-Lázaro & Iglesias Gallego, 2020). The quality of relationships, level of empathy, and adeptness in social interactions play a significant role in one's overall satisfaction and success. Developing higher emotional intelligence levels can lead to improved outcomes in these areas, thus demonstrating the importance of emotional intelligence in achieving success. Individuals with high emotional intelligence can effectively manage anxiety and stress, as well as effectively communicate their mental state to others (Hassan, Ilyas, Sadaf & Saeed, 2021).

Research results indicate that girls generally show higher levels of emotional intelligence than boys, and boys tend to believe they have better emotional skills than girls (D'Amico & Geraci, 2022). Furthermore, a study has indicated that emotional intelligence is positively associated with resilience and a proactive approach to personal growth (Pagavathsing, 2021).

"Emotional intelligence is considered essential in personal growth programs that seek to improve an individual's progress in different situations in life (Hassan et al., 2021)." Personal growth entails a conscious effort to improve and enhance oneself, and individuals with higher personal growth initiative tend to have clear goals and develop specific life plans based on their life stages, increasing the likelihood of achieving their goals (Cai & Lian, 2022). Research has shown that developing innovative personal growth skills can enable individuals to reach their full potential, especially when faced with ambiguity (Balqis, Karmiyati, Suryaningrum & Akhtar, 2023). Furthermore, studies have found that variations in emotional intelligence among individuals can predict differences in personal growth (Wischerth, Mulvaney, Brackett & Perkins, 2016)." Emotional intelligence is considered essential for success in personal life and marriage, and it is becoming more important in shaping people's attitude toward marriage (Sarabizadeh & Fard, 2023). Emotional intelligence offers the ability to form healthy relationships, improve mental well-being, and handle challenges by promoting empathy, effective communication, and constructive dialogue. Building emotional connections can lead to healthier relationships and better mental health on an individual level, shaping attitudes toward marriage (Erus & Deniz, 2020).

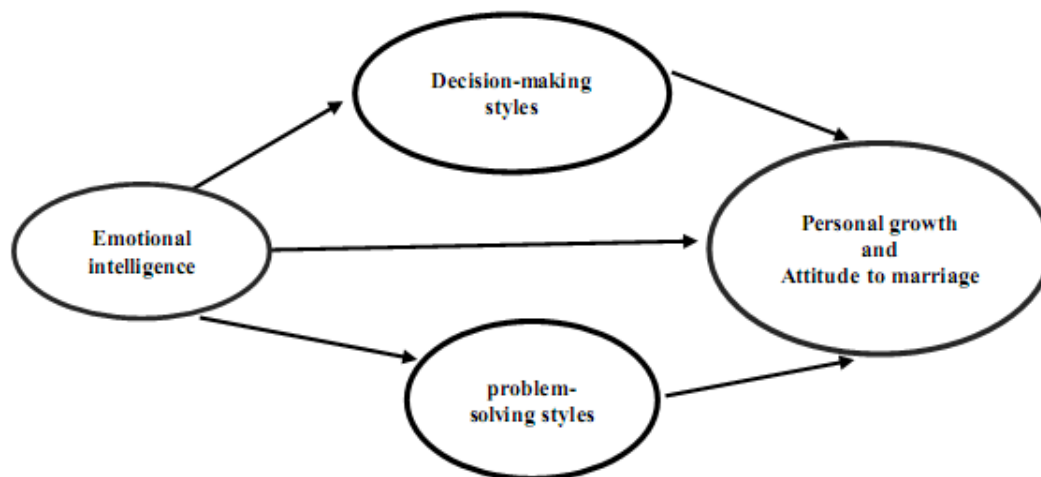
Attitudes toward marriage encompass individuals' perceptions, expectations, and feelings about marriage, including being optimistic, pessimistic, realistic, or idealistic (Mokhtari Masoumi Alamdarloo & Zakeri, 2024). Studies have revealed that men generally exhibit a more positive attitude towards marriage than women, with individuals aged 20 to 25 showing the most favorable views, along with those with a bachelor's degree and men with good mental health (Al-Shaddadi, Al-Qurashi, Al-Ghamdi, Al-Harithi, Al-Otaibi, Al-Zahrani, et al, 2023). Furthermore, research has shown a significant connection between emotional intelligence and attitudes toward marriage, suggesting that emotional intelligence can impact students' perceptions of marriage (Sarabizadeh & Fard, 2023).

Emotions have a significant impact on our thoughts, thus affecting our decision-making skills (Arias, 2022). Emotional intelligence is considered a vital element in psychology because it allows us to predict the consequences of our choices (Farrokhi Rad, Baghersalimi & Azadehdell, 2023). Decision-making involves choosing the best solution from various options and is at the core of planning, encompassing five styles: rational, intuitive, dependent, spontaneous, and avoidant (Hadizadeh Moghadam & Tehrani, 2020). Studies have demonstrated that emotional intelligence has a positive influence on intuitive decision-making but has a negative effect on avoidant and dependent decision-making styles. It acts as a connection between personality traits and decision-making styles. (El Othman, El Othman, Hallit, Obeid & Hallit, 2020). Research has shown that in the context of marriage, it is crucial to have a greater emphasis on rational decision-making styles while reducing reliance on intuitive, impulsive, immediate, and avoidance styles. Additionally, it is important to recognize an improvement in one's self-confidence. (Jokar, Yousefi & Torkan, 2023). Individuals with high emotional intelligence can effectively confront challenges and generate potential solutions by applying problem-solving techniques (Döner & Efeoğlu, 2024).

Problem-solving styles endure individual variances in how individuals prefer to plan and execute productive and focused tasks to achieve clarity, brainstorm ideas, and prepare for action (Gao, Zhai, Bulut, Cui & Sun, 2022). Using problem-solving strategies increases the chances of choosing the most effective solution from a range of options, boosts self-confidence, and involves six approaches to problem-solving: creative, trust, inclination, helplessness, control, and avoidance (Salehitabar, Davari & Ebrahimi Moghadam, 2023). Research has demonstrated that emotional intelligence is essential for enhancing problem-solving skills (Döner & Efeoğlu, 2024). Another research study showed that the problem-solving methods, whether positive or negative, that husbands use can predict the level of satisfaction in their marriage, both for themselves and their spouses, based on marital compatibility (Ünal & Akgün, 2022). Emotional intelligence is strongly linked to emotional health and has a direct influence on both physical and mental well-being, as well as leading to reduced substance abuse, enhanced academic performance, and decreased aggressive behavior (Toscano-Hermoso et al,

2020). Although there have been many research studies on emotional intelligence, there has been no specific examination of how emotional intelligence affects the personal growth and attitudes toward marriage of young people. This study also examines how decision-making and problem-solving styles can act as mediators. Given the importance of emotional intelligence in young individuals, the current research is a groundbreaking endeavor in this

area. It seeks to investigate the influence of emotional intelligence on personal growth and attitudes towards marriage among youth, as well as the potential role of decision-making and problem-solving approaches in this relationship. Figure 1 demonstrates the conceptual model used in the study.



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the research**

## 1. Methods and Materials

### 2.1. Study Design and Participants

The present study falls under the descriptive-correlational research category and utilized the cross-sectional research method. This study utilized a structural model and conducted path analysis. The statistical population for this research consisted of unmarried young individuals in Tehran during August and September of 2023.

A total of 188 participants, comprising girls and boys, were chosen for the research study through cluster random sampling and convenience sampling techniques. The adequacy of the sample size was determined using Cohen's formula for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in 2013. The sample size calculation was based on an anticipated effect size of 0.3, a desired statistical power level of 0.8, five latent variables, 171 observed variables, and a probability level of 0.01, resulting in a minimum sample size of 150 individuals. To account for the possibility of participants leaving the study, the researcher chose to involve a total of 200 individuals. The next step involved establishing criteria for inclusion and exclusion in the research sample. Inclusion criteria included residency in Tehran, giving informed consent, being unmarried, and being at least 20 years old. The only reason for not being included in the study was if they did not answer more than 10 questions in the questionnaires.

The research methodology involved obtaining necessary permits from the university where the researcher was enrolled. The research concentrated on 22 urban regions in Tehran, with data collection randomly chosen from 5 specific areas (7, 4, 10, 16, and 17). The researcher approached residents in these areas who met the research

criteria and invited them to participate in the study. All participants received details regarding the study's goals, permissions, and ethical standards. Due to limited cooperation, it took a month to complete the data collection process. Out of 200 questionnaires distributed, 188 were deemed usable, with 12 excluded due to incomplete or intentionally incorrect responses. "The surveys were based on self-reporting. Before giving out the surveys, individuals had to sign a document consenting to participate, with the option to stop at any point. Participants were assured that their participation in the research was optional and that they had the right to withdraw at any time. They were also informed that the evaluations would not collect any personal data.

### 1.2. Measures

**1.2.1. General Decision-Making Style questionnaire**  
Scott and Bruce developed a self-report questionnaire in 1995 to assess the decision-making style of managers (Scott, Bruce, 1995). The questionnaire consists of 5 subscales: rational, intuitive, dependent, spontaneous, and avoidance. Rational decision-making (including questions 4, 7, 11, 13, and 25) requires understanding all possible solutions and their potential consequences, with a focus on maximizing profits. Intuitive decision-making (including questions 1, 3, 12, 16, and 17) is based on unconscious processes and past experiences, relying on feelings rather than rational analysis. Dependence decision-making (including questions 2, 5, 10, 18, and 22) shows a lack of independence, and seeking support from others in decision-making. Spontaneous decision-making (including questions 8, 9, 15, 20, and 24) occurs in urgent situations, with decisions made quickly without prior support. Avoidance decision-making (including questions 6, 14, 19, 21, and 23) involves delaying

decisions when faced with problems and avoiding addressing the issue. The survey consists of 25 questions rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with each component scored between 5 and 25. Scott and Bruce calculated the reliability of the questionnaire to be between 0.84 and 0.94 for different decision-making styles. Researchers in Iran found the internal consistency of the scale to be 0.75 (Hosseini, Esazadegan, Soleymani, 2023). In their research, they obtained Cronbach's alpha coefficient, composite reliability value, and AVE value for each decision-making style. Dependency decision-making had a reliability coefficient of 0.885 and AVE value of 0.75. Spontaneous had a reliability coefficient of 0.894 and an AVE value of 0.60. Intuitive had a reliability coefficient of 0.735 and AVE value of 0.55. Rational had a reliability coefficient of 0.860 and AVE value of 0.58.

### 1.2.2. Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory

Bar-On created a self-report questionnaire in 2004 to assess emotional intelligence in individuals (Bar-On, 2004). The questionnaire consists of 90 questions and utilizes a 5-point Likert scale ranging from completely disagree to agree. There are 15 main subscales in the questionnaire, which include aspects such as emotional self-awareness, independence, flexibility, happiness, impulse control, interpersonal relationships, optimism, problem-solving, and more. Each subscale consists of 6 questions, and the total score for an individual range from 90 to 450, with a higher score indicating higher emotional intelligence. A study conducted in Iran reported the internal consistency of the questionnaire as 0.86 and the overall validity as 0.84 (Torabi Sa'een, Livarjani, Azmoudeh, Rezaee, 2022). Another research study found the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for emotional intelligence to be 0.811, the composite reliability value to be 0.869, and the AVE value for convergent validity to be 0.57.

### 1.2.3. Marital Attitudes Scale

The Marriage Attitudes Scale was developed by Braaten & Rosen in 1998 to assess individuals' attitudes toward marriage (Braaten, Rosén, 1998). This scale has 23 questions divided into four categories: pessimistic, optimistic, realistic, and idealistic attitudes towards marriage. Questions range from doubts about marital success to beliefs about the sanctity of marriage. Respondents rate each item on a four-point scale from 0 (strongly agree) to 3 (strongly disagree), resulting in a total score between 23 and 69. Higher scores indicate a more positive attitude towards marriage. In the initial research, the scale showed strong internal reliability, achieving a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85. Subsequent research in Iran yielded an alpha value of 0.90, indicating high reliability (Khojasteh Mehr, Mombeini, Aslani, 2013). Results from this study also showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.884 for Attitude toward marriage, a combined reliability of 0.910, and a convergent validity score of 0.59 for the AVE value.

### 1.2.4. Problem-solving style

The Long & Cassidy Scale, developed in 1996, is a tool used to assess individuals' problem-solving styles and various dimensions such as helplessness, control, creativity, trust, avoidance, and approach. This questionnaire consists of 24 questions that focus on six dimensions: helplessness, control, creativity, confidence, avoidance, and approach style. Each question is scored on a three-point Likert scale (yes=2, don't know=1, no=0) with a total score ranging from 0 to 8. Questions 1-4 pertain to helplessness, 5-8 to control, 9-12 to creativity, 13-16 to confidence, 17-20 to avoidance, and 21-24 to approach style. In a study conducted in Iran, Cronbach's alpha value for this questionnaire was reported as 0.74 (Zaree, Nahravanian, 2018). The researcher also calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient values for each dimension: helplessness (0.802), control (0.701), creativity (0.733), confidence (0.896), avoidance (0.638), and approach (0.853).

### 2.2.5. Personal Growth Initiative Scale-II

Robitschek developed the scale in 1998 with the specific aim of assessing personal growth efforts. The assessment includes nine questions designed to evaluate various aspects of personal growth across four separate categories. The survey uses the Likert scale, which includes options from strongly agree to disagree and a total scoring range of 9 to 45. A study conducted in Iran found that the Cronbach's alpha value for this questionnaire was 0.87. In a different study, the researcher calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to be 0.930.

### 1.3. Data Analysis

The information was analyzed utilizing SPSS version 27 software, Smart PLS 4 software, and the structural equation model technique. Significance was determined at the 0.05 level based on statistical results. Additionally, the researcher utilized the structural equation model approach to investigate the path coefficients and mediating variables. Bootstrapping was employed to assess the model's significance. The next phase required the researcher to evaluate the assumptions of the test. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine the normality of the distribution of the research variables. The test results indicated that the research variables did not follow a normal distribution, leading the researcher to employ the equation model A structure in SmartPLS software.

## 2. Findings and Results

Initially, the researcher examined the descriptive statistics of the variables used in the study. The youth participants were categorized into three age groups: 20 to 25 years old (33.5%), 25 to 30 (38.8%), and 30 to 35 years old (27.7%). Likewise, about gender, they were split into two groups: male (67.0%) and female (33.0%). They were divided based on their level of education into three categories: diploma, bachelor, and master's degree (Table 1).



**Table 1**  
*Description of the demographic variables*

Variables	Groups	F	%	Sample size	Md
Age	20-25	63	33.5	188	2
	25-30	73	38.8		
	30-35	52	27.7		
Gender	Man	126	67.0	188	1
	Female	62	33.0		
	Total	188	100.0		
Education	Diploma	54	28.7	188	3
	Bachelor	121	64.4		
	Master	13	6.9		

**Table 2**  
*Description of the main research variables*

Variables	N	M	SD	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk	
								W	p
Emotional Intelligence	188	295.553	12.272	279	320	0.366	-1.134	0.926	p < 0.001
Attitude toward Marriage	188	40.989	6.967	28	56	-0.072	-0.650	0.972	p < 0.001
Personal Growth	188	39.149	4.970	30	47	-0.136	-1.157	0.947	p < 0.001
Rational Decision Making	188	16.191	2.378	12	21	-0.187	-0.903	0.947	p < 0.001
Intuitive Decision Making	188	13.809	1.880	10	19	0.144	-0.224	0.965	p < 0.001
Dependency Decision Making	188	14.729	2.143	10	19	0.009	-0.756	0.954	p < 0.001
Spontaneous Decision Making	188	14.388	2.459	10	19	0.209	-1.074	0.939	p < 0.001
Avoidance Decision Making	188	14.580	2.387	10	19	0.239	-1.290	0.912	p < 0.001
Helplessness in Problem Solving	188	2.383	1.086	0	4	-0.075	-0.691	0.902	p < 0.001
Control in Problem Solving	188	2.096	1.242	0	4	0.155	-1.234	0.877	p < 0.001
Creativity in Problem Solving	188	1.814	1.233	0	4	0.516	-1.004	0.838	p < 0.001
Confidence in Problem Solving	188	1.830	1.066	0	4	0.399	-0.477	0.897	p < 0.001
Approach to Problem Solving	188	2.117	1.375	0	4	0.087	-1.535	0.823	p < 0.001
Avoidance of Problem Solving	188	2.856	1.037	0	4	-0.784	-0.055	0.849	p < 0.001

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of the research variables.

**Table 3**  
*Pearson's Correlation Coefficient*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Personal Growth	Pearson's r	—												
2. Attitude toward Marriage	Pearson's r	0.528 ***	—											
3. Emotional Intelligence	Pearson's r	0.733 ***	0.763 ***	—										
4. Rational Decision Making	Pearson's r	0.622 ***	0.758 ***	0.764 ***	—									
5. Intuitive Decision Making	Pearson's r	0.476 ***	0.582 ***	0.551 ***	0.641 ***	—								
6. Dependency	Pearson's r	0.564 ***	0.656 ***	0.750 ***	0.658 ***	0.513 ***	—							

Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Decision Making															
7. Spontaneous Decision Making	Pearson's r	-.539 ***	-.470 ***	-.676 ***	-.489 ***	-.389 ***	0.577 ***	—							
8. Avoidance Decision Making	Pearson's r	-.490 ***	-.568 ***	-.602 ***	-.572 ***	-.409 ***	0.740 ***	0.463 ***	—						
9. Helplessness in Problem Solving	Pearson's r	-.647 ***	-.774 ***	-.840 ***	-.795 ***	-.595 ***	0.695 ***	0.531 ***	0.578 ***	—					
10. Control in Problem Solving	Pearson's r	0.530 ***	0.621 ***	0.657 ***	0.668 ***	0.361 ***	0.581 ***	0.506 ***	0.540 ***	0.658 ***	—				
11. Creativity in Problem Solving	Pearson's r	0.464 ***	0.503 ***	0.601 ***	0.592 ***	0.328 ***	0.555 ***	0.332 ***	0.406 ***	0.605 ***	0.742 ***	—			
12. Confidence in Problem Solving	Pearson's r	0.523 ***	0.573 ***	0.612 ***	0.625 ***	0.341 ***	0.509 ***	0.472 ***	0.488 ***	0.627 ***	0.776 ***	0.606 ***	—		
13. Approach to Problem Solving	Pearson's r	0.440 ***	0.382 ***	0.483 ***	0.405 ***	0.356 ***	0.347 ***	0.243 ***	0.285 ***	0.406 ***	0.363 ***	0.249 ***	0.291 ***	—	
14. Avoidance of Problem Solving	Pearson's r	-.270 ***	-.336 ***	-.387 ***	-.401 ***	-.362 ***	0.310 ***	0.322 ***	0.345 ***	0.353 ***	0.342 ***	0.360 ***	0.230 ***	0.101 ***	—

\* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

The results presented in Table 3 indicate a significant and positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Personal growth ( $r=0.733$ ,  $P<0.001$ ), as well as Attitude towards marriage ( $r=0.763$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). Similarly, Emotional Intelligence also showed a positive and significant relationship with Rational decision-making ( $r=0.764$ ,  $P<0.001$ ) and Intuitive decision-making ( $r=0.551$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). Conversely, Emotional Intelligence demonstrated a negative and significant correlation with Dependency decision-making ( $r=-0.750$ ,  $P<0.001$ ), Spontaneous decision-making

( $r=-0.676$ ,  $P<0.001$ ), and Avoidance decision-making ( $r=-0.602$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). Additionally, there was a notable negative correlation found between Emotional Intelligence and Avoidance of problem-solving ( $r=-0.387$ ,  $P<0.001$ ) as well as Helplessness in problem-solving ( $r=-0.840$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). On the other hand, Emotional Intelligence showed positive correlations with Control, Creativity, Confidence, and approach to problem-solving.

**Table 4**

*Standard Research Coefficients*

Path between Variables	Path	STDEV	P-value	T-value	Result
Avoidance Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.034	0.058	0.565	0.576	rejection
Avoidance Decision Making -> Personal Growth	-0.079	0.061	0.194	1.300	rejection
Avoidance of Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.004	0.047	0.926	0.093	rejection
Avoidance of Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	0.046	0.048	0.333	0.967	rejection
Confidence in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.023	0.070	0.748	0.321	rejection
Confidence in Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	0.088	0.092	0.340	0.954	rejection
Creativity in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.146	0.057	0.010	2.577	confirmation
Creativity in Problem Solving -> Personal growth	0.050	0.096	0.598	0.527	rejection
Dependency Decision making -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.083	0.076	0.272	1.098	rejection
Dependency Decision making -> Personal Growth	0.077	0.077	0.320	0.995	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.322	0.108	0.003	2.976	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Avoidance Decision Making	-0.602	0.044	0.000	13.786	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Avoidance of Problem Solving	-0.387	0.063	0.000	6.104	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Confidence in Problem Solving	0.612	0.043	0.000	14.239	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Creativity in Problem Solving	0.601	0.045	0.000	13.394	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Dependency Decision Making	-0.750	0.028	0.000	26.567	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Helplessness in Problem Solving	-0.840	0.023	0.000	36.832	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Spontaneous Decision Making	-0.676	0.036	0.000	18.636	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Intuitive Decision Making	0.551	0.055	0.000	10.078	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Control in Problem Solving	0.657	0.038	0.000	17.377	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Personal Growth	0.467	0.132	0.000	3.524	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Rational Decision Making	0.764	0.028	0.000	27.365	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Approach to Problem Solving	0.483	0.057	0.000	8.508	confirmation
Helplessness in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.227	0.094	0.015	2.424	confirmation

Helplessness in Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	-0.016	0.106	0.878	0.153	rejection
Spontaneous Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.122	0.061	0.044	2.019	confirmation
Spontaneous Decision Making -> Personal Growth	-0.112	0.078	0.150	1.438	rejection
Intuitive Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.113	0.056	0.045	2.001	confirmation
Intuitive Decision Making -> Personal Growth	0.070	0.075	0.351	0.933	rejection
Control in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.175	0.086	0.042	2.035	confirmation
Control in Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	-0.053	0.106	0.619	0.497	rejection
Rational Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.217	0.086	0.011	2.538	confirmation
Rational Decision Making -> Personal Growth	0.082	0.085	0.335	0.964	rejection
Approach to Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.036	0.045	0.426	0.797	rejection
<b>Approach to Problem Solving -&gt; Personal Growth</b>	<b>0.113</b>	<b>0.053</b>	<b>0.034</b>	<b>2.126</b>	<b>confirmation</b>

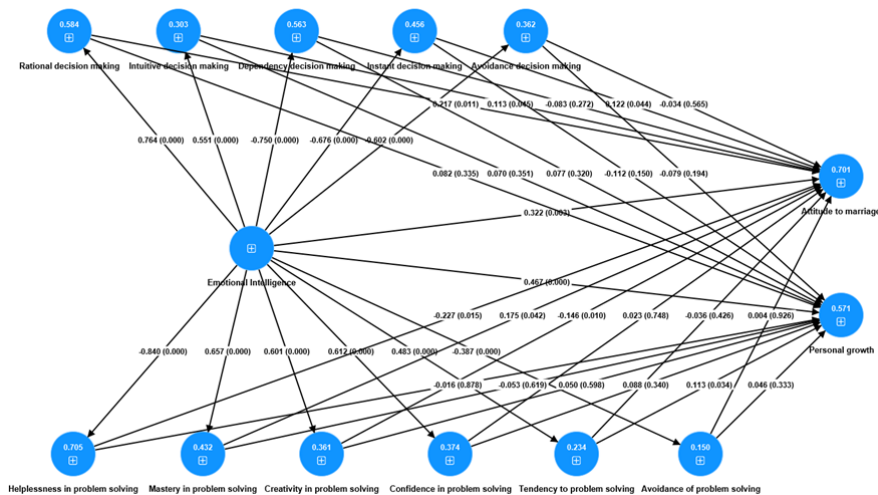


Figure 2: Path Coefficients between Variables and Significance Level

Based on the findings presented in Table 4 and Figure 2, it can be observed that Emotional Intelligence has a positive and significant impact on Attitude towards marriage ( $\beta = 0.322, p = 0.003$ ), Confidence in solving problems ( $\beta = 0.612, p = 0.000$ ), Creativity in problem-Solving ( $\beta = 0.601, p = 0.000$ ), Intuitive decision-making ( $\beta = 0.551, p = 0.000$ ), Control in problem-solving ( $\beta = 0.657, p = 0.000$ ), Personal growth ( $\beta = 0.467, p = 0.000$ ), Rational decision-making ( $\beta = 0.217, p = 0.011$ ), Helplessness in problem-solving negatively impacted attitude toward marriage ( $\beta = -0.227, p = 0.015$ ). Creativity in problem-solving also had a negative effect ( $\beta = -0.146, p = 0.010$ ). Spontaneous decision-making had a positive effect ( $\beta = 0.122, p = 0.044$ ), as did intuitive decision-making ( $\beta = 0.113, p = 0.045$ ). Control in the problem-solving component positively influenced attitude toward marriage ( $\beta = 0.175, p = 0.000$ ), and approach to problem-solving ( $\beta = 0.483, p = 0.000$ ). Nonetheless, Emotional Intelligence has a negative and significant influence on Avoidance decision-making ( $\beta = -0.602, p = 0.000$ ), Avoidance of problem-solving ( $\beta = -0.387, p = 0.000$ ), Dependent decision-making ( $\beta = -0.750, p = 0.000$ ), Helplessness in problem-solving ( $\beta = -0.840, p = 0.000$ ), and Spontaneous decision-making ( $\beta = -0.676, p = 0.000$ ).

0.764,  $p = 0.000$ ), and approach to problem-solving ( $\beta = 0.483, p = 0.000$ ). Nonetheless, Emotional Intelligence has a negative and significant influence on Avoidance decision-making ( $\beta = -0.602, p = 0.000$ ), Avoidance of problem-solving ( $\beta = -0.387, p = 0.000$ ), Dependent decision-making ( $\beta = -0.750, p = 0.000$ ), Helplessness in problem-solving ( $\beta = -0.840, p = 0.000$ ), and Spontaneous decision-making ( $\beta = -0.676, p = 0.000$ ). Rational decision-making also had a positive impact ( $\beta = 0.217, p = 0.011$ ). The approach to problem-solving has had a beneficial effect on personal growth ( $\beta = 0.113, p = 0.034$ ). The researcher utilized the bootstrap method to examine the indirect effect of the variables in the study.

Table 5

#### Indirect Effects between Research Variables

Path between Variables	Path coefficient	SD	P-value	T-value	Result
Emotional Intelligence -> Avoidance Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.020	0.036	0.570	0.568	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Approach to Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	0.055	0.027	0.044	2.011	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Dependency Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.063	0.057	0.273	1.095	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Helplessness in Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	0.014	0.090	0.879	0.152	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Intuitive Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.062	0.032	0.050	1.960	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Creativity in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.088	0.035	0.013	2.486	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Dependency Decision Making -> Personal Growth	-0.058	0.058	0.321	0.994	rejection

Emotional Intelligence -> Helplessness in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.190	0.078	0.015	2.445	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Spontaneous Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.083	0.042	0.048	1.978	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Control in Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	-0.035	0.070	0.621	0.495	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Avoidance of Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.002	0.019	0.928	0.090	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Rational Decision Making -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.166	0.066	0.013	2.498	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Avoidance Decision Making -> Personal Growth	0.047	0.037	0.202	1.276	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Confidence in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.014	0.043	0.749	0.321	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Approach to Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	-0.017	0.022	0.434	0.783	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Confidence in Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	0.054	0.057	0.345	0.944	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Creativity in Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	0.030	0.057	0.598	0.527	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Control in Problem Solving -> Attitude toward Marriage	0.115	0.056	0.042	2.033	confirmation
Emotional Intelligence -> Avoidance of Problem Solving -> Personal Growth	-0.018	0.019	0.359	0.918	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Spontaneous Decision Making -> Personal Growth	0.076	0.054	0.157	1.415	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Intuitive Decision Making -> Personal Growth	0.038	0.042	0.362	0.912	rejection
Emotional Intelligence -> Rational Decision Making -> Personal Growth	0.063	0.066	0.340	0.955	rejection

Based on Table 5, Emotional Intelligence positively impacted Personal Growth (with a coefficient of 0.055 and p-value of 0.044) by enhancing the approach to problem-solving. Furthermore, Emotional Intelligence was found to have a detrimental impact on attitude toward marriage, as indicated by a coefficient of -0.088 and a p-value of 0.013, due to its association with creativity in problem-solving.

Similarly, Emotional Intelligence was found to have a positive and significant impact on Attitude toward marriage by influencing the variable of helplessness in problem-solving ( $\beta=0.190$ ,  $p=0.015$ ). It was observed that the path coefficient of Emotional Intelligence decreased from 0.322 to 0.190 in the indirect mode, indicating that helplessness in problem-solving diminishes the positive influence of Emotional Intelligence on Attitude toward marriage. Additionally, Emotional Intelligence had a negative and significant effect on Attitude toward marriage ( $\beta=-0.083$ ,  $p=0.048$ ) due to the spontaneous decision-making variable, leading to a decline. Moreover, Emotional Intelligence had a beneficial and substantial impact on Attitudes toward marriage by promoting rational decision-making ( $\beta=0.166$ ,  $p=0.013$ ). Moreover, Emotional Intelligence had a positive and significant effect on Attitude toward marriage by influencing the variable of control in problem-solving ( $\beta=0.115$ ,  $p=0.042$ ), further increasing it.

### 3. Discussion and Conclusion

The main goal of this study was to explore the impact of emotional intelligence on personal growth and attitude toward marriage among young men and women, taking into account decision-making and problem-solving styles. The study findings showed that emotional intelligence can enhance one's attitude toward marriage, personal growth, confidence, creativity, approach to problem-solving, intuitive and rational decision-making, and decreased avoidance in decision-making, dependence, spontaneous, helplessness, and avoidance of problem-solving. Helplessness and creativity in problem-solving were associated with a lower attitude toward marriage, while

spontaneous, rational, intuitive decision-making and control in problem-solving increased positive attitudes toward marriage. Additionally, approaches to problem-solving were connected to personal growth. "Enhanced emotional intelligence led to personal growth through the approach to problem-solving. Furthermore, it resulted in a more positive attitude toward marriage through control problem-solving and rational decision-making, but also contributed to a less favorable attitude towards marriage through creative problem-solving, helplessness, and spontaneous decision-making."

The results of the current study indicate that emotional intelligence can enhance personal growth, attitude toward marriage, positive problem-solving strategies, and intuitive and rational decision-making styles while reducing dependent, spontaneous, and avoidant decision-making styles. It also decreases helplessness and avoidance in problem-solving, ultimately leading to personal growth and a positive attitude towards marriage, which aligns with previous research findings (Pagavathsing, 2021), (Wischerth et al, 2016), (Sarabizadeh & Fard, 2023), (Döner & Efeoğlu, 2024), (Hadizadeh Moghadam & Tehrani, 2020). Previous research has suggested a positive connection between emotional intelligence and personal growth initiative (Pagavathsing, 2021). Additionally, individual differences in emotional intelligence have been shown to predict increased personal growth (Wischerth, 2016). Furthermore, the study found a significant association between attitude toward marriage and emotional intelligence, with emotional intelligence being able to predict students' attitudes toward marriage (Sarabizadeh & Fard, 2023). The study also emphasized the notable influence of emotional intelligence on problem-solving skills (Döner & Efeoğlu, 2024). Hadizadeh Moghadam and colleagues (2020) found in their research that emotional intelligence is connected to avoidance decision-making styles in a negative way and to intuitive decision-making styles in a positive way (Hadizadeh Moghadam & Tehrani, 2020).

Emotional intelligence can be defined as a collection of emotional and social skills, behaviors, and competencies that play a crucial role in how we understand ourselves and



others, communicate effectively, and manage relationships. Our emotions, perceptions, and thoughts are interconnected, and by learning to regulate our emotions and gather relevant information, we can shape more accurate and positive perceptions and thoughts, ultimately aiding in personal growth and development in various aspects of life (Amado Alonso, 2020). Developing emotional intelligence is essential for fostering inner peace, building strong relationships with others, achieving life goals, dealing with challenges, and expressing emotions openly. Individuals who have high emotional intelligence are likely to have a favorable self-perception, discover meaning in life, and have the ability to bounce back from everyday challenges. In summary, emotional intelligence is essential to achieving success, happiness, and healthy relationships, as it promotes a positive attitude toward marriage or life and enhances one's ability to navigate personal and marital challenges effectively (Korkmaz, Keleş, Kazgan, Baykara, Gürok, et al, 2020).

Additionally, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in forming successful human relationships, as the assessment and regulation of emotions can impact clinical performance by enhancing problem-solving skills. Improving emotional intelligence can enhance problem-solving skills, boost critical and creative thinking, and decrease helplessness, and avoidance in decision-making by cultivating inner peace (Kim & Sohn, 2019). Emotions also heavily influence decision-making, as emotional involvement in decisions can shape our choices and act as a driving force in the decision-making process. Rational decision-makers seek to gather information, evaluate alternatives, and make decisions based on reason to achieve success, while intuitive decision-making is influenced by personal and environmental awareness. Emotional intelligence improves decision-making styles, unlike decision-making styles based on dependent, spontaneous, and avoidance. These styles require ongoing avoidance of decision-making responsibilities and lack self and situational understanding, leading to the need for external assistance, direction, and counsel (El Othman, 2020).

Another discovery from the current research indicated that feelings of helplessness and creativity in problem-solving lead to a decrease in one's attitude toward marriage, consistent with previous studies (Ünal & Akgün, 2022). A study also found that husbands' approach to problem-solving, whether positive or negative, can predict their own and their spouse's marital satisfaction based on compatibility (Ünal & Akgün, 2022). Conversely, the study highlighted that spontaneous, rational, and intuitive decision-making can enhance one's attitude toward marriage. Jokar et al. (2023) found that rational decision-making styles are increasing while intuitive, dependent, spontaneous, and avoidant styles are decreasing in the context of marriage. They also highlighted the importance of self-efficacy in marriage. This research contradicts the implicit assumptions of other studies (Jokar et al, 2023).

The explanation of this discovery suggests that the creative problem-solving style typically involves planning and considering various solutions based on the problem at hand,

which is generally seen as a constructive approach. However, in the context of marriage discussions, this style can lead to excessive planning, inefficiency, and emotional exhaustion, resulting in a response marked by confusion and anxiety rather than a proper reaction to traumatic or stressful situations. The style of helplessness in problem-solving indicates a person's feelings of powerlessness when faced with difficult circumstances. This inefficient approach not only decreases individual participation but also leads to ignoring complex issues and circumstances that could affect one's attitude toward marriage (Salehitabar, 2023). Various factors contribute to the disparities observed, such as variations in the living environments of the participants, differences in the tools used, and varying levels of access among the young individuals studied.

Jokar et al.'s study (2023) focused on the decision-making and self-efficacy of unmarried men towards marriage, potentially due to societal differences as a contributing factor (Jokar, 2023). The researchers found that all three decision-making styles - rational, intuitive, and spontaneous - could impact attitudes toward marriage. Intuitive decision-making is subconscious and relies on emotions and implicit learning, whereas rational decision-making involves considering multiple solutions and outcomes. Spontaneous decision-making occurs during emergencies without detailed analysis, yet it is based on previous experiences to make informed choices. Combining emotions with rational thinking can potentially enhance the attitude toward marriage among young adults with these decision-making styles (Farrokhi Rad, 2023).

Additionally, research has shown that control in problem-solving can improve attitudes toward marriage and contribute to personal growth. While there have not been any studies specifically focused on this subject, the findings align with previous research showing that problem-solving can positively affect individuals (Enayat, 2021); (Kusakli & Sönmez, 2024). Studies have shown a positive correlation between rational problem-solving skills and social well-being (Enayat, 2021). Another study suggested that enhanced problem-solving skills can enhance overall capabilities (Kusakli & Sönmez, 2024).

Explaining this discovery involves acknowledging that problem-solving is a crucial coping mechanism that enhances personal and social skills and advancement. Individuals who employ productive problem-solving techniques can cultivate additional abilities, such as creativity, display rational behavior, adaptability, critical thinking, and determination, and enhance their attitude toward marriage by effectively resolving various challenges (Salehitabar, 2023). Problem-solving techniques encompass the strategies used by individuals to manage and regulate their emotions and thoughts and guide their behavior and actions in social and non-social settings. Positive and adaptive problem-solving methods reinforce mental resilience and a goal-driven mindset to efficiently complete daily tasks and enable individuals to identify issues and create alternative solutions. Individuals can enhance their personal growth by leveraging their inner strengths, such as self-efficacy and ability to make decisions, enabling them to

overcome challenges and develop in challenging situations (Mehdipour & TAJERI, 2022).

The research highlights the complex relationship between variables, suggesting that improving emotional intelligence could result in a more positive attitude toward marriage, personal growth, effective problem-solving skills, and intuitive and rational decision-making. Furthermore, proficiency in problem-solving can also contribute to a more positive attitude towards marriage. "Experts suggest holding workshops in educational institutions with the help of psychologists and counselors to educate people about emotional intelligence." The results of this research may be advantageous for professional counselors specializing in marriage and family therapy, as well as psychologists when helping clients in therapy sessions. Workshops focusing on problem-solving and decision-making styles could be advantageous in improving young people's attitudes towards marriage, suggesting the implementation of classes and seminars in this area.

One of the limitations of the present study is the potential for biased responses due to personal interests and the lack of patience in the participants when answering questionnaires. Emotional intelligence is a subjective variable, and relying on self-report questionnaires may not accurately reflect an individual's true emotional capabilities. Future research should consider alternative measurement methods in addition to self-report tools. Cultural variances, social influences, family relationships, and educational history may affect how individuals solve problems. Similarly, environmental pressures, social assistance, and personal life events can influence emotional intelligence, which was not fully accounted for in the study. Additional constraint includes the absence of prior studies investigating the correlation between problem-solving approaches and attitudes toward marriage and self-growth, indicating a necessity for more in-depth examination in this subject area. The participants may have become fatigued and had their concentration affected by the extensive assessment process involving multiple questionnaires, despite attempts to address this by allowing ample time. Future studies should replicate these findings in different cultures and with larger sample sizes to enhance the generalizability of the results.

#### Authors' Contributions

The first and corresponding author were responsible for conducting the interview and collecting data, and the other authors were responsible for analyzing the data and writing the article.

#### Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

#### Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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#### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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#### Ethics Considerations

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