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A STUDY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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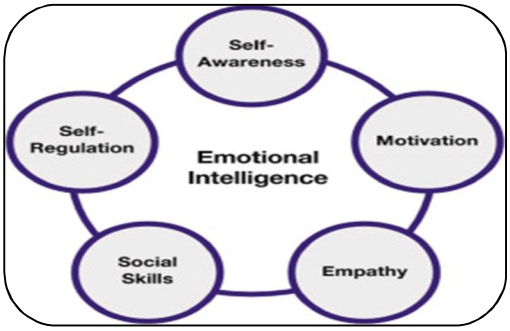
ABSTRACT



Emotional intelligence is an important psychological factor that influences students' academic performance, social relationships, behaviour, and overall personality development. It refers to the ability to recognise, understand, manage, and express emotions effectively while understanding the emotions of others. Secondary school students experience various emotional, social, and academic changes during adolescence, making emotional intelligence an essential aspect of their personal and educational development. The present study focuses on examining emotional intelligence among secondary school students and understanding its significance in their academic and social lives. It aims to explore students' abilities in emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, motivation, and interpersonal relationships.

The study also considers the possible influence of gender, family environment, school environment, and socio-economic background on emotional intelligence. A descriptive research method may be employed to collect data from selected secondary school students using an appropriate emotional intelligence scale, questionnaires, and relevant statistical techniques. The findings of such a study may help teachers, parents, and educational administrators understand students' emotional needs and develop appropriate strategies to support their emotional well-being. The study highlights the importance of integrating emotional learning activities, counselling services, cooperative learning, and positive teacher-student relationships into the school environment. It concludes that promoting emotional intelligence can contribute to improved emotional stability, effective communication, better social adjustment, and holistic development among secondary school students.

KEYWORDS: *Emotional Intelligence, Secondary School Students, Emotional Awareness, Emotional Regulation, Empathy, Academic Performance, Adolescent Development, Social Adjustment, Emotional Well-being.*

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence has emerged as an important concept in educational psychology because of its significant role in students' academic achievement, social behaviour, emotional well-being, and personality development. It refers to an individual's ability to recognise, understand, express, and regulate emotions effectively, as well as to understand and respond appropriately to the emotions of others. In the educational context, emotional intelligence helps students manage stress, develop positive relationships,

make responsible decisions, and cope with academic and personal challenges. Therefore, understanding emotional intelligence among secondary school students is essential for promoting their holistic development. Secondary school education is a crucial stage in an individual's life because it coincides with adolescence, a period characterised by physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. During this stage, students experience increasing academic expectations, peer pressure, competition, family expectations, and concerns about their future careers. These experiences may influence their emotional stability, self-confidence, motivation, and behaviour. Students with better emotional intelligence may be more capable of managing their feelings, responding constructively to difficult situations, maintaining healthy friendships, and adapting to changing circumstances. In contrast, difficulties in emotional regulation may contribute to anxiety, frustration, conflicts, and problems in social adjustment.

Emotional intelligence includes several important dimensions, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Self-awareness enables students to identify and understand their emotions, while self-regulation helps them control impulsive reactions and respond thoughtfully to challenging situations. Motivation encourages them to work towards their educational goals, and empathy helps them recognise and respect the feelings of classmates and teachers. Social skills support effective communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, and the development of positive interpersonal relationships. These abilities are valuable not only for academic success but also for the development of responsible and emotionally mature individuals.

Schools play an important role in developing emotional intelligence among students. Teachers, classmates, school counsellors, and the overall school environment can influence how students understand and manage their emotions. A supportive classroom environment that encourages open communication, cooperation, respect, and emotional expression can help students develop confidence and resilience. Similarly, parents and family members contribute to emotional development by providing encouragement, guidance, understanding, and appropriate opportunities for independent decision-making. Educational activities such as group discussions, role-playing, cooperative learning, counselling, and life-skills education can further strengthen students' emotional competencies.

The study of emotional intelligence among secondary school students is significant because academic performance alone does not fully represent a student's overall development. Students also require emotional competence to cope with examination pressure, maintain healthy relationships, overcome setbacks, and make appropriate decisions. Investigating emotional intelligence can help identify students' emotional strengths and areas requiring support. It may also provide useful insights into differences in emotional intelligence associated with gender, family background, school environment, and other relevant factors, depending on the objectives and design of the research.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is an essential component of the educational and personal development of secondary school students. Understanding its nature and influence can help teachers, parents, and educational institutions create supportive learning environments that address both academic and emotional needs. The present study, therefore, focuses on examining emotional intelligence among secondary school students to develop a better understanding of their emotional competencies and to highlight the importance of emotional development in achieving balanced personality growth, effective social adjustment, and overall well-being.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim of the Study

The main aim of the present study is to investigate the level of emotional intelligence among secondary school students and understand its importance in their emotional, social, and academic development.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of emotional intelligence among secondary school students.
2. To study the different dimensions of emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.
3. To compare the emotional intelligence of male and female secondary school students.
4. To examine differences in emotional intelligence between students studying in rural and urban schools.
5. To investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among secondary school students.
6. To study the role of family environment in the development of emotional intelligence among students.
7. To examine the influence of the school environment and teacher-student relationships on students' emotional intelligence.
8. To understand how emotional intelligence helps students manage stress, peer pressure, and academic challenges.
9. To identify the emotional and social difficulties experienced by secondary school students.
10. To suggest appropriate strategies for developing emotional intelligence and promoting the overall well-being of secondary school students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Emotional intelligence has received considerable attention in educational psychology because of its importance in students' emotional development, academic achievement, social adjustment, and interpersonal relationships. Researchers have examined emotional intelligence from different theoretical perspectives and investigated its role in learning, behaviour, motivation, and psychological well-being. The existing literature provides a foundation for understanding the emotional competencies of secondary school students and identifying factors that may influence their development. Salovey and Mayer (1990) introduced the concept of emotional intelligence as a form of social intelligence involving the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, distinguish among them, and use this information to guide thinking and actions. Their work established an important theoretical foundation for subsequent research on emotional intelligence. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) further developed the ability-based approach, explaining emotional intelligence as a set of mental abilities associated with perceiving, understanding, using, and managing emotions. This framework is relevant to secondary school students because emotional awareness and regulation can influence their responses to academic pressure and social situations.

Goleman (1995) popularised emotional intelligence through his work on the role of emotional competencies in personal and professional effectiveness. He highlighted the importance of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These dimensions are particularly relevant during adolescence, when students experience changes in emotional expression, peer relationships, independence, and self-identity. Goleman's approach suggests that emotional competencies can be developed through appropriate learning experiences and supportive relationships. Petrides, Frederickson, and Furnham (2004) examined the relationship between trait emotional intelligence and academic performance in

school settings. Their research contributed to the understanding of how emotional self-perceptions and personality-related emotional competencies may be associated with educational outcomes. The study also highlighted the importance of considering emotional intelligence alongside other psychological and social factors when examining students' academic experiences.

Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, and Salovey (2012) discussed the importance of emotional intelligence and social-emotional learning in educational environments. Their work emphasised that schools can support students' emotional competencies through structured programmes, positive relationships, and classroom practices that encourage emotional awareness and responsible expression. Such approaches can help students develop interpersonal skills and improve their ability to manage emotions in everyday school situations. Mayer, Roberts, and Barsade (2008) reviewed research on emotional intelligence and its relationship with social functioning, psychological adjustment, and interpersonal behaviour. Their review indicated that emotional intelligence can be relevant to understanding how individuals perceive emotional information and respond to social situations. In secondary schools, these abilities may contribute to cooperation, conflict resolution, empathy, and the development of healthy peer relationships. The literature also suggests that adolescence is an important period for emotional development. Students at the secondary school level face academic competition, examination stress, peer influence, family expectations, and decisions about future education. Emotional intelligence may help them understand their emotional responses and adopt more constructive coping strategies. However, students differ in their emotional experiences and competencies, and these differences may be influenced by family relationships, school climate, social background, and individual personality characteristics. In the Indian educational context, the study of emotional intelligence among secondary school students is significant because schools serve learners from diverse socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Understanding emotional intelligence can help educators identify students' emotional needs and develop suitable approaches to counselling, classroom interaction, life-skills education, and social-emotional learning. Research in this area can also examine whether emotional intelligence differs according to gender, school location, family environment, or academic achievement, provided that these variables are included in the research design.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology provides a systematic framework for investigating emotional intelligence among secondary school students. The present study may adopt a descriptive survey method to assess students' emotional intelligence and understand its role in their emotional, social, and academic development. The descriptive method is suitable for collecting information about students' existing emotional competencies, attitudes, and behavioural characteristics in a natural educational setting. The population of the study consists of students studying in secondary schools, particularly those in Standards VIII to X. A sample of approximately 100 to 200 students may be selected from government, aided, or private schools, depending on the availability of participants and research resources. A suitable sampling technique, such as simple random sampling or stratified random sampling, may be used to ensure appropriate representation of students by gender, school type, or rural and urban background.

Data may be collected using a standardised emotional intelligence scale appropriate for the age group and the educational context. A structured questionnaire may also be used to collect demographic information, including age, gender, class, school location, and family background. Academic achievement records may be considered if the study aims to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance. The selected instruments should have appropriate validity and reliability, and the researcher should follow the prescribed scoring procedures. The collected data may be analysed using suitable statistical techniques, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Where

relevant, an independent-samples t-test may be used to compare emotional intelligence scores between two groups, while correlation analysis may be employed to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. The selection of statistical techniques will depend on the research objectives, the nature of the data, and the assumptions of each test.

Ethical considerations are essential throughout the research process. Permission should be obtained from the concerned school authorities, and informed consent should be secured from parents or guardians, along with students' assent where required. Participation should be voluntary, and the confidentiality of students' responses must be maintained. The data should be used exclusively for academic and research purposes. The study is expected to provide systematic information about the level and dimensions of emotional intelligence among secondary school students. The findings may help teachers, parents, and school administrators understand students' emotional needs and develop appropriate strategies to promote emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social adjustment, and overall well-being. The sample size, sampling method, and statistical procedures described above are proposed choices and should be revised according to the actual research design and data collected.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in the emotional, social, and academic development of secondary school students. It refers to the ability to recognise, understand, regulate, and express emotions effectively while responding appropriately to the emotions of others. Secondary school students experience adolescence, a period characterised by rapid physical, psychological, emotional, and social changes. During this stage, students face various challenges, including academic pressure, examination anxiety, peer influence, family expectations, competition, and concerns about their future. These challenges may affect their emotional stability, self-confidence, motivation, interpersonal relationships, and academic performance. Although educational institutions generally emphasise academic achievement, the development of emotional competencies may not always receive adequate attention. Students with difficulties in understanding and managing their emotions may experience stress, frustration, conflicts, low motivation, and problems in social adjustment. In contrast, students with stronger emotional competencies may be better equipped to cope with challenges, maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. However, the level of emotional intelligence may differ among students according to individual characteristics, family environment, gender, school environment, and socio-economic background.

Therefore, it is important to study emotional intelligence among secondary school students to understand their emotional competencies and identify factors associated with their development. The present study focuses on assessing the level of emotional intelligence among secondary school students and examining relevant differences and relationships according to the selected research variables. It also seeks to highlight the importance of developing emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills in the school environment. The problem of the present study is thus stated as "A Study of Emotional Intelligence Among Secondary School Students." The study may provide useful insights for teachers, parents, counsellors, and school administrators in developing appropriate educational strategies to strengthen students' emotional well-being, social adjustment, and holistic personality development.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Emotional intelligence is an important factor in the overall development of secondary school students. It helps students recognise their emotions, regulate their feelings, understand others, and respond effectively to different situations. Secondary school education is a crucial stage because students

experience significant physical, psychological, emotional, and social changes during adolescence. At this stage, they face academic competition, examination stress, peer pressure, family expectations, and concerns about future educational and career opportunities. Therefore, studying emotional intelligence is necessary to understand students' emotional needs and support their healthy development. The present study is needed to assess the level of emotional intelligence among secondary school students and understand its importance in their educational and personal lives. Academic achievement alone cannot fully represent students' development, as emotional stability, self-confidence, motivation, empathy, and interpersonal skills also contribute to successful learning. Students who can understand and manage their emotions may be better prepared to cope with academic difficulties, maintain positive relationships, resolve conflicts, and adapt to changing circumstances.

The study is also important for identifying possible differences in emotional intelligence among students based on gender, school environment, family background, and rural or urban location. Understanding these differences may help teachers and educational administrators develop suitable educational activities and support systems according to students' needs. The findings may also provide useful information for parents and school counsellors to recognise emotional difficulties and offer appropriate guidance. Furthermore, the study highlights the need to integrate emotional learning into school education through counselling, life-skills programmes, cooperative learning, group discussions, and positive teacher-student interactions. Such initiatives may encourage emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, responsible decision-making, and social adjustment among students.

In conclusion, the need for the present study arises from the importance of emotional intelligence in promoting students' academic engagement, psychological well-being, social relationships, and personality development. By examining emotional intelligence among secondary school students, the study may contribute to a better understanding of their emotional competencies and help educational institutions create supportive learning environments that promote balanced and holistic development.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Further research on emotional intelligence among secondary school students can be conducted to develop a deeper understanding of students' emotional competencies and their influence on educational and personal development. Future researchers may examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement, motivation, self-confidence, stress management, and psychological well-being. Comparative studies can be undertaken to investigate differences in emotional intelligence based on gender, age, socio-economic background, school type, and rural or urban location. Longitudinal studies may be conducted to understand how emotional intelligence develops throughout secondary education and how it changes with age and educational experiences. Researchers may also investigate the influence of family environment, parenting styles, peer relationships, teacher behaviour, and school climate on students' emotional development. Special attention may be given to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those experiencing learning difficulties or social challenges.

Further studies can evaluate the effectiveness of emotional intelligence training programmes, counselling services, life-skills education, and social-emotional learning activities in schools. Experimental research may be undertaken to determine whether structured interventions improve students' emotional regulation, empathy, interpersonal relationships, and academic engagement. Researchers may also explore the role of digital media, social networking platforms, and online learning environments in shaping students' emotional experiences. Comparative research across different states, educational boards, languages, and cultural settings in India may provide a broader understanding of variations in emotional intelligence. Future investigations may use larger and more diverse samples, validated assessment tools,

interviews, observations, and mixed-method research designs to obtain comprehensive findings. Researchers should also examine the reliability and cultural appropriateness of emotional intelligence measurement tools used with Indian secondary school students.

Finally, further research should focus on developing practical recommendations for teachers, parents, counsellors, and educational policymakers. Such research can support the integration of emotional intelligence education into school curricula and contribute to students' emotional well-being, social adjustment, resilience, and holistic personality development.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on examining emotional intelligence among secondary school students and understanding its importance in their emotional, social, and academic development. It covers students studying at the secondary school level and considers emotional intelligence in terms of self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and interpersonal skills. The study may examine differences in emotional intelligence according to gender, age, school type, and rural or urban background, depending on the selected research objectives.

It also considers the possible relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement, stress management, social adjustment, and personality development. The findings may help teachers, parents, school counsellors, and educational administrators understand students' emotional needs and develop appropriate strategies to improve emotional well-being. The study may further support the development of supportive classroom environments, counselling programmes, and emotional learning activities in schools. Its findings will primarily apply to the students and educational settings included in the research sample.

Limitations of the Study

The present study may have certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting its findings. The sample size and selection of schools may restrict the generalisation of results to all secondary school students. If the study is conducted in a particular geographical area, its findings may not represent students from different cultural, social, and educational backgrounds across India. The accuracy of the results may also depend on the reliability and validity of the emotional intelligence scale or questionnaire used for data collection. Students' responses may be influenced by their mood, personal experiences, understanding of the questions, or tendency to provide socially desirable answers.

Emotional intelligence is a complex psychological concept, and a questionnaire alone may not fully capture every aspect of students' emotional experiences and behaviour. If data are collected at a single point in time, the study may not explain how emotional intelligence develops over time or establish cause-and-effect relationships. Furthermore, factors such as parenting styles, peer relationships, teacher behaviour, mental well-being, and family circumstances may not be examined in detail. These limitations should be acknowledged when drawing conclusions and making recommendations based on the study's findings.

DISCUSSION

Emotional intelligence is an important aspect of students' overall development, influencing their emotional stability, academic engagement, social relationships, and ability to cope with everyday challenges. The present study focuses on understanding emotional intelligence among secondary school students and examining its significance during adolescence. This stage of life involves considerable

physical, psychological, emotional, and social changes, which may affect students' behaviour, attitudes, motivation, and learning experiences. Therefore, emotional intelligence deserves appropriate attention within the school education system. One important aspect of emotional intelligence is self-awareness, which enables students to recognise their emotions, understand their strengths and weaknesses, and identify the factors influencing their behaviour. Students who develop self-awareness may become more confident in expressing their feelings and making appropriate decisions. Emotional regulation is equally important because secondary school students frequently experience examination stress, academic competition, peer pressure, and family expectations. The ability to manage anger, anxiety, disappointment, and frustration can help students respond constructively to challenging situations and maintain emotional balance.

Motivation is another significant dimension of emotional intelligence. Students who understand and regulate their emotions may be better equipped to maintain concentration, establish educational goals, overcome setbacks, and continue working towards academic success. However, emotional intelligence should not be considered the only factor determining academic achievement, as learning outcomes are also influenced by teaching quality, family support, school resources, socio-economic conditions, and individual learning abilities. Empathy and social skills are also essential for the healthy development of secondary school students. Empathy enables students to understand the feelings and perspectives of classmates, teachers, and family members. These abilities may promote cooperation, respect, friendship, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Effective communication and interpersonal skills can further contribute to a positive classroom environment, reduce misunderstandings, and encourage participation in group activities. Schools can strengthen these competencies by promoting collaborative learning, peer interaction, discussions, and activities that encourage mutual understanding.

The family and school environments may significantly influence students' emotional development. Supportive parenting, positive teacher-student relationships, appropriate guidance, and opportunities for emotional expression can help students develop confidence and emotional resilience. Conversely, excessive academic pressure, negative peer interactions, bullying, and a lack of emotional support may create difficulties for some students. Teachers and parents should therefore recognise the importance of emotional development and provide appropriate guidance and encouragement. The discussion also highlights the importance of emotional intelligence education in secondary schools. Counselling services, life-skills education, mindfulness activities, cooperative learning, and structured social-emotional learning programmes may help students improve emotional awareness and regulation. Such initiatives should be inclusive and sensitive to students' individual, cultural, and social differences.

Overall, emotional intelligence is a valuable component of holistic education because it supports students' emotional well-being, social adjustment, responsible decision-making, and personal development. The present study may provide useful insights into the emotional competencies of secondary school students and help educators identify areas requiring attention. However, because no actual survey results or statistical findings have been provided, these points represent a conceptual discussion rather than conclusions based on measured data. Empirical findings would be necessary to determine the actual level of emotional intelligence among the selected students and establish whether significant differences or relationships exist.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools should give greater importance to the development of emotional intelligence among secondary school students by integrating emotional and social learning activities into the regular curriculum. Students should be encouraged to develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy,

motivation, and interpersonal skills through classroom discussions, cooperative learning, role-playing, and practical activities. Teachers should receive appropriate training to understand students' emotional needs and create a supportive, inclusive, and positive learning environment. School counselling services should be strengthened to help students manage examination stress, anxiety, peer pressure, family expectations, and other emotional challenges. Parents should maintain open communication with their children and provide emotional support, encouragement, and guidance during adolescence.

Educational institutions should organise workshops, seminars, and awareness programmes to highlight the importance of emotional intelligence in academic achievement, social adjustment, and personality development. Students should be encouraged to practise positive thinking, self-reflection, responsible decision-making, and constructive conflict resolution. Schools should promote healthy peer relationships, mutual respect, teamwork, and effective communication to improve students' social and emotional competencies. Special attention should be given to students experiencing emotional difficulties, low self-confidence, or problems with social adjustment. Regular assessment using appropriate and reliable tools may help identify students' emotional strengths and areas requiring support. Further research involving diverse student populations should be undertaken to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, academic achievement, gender, family environment, and school climate. Coordinated efforts by teachers, parents, counsellors, school administrators, and policymakers are necessary to promote emotional well-being and ensure the holistic development of secondary school students.

CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence is an essential component of the overall development of secondary school students, as it influences their emotional well-being, academic engagement, social relationships, and personality development. The secondary school stage is a significant period of adolescence during which students experience various physical, psychological, emotional, and social changes. During this period, the ability to recognise, understand, and regulate emotions becomes particularly important for managing academic pressure, peer relationships, family expectations, and personal challenges. Emotional intelligence helps students develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, motivation, and effective communication skills.

The present study highlights the importance of understanding emotional intelligence among secondary school students and its possible relationship with academic achievement, stress management, and social adjustment. Students who develop effective emotional competencies may be better prepared to handle challenging situations, maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and adapt to changing circumstances. However, emotional intelligence is only one of several factors that influence students' educational and personal development.

Schools and families have an important role in promoting emotional intelligence. Teachers can encourage emotional development through supportive classroom environments, cooperative learning, counselling, and life-skills education, while parents can contribute through positive communication, guidance, and encouragement. Educational institutions should also provide appropriate support systems to help students manage emotional difficulties and develop confidence and resilience.

In conclusion, the study of emotional intelligence among secondary school students is important for promoting balanced personality development and holistic education. Greater awareness, appropriate educational interventions, and cooperation among teachers, parents, counsellors, and policymakers can help strengthen students' emotional competencies. Although the actual level of emotional intelligence cannot be determined without analysing collected data, the study provides a valuable framework for

understanding its significance and identifying strategies to support students' emotional, social, and academic development.

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