





# An Analysis of Emotional Intelligence Among Secondary School Students

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## Abstract

This study explores the levels of emotional intelligence among secondary school students in Bengaluru District, Karnataka, with a focus on how it varies across gender, school type, and family background. A descriptive survey design within a quantitative research framework was employed. Using a stratified random sampling method, data were gathered from 180 students using the Emotional Intelligence Inventory by Schutte et al., along with a personal information questionnaire. Statistical analysis was conducted using the t-test at a 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed notable differences in emotional intelligence based on gender, with female students scoring higher than their male counterparts. To address this gap, strategies such as mindfulness exercises and emotional reflection are recommended for male students to enhance self-awareness and emotional regulation. Moreover, students from aided schools exhibited higher emotional intelligence compared to those from private and government institutions. To support students in private and government schools, it is suggested to incorporate skill-building activities like role-playing and group discussions that promote communication, empathy, and conflict resolution.

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, Secondary School Students, Gender Differences, School Type, Family Background.*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The disciplines of psychology and emotional intelligence (EI), while interconnected, serve distinct purposes. Psychology is the scientific investigation of human behavior and mental processes, exploring how individuals perceive, think, feel, and act across different

environments. It encompasses diverse areas ranging from cognitive functions and personality development to the diagnosis and treatment of psychological disorders.

Emotional intelligence, in contrast, refers to the capability to perceive, interpret, regulate, and effectively express emotions both one's own and

those of others. It includes essential interpersonal and intrapersonal skills such as empathy, emotional regulation, and social competence. Although emotional intelligence is not a subfield of psychology, it heavily draws upon psychological theories, as well as insights from neuroscience and social sciences, to develop practical frameworks for emotional and social development.

In the context of secondary education, emotional intelligence holds particular relevance. Adolescents often face both academic pressures and personal challenges, making emotional regulation and resilience key factors for success. Students with well-developed emotional intelligence tend to perform better academically, experience improved mental well-being, and form healthier peer relationships. These students typically demonstrate greater ability in handling stress, resolving conflicts, and working collaboratively, all of which contribute to overall school success and life readiness.

Moreover, nurturing emotional intelligence during the secondary school years can lay the foundation for leadership and interpersonal skills that are increasingly valued in today's social and professional environments. By promoting empathy, self-awareness, and constructive communication, schools can help students grow into emotionally competent individuals capable of managing themselves and influencing others positively.

To integrate emotional intelligence in school curricula, educators can employ strategies such as mindfulness exercises, cooperative learning tasks, mentoring programs, and activities focused on emotional reflection. Such practices foster a classroom culture that supports emotional growth alongside academic learning.

Research into students' emotional intelligence often involves measuring key competencies like emotional awareness, empathy, and self-control. These can be assessed through a combination of self-report instruments, behavioral observations, and cognitive tasks. For instance, emotional self-awareness might be evaluated through reflective questionnaires, while empathy may be observed during peer interactions. Similarly, self-regulation can be assessed through activities that require impulse control or emotional moderation in challenging scenarios.

Additionally, studies may examine how emotional intelligence correlates with other

important outcomes, including academic success, social adjustment, and psychological health. Research consistently shows that students with higher EI are more likely to thrive academically and maintain positive mental health. Their enhanced ability to manage emotions helps them cope better with stress, build stronger relationships, and function more effectively in social settings.

Exploring the influences that shape emotional intelligence is another important area of study. Factors such as family environment, teacher support, and involvement in extracurricular activities can significantly impact a student's emotional development. Understanding these influences can help in designing interventions that support EI growth among adolescents.

In summary, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in shaping both the academic journey and personal growth of secondary school students. Investigating EI not only helps in evaluating students' emotional capabilities but also in identifying how various social and educational factors contribute to their development. Insights gained from such research can guide parents, teachers, and policymakers in fostering emotionally intelligent, well-rounded learners.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

According to **Best and Kahn (1989)**, reviewing existing literature serves as a crucial foundation for any research, helping to clearly define the research problem, highlight its significance, and guide the selection of methods, tools, and sources for data collection. A number of previous studies have been reviewed to understand the context and findings related to emotional intelligence.

**Patel (2017)** conducted a study to analyze the emotional intelligence of college students with respect to gender. The results indicated a significant difference between male and female students, with females demonstrating higher emotional intelligence. In another study, **Bibi, Saqlain, and Mussawar (2016)** explored the link between emotional intelligence and self-esteem among Pakistani university students. Although female students exhibited higher emotional intelligence compared to their male counterparts, no substantial gender difference was found in terms of self-esteem.

**Tajeddini et al. (2014)** assessed emotional intelligence among Indian and international students. Their findings showed no significant gender-based differences in emotional intelligence levels. Similarly, **Reddy (2014)** explored emotional intelligence among degree-level students and found that the type of institutional management (government, private, or aided) had a notable impact on emotional intelligence scores.

### 3. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Education today is not only concerned with academic achievement but also with fostering students' overall development, including emotional and psychological well-being. As young individuals face increasing societal and academic pressures, equipping them with the skills to manage their emotions becomes critical.

**Dhall and Thukral (2013)** highlighted the significant positive relationship between intelligence, self-confidence, and academic success. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to understand, express, and regulate emotions effectively while empathizing with others, plays a crucial role in this development. For school-aged children, emotional intelligence supports the building of healthy peer and teacher relationships, helps in conflict resolution, and enhances communication skills.

Moreover, emotionally intelligent students are better at coping with stress, making informed decisions, and maintaining positive mental health. These attributes contribute not only to academic success but also to better social adjustment and resilience. Given these benefits, understanding the emotional intelligence levels of secondary school students is essential, particularly in the context of variables such as gender, school type, and family background. This understanding can help educators, parents, and policymakers implement targeted interventions to support students' emotional and academic growth.

### 4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of this study are:

- To determine whether there are significant differences in emotional intelligence between male and female secondary school students.

- To investigate differences in emotional intelligence among students attending different types of schools (government, aided, and private).
- To examine whether emotional intelligence levels vary based on students' family structure (nuclear or joint family).

### 5. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses have been formulated for this study:

- There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between male and female secondary school students.
- There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between students studying in government and aided schools.
- There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between students studying in aided and private schools.
- There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between students studying in government and private schools.
- There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between students from nuclear and joint families.

### 6. METHODOLOGY

This research seeks to explore emotional intelligence among secondary school students in Bengaluru District, Karnataka, with specific focus on gender, school type, and family background. The study adopted a descriptive survey method within a quantitative research framework.

A sample of 180 secondary school students was selected through stratified random sampling, ensuring representation across gender, school management types (government, aided, and private), and family types (nuclear and joint).

Data collection was carried out using the Emotional Intelligence Inventory developed by Schutte et al., along with a personal information sheet to gather demographic data. The responses were analyzed using the t-test to compare means across groups. The level of significance was set at 0.05, providing a statistical basis for accepting or rejecting the stated hypotheses.

## 7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table-1:** Emotional Intelligence Scores of Secondary School Students by Gender

| Variable | Group | N  | Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (SD) | t-value | Significance Level         |
|----------|-------|----|----------|-------------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Gender   | Boys  | 90 | 61.77    | 15.31                   | 2.23    | <i>Significant at 0.05</i> |
|          | Girls | 90 | 66.96    | 15.91                   |         |                            |

The data presented in Table 1 indicate that the calculated t-value of 2.23 exceeds the critical value of 1.98 at the 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom (df = 178). This suggests that the difference in emotional intelligence between boys and girls is statistically significant.

As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that there is a meaningful

difference in the emotional intelligence levels of male and female secondary school students.

Furthermore, the mean score for girls (M = 66.96) is noticeably higher than that of boys (M = 61.77), implying that female students in this sample tend to demonstrate greater emotional intelligence compared to their male counterparts.

**Table-2:** Emotional Intelligence Scores of Secondary School Students by Type of School

| Variable       | Group      | N  | Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (SD) | t-value | Significance Level               |
|----------------|------------|----|----------|-------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| Type of School | Government | 60 | 60.45    | 14.62                   | 2.61    | <i>Significant at 0.05 level</i> |
|                | Aided      | 60 | 68.83    | 13.97                   |         |                                  |
|                | Aided      | 60 | 68.83    | 13.97                   | 1.34    | Not Significant                  |
|                | Private    | 60 | 66.21    | 15.24                   |         |                                  |
|                | Government | 60 | 60.45    | 14.62                   | 1.89    | Not Significant                  |
|                | Private    | 60 | 66.21    | 15.24                   |         |                                  |

The analysis reveals a significant difference in emotional intelligence between students from government and aided schools, with aided school students demonstrating higher emotional intelligence. However, no statistically significant differences were observed between students from aided and private schools, or between government and private schools, despite slight variations in

average scores. These findings suggest that the school environment—particularly in aided schools—may play a role in fostering emotional intelligence, while government schools may require more structured support and interventions to help students develop emotional and social competencies.

**Table-3:** Emotional Intelligence Scores of Secondary School Students by Family Type

| Variable    | Group   | N   | Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (SD) | t-value | Significance Level |
|-------------|---------|-----|----------|-------------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Family Type | Nuclear | 140 | 65.42    | 14.88                   | 0.72    | Not Significant    |
|             | Joint   | 40  | 63.75    | 15.12                   |         |                    |

The data presented in Table 3 indicate that the calculated t-value of 0.72 is less than the critical value of 1.98 at the 0.05 level of significance (df = 178). This result implies that the difference in emotional intelligence between students from nuclear and joint families is not statistically significant. Although students from nuclear families had a slightly higher average emotional intelligence score (M = 65.42) compared to those from joint families (M = 63.75), the variation is not large enough to draw a meaningful conclusion. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, suggesting that family type

alone may not have a significant impact on the emotional intelligence of secondary school students. Other influencing factors such as parental involvement, emotional support, and the quality of family relationships may play a more crucial role than the family structure itself.

## 8. FINDINGS

- Female students showed significantly higher emotional intelligence than male students.

- Students from aided schools had notably higher emotional intelligence compared to those from government schools.
- There was no significant difference in emotional intelligence between students from aided and private schools.
- Emotional intelligence levels between students from government and private schools did not differ significantly.
- No significant difference was found in emotional intelligence between students from nuclear and joint family backgrounds.

## 9. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The analysis revealed a notable difference in emotional intelligence between male and female secondary school students, with females demonstrating higher levels. It is important to support boys in becoming more aware of their emotions by encouraging self-reflection and mindfulness techniques such as journaling. Additionally, fostering communication skills like active listening, assertiveness, and conflict resolution through interactive activities like role-playing and group discussions can greatly benefit them.

The study also showed a significant difference in emotional intelligence between students attending government and aided schools, with aided school students scoring higher. This suggests a need for targeted programs in government schools that promote emotional skills development. Such initiatives can help students improve their social interactions, manage conflicts, and build stronger relationships with peers and teachers, contributing to a healthier school environment.

On the other hand, no significant differences were observed in emotional intelligence between students from aided and private schools, government and private schools, or between those from nuclear and joint family backgrounds. These findings indicate that emotional intelligence is likely influenced more by individual and contextual factors rather than family structure or certain types of school management.

Overall, schools should prioritize emotional intelligence development as a key part of education to support students' academic success, social skills, and mental well-being. Providing consistent opportunities for emotional learning

and communication training can empower students to navigate challenges more effectively and foster a positive school culture.

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