

Research Paper

Emotional Intelligence Among Adolescent Students of Kerala

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a stage in life where the people find identity crisis, gender discrimination, facing physical and mental changes, taking important decision regarding future. It is the transition phase between growth and development between childhood and adulthood. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an adolescent as any person between ages 10 and 19. This age range falls within WHO's definition of young people, which refers to individuals between ages 10 and 24. During adolescence (age 12 to 18 yrs), the transition from childhood to adulthood is most important. Children are becoming more independent, and begin to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, etc. The individual wants to belong to a society and fit in. Emotional intelligence plays an important role in this phase. Emotional Intelligence signifies the ability to understand and manage ones as well as the others' emotions. It refers to a combination of skills these include empathy, self-control, self-awareness, sensitivity to the feeling of others, persistence and self-motivation among others. Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in the development and well-being of adolescents. Through understanding and managing your own emotions, as well as empathizing with others, adolescents can navigate the complexities of social interactions, academic challenges, and personal growth more effectively. Cultivating emotional intelligence not only enhances your interpersonal relationships but also equips you with valuable skills for resilience, conflict resolution, and decision-making. The purpose of the study was to describe the level of emotional intelligence among adolescent students of Kerala. The sample population consisted of 240 high school students selected by random sampling technique. The tool used is the Emotional Intelligence Inventory prepared and standardized by the investigator. Data analysis used a quantitative approach with descriptive methods. The results showed that emotional intelligence among adolescent students were average in nature.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Adolescent students*

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to sense, express, understand, identify, and cope with emotions. It may also refer to one's interpersonal skills, stress-management skills, and mood regulation. Adolescent students' emotional intelligence supports them to navigate every area of life, including family connections, friendships, school, and identity building. Like any other form of intelligence, emotional intelligence may be expressed more naturally in some people than others. However, just like mathematical or reading skills, EI can be strengthened throughout one's life. It is very important to learn how to cultivate emotional intelligence, which help adolescents improve stress management and

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have stronger relationships. It provides adolescents with the foundational skills they need to foster good mental health and supportive relationships with themselves and others. EI reduces stress and levels of burnout and increases resilience, connection, problem solving, and overall life satisfaction and well-being. Parents and teachers can help them to develop emotional intelligence by teaching them how to identify, express, and cope with their feelings.

Emotional intelligence is important for adolescent students because it serves as the foundation of their emotional development and emotional maturity. It sets their ability to build resilience, persevere through mental health struggles, cope with difficult thoughts and feelings, and foster healthy relationships with themselves and others. A strong emotional intelligence can have the following benefits.

- Reduced level psychological stress
- Lower levels of burnout or truancy in school settings and later in work environments
- Increased level of resilience
- Improved quality of relationships
- Better problem-solving skills and ability to set and reach personal goals, which supports academic achievement
- Higher overall levels of mental health, life satisfaction, and well-being

Adolescence means developing a sense of self, connecting with people around and learning skills to regulate challenges faced in their life. The ability to cope with and navigate both positive and negative emotions effectively requires having high emotional intelligence. Building emotional intelligence skills helps teenagers adjust to adversity, respond in healthy ways to life's stressors, and overcome difficult situations and events. Furthermore, high emotional intelligence supports teens to manage emotions, foster self-confidence and self-compassion, increase emotional self-awareness, and build strong relationships with others. On the other hand, having low emotional intelligence in adolescence is associated with a higher risk of experiencing anxiety and depression.

Need and significance of study

Emotions are one of the most complex phenomena that the human brain can generate. Human emotions are a quick and relatively rudimentary form of information processing that can play a significant role in many areas of your life. Emotions can prompt decisions, strengthen interpersonal relationships, signal potential threats to your physical or mental well-being, and help you adapt to your environment. If you are not in contact with your emotions prevents you from exercising control over them, resulting in all kinds of problems such as personal, professional, and social. Researches proved that emotional intelligence (EI or EQ) plays a crucial role in shaping academic achievement and lifelong learning. As education develops beyond rote memorization, modern educators recognize the profound benefits emotional intelligence brings to student progress, classroom climate, and overall educational success. EI is now seen as critical for adolescents to develop resilience, build relationships, and navigate the complex social landscape of schools. The key benefits of Emotional Intelligence in Education are improved academic performance, enhanced social skills and relationships and greater emotional resilience and well-being. Emotional intelligence is considered as the predictor of future work, leadership, and relationship success. The impact of emotional intelligence on student success is far-reaching. EI motivates teens to participate actively and take ownership of their learning. The importance of cultivating emotional intelligence not only enhances interpersonal relationships but also

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equips with valuable skills for resilience, conflict resolution, and decision-making. The present study aimed to describe the level of emotional intelligence among adolescent students of Kerala.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the level of emotional intelligence of adolescent students of Kerala.
2. To compare the level of emotional intelligence of adolescent students of Kerala with respect to gender.

Hypotheses of the study

1. Majority of adolescent students of Kerala possess higher emotional intelligence.
2. There will be a significant difference in the emotional intelligence scores of adolescent students of Kerala with respect to gender.

METHODOLOGY

The Method

The method employed in the investigation has been briefly presented below. For collecting the data, the Normative Survey method was used.

The Sample

The population of the study consists of adolescent students of Kerala. For the present study, the investigator selected 240 adolescent students (studying in Standard IX) from all over Kerala from 4 different districts as the sample for the study. Due representation was given to Gender. The investigator adopted random sampling technique.

Tool used for the study

Emotional intelligence Inventory prepared and standardized by the investigator was used for data collection

Procedure adopted for the study

Emotional intelligence Inventory was prepared and standardized by the investigator. It contains 50 items for assessing the emotional intelligence level of adolescent students. The investigator used a General Data sheet to collect necessary preliminary information from students. The tool was administered to 240 adolescent students in various schools in Kerala. The data were analyzed statistically using appropriate statistical techniques.

Statistical techniques used

1. Percentage Analysis
2. Mean,
3. Standard Deviation
4. t-test

Analysis of the study

Objective 1: Level of emotional intelligence of adolescent students of Kerala.

To find out the level of emotional intelligence of adolescent students of Kerala, the students were grouped in to three levels High, Average and Low based on their scores. The mean and standard deviation were calculated. Those getting score at or above ($M + \sigma$) were grouped as 'High' and those getting scores below ($M - \sigma$) were grouped as 'Low' and those getting between ($M + \sigma$) and ($M - \sigma$) were grouped as 'Average'. The percentage of students with High, Average and Low emotional intelligence is given in Table.1

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Table 1 The percentage of students with High, Average and Low emotional intelligence

Level of Emotional Intelligence	Percentage
High emotional intelligence	20.1
Average Emotional Intelligence	56.8
Low Emotional Intelligence	23.1
Total	100

Table.1 shows that 20.1 % students possess high level of emotional intelligence, 56.8% of students have average level of emotional intelligence and 23.1 % students possess low emotional intelligence. It indicates that a high proportion of (56.8%) students possess only an average level of emotional intelligence. Thus, the hypothesis formulated in this context, 'Majority of adolescent students of Kerala possess higher emotional intelligence' is rejected.

Objective 2: To compare the level of emotional intelligence of adolescent students of Kerala with respect to gender.

The scores of emotional intelligences obtained by male and female students were compared using test of significance of difference between means and the obtained t-value was tested for significance. The data and result of the analysis are given in Table 2.

Table 2 Data and Results of the Test of Significance of the Difference between Means of the emotional Intelligence Scores of the Male and Female Students

Group	N	Mean	SD	T-value
Male	100	28.5	4.70	
Female	140	27.5	5.11	1.54

Table.2 shows that the t-value obtained is not significant at both levels (0.05 level and 0.01 level), showing the male and female students have no significant difference in their emotional intelligence ($t=1.54$; $p > 0.01$). Thus, the hypothesis formulated in this context 'There will be a significant difference in the emotional intelligence scores of adolescent students of Kerala with respect to gender is rejected.

Major findings of the study

1. A high proportion of (56.8%) adolescent students of Kerala possess only an average level of emotional intelligence level.
2. There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence scores of adolescent students of Kerala with respect to gender.

CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in the development and well-being of adolescents. Through understanding and managing one's own emotions, as well as empathizing with others, adolescents can navigate the complexities of social interactions, academic challenges, and personal growth more effectively. Cultivating emotional intelligence not only enhances interpersonal relationships but also equips you with valuable skills for resilience, conflict resolution, and decision-making. The purpose of the study was to find out the level of emotional intelligence among adolescent students of Kerala. The results showed that emotional intelligence among adolescent students were average in nature.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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