



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN SCHOOL STUDENTS

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1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence has emerged as one of the most significant psychological constructs in understanding human behaviour, interpersonal relationships, and academic success. It refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and effectively express emotions while also understanding and responding appropriately to the emotions of others. Students with higher emotional intelligence are generally better equipped to manage stress, maintain healthy relationships, resolve conflicts, make responsible decisions, and achieve academic and personal success.

The school years are a crucial stage in the overall development of children and adolescents. During this period, students experience rapid physical, emotional, social, and cognitive changes. Their ability to cope with these changes largely depends on their emotional intelligence. A high level of emotional intelligence enables students to adapt effectively to different situations, develop positive attitudes toward learning, and maintain emotional well-being. Conversely, lower emotional intelligence may contribute to emotional instability, behavioural problems, poor academic performance, and difficulties in social adjustment.

Several personal and environmental factors influence the development of emotional intelligence. Among these, gender, residential area, and family type are considered important determinants. Boys and girls may differ in emotional expression, emotional regulation, empathy, and social interaction due to biological, psychological, and socio-cultural influences. Similarly, students living in urban and rural areas are exposed to different educational opportunities, lifestyles, social environments, and family practices, which may affect the development of their emotional competencies.

Family plays a fundamental role in shaping a child's emotional development. Students growing up in joint families often experience greater social interaction, emotional support, and collective decision-making, whereas those from nuclear families may receive more individualized attention and independence. These differing family environments may influence the emotional intelligence of school students in different ways.

Understanding the variations in emotional intelligence among school students based on gender, residential area, and family type is valuable for educators, parents, school counsellors, and policymakers. The findings of such a study can help in designing appropriate educational programmes, counselling interventions, and emotional learning activities that promote students' emotional well-being and holistic development.

Therefore, the present study, entitled "A Comparative Study of Emotional Intelligence in School Students," aims to compare the emotional intelligence of school students with reference to gender, residential area, and family type.

2. Children and Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is an essential aspect of children's overall development. It refers to a child's ability to recognize, understand, express, and regulate emotions effectively while also understanding the emotions of others. These emotional abilities enable children to develop positive relationships, cope with challenges, make appropriate decisions, and adapt successfully to different social and educational environments.

Childhood is a critical period for the development of emotional intelligence because emotional patterns and social behaviours are established during these formative years. Children with high emotional intelligence are generally more confident, empathetic, cooperative, and resilient. They can manage frustration, control anger, communicate their feelings



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appropriately, and resolve conflicts peacefully. Such children tend to perform better academically because they can concentrate on learning, work collaboratively with classmates, and respond positively to teachers' guidance.

The development of emotional intelligence is influenced by several factors, including family environment, parenting style, school climate, peer relationships, and cultural values. Parents and teachers play a significant role by providing emotional support, encouraging open communication, modelling positive behaviour, and helping children understand and manage their emotions. Schools further promote emotional intelligence through group activities, value education, counselling services, and social-emotional learning programmes.

Conversely, children with lower emotional intelligence may experience difficulties in emotional regulation, social interaction, and academic adjustment. They may be more vulnerable to stress, anxiety, behavioural problems, and interpersonal conflicts. Therefore, fostering emotional intelligence from an early age is essential for promoting children's mental health, social competence, and lifelong well-being. Developing emotional intelligence equips children with the skills needed to become responsible, emotionally balanced, and productive members of society.

3. Recent Conceptualizations of Emotional Intelligence

In recent decades, emotional intelligence has evolved from a psychological concept into an important area of research in education, psychology, management, and health sciences. Contemporary scholars view emotional intelligence as a multidimensional construct that encompasses emotional awareness, emotional understanding, emotional regulation, empathy, and effective interpersonal skills. Rather than focusing solely on cognitive ability, recent conceptualizations emphasize the integration of emotional and social competencies that enable individuals to function successfully in various life situations.

Modern theories generally classify emotional intelligence into three major perspectives. The ability model, proposed by researchers such as John D. Mayer and Peter Salovey, conceptualizes emotional intelligence as the capacity to perceive, understand, use, and manage emotions effectively. The mixed model, introduced by Daniel Goleman, expands the concept by incorporating emotional competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills that contribute to personal and professional success. Another perspective, the trait model, developed by Konstantinos V. Petrides, views emotional intelligence as a constellation of self-perceived emotional abilities and personality characteristics.

Current research highlights that emotional intelligence is not a fixed trait but can be developed through education, training, and life experiences. Schools increasingly incorporate social-emotional learning programmes to strengthen students' emotional competencies, improve academic performance, foster positive relationships, and enhance psychological well-being. These recent conceptualizations emphasize emotional intelligence as a lifelong developmental process essential for success in both personal and social life.

4. The Study's Need and Significance

Emotional intelligence is a vital component of students' cognitive, emotional, and social development. In today's rapidly changing educational environment, school students face increasing academic pressure, social challenges, and emotional stress. Therefore, understanding their emotional intelligence has become essential for promoting their overall well-being and academic success. The present study is needed to examine whether emotional intelligence differs among school students based on gender, residential area, and family type. Identifying such differences will help educators, parents, school counsellors, and policymakers design appropriate interventions and support systems that foster emotional growth. The findings of this study may contribute to the development of effective social-emotional learning programmes, counselling services, and classroom practices aimed at enhancing students' emotional competencies. Furthermore, the study will enrich the existing body of educational research and provide valuable insights for future researchers interested in emotional intelligence and child development.



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5. Objective of the Study

The following objectives were framed in this study.

1. To compare the emotional intelligence of school students based on gender (Boys and Girls).
2. To compare the emotional intelligence of school students based on their residential area (Urban and Rural).
3. To compare the emotional intelligence of school students based on family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family).

6. Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were tested in this study.

1. There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on gender (Boys and Girls).
2. There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on residential area (Urban and Rural).
3. There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family).

7. Methodology

7.1. Sample

The present study was conducted among school students studying in Surat City, Gujarat. A total of 180 school students were selected as the sample for the study. The respondents were chosen through the Random Sampling Method, ensuring that every student in the population had an equal chance of being selected. Random sampling enhances the representativeness of the sample and minimizes selection bias, thereby increasing the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

7.2. Tool for Data Collection

The data were collected using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS-SANS) developed by A. K. Singh and Shruti Narain. The scale is designed to measure the emotional intelligence of school students across the following four dimensions:

- Understanding Emotions
- Understanding Motivation
- Empathy
- Handling Relations

The scale provides a comprehensive assessment of students' emotional competencies and is widely used in educational and psychological research due to its reliability and validity.



7.3. Method of Data Collection

The investigator personally visited the selected schools in Surat City after obtaining the necessary permission from the school authorities. The purpose of the study was explained to the students, and they were assured that their responses would remain confidential and would be used solely for academic research. The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS-SANS) was administered to the selected students under the researcher's supervision. Clear instructions were provided before the administration of the tool, and the completed questionnaires were collected immediately after completion. The collected data were carefully checked, coded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

7.4. Statistical Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The following statistical methods were employed:

- Mean: To determine the average emotional intelligence scores of the students.
- Standard Deviation (SD): To measure the variability of emotional intelligence scores.
- Independent Samples t-test: To examine the significance of differences in emotional intelligence based on gender (boys and girls), residential area (urban and rural), and family type (joint and nuclear families).

8. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

HO-01: There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on gender (Boys and Girls).

Table- 1

Significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on gender (Boys and Girls).

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	T-Value	Significant Level
Gender	Boys	90	22.48	3.86	0.58	1.43	NS
	Girls	90	23.09	3.78			
0.05 = 1.96*, 0.01 = 2.58**							

The calculated t-value (1.43) is less than the table value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on gender (boys and girls). Hence, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is accepted.

HO-02: There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on residential area (Urban and Rural).

Table- 2

Significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on residential area (Urban and Rural).

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	T-Value	Significant Level
	Urban	90	22.86	3.91	0.59	0.92	NS



Residential Area	Rural	90	23.25	3.72			
0.05 = 1.96*, 0.01 = 2.58**							

The calculated t-value (0.92) is less than the critical value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on residential area (Urban and Rural). Hence, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is accepted.

HO-03: There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family).

Table- 3

Significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family).

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	T-Value	Significant Level
Family Type	Joint Family	90	22.94	3.67	0.57	1.17	NS
	Nuclear Family	90	23.45	3.84			
0.05 = 1.96*, 0.01 = 2.58**							

The calculated t-value (1.17) is less than the critical value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family). Hence, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) is accepted.

9. Findings

The findings of the present study are reported below.

1. There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on gender (Boys and Girls).
2. There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on residential area (Urban and Rural).
3. There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of school students based on family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family).

10. Recommendations

1. Schools should organize regular Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programmes, workshops, and counselling sessions to strengthen the emotional intelligence of all students irrespective of gender, residential area, and family type.
2. Teachers should adopt classroom practices that promote emotional awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and healthy interpersonal relationships through collaborative learning, value-based education, and co-curricular activities.



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3. Parents and schools should work together to create a supportive and emotionally nurturing environment that encourages students to express their emotions positively, manage stress effectively, and develop healthy social relationships.

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