

# Emotional Intelligence of Higher Secondary School Students of Kerala

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## Abstract

Adolescence 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. In adolescence, students face some problems during the period of puberty. To overcome these problems, guiding and counselling services are needed. Nevertheless, for it to be effective, it is important to understand students' emotional intelligence level accurately. The purpose of the study was to find out the level of emotional intelligence among students in higher secondary schools of Kerala, India. The sample population consisted of 240 higher secondary school students selected by random sampling technique. The tool used is the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EI Scale) prepared and standardised by the investigator. Data analysis used a quantitative approach with descriptive methods. The results showed emotional intelligence among higher secondary school students were average in nature. The findings of this study might be used by counsellors to improve students' emotional intelligence level.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Higher Secondary School Students

## 1. Introduction

Adolescence is the exciting and stressful time when a child starts transitions into adulthood. Many rapid changes and developments take place during this time, and it is not always a smooth journey. Children will begin to discover who they are and where they belong through the various physical, cognitive and psychological changes. Adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood. Children are going through adolescence face many changes in their bodies and brains. The changes include physical, intellectual, psychological social and emotional challenges, as well as development of their own moral standard. The changes are rapid and often take place at different rates. It can be a challenging time in the life of a teenager. Adolescence is the time when your child becomes more independent and starts to explore their identity.

### 1.1 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence generally includes a few skills namely emotional awareness, or the ability to identify one's own emotions; the ability to harness those emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problem solving; and the ability to manage emotions, which includes both regulating one's emotions when necessary and helping others to do the same. Daniel Goleman, the psychologist identified the key personal and interpersonal skills involved in emotional intelligence and explained EQ is as important as IQ when it comes to success. The skills of emotional intelligence are

**Self-awareness**

Self-awareness is about recognising and understanding one's own emotions – what we are feeling and why – as well as appreciating how they affect those around us. It is considered to be the basis for good intuition and decision making, help to make the right choices in all aspects of one's life. Self-awareness is the ability to know about a person's strengths and weaknesses, attitudes, values and moral compass.

**Self-regulation**

After the mastery of emotional awareness, the next step is managing those emotions – particularly the negative ones – effectively. Always treat others with respect and try to stay in control in our behaviour. In the case of any emotional outbursts, practise being calm, step back and take a deep breath. Always stay true to yourself, your values, and hold yourself personally accountable for any mistakes.

**Motivation**

The third element is motivation, which is about an individual's drive to improve and achieve. Setting high standards for ourselves and working consistently towards the goals is the skill of motivation. It includes take the initiative, be ready to act on opportunities as they come along, and practise being assertive. Motivation is also about optimism and resilience, and finding positives in a situation, even those didn't go well.

**Empathy**

A key interpersonal skill is empathy, which is the ability to put our self in someone else's shoes and view a situation from their perspective. It is important to have an awareness of others' feelings, then to acknowledge and respond to them on appropriate time. Respecting diversity and inclusion is considered to be the vital aspect of empathy. Another important aspect is communication, which refers to pay close attention to what you and others say, whether verbally or through body language.

**Social skills**

Those who are described as 'people person' are said to be socially skilled and they are adept at dealing with other people. They are trustworthy team players and confident communicators. They are as good at listening to other people as they are at speaking themselves. They can become great leaders, inspiring and motivating colleagues, can manage change and resolve conflict effectively.

In the educational context of Kerala, higher secondary level schooling is an important period in every students' life. It is during this period that an individual is supposed to work in groups towards achieving the major goals of one's life. Despite all these, this period marks the major time of adolescence, for which an individual must be sufficiently equipped with the necessary competencies needed for life like confidence, self-efficacy, tolerance, resilience; and above all 'psychological well-being'. These are even important in successfully dealing with concerns of one's academic life also.

**2. Need and significance of study**

Research has found that higher emotional intelligence can have a number of important benefits for physical and psychological health including combating loneliness, increasing resilience to stress, decreasing the risk of depression and suicide, lowering the risk of cardiovascular disease, improving longevity etc. When one has strong emotional intelligence, he/she may feel more motivated to engage in behaviours that are good for mental and physical health. Research has found that people who have higher level of emotional competencies can participate more in social relationships and avoid negative situations in their life. To become emotionally intelligent, do activities such as yoga, meditation, discussions group works, projects, etc. Many related studies have indicated that higher emotional intelligence level could influence on the

academic success of higher secondary school students. Activities to enhance emotional competencies obviously gets involved in their regular learning activities. Students are allowed to interact more with peers or teachers and to ask free for help in clearing doubts. Through these interactions, students will be helped to communicate their difficulties in understanding the lessons, and overcome immediately their difficulties. These can lead to foster their emotional traits. The present study titled as 'Emotional intelligence of higher secondary school students of Kerala' describes the level of emotional intelligence among higher secondary school students of Kerala.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

1. To find out the level of emotional intelligence of higher secondary school students
1. To find out the level of emotional intelligence of higher secondary school students with respect to gender.

### **4. Hypotheses of the study**

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

### **5. Methodology**

#### **5.1 The Method**

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

#### **5.2 The Sample**

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

#### **5.3 Tool used for the study**

Emotional intelligence scale prepared and standardised by the investigator was used for data collection

### **6. Procedure adopted for the study**

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

### **7. Statistical techniques used**

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

**8. Analysis of the data**

**8.1. Level of Emotional intelligence of Higher Secondary School students.**

To find out the level of emotional intelligence of higher secondary school students, 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 below.

**Table.8.1 The percentage of students with High, Average and Low Emotional Intelligence(EI)**

Emotional intelligence	Percentage
High	19.9
Average	60.3
Low	19.8
Total	100

Table.1 shows that 19.9 % students possess high emotional intelligence, 60.3% of students have average level of emotional intelligence and 19.8 % students possess low emotional intelligence level. It indicates that a high proportion of (60.3%) students possess only an average emotional intelligence level. Thus, the hypothesis formulated in this context, ‘Majority of the students in higher secondary schools of Kerala possess high emotional intelligence’ is rejected.

**8.2. Level of emotional intelligence of higher secondary school students with respect to gender.**

The scores of emotional intelligence obtained by male and female students through 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 8.2 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	124	94.5	2.50	5.71
Female	116	92.5	2.89	

Table.2 shows that the t-value obtained is significant at both levels (0.05 level and 0.01 level), showing the male and female students differ significantly in their emotional intelligence ( $t=5.71$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). This shows that male students possess higher emotional intelligence than females. Thus, the hypothesis formulated in this context ‘There will be a significant difference in the emotional intelligence scores of higher secondary school students with respect to gender’ is accepted.

**9. Results**

1. A high proportion of (60.3%) students possess only an average level of emotional intelligence.
2. There is significant difference in the emotional intelligence scores of male and female students ( $t=5.71$ ;  $p<0.01$ ).

## 10. Conclusion

Emotional intelligence (also known as emotional quotient or EQ) is the ability to understand, use, and manage your own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict. The results of this study showed the emotional intelligence of higher secondary school students in Kerala were average in nature. The results of this study serve as references for counsellors to provide guidance and counselling services to students using a variety of creative and innovative techniques/approaches.

## 11. References

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