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Adolescents And Emotional Intelligence: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

The period of Adolescence is characterized by its nimbleness, boldness, and liveliness which demands guidance and direction to make healthy and informed choices. And the period of adolescence is often regarded as the period of “storm and stress.” (Stanley Hall, 1904). Emotional intelligence is very important for adolescents in this regard as they helps adolescents to enhance their abilities, to take responsibility for making healthier choice, resisting negative pressure, deal constructively with others and avoiding risk behaviours. . This paper explores the dimensions of emotional intelligence of adolescents namely the personal efficacy, intrapersonal efficacy and inter personal efficacy. The research study revealed that 27. 40 % of the adolescents are having very high level of emotional intelligence and 30. 14 % are having high level of emotional intelligence. In personal efficacy dimension 27. 40 % adolescents have very high level of personal efficacy, 24. 66 % have high personal efficacy. In inter personal efficacy level 35. 62. % of adolescents are having very high level of inter personal efficacy and 23. 29 % of adolescents are having high level of inter personal efficacy. In the intra personal level only 8. 22 % adolescents are having very high level of intra personal efficacy and 21. 92 % are having high level of intra personal skills.

Key Words.

Emotional Intelligence, Personal Efficacy, Intrapersonal Efficacy, Interpersonal Efficacy, Overall Emotional Efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a unique time in human development, it's a period when children are transitioning to adulthood, and establishing their autonomy and identity. They begin to adjust and adapt to the marked biological, psychological, and social changes and challenges that are by-products of the period. The way in which adolescents handle these changes and challenges will result in their interactions with families, communities, and the larger social environment.

As the adolescent attempts to become more independent he withdraws from some of the emotional ties he developed with his parents during childhood. This results in a temporary phase of narcissism or self-centeredness, during which peer relationships become increasingly important. Feelings of emptiness, loneliness, boredom and unreality follow if close peer relationships are not substituted for the previously close parental relationship. This may result in various social, emotional and behavioural problems among the adolescents. He may experiment with sex and/or drugs, or become involved in more serious antisocial behaviour. Many become disenchanted, they reject society. They wish that society (their parents, their schools, their community, their country, and even the world) were different.

There are risk and protective factors on different levels that contribute to adolescent risk behaviour. There are various research studies showing that risk factors at the individual level (e.g., weak psychosocial competencies, meaninglessness), family level (e.g., parental marital discords, non-intact families), school level (e.g., low academic achievement, weak school support) and community level (e.g., growing up in deprived communities and developing anti social behaviour, easy accessibility to drugs) increase adolescent risk behaviour, such as drug abuse in adolescents (Shek, 2007). On the other hand, there is also a vast literature showing that

there are factors that can reduce the probability of adolescent risk behaviour. The role of emotional intelligence is very important in this respect. People with higher emotional intelligence are more satisfied in their life and they perceived better problem solving and coping ability (Bastia et al. 2005) successful in their careers (Srivastava and Bharamanaikar 2004). Studies shows that emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy significantly correlated with academic achievement (Dey, 2009),and that adolescents who have higher level of responsibility do better on scholastic performance, make better adjustments and are more confident, (Mathur, Dube and Mallhotra,2003). It is also reported that High emotional intelligence (EI) is associated with decreased adolescent smoking (Trinidad, Unger, Chou and Johnson 2006)

In our daily day experiences we know that, it is not the academically brilliant and smartest people are the most successful or the most fulfilled in life. It is a known fact that people who are academically brilliant and yet are socially inept and unsuccessful at work or in their personal relationships. Intellectual intelligence or IQ isn't enough on its own to be successful in life. IQ can help you get into college but it's EQ that will help you manage the stress and emotions of sitting your final exams.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotions are an essential part of human nature. When we set them apart from us, we lose a fundamental aspect of our human capacities. Being emotionally intelligent means that we know what emotions we and others have, how strong they are, and what causes them. All adolescents must begin to master the emotional skills necessary to manage stress and be sensitive and effective in relating to other people for a healthy life.

The term emotional intelligence was coined by Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) and they defined Emotional Intelligence as *“the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions”*.

More specifically, Mayer and Salovey (1990) divided emotional intelligence abilities into four areas in their four-branch model as:

- (i) *perceiving and expressing emotions*
- (ii) *assimilating emotions in thought,*

- (iii) *understanding emotions,*
- (iv) *reflectively regulating emotions.*

The concept was then popularized by Daniel Goleman in 1995 and defined Emotional Intelligence as, “*the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well ourselves and in our relationships.*” (Goleman, Daniel, 1995). Goleman's outlines five main emotional intelligence constructs. The first, self-awareness, is the ability to read one's emotions and recognize their impact while using gut feelings to guide decisions. Self-management, the second construct, involves controlling one's emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances. The third construct, self motivation involves emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals. The fourth construct social awareness includes the ability to sense, understand, and react to other's emotions while comprehending social networks. Finally, relationship management, the fifth construct, entails the ability to inspire, influence, and develop others while managing conflict (Goleman, 1998).

Robert Cooper and Ayman Sawaf (1997) defined EQ as, “*the ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as a source of human energy, information, connection and influence.*” He laid that EQ in business and in life can be best understood by a Four-Cornerstone Model, as the first cornerstone as:

- (i) *Emotional Literacy*, which builds a locus of self-confidence through emotional honesty, energy, emotional feedback, intuition, responsibility and connection.
- (ii) *Emotional Fitness*, which strengthens authenticity, believability, and resiliency, expanding circle of trust and capacity for listening.
- (iii) *Emotional Depth*, that explores ways to align one's life and work with his or her unique potential and purpose, and accountability, which in turn, increases influence without authority.
- (iv) *Emotional Alchemy*, through which one can extend creative instincts and capacity to flow with problems and pressure and to compete for the future by building one's capacity to sense more readily.

Another prominent researcher of the emotional intelligence construct is Reuven Bar-On, the originator of the term "emotion quotient". Possessing a slightly different outlook, he defines emotional intelligence as being concerned with understanding oneself and others, relating to

people, and adapting to and coping with the immediate surroundings to be more successful in dealing with environmental demands (Bar-On, 1997).

Goleman: A Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goleman, a psychologist and science writer who has previously written on brain and behaviour research for the New York Times, discovered the work of Salovey and Mayer in the 1990's. Inspired by their findings, he began to conduct his own research in the area and eventually wrote *Emotional Intelligence* (1995), the landmark book which familiarized both the public and private sectors with the idea of emotional intelligence. Goleman's model outlines five main emotional intelligence constructs. The first, self-awareness, is the ability to read one's emotions and recognize their impact while using gut feelings to guide decisions. Self-management, the second construct, involves controlling one's emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances. The third construct, self motivation involves emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals. The fourth construct social awareness includes the ability to sense, understand, and react to other's emotions while comprehending social networks. Finally, relationship management, the fifth construct, entails the ability to inspire, influence, and develop others while managing conflict (Goleman, 1998).

Goleman includes a set of emotional competencies within each construct of emotional intelligence. Emotional competencies are not innate talents, but rather learned capabilities that must be worked on and developed to achieve outstanding performance. Goleman posits that individuals are born with a general emotional intelligence that determines their potential for learning emotional competencies. The following figure illustrates Goleman's conceptual model of emotional intelligence and corresponding emotional competencies. The constructs and competencies fall under one of five categories: the recognition of emotions in oneself or others and the regulation of emotion in oneself or in others.

Goleman's (2001) Emotional Intelligence Competencies

	SELF Personal Competence	OTHER Social Competence
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<p>RECOGNITION</p>	<p><u>Self-Awareness</u> Emotional Self-Awareness Accurate Self-Assessment Self-Confidence</p>	<p><u>Social Awareness</u> Empathy Service Orientation Organizational Awareness</p>
<p>REGULATION</p>	<p><u>Self-Management</u> Self-Control Trustworthiness Conscientiousness Adaptability achievement orientation Initiative <u>Self Motivation</u> Achievement Drive Commitment Initiative Optimism</p>	<p><u>Relationship Management/Social skills</u> Developing Others Influence Communication Conflict Management Leadership Change Catalyst Building Bonds Teamwork and Collaboration</p>

Self Awareness

In Goleman competencies Self awareness is the base of all others. Without recognizing what we are feeling, we cannot proceed to other competencies. Self awareness involves three skills namely emotional self awareness, accurate self assessment and self confidence. We must be aware of our emotional state, and then we can assess it that will boost our self confidence.

When we are not aware of our feeling and what causes them leading a happy, productive life is difficult though if not possible. When we develop our emotional self awareness, we will be able to specify how we are feeling at any given moment. We can identify where the feeling is coming from and how the body is reacting the feeling.

The component of self awareness is the ability to accurately assessing how the emotions are affecting our performances, our behaviour, and our relationships. Self assessment involves honestly investigating and acknowledging our emotional strengths and weaknesses.

The final element of self awareness is self- confidence. The persons with highly developed self confidence are very well aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and they know that which is not an indicator of their worth as a person.

Self Management

Self management refers to the act of taking responsibility for our own actions. When we take the responsibility of our actions it gives us courage to take decisions that are most supportive for our mental and emotional health. The competency of self management has six different skill attributes. Self control trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, achievement orientation and initiative. Self control is the ability to refrain from improper reactions in response to our emotions. It is the ability of a person to stop and think before hastily actions, and to consider the best course of action in the present situation. Trustworthiness in the context of self management means that we will do what we say and that we are honest about what we can do and cannot do. It means acting with integrity. Conscientiousness means staying committed to the process of emotional self management and that we take full responsibility for our emotions. By taking conscientiousness ownership of our emotions we take responsibility for our actions and we have options. Adaptability is the ability where one doesn't allow feelings about change to become the source of emotional and other constraints. When we are successful at self management, we can choose the actions that will help move us towards our goals. The last skill involved in the self management is initiative. Initiative means looking ways to continually develop ourselves and recognise that true happiness comes from taking full responsibility for our life.

Social Awareness

The first two competencies namely self awareness and self management are personal competencies as they are related to the emotions of the self. The second two competencies namely, social awareness and relationship management are social as they relate to understanding and working with emotions of others. Social awareness is the ability to perceive and understand the social relationships and structures in which we and those around are operating. It involves

understanding how other people and feeling. The three elements of this competency are empathy, organisational awareness and service orientation. Empathy helps to get in the place of other person and see the situation from their side. To practice empathy one has to become aware of other persons emotions. Awareness and acknowledgement don't require agreement but they do allow us to understand and validate the others persons feelings. Empathy helps us to understand the emotions and feelings of an individual, organizational awareness helps us to understand the culture within which those emotions operate. Organizational awareness refers to recognizing and understanding how the organizational structures in which you and others operate can influence emotions. The final skill of the social awareness aspect of emotional intelligence is service orientation. It depends on other social awareness skills. Once we have empathy we understand the influences they are under organizational structures and we can assist the persons by providing insights and suggestions that are for the best interest of the other person.

Social skills / Relationship skills

Social awareness provides understanding of others whereas social skills offer means of interacting with others that helps boost productivity, improve relationships, and increase our general quality of life. There are eight skills associated with social skills namely influence, leadership, developing others, communication, change catalyst, conflict management, building bonds, teamwork and collaboration. Influence is the ability to have an impact on others and their decision making. Influence and leadership are related, in that we cannot lead someone without influencing them in some way. Persons with strong emotional intelligence have great ability to lead others. The people with the ability of developing others can develop others in tandem with developing themselves. Every interaction we have with others involves some sort of communication. People who are effective communicators are able to tune in to the emotions of others and then use that information. A person who is a change catalyst is not satisfied with the doing things the same way others do always, they may be forward thinking and open to change as a way of improving himself, helping others to improve. He understands that change is part of life and part of remaining competitive. Conflict management is a essential quality of a person with high emotional intelligence, and managing conflict well requires a great deal of emotional intelligence. The skill of conflict management will help the persons to solve problem and strengthen relationships. The skill of building bonds will help the persons to improve the quality

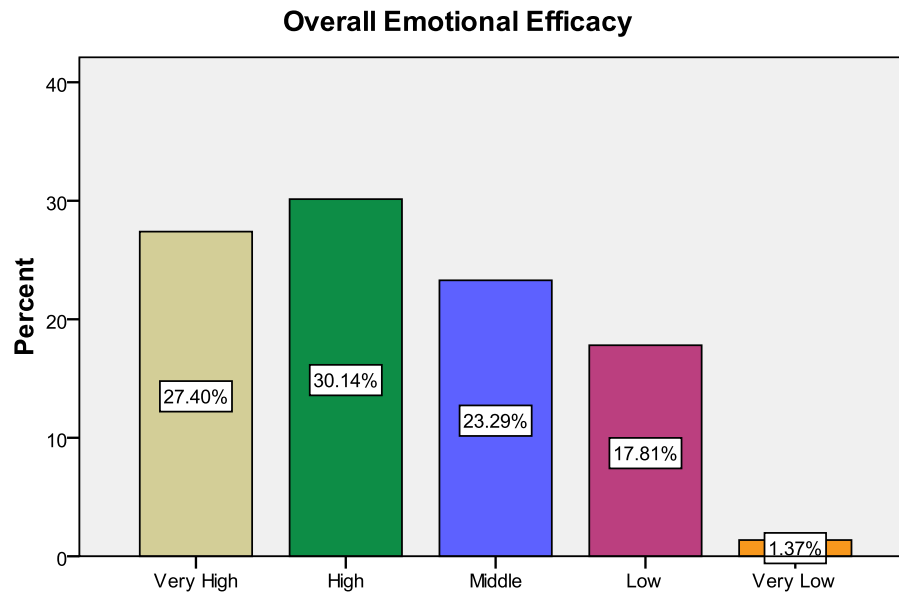
and quantity of relationships with others. It tells us that relationships are not just happen but as bonds that we can constructively build. A person with emotional intelligence understands that team work and collaboration are powerful tools for decision making, relationship building, and constructive work environment.

Research Methodology

The research design was descriptive in nature and the researcher had chosen purposive sampling for collecting the data. The researcher selected 73 adolescents for the study. The objectives of the study were to assess the extent of emotional intelligence in the dimensions of personal efficacy, intrapersonal efficacy and the inter personal efficacy found among the adolescents. The assessment was conducted with the Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EII) developed by Thomas, I and Sushama, S.R. (2003). The data collected on the selected sample was classified, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

Major Analysis

The study analyses each dimension of emotional intelligence with the components of overall emotional efficacy, personal efficacy, interpersonal efficacy and inter personal efficacy. Overall emotional efficacy is a measure relating to a person's emotional development, maturity, general mental health, etc. Some of the characteristics of those scoring in this measure are: moderation in responses; ability to read correctly the mental state of others and regulate one's own behaviour in accordance with it; proper goal orientation; ability to behave suitably in accordance with the demands of the situation; sense of humour; ability to create and maintain good personal relationships; balance in emotions. The following graph depicts the level of overall emotional efficacy of the adolescents.

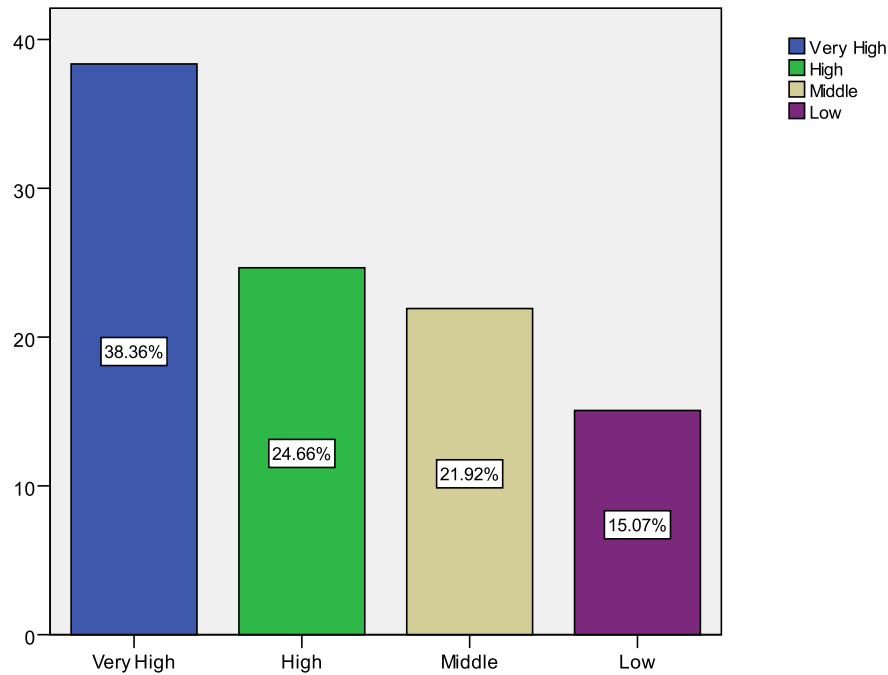


The graph shows that the 27.40% of the adolescents are having very high level of emotional intelligence and 30.14% are having high level of emotional intelligence. And 23.29% of adolescents fall in the category of middle level and 17.81% is having low level emotional intelligence. It is very

Personal Efficacy among Adolescents

Personal efficacy is a measure of one's ability to act with highest efficiency, in accordance with the different social situations. Personal efficacy is a basic component of overall emotional efficacy. Some of the characteristics of those who score high on this scale are: Ability to think and act independently; self reliance; self esteem; sense of responsibility; earnestness; sense of commitment; ability to control one's own behaviour.

Personal Efficacy

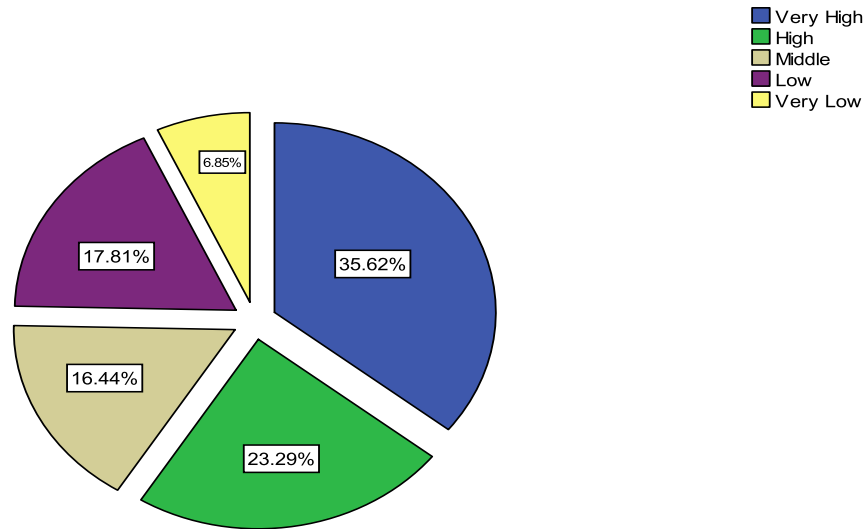


This bar diagram shows the details of levels of personal efficacy among the adolescents. 38.36% adolescents have very high level of personal efficacy. 24.66% have high personal efficacy and 21.92% have middle level personal efficacy. And 15.07% adolescents have low level personal efficacy. It shows that majority of adolescents under study are having either high or very high level of personal efficacy.

Inter personal Efficacy of Adolescents

Inter personal efficacy is a measure of the ability to develop and maintain social relations and personal relations. It is the second component of overall emotional efficacy. Some of the characteristics of those who score high in this are: Ability and interest to bring and keep people together; key role in group activities and opinion formation of groups, ability to influence one’s own social milieu, more than getting influenced by it, and to keep it always favourable to oneself. The following graph depicts the interpersonal efficacy of the adolescents under study.

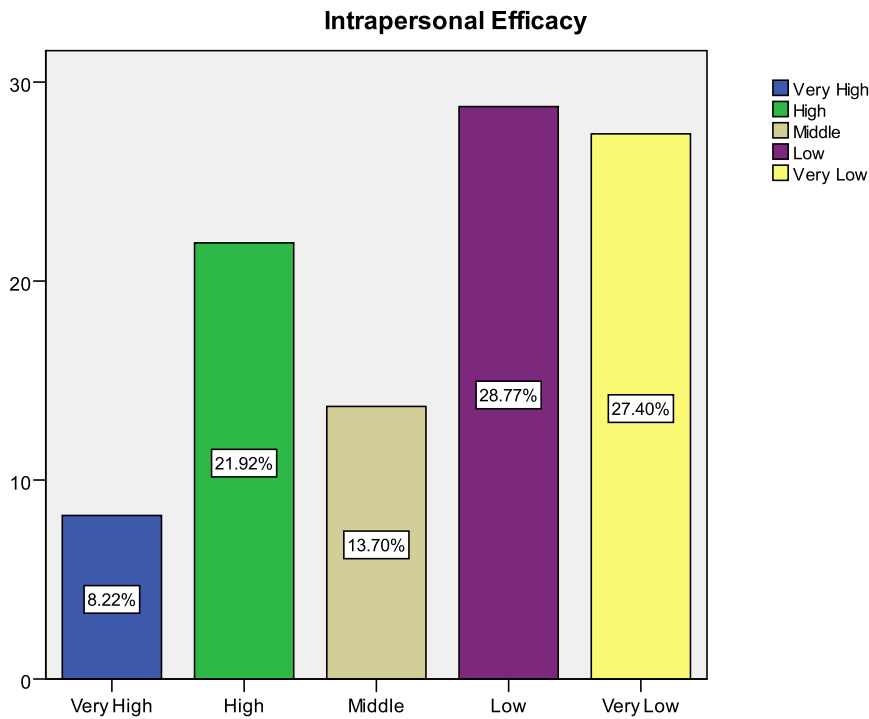
Interpersonal Efficacy



The diagram shows that 35.62% of adolescents are having very high level of interpersonal efficacy and 23.29% of adolescents are having high level of interpersonal efficacy. And a significant 17.81% of adolescent is having low level of interpersonal skills and even 6.85% are having very low level of interpersonal skills. The independent sample t-test shows that there is no significant difference between adolescent boys and girls in the level of interpersonal skills.

Intra Personal Efficacy of Adolescents

Intra personal efficacy is a measure of the extent to which one is free from the mental conflicts and tensions, which negatively influence the development of personality. This is the third component of overall emotional efficacy. People with low Intra personal efficacy succumb very easily to emotions and experience a lot of mental conflicts, frustration, self-derogation, anxiety, etc. are other characteristics.



The graph shows that 28.7% adolescents are having low level of intra personal efficacy and a significant 27.40% is having very low of level intra personal efficacy. And it is very important to note that 56.17% of adolescents are placed in low and very low level of intra personal efficacy. And only 8.22% adolescents are having very high level of intra personal efficacy and 21.92% are having high level of intra personal skills. The remaining 13.70% adolescents are having middle level of intra personal efficacy. The findings shows that adolescents experience a lot of mental conflicts frustration, self-derogation, anxiety, etc. are other characteristics

Conclusion

The study reveals that the significant portion of adolescents (57.54%) under study has either very or high level of emotional intelligence and the remaining are having average and below average score. In personal efficacy dimension 52.04% adolescents have very high or high personal efficacy. In inter personal efficacy level 58.91% of adolescents are having very high level or high level of inter personal efficacy. It is very important to note that 56.17% of adolescents are placed in low and very low level of intra personal efficacy which mean that

majority of the adolescents are experience lot of mental conflicts frustration, self-derogation, anxiety and tension. Why is it that some children and adults seem better able to cope with some situations than others? Why some children are behaving in a maladaptive manner and causing distress to society? Why Children who are academically brilliant may sometimes be socially and interpersonally dull? The answers to these questions points towards the importance of ensuring the emotional intelligence among adolescents.

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