



# Emotional Intelligence and Career Decision Making in Adolescent Students

Varghese A\*

Department of Psychology, Bharathiar University, India

\*Corresponding author: Angel Varghese, Department of Psychology, Sree Saraswathi Thyagaraja College, Bharathiar University, India, Tel: 7558845223; Email: angelmol707@gmail.com

Received Date: May 27, 2024; Published Date: June 13, 2024

## Abstract

The present study was carried out to compare emotional intelligence and career decision making in adolescent students. Cross sectional comparative design was used in the study. The data was collected from different schools in Thrissur dist., Kerala. The participants were 127 (65 boys and 62 girls), from different schools in Thrissur dist., Kerala. The age ranges from 14 to 17 years old. After the purpose of the study and general procedures were described, students were consent to participate in this study, provided with a set of questionnaires. All of them were volunteers. Out of 127 participants, 65 were boys and 62 were girls, 65 were from state syllabus and 62 were from CBSE syllabus. The sampling method adopted was convenient sampling. Questionnaire method was used to collect data from the participants. Researcher personally collected data from different schools. The tools used in this study were: a) emotional intelligence scale, b) career decision making scale. The findings show that the favourable attitude towards career decision making is comparatively higher in state board students than CBSE syllabus been followed. A favourable attitude towards emotional intelligence is seen mostly in state board students than in CBSE stream. There is no much difference in career decision making and emotional intelligence on the basis of male and females. Therefore, emotional intelligence shows the stronger relation in order to take up a career decision. Thus, the students those who are having emotional stability can have a better career choice for their future.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence; Career Decision Making; Adolescent Students

## Introduction

Each and every individual in our society has unique and different personalities through which they tend to lead their whole life. In order to create a person's personality mainly three factors are been involved culture, education and society, and in it education plays a prominent role in building up a better personality for a better society. Education is the stepping stones to success, it's also important to know about the education systems and it's functioning. Now in present there are different syllabus that are been followed like state board, CBSE, ICSE etc, through which education and its exposure is reached to students but in varied levels.

Through the exposure followed the student on the basis of the syllabus gives them the opportunity to decide the career for their future. So, it's very important that education and its exposure as well as society and its cultures build up a personality or a future of the country.

## Emotional Intelligence

Emotions are the basics that build up an individual. Emotions plays up a critic role in an individual to make up or not to pursue that they want to do in present or in the future. Buck (1985) has defined emotion as the process by which motivational potential is realized or read out, when

activated by challenging stimuli. In other words, emotion is seen as a read-out mechanism carrying information about motivational systems. In this present period, India's socio-economic status among common people is been unstable due to poverty, unemployment, etc. so it affects our children indirectly which makes them to take up the challenges which are unbearable for them of their age. So, in order to explore the new areas for their future it is necessary to get them well prepared on the basis of emotional intelligence and also on the education which they attain from institutions.

Emotional intelligence was the term coined by two professors from American university, Salovey and Mayer in the year of 1990. During their process for knowing the variance in individual's ability on the basis of emotion, however the concept was brought by and the credit was also gone to Goleman D [1], an American psychologist. Cooper RK, et al. [2], define emotional intelligence 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. Mayer JD, et al. [3], define emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action. The most formal academic definition refers to "emotional awareness and emotional management skill which provide to ability to balance emotional and reason so as to maximum long-term happiness" [4]. Emotional intelligence is attained through mainly five components, they are Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Motivation, empathy and social skills. It is very important to understand how the emotional intelligence and academic guidance goes hand in hand in order to bring the changes in the students or co-workers etc. If emotional intelligence is stable in an individual, they become self-aware of themselves and be balanced in order to achieve their success. They are also empathetic and curious about what they do and happens around them. Emotional intelligence can be learned and sometimes they are inborn. Since, Mayer JD, et al. [5] were leading researchers on emotional intelligence. In their article they defined emotional intelligence as "The subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's feeling and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action [6]. Many researchers have been proved emotional intelligence plays the prominent role in individuals who are in different fields like employees, software engineers, students, nurses, teachers.

### Career Decision Making

Its starts in childhood, when they play as a doctor, officer and as they grow, they gain knowledge through education through which they make it to be reality. Education paves the way for the fulfillment of the career dreamt by a child in his\her childhood. Process of making decisions about

their career starts from the age of 13 till 18 years. This is the period for biological and psychological development in a child into an adult which then makes them to get to know about their identity and how to make their identity with their career a fruitful one. So, it's a stage of struggle to reach to a specific conclusion of what to do next and how to pursue their dreams. According to Erickson late adolescence is the time when ideological and occupational commitment is a key task. The main requirement at this stage is preparation for a career; increase in awareness about careers and occupations, exploration of life roles and knowledge of biases about specific occupations [7]. Anojan V, et al. [8] spoke of the need for students to "look ahead". They may fluctuate in their decisions due to their circumstances in which they live. So, they compromise in their career decisions. But the decisions that they take an pursue will affect their future life. So, its important that they are given proper guidance to choose their career. So, it is a very complex process as the main three factors like social, culture and parenting affect the career decision taken by a child in their life.

### Adolescence

This is a transitional stage from childhood to adulthood that is from 13 onwards. It is mainly divided into three early adolescences from 13 to 15, middle adolescence from 15 to 17 and late adolescence from 18 to 21. In this period, they move in a state of struggle to find their self-identity and independence. So, they become addict of alcohol, drugs etc. which affects their life. But in this stage, they won't listen to the elders they make their own decisions of their life and makes it as a trial-and-error form of life where they do more experiment with their own life and careers. In this age period they face a lot of challenges or conflicts in their life like in education, society, maintaining a relationship these all would be a difficult process for them to get through it. They may even face anxiety and depression in the phases of adolescence.

### Review of Literature

A study was conducted by Tyagi S [9] to compare the level of EQ of male and female secondary teachers of different age levels. The sample consisted of 500 secondary teachers (350 male and 150 female). The sample was divided into three groups. Group I consisted of teachers below 30 years, Group II consisted of teachers between 31 and 45 years, and Group III consisted of teachers between 46 and 60 years. The test of emotional intelligence developed by Al-Kalbani MSA, et al. [10] was administered on the sample. The results showed that the level of emotional intelligence of secondary teachers is extremely low. The study also revealed that the male and female teachers do not differ in respect of their level of emotional intelligence. No significant difference among means was noted on the variable of emotional intelligence across age. In other words, the age was found to

be independent of EQ. A study was conducted by Chandna S [11] One hundred and fifty-eight secondary school teachers to assess their perceived emotional intelligence and general self-efficacy towards helping other. An item factor analysis yielded four dimensions of perceived emotional intelligence, leading to the construction of four corresponding empirical scales. Teachers scored most highly on positive utilization and emotional appraisal, followed by empathic sensitivity and positive regulation. Using the four components of perceived emotional intelligence as predictors of 67 self-efficacy beliefs, positive regulation emerged as the significant predictor in predicting general self-efficacy whereas empathic sensitivity merged as the significant predictor in predicting self-efficacy towards helping others.

A study was done by Srivastava, et al. [12] examined the emotional intelligence among army officers and found that five dimensions of emotional intelligence viz. emotions, empathy, social skills, innovation and intuition, significantly contributed to transformational leadership while intuition dimension of emotional intelligence was found to be a significant predictor of contingent reward component of transactional leadership style. Pant, et al. [13] also did not find any difference between male and female students and executives on the tasks of managing emotions and emotional identification (faces, designs and stories). On managing others males scored higher than females but on MEIS music task, assimilating emotions (feeling biases) and understanding emotions (progression task) females scored higher than males. A study was done by Pandey [14] observed the relationship between professional stress among degree college teachers and their emotional intelligence. Sample consisted of 50 teachers of colleges affiliated to D.D.U. Gorakhpur University. The value of the coefficient of correlation was -0.69. Singh, et al. [15] studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and examination stress. Misra's Test of Emotional Intelligence and 'Examination Stress Inventory' were used to collect relevant data from 100 XI class students. It was found that Emotional intelligence is not related to professional stress ( $r = -0.1134$ ). For the sample of highly emotionally intelligent students she found a negative relationship ( $r = -0.4946$ ) between the two variables while a positive relationship was found to exist in the case of students with low emotional intelligence ( $r = 0.5701$ ).

## Methodology

The present study was carried out to compare emotional intelligence and career decision making in adolescent students. This chapter shows the approach and the way the research was conducted. It also talks about the method and the materials used in this research. It also includes the research design, details of sample, sampling techniques used,

tools used for data collection, procedure for data collection and statistical methods employed for data analysis.

## Research Design

Cross sectional comparative design was used in the study.

## Objectives

- To find out the difference between boys and girls in the emotional intelligence and career decision making.
- To find out the difference between boys and girls in attitude towards emotional intelligence and career decision making based on syllabus followed.
- To find out the relationship among attitude towards emotional intelligence and career decision making.

## Hypothesis

**H1:** There is a significant difference between boys and girls in attitude towards emotional intelligence and career decision making.

**H2:** There is a significant difference between boys and girls in attitudes towards emotional intelligence and career decision making based on the syllabus followed.

**H3:** There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and career decision making.

## Universe

**Geographical Area:** The data was collected from different schools in Thrissur dist., Kerala.

**Participants:** The participants were 127 (65 boys and 62 girls), from different schools in Thrissur dist., Kerala. The age ranges from 14 to 17 years old. After the purpose of the study and general procedures were described, students were consent to participate in this study, provided with a set of questionnaires. All of them were volunteers. Out of 127 participants, 65 were boys and 62 were girls, 65 were from state syllabus and 62 were from CBSE syllabus.

**Sampling:** The sampling method adopted was convenient sampling. Questionnaire method was used to collect data from the participants. Researcher personally collected data from different schools.

## Measures

Only questionnaire measures were used in present study. The questionnaires such as emotional intelligence scale and career decision making scale were administered to the participants to collect data. In addition to these standardized measures, a personal data sheet seeking information with regard to relevant socio-demographic variables were also made of.

**Socio-Demographic Data Sheet:** A socio-demographic data sheet was used in order to collect information regarding the participants by assuring confidentiality in the personal

details collected. The personal details like age, gender, and syllabus followed, religion, and socio-economic status were mentioned.

- Emotional Intelligence Scale [2]
- Career Decision Making Scale [16]

### Procedure

Before conducting the study, the researcher provided information about the nature and purpose of the study. After taking their consent, they were provided with the questionnaires under the consideration. The participants were asked to write down the details asked in the demographic sheet. And after filling it, they were asked to give response to the questions consisting in each questionnaire. They were requested to fill all the items. Confidentiality was maintained. The participants were asked that the data would be used for research purpose only.

### Statistical Analysis

The statistical techniques selected were based on the objectives and the hypothesis formulated. The statistical techniques used are as follows:

| Variables               | Mean  | S. D  | Skewness | St. Error | Kurtosis | St. Error |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Emotional intelligence  | 79.16 | 8.474 | 0.33     | 0.215     | *.287    | 0.427     |
| Career decision making. | 12.37 | 1.703 | *.439    | 0.215     | *.345    | 0.427     |

**Table 1:** Mean, SD, Skewness and kurtosis of study variables.

Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of attitude towards career decision making attitude towards emotional intelligence. Mean and SD of attitude towards emotional intelligence is 79.16 and 8.474

| Variable          | N%         |
|-------------------|------------|
| Gender            |            |
| Male:             | 65 (51.18) |
| Female:           | 62 (48.81) |
| Syllabus Followed |            |
| State Board:      | 65 (51.18) |
| CBSE:             | 62 (48.81) |

**Table 2:** Frequency table.

Table 2 shows the frequency of the demographic variable such as gender; syllabus following. The total sample size of the study is 127. The study constitutes 65(51.18) male participants and 62(48.81) females' participants. 65 (51.18) and 62(48.81) were represented from each syllabus they

**Independent Sample T-Test:** T-test is based on t-distribution and is considered an appropriate test for judging the significance of a sample mean or for judging the significance of difference between the means of two samples in case of small samples (s) when population variance is not known (in which case we use the variance of the sample as an estimate of the population variance). Independent sample t-test was used in the study to compare the difference between boys and girls in study variables.

**Product Moment Correlation:** Correlation is a statistical technique which tells us if two variables are related. Correlation can tell you something about the relationship between variables. It is used to understand: Whether the relationship is positive or negative and the strength of relationship.

### Results

#### Preliminary Analysis

The preliminary analysis consists of the tests to find out the normality and the frequency.

respectively. The mean and SD of career decision making is 12.37 and 1.703 respectively. Skewness and kurtosis values of all the study variables are falls in between the range of +1 to -1 and +3 to -3 respectively.

followed that is state board and CBSE respectively.

#### Major Analysis

The major analysis consists of t-test and product moment correlation.

| Variable                | Demographic Variables | Mean  | df  | t-value |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-----|---------|
| Emotional Intelligence. | 1                     | 79.94 | 125 | 1.064   |
|                         | 2                     | 78.34 |     |         |
| Career Decision Making  | 1                     | 12.31 | 125 | *.421   |
|                         | 2                     | 12.44 |     |         |

**Table 3:** t-test for gender difference with regard to study variables. No difference.

Table 3 depicts that there is no significant gender difference in attitude towards emotional intelligence and career decision making. The hypothesis which shows there is a significant

difference in attitude towards emotional intelligence and career decision making is rejected. That is H1 is rejected.

| Variable               | Demographic Values | Mean  | df      | t-value |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------|---------|---------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 1                  | 81.2  | 121.026 | 2.875   |
|                        | 2                  | 77.02 |         |         |
| Career Decision Making | 1                  | 12.31 | 122.784 | *.423   |
|                        | 2                  | 12.44 |         |         |

**Table 4:** t-test for syllabus followed with regard to study variables. Difference in emotional intelligence.

Table 4 shows the significant difference in syllabus followed among study variables. Emotional intelligence shows significant difference in syllabus followed (t- 2.875,  $p < 0.1$ ) with state board scoring higher on (81.20) compared to CBSE (77.02). So, the hypothesis H2 is accepted.

coming under syllabus followed or stream followed by the adolescent students.

| Variable               | 1    | 2 |
|------------------------|------|---|
| Emotional intelligence | 1    |   |
| Career decision making | 0.38 | 1 |

**Table 5:** Correlation.

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed).

Table 5 shows the product moment correlation between the study variables. The attitude towards emotional intelligence is positively correlated, f attitude towards career decision making,  $r = .380$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . So, there is significant relationship between attitude towards emotional intelligence and career decision making. So, H3 is accepted.

An important variable studied in the present research work was emotional intelligence in relation to career decision making. The students with high level of emotional intelligence, experience higher in carrier decision making level. Emotional intelligence reflect an individual's ability to deal successfully with other people as well as own feelings, researchers in the past have also reported that emotions played significant roles in carrier development [20]. Cooper RK, et al. [2] argued that people who trust and use their feelings effectively are more likely to achieve successful career. Paseluiko, et al. [21] emphasized on the fact that emotional intelligence energizes and motivates actions in career exploration and decision making process activities. Brown, et al. [22], found that emotional intelligence to be positively related to construct like career commitment and decision making process. An individual who is high on emotional intelligence quotient would be more aware of the surrounding options and will be able to access and evaluate the various available options in terms of career and other opportunities in life. Jordaan K, et al. [23] explained a career mature young person is someone who tends to have more career information and come across as more realistic in his/her career aspirations. Kield, et al. [24] observed the trend that individuals within the school to work transition phase have a need to become more self-reliant when it comes to managing their career aspirations.

## Discussion

Present study was being undertaken to investigate the relation between emotional intelligence and career decision making in adolescent. An attempt was made to examine the interaction of emotional intelligence in relation to career decision making. It was hypothesized that there will be significant relation between emotional intelligence and career decision making, when gender and syllabus followed are influenced [17-19]. One of the findings in the research shows that there is a significant relation between emotional intelligence and career decision making and also when

Certain level of career meta competencies skills and abilities such as identity awareness, sense of purpose, behavioral

adaptability, self-esteem and emotional intelligence are required, which enables them to be self-directed learners and help them become proactive agents in management of their career. Coetzee A, et al. [25] stated that career meta competencies facilitated acquisition of certain specific skills which promote general employability and occupational expertise. Stead, et al. [26] identified that career decision making as a construct can be enhanced through structured programme interventions within the school environment and help in preparing students for the transition from school to work. These organizational orientation programs also help students through the challenges which they face during the development of a career identity in the early adulthood phase [27-30]. Adolescence has been defined as the period when most of the work of identity formation takes place therefore, a significant sense of making a firm commitment and exploring the world in relation, so as to choose the right type of work. They wanted to do and match the occupational qualification accordingly for which one needs sufficient information about the world of work. Career maturity has emerged as a significant concept in the recent past which focuses on the readiness to make appropriate career decision [31]. A person with high emotional intelligence will be more capable in choosing appropriate and realistic career choices.

Therefore, vocational identity provides a framework for goal setting and direction. In today's challenging environment, students while choosing a suitable vocation for themselves the relation between emotional intelligence and career decision making will play a significant role in their lives [32]. Necessary steps can be taken to enhance the emotional intelligence so that career decision making can be increased. Thus, the results prove to be true that emotional intelligence directly involve in the career decision making in an individual or in a adolescent student.

## Conclusion

The findings show that the favourable attitude towards career decision making is comparatively higher in state board students than CBSE syllabus been followed. A favourable attitude towards emotional intelligence is seen mostly in state board students than in CBSE stream. There is no much difference in career decision making and emotional intelligence on the basis of male and females. Therefore emotional intelligence shows the stronger relation in order to take up a career decision. Thus, the students those who are having emotional stability can have a better career choice for their future.

## Limitations

- There were chances of faking responses, because it was related to their self-emotions and career decision, for

which they have not properly prepared for.

- Samples from higher secondary school level were small.

## Implications

- Since, the attitude towards emotional intelligence and career decision making is high in state syllabus students than CBSE stream, so the teaching methodology can be modified in order to get more exposure and sufficient knowledge about their surrounding environment.
- Parents should encourage their children, so that it may help them to empower their emotional intelligence and thus they can take better career choices.

As in gender, it does not showed any significant difference on basis of career decision making and emotional intelligence. Even though females gets less chance to be educated and be excelled in their career. So let the family, teachers and society should encourage the girls to come ahead, and should maintain an equal balance between boys and girls.

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