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# Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress among Adolescents: An Empirical Study

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**Abstract--** Adolescence is a critical developmental stage marked by significant emotional, cognitive, and social changes. During this period, adolescents often experience academic stress due to increased academic demands, parental expectations, peer competition, and career concerns. Emotional intelligence has been identified as an important psychological factor that helps individuals understand and regulate emotions effectively, thereby reducing stress and enhancing mental health. The present empirical study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescents.

The study was conducted on a sample of 120 adolescents studying in secondary schools. Participants were selected using a simple random sampling method. The Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Schutte et al. (1998) and the Academic Stress Scale developed by Kohn and Frazer (1986) were used to collect data. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and t-tests were used for statistical analysis.

The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress. Adolescents with higher emotional intelligence reported lower levels of academic stress. The study highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in helping adolescents manage academic challenges and maintain psychological well-being. Educational institutions should incorporate emotional skill development programs to support students' mental health and academic success.

**Keywords--** Emotional intelligence, academic stress, adolescents, mental health, emotional regulation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood characterized by rapid physical, emotional, and psychological development. During this period, individuals experience numerous changes that shape their identity, personality, and future aspirations. Adolescents often face various challenges such as academic pressure, social expectations, peer influence, and family responsibilities. These challenges may lead to stress, anxiety, and emotional instability.

Academic stress has become one of the most common psychological problems among adolescents. Students frequently experience pressure related to examinations, assignments, academic performance, and future career goals.

Excessive academic stress can negatively affect students' mental health, emotional well-being, and academic performance.

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in managing stress and maintaining emotional balance. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and regulate one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are better able to cope with stressful situations and maintain positive relationships.

Psychologists such as Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, integrate emotions into thinking, understand emotional meanings, and regulate emotions effectively. Later, Goleman (1995) emphasized the role of emotional intelligence in success, leadership, and psychological well-being.

For adolescents, emotional intelligence is particularly important because it helps them manage emotional challenges, build social relationships, and maintain self-confidence. Students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to cope effectively with academic stress and maintain better mental health.

Educational institutions play an important role in shaping adolescents' emotional development. Teachers and parents can support adolescents by creating supportive environments that encourage emotional expression, problem-solving skills, and resilience.

Therefore, examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescents is important for understanding how emotional skills can help students manage academic challenges and improve their overall well-being.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress among adolescents.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) introduced the concept of emotional intelligence and emphasized its role in emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships.

Goleman (1995) suggested that emotional intelligence is a key determinant of success and psychological well-being.



Davis and Humphrey (2012) reported that adolescents with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate better coping strategies and lower stress levels.

Singh and Kumar (2020) found that emotional intelligence significantly predicted academic performance and psychological well-being among secondary school students.

Sharma and Sharma (2021) conducted a study on emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescents and found a negative correlation between the two variables.

Rao and Reddy (2022) reported that students with higher emotional intelligence were better able to manage academic stress and maintain emotional stability.

Gupta and Mishra (2023) found that emotional intelligence improved students' resilience and reduced academic stress.

Verma and Kapoor (2021) reported that emotional intelligence training programs significantly improved students' emotional regulation and reduced stress levels.

These studies suggest that emotional intelligence plays an important role in reducing academic stress and improving adolescents' psychological well-being.

### III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the level of emotional intelligence among adolescents.
2. To assess the level of academic stress among adolescents.
3. To study the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress.
4. To examine gender differences in emotional intelligence and academic stress.

### IV. HYPOTHESES

1. There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescents.
2. Adolescents with higher emotional intelligence will experience lower academic stress.
3. There is a significant gender difference in emotional intelligence among adolescents.
4. There is a significant gender difference in academic stress among adolescents.

### V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### *Research Design*

The study employed a **descriptive and correlational research design** to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescents.

#### *Sample*

The sample consisted of **120 adolescents** selected from secondary schools of Bhojpur District of Bihar.

#### *Sample Characteristics*

Category	Frequency
Male	60
Female	60
Total	120

Age Range: **14–18 years**

Sampling Method: **Purposive Sampling Technique.**

#### **Variables**

Independent Variable: Emotional Intelligence

Dependent Variable: Academic Stress

#### *Emotional Intelligence Scale*

The Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998) was used to measure the level of emotional intelligence among the respondents. This scale assesses an individual's ability to perceive, manage, utilize and understand emotions in different situations. The scale consists of three major dimensions including emotional perception, managing emotions, and utilizing emotions, while also covering aspects related to understanding emotions. It contains a total of 33 items designed to evaluate emotional intelligence comprehensively. The responses are recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores on the scale indicate a higher level of emotional intelligence. The scale has demonstrated good psychometric properties, with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of approximately 0.87.

In addition, the scale shows strong construct and criterion validity and has been widely used in emotional intelligence research.

*Academic Stress Scale*

The Academic Stress Scale developed by Kohn and Frazer (1986) was used to measure the level of academic stress experienced by students. This scale evaluates different sources of stress related to academic life. It includes four major dimensions: academic workload, examination stress, parental expectations, and peer competition. The scale consists of 40 items designed to assess the degree of stress experienced by students in their academic environment. Responses are measured using a five-point Likert scale. Higher scores on the scale indicate a higher level of academic stress. The reliability coefficient of the scale is reported to be approximately 0.82, indicating satisfactory reliability. The scale also demonstrates satisfactory construct validity and has been widely used in research in the field of educational psychology.

VI. RESULTS

**Table-1:**  
**Mean and Standard Deviation of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress**

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Emotional Intelligence	120	124.48	12.32
Academic Stress	120	88.56	10.14

*Description:*

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress among the participants. The sample consisted of 120 adolescents.

*Interpretation:*

The mean score of Emotional Intelligence was **124.48** with a standard deviation of **12.32**, indicating moderate variability among participants. The mean score of Academic Stress was **88.56** with a standard deviation of **10.14**, suggesting that the level of academic stress among the respondents was moderate.

**Table -2:**  
**Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress**

Variables	Mean	SD	r value	Significance
Emotional Intelligence	124.48	12.32	-0.58	p < .01
Academic Stress	88.56	10.14		

*Description:*

Table 2 presents the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress among adolescents using Pearson’s correlation method.

*Interpretation:*

The obtained correlation coefficient (**r = -0.58**) indicates a **moderate negative relationship** between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Stress. The correlation is statistically significant at **p < .01**, suggesting that higher emotional intelligence is associated with lower academic stress among adolescents.

**Table-3:**  
**Gender Difference in Emotional Intelligence (Mean, SD and t-value)**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Male	60	121.75	11.82	
Female	60	127.21	12.46	2.18*

*Significant at p < .05*



*Description:*

Table 3 presents the comparison of Emotional Intelligence scores between male and female adolescents using an independent sample t-test.

*Interpretation:*

The mean score of Emotional Intelligence among male students was **121.75** with a standard deviation of **11.82**,

whereas female students obtained a mean score of **127.21** with a standard deviation of **12.46**. The calculated **t-value (2.18)** is significant at the **0.05 level**, indicating a statistically significant difference between male and female adolescents. Female students were found to have higher emotional intelligence compared to male students.

**Table-4:**  
**Gender Difference in Academic Stress (Mean, SD and t-value)**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Male	60	90.12	10.45	
Female	60	86.98	9.63	1.72

*Not significant at  $p > .05$*

*Description:*

Table 4 presents the comparison of Academic Stress between male and female adolescents using an independent samples t-test.

*Interpretation:*

The mean score of Academic Stress among male students was **90.12** with a standard deviation of **10.45**, whereas female students obtained a mean score of **86.98** with a standard deviation of **9.63**. The calculated **t-value (1.72)** is not statistically significant at the **0.05 level**. This indicates that there is **no significant difference in academic stress between male and female adolescents** in the present study.

**VII. DISCUSSION**

The findings of the study indicate a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescents. Adolescents with higher emotional intelligence demonstrated lower levels of academic stress.

These results support previous research conducted by Sharma (2021) and Rao (2022), which reported that emotional intelligence helps individuals regulate emotions and cope effectively with stressful situations.

Emotional intelligence enables adolescents to manage their emotions, develop positive relationships, and maintain emotional stability. Students who possess strong emotional skills are better able to handle academic challenges and maintain psychological well-being.

Educational institutions should focus on developing emotional intelligence through counselling programs, social-emotional learning activities, and stress management workshops.

**VIII. CONCLUSION**

The present study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress among adolescents. The findings revealed that emotional intelligence plays an important role in reducing academic stress.

Students with higher emotional intelligence are better able to manage academic challenges and maintain emotional stability. Promoting emotional intelligence through educational programs can significantly improve students' mental health and academic performance.

**IX. LIMITATIONS**

1. The sample size was relatively small.
2. The study was limited to a specific geographical area.
3. Self-report questionnaires may produce response bias.

**X. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

1. Future research may include larger and more diverse samples.
2. Longitudinal studies may examine emotional intelligence development over time.
3. Additional variables such as family support and academic motivation may be examined.

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