

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Ethical Choices among College Going Adolescents

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Abstract: Adolescence is a transitional phase in one's life. During this phase parents may successfully prepare their children for careers, but instilling values like honesty and responsibility remains a challenge. (Manish Sisodia, 2019). In order to be a good human being one needs to understand themselves as well as others well, they need to ethically use their emotional intelligence for better outcome. **Objective:** The main objective of this research is to assess and compare emotional intelligence and ethical choices of adolescents. The study also examines the relationships among emotional intelligence and ethical choices of adolescents. **Method:** The sample consisted of hundred and twenty adolescents. Subjects were administered a set of questionnaires individually, which included demographic details, emotional intelligence scales, and ethical decision-making questionnaire. **Result:** The findings of the present study indicate a significant correlation among EI and EDM. It also reveals similar levels of EI and EDM skills among male and female adolescents, indicating no significant gender-based differences. **Conclusion:** Thus adolescents with high EI will be good at taking better ethical decisions.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Ethical Choice, College going Adolescents

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a significant developmental period characterised by a range of physical, cognitive and psychological changes. It originates in biology and evolves into cultural manifestations. (Steinberg, 2014). This pivotal stage of development typically spans the transition from puberty to social autonomy. (Steinberg, 2014) During this stage of development adolescents start to identify who they are and what they want to do in life. At the same time they have to accommodate to many major biological, psychological and social changes. When adolescents go through several changes in life it is natural for them to feel anxious about these changes, opportunities and hurdles. Adolescence is typically defined as spanning ages 10-19, although definitions can vary, with some sources extending the range from 9 to 26 years. (APA, 2002). According to Nienstein et al. (2009), adolescence can be divided into three sub-stages: early adolescence (roughly 10-13 years), middle adolescence (around 14-16 years), and late adolescence (approximately 17-19 years). The adolescent stage signifies a crucial transition from childhood to adulthood. The successful navigation of adolescence is crucial for shaping young people's futures and influencing a country's social and economic development. They must be healthy, knowledgeable, equipped with confidence and sound mind that would empower them to be successful human beings who would be able to contribute to their communities.

EI helps to maintain wellness and increases the capability to deal with life's significant struggles. (Vergara et al., 2015). It can influence the overall development of an adolescent. Concerning the above context emotional intelligence is important because it improves an individual's psychological aspect,

physical health, social relation and their relationship with the environment. If these dimensions of adolescents will be improved, it will help them to reduce their anxiety, to become healthy, honest, happy and responsible individuals along with making them competent professionals. Ethical decision making helps them to fulfil the task in such a way which is not only acceptable by them but by the society. EI is positively related to EDM. Adolescents with high EI are more capable of dealing with negative situations more successfully than those with low EI. (Wagih, 2013)

Emotional intelligence is linked to ethical decision-making, and education appears to be a significant contributor to this relationship. In light of this study's conclusions it has been revealed that to foster ethical decision-making, educators should prioritize developing emotional intelligence in adolescents throughout their academic journey. (Scott, 2004). Adolescents with high emotional intelligence deal effectively in negative situation. (J Cejudo, L Losada, 2018). Emotional intelligence is crucial for achieving success and psychological well-being, and it significantly influences ethical decision-making.

Rationale

Adolescence is a transitional phase. During this phase adolescents try to take new decisions in life. It is not only important to take a decision but also important to take the right decision. This refers to the systematic evaluation and selection of alternatives that align with moral values and ethical principles. Also research study on the impact of EI and EDM is negligible so far as adolescence is concerned. In the Indian context no studies are available on combined impact of EI and EDM of adolescence. For the above mentioned points, this research aimed to study the impact of EI and EDM in adolescents.

2. Objectives

- To determine whether there is significant gender differences in EI and EDM of adolescents.
- To find out whether there is any significant relationship between EI and EDM of adolescents.

3. Method

3.1 Design

An independent samples t-test was conducted to investigate gender differences in EI and EDM. In order to find out the relationship between EI and EDM correlation was used in this study.

3.2 Sample

The initial sample size of this present study consisted of 200 adolescents in the age group of 20-22 years. For selection of participant convenient sampling method was used. 120 completed questionnaires were obtained from 60 female, 60 male adolescents.

3.3 Materials Used

1. Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)
2. Ethical Position Questionnaire

3.4 Procedure

Data collection involved administering three instruments to students at Utkal University: the 33-item SSEIT, the 20-item EPQ, and a demographic form. To ensure diverse representation, questionnaires were distributed in various department buildings, allowing students from different disciplines to

participate. They were asked to participate after explaining the purpose of the research study. Participants received questionnaire sets in English, comprising an introduction to the study, confidentiality assurances, a demographic form, and the SSEIT and EPQ scales. Participants were allowed to complete the questionnaires at their own pace, without any time constraints. After the respondents completed responding to the questionnaire the researcher collected them and thanked them for their cooperation. Then Scoring was conducted according to the standardized guidelines outlined in the manuals for each inventory. After the scoring was completed, the data were statistically analyzed using SPSS.

4. Result

Table-1

The *t*-values indicating the differences between male and female adolescents in terms of emotional intelligence and ethical decision-making

Table-1: reveals that there is no significant difference between EI and EDM of male and female adolescents.

Measures	t	df	p
Emotional Intelligence(EI)	.00	118	1.00
Perception of Emotion(POE)	.24	118	.80
Managing Own Emotion(MOE)	.20	118	.84
Managing Others' Emotion(MOE)	.02	118	.98
Utilization of Emotion(UOE)	.44	118	.66
Ethical Decision Making(EDM)	.30	118	.76
Idealism	.56	118	.57
Relativism	.13	118	.89

* $P < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 2 Inter-correlation among measures of emotional intelligence and ethical decision making

Table-2: shows that EI has significant positive correlation with ethical decision making of adolescents.

	Emotional Intelligence (EI)	Perception of emotion (POE)	Managing Others Emotion (MOE)	Managing Own Emotion (MOE)	Utilization of Emotion (UOE)	Ethical Decision Making (EDM)	Idealism	Relativism
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	1	0.71**	0.81**	0.71**	0.71**	0.54**	0.50**	0.44**
Perception of Emotion		1	0.46**	0.23*	0.31**	0.34**	0.31**	0.31**

(POE)								
Managing Others Emotion (MOE)			1	0.50**	0.50**	0.39**	0.36**	0.33**
Managing Own Emotion (MOE)				1	0.48**	0.48**	0.47**	0.37**
Utilization of Emotion (UOE)					1	0.40**	0.39**	0.32**
Ethical Decision Making (EDM)						1	0.87**	0.89**
Idealism							1	0.57**
Relativism								

*P<.05, **p<.01

5. Conclusion

The result reveals a positive significant correlation between EI and EDM of adolescents. It indicates that adolescents with high EI will be better at taking the right ethical decision. Intervention in emotional intelligence will foster ethical decision making. (Trigeros et al., 2019). This study has limitations, including time constraints and a relatively small sample size, which may impact the generalizability of the findings. Additional research is necessary to draw broader conclusions and enhance the generalizability of these findings. This study didn't control for personality, home environment, and socio-cultural background, which could have influenced the results; accounting for these variables might have yielded different outcomes.

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