

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.121126191

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN RELATION TO TYPE OF FAMILY AMONG ADOLESCENT LEARNERS

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Received: 14/08/2025

Accepted: 06/01/2026

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This study investigates the relationship between family structure and Emotional Intelligence (EI) among 400 adolescent learners in Kamrup Metropolitan District of Assam. Utilizing Mayer and Salovey's framework, the research compares EI across nuclear, joint, and extended families. **Objective of the study:** To assess the Emotional Intelligence of adolescents in relation to type of Family. **Methodology:** 400 students (200 boys, 200 girls) from class IX were selected using stratified random sampling, from 14 rural and 37 urban schools, located across 4 different zones, North, South, East and West. The study employed an Ex-post facto Research Design to compare EI scores across Nuclear, Joint, and Extended families. **Results:** The study found no significant difference between Emotional Intelligence and the type of family. While some previous research suggests nuclear families provide more stimulating environments for interpersonal awareness, this study indicates that family structure provides little evidence compared to internal family dynamics. **Key Findings:** **No Significant Difference:** One-way ANOVA tests revealed no significant variation in total EI scores based on family type. **Domain Consistency:** Family type did not influence specific domains such as self-awareness, empathy, or managing emotions. **Dynamics Over Structure:** The results suggest that family dynamics, including parenting styles, communication, and cohesiveness, are more influential than the mere size or type of the family unit. **Conclusion:** While some literature suggests nuclear families foster better interpersonal skills due to increased parent-child interaction, this study aligns with findings that family size alone is not a primary predictor of emotional development. The researchers conclude that internal qualitative factors, such as emotional support and the absence of conflict, are more critical for adolescent psychosocial adjustment.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Family Structure, Adolescent, Family Dynamics, Nuclear, Joint, Extended.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Mayer and Salovey (1997)¹¹, Emotional Intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to assess and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence was given by Yale psychologists, Mayer and Salovey in 1999¹¹. Since then, interests of researchers had gravitated towards Emotional Intelligence.

Student learners in the age range of 13-17 years, studying in class IX of provincialized schools in Kamrup Metropolitan District, are the adolescents in this study.

Size of the family has still been a debatable issue. Richter, Richter, Eisemann and Mau (1997)¹⁸ had suggested that large families pose a risk for children's mental health and behaviour.

Fazelinia (2006)⁷ had stated that in a family where there are more siblings there is less scope for parent-child interactions, listening and positive attentions and these are reasons enough that would contribute to low level of Emotional Intelligence in the family.

Adolescence is a crucial stage in life. Experience gained during this stage has far reaching consequences. It is a transition period from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence has long been characterized as a time of increased emotionality. Aristotle described youth as "passionate, irascible and apt to be carried away by their impulses." Hall's (1904) view of adolescence as a period of 'storm and stress' has been a subject of debate as what appears to be storm is actually the adolescents' response to a changing body in relation to a changing world. 'Adolescence is a social creation' as stated by Ritzer, Kammever and Yetman (1979)¹⁸. This implies to adolescence worldwide. Though developmentalists have tried to define the word 'adolescence'; to arrive at a particular age span of this stage has not been possible.

Henslin (1997) defines this period as the second stage of life, aged between 13-17 years. Due to rapid industrialization the teenagers could stay away from work and moreover due to demand for education, a gap was created between childhood and adulthood. Thereby a new stage was created which Hall (1904) termed as adolescence. Henslin was of the opinion that "It is contemporary society, not biological age, that makes these years a period of turmoil".

With these definitions in mind, the present study would focus on the understanding that it is a stage that starts at puberty and ends before adulthood.

Technological advancements have led to precocious puberty which begins as early as 7-8 years nowadays, especially in India. It is obvious that a jump into this stage from childhood to adolescence makes the transition very stressful which gets manifested in myriad forms, such as, conflicts with caregivers, aggression, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, lack of focus and a goal direction. Adolescence is a stage of transformation from childhood to adulthood. They are expected to behave like grownups and to develop a sense of self responsibility. At the same time, they are also labelled as too immature to take certain decisions, for example, to go out alone particularly in case of girls, to watch certain programmes on TV or to dress up like adults. The growth occurring during this period is marked by rapid physical changes in the body. This causes a lot of emotional turmoil in the adolescent. This situation is particularly more aggravated in the Indian context due to the fact that sex education in the households is a taboo. Girls attend puberty without knowing what is a menstrual cycle and boys tend to alienate from their fathers on reaching puberty. Growth during this period is markedly influenced by parenting techniques, social institutions, geographical conditions, locality, neighborhood, tradition and culture apart from hereditary influences. Most of the characteristics during this stage is universal, - heightened emotionality triggered by hormonal changes during this period; pressure of conforming to peer group expectations, rebelliousness and conflict with family. This was stated by several researchers such as Shaffer (1996), Santrock (2011), Morgan and King (2001). But studies on adolescents are not adequate in India.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- 1) To assess the Emotional Intelligence of adolescents in relation to type of Family.

Ex-post facto Research Design was used to elicit information on Emotional intelligence and demographic variable- Type of Family.

3. RESEARCH REFLECTIONS

Enny (2013)⁶ conducted a study on adolescents and revealed that type of family was not significantly associated with total Emotional Intelligence of adolescents.

Sati and Gir (2016)¹⁹ had attempted to assess and compare the Emotional Intelligence of 120 late adolescent girls between the age range 16 to 18 years, studying in governmental schools of Udaipur city. The results obtained were that the girls of nuclear families were better; these girls had better level of

interpersonal awareness and the reasons cited were that the girls in the nuclear families received more opportunities, stimulating environment than the girls coming from joint families.

This finding was in line with Sibia, Misra and Srivastava (2004)²⁰ who revealed that a nuclear family can take care of the dimensions of interpersonal characteristics, such as empathy, social responsibility and interpersonal relationships. The girls from nuclear families were better in interpersonal management skills as compared to joint family girls. The reason cited was that parents emotionally relate with their daughters.

Afzal and Afzal (2016)¹ had found negative correlation between family structure and Emotional Intelligence which was consistent with the findings of Ozabaci (2006)¹⁷ and Blake (1989)³ and also Barbar, Christenson and Barchard (2004)², and Cherian (1990)⁴.

Noor and Hanafi (2016)¹⁰ had also found a negative relationship between family structure and Emotional Intelligence.

4. FAMILY STRUCTURE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF ADOLESCENTS

Several studies have been done on the influence of family environment on the development of mental faculties, however there is dearth of empirical evidence regarding the influence of family size.

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Naghavi and Rezduan (2012) were of the opinion that in large family's family resources are diluted and this can affect the behavior of adolescents.

Still among those who were in favour of large family's mention may be made of Downey,1995; Powell, Steelman,1999) and also Golestan, Haslinda, Nobaya and Anjomshoa (2010).

On analyzing the results of the studies, it was found that family size was just one factor, while there is a myriad of several other factors such as the climate in the family, parental behavior, parenting styles and family interaction. Researchers like Fisher (1984) has also linked parental criminality and sibling delinquency to be the outcome of large families which does not facilitate emotional

intelligence. According to Fischer (1984), a large family is characterized by overcrowding, inadequate resources, poor parental behavior, inappropriate disciplining techniques, lack of attention, love and care and family communication.

Cicirelli,1994; Lu, Donald and Treiman,2008 had mentioned about other family characteristics such as birth order, parenting techniques, the availability of family resources, the availability of parental time, energy and attention. The quality and relationship with parents and othe family members.

Naghavi and Rezduan(2012)¹⁴ on exploring the influence of family characteristics, stated had stated about the influence of the social status of the family, the sidence, the number of siblings and the relationships among the siblings.

On the ground of the existing literature, the effect of the family size on emotional intelligence has been analysed.

'Nuclear Family also called elementary family in sociology and anthropology, is a group of people who are united by ties of partnership and parenthood and consisting of a pair of adults and their socially recognized children' (Encyclopaedia Britannica). The joint family is an extension of the nuclear family comprising of parents and dependent children, who live together with their spouses and offspring under the authority of one of the members. The extended family differs from the joint family only in that the members of the extended family live in separate compounds. The nuclear family comprises of other relatives like uncles, cousins besides the two generations living together.

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Sati and Gir (2016) had attempted to assess and compare the emotional intelligence of 120 late adolescence girls between the age ranges 16 to 18 years studying in governmental schools of Udaipur city. The results obtained were that the girls of nuclear families were better; these girls had better level of interpersonal awareness and the reasons cited were that the girls in the nuclear families received more opportunities, stimulating environment than the girls coming from joint families. This finding was in line with Sibia, Misra and Srivastava (2004) who revealed that a nuclear family can take care of the dimensions of interpersonal characteristics such as empathy, social responsibility and interpersonal relationships. The girls from nuclear families were better in

interpersonal management skills as compared to joint family girls. The reason cited was that parents emotionally relate with their daughters.

Afzal and Afzal (2016)² had found negative correlation between family structure and Emotional Intelligence which were consistent with the findings of Ozabaci (2006)¹⁷ and Blake (1989)³ and also Barbar, Christenson and Barchard (2004)², Cherian (1990)⁴ and Blake (1989)³.

Noor and Hanafi (2016)¹⁶ had also found a negative relationship between family structure and emotional intelligence.

Afzal and Afzal (2016)² further cited the positive correlation revealed by Murrand (1999)¹³

In support of the inconsistent findings, mention may be made of Ozabaci(2011), who had quoted the findings of Manuel (2002)¹⁰ on the effects of parents on emotional intelligence among 109 young people between 11 and 15 years. The study had revealed that encouraging, giving rewards and guiding the

children had crucial effects in developing emotional intelligence.

Ozabaci(2011)¹⁷ had concluded that the family environment is highly important in the emotional and social development of the child and mentions Nixon et al (1990)¹⁵ observations that there exists a connection between a child's negative emotions and family experiences.

Methodology: 400 students comprising of 200 boys and 200 girls and belonging to both rural and urban schools were selected through stratified random sampling.

Ex-post facto Research Design was used to elicit information on Personal Data and Demographic Variables.

In the present study the validated study by Dr Ekta Sharma was used with the permission from Prasad Psycho Corporation from where it was procured.

Table 1: The List of the Schools and the Number of Respondents Selected Are Presented in the Table Below.

Zone	No of schools		No of students	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
North	2	6	20	47
South	12	3	159	29
Mid		2		7
East	2	10	21	52
West	Nil	11	Nil	65
Total	14	37	200	200

Sample Size: The urban samples comprised of 100 boys and 100 girls and altogether 200 in number. The students were selected zonewise, North, South, East and West and in the ages between 13 to 17 years. Again, the rural samples comprised of 200 adolescents, 100 boys and 100 girls respectively.

Sampling technique used: Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the participants who were students of class IX.

Test Administration and Data Collection: After seeking permission from each of the schools selected for data collection, the dates were fixed and the EI test was administered to the adolescents in the schools.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Comparison of EI Scores with Type of Family

One way ANOVA tests are used to find the mean differences in scores among the different Types of Family in relation to the five domains of EI.

It can be observed from table 1 that there exist no significant differences between Emotional Intelligence and different Types of Family. The

relationship between different domains and Type of Family and also Total EI and Type of Family was observed and the findings reveal that the Type of Family did not influence the EI of adolescents. The concept of large families being more conducive to children's upbringing does not always hold true; due to the play of several other factors, such as family dynamics, parenting techniques, the communication and interaction within the family members, the time given by the parents, negative issues like substance abuse at home, domestic violence, and child abuse.

Present research evidence does not prove that larger families are more conducive for adolescents' emotional development. A recent study by Afzal and Afzal (2016)¹ revealed that family size and number of siblings have no relationship with Emotional Intelligence. Afzal and Afzal had reported of Ozabaci (2006)¹¹ who had revealed the decrease of emotional intelligence with the increase of family size. The reason mentioned was that as family size increases with a greater number of siblings, the interaction with parents and their supervisors decreases.

Table 2: EI In Relation to Type of Family.

Domains	Family Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Self-Awareness	Nuclear	344	37.30	5.081	0.274
	Joint	21	37.95	4.353	0.950
	Extended	35	38.00	6.068	1.026
	Total	400	37.39	5.132	0.257
Managing Emotions	Nuclear	344	25.83	3.272	0.176
	Joint	21	26.48	4.179	0.912
	Extended	35	25.29	3.967	0.671
	Total	400	25.82	3.386	0.169
Motivating Oneself	Nuclear	344	54.11	6.426	0.346
	Joint	21	53.10	6.244	1.363
	Extended	35	53.91	6.568	1.110
	Total	400	54.04	6.417	0.321
Empathy	Nuclear	344	30.67	4.448	0.240
	Joint	21	31.10	4.979	1.087
	Extended	35	30.97	3.400	0.575
	Total	400	30.72	4.388	0.219
Handling Relationships	Nuclear	344	62.88	7.564	0.408
	Joint	21	60.24	6.300	1.375
	Extended	35	63.49	8.364	1.414
	Total	400	62.79	7.585	0.379
Total Emotional Intelligence	Nuclear	344	210.80	16.208	0.874
	Joint	21	208.86	17.205	3.755
	Extended	35	211.66	16.773	2.835
	Total	400	210.77	16.276	0.814

The above table depicts the relation of the different domains of Emotional intelligence with type of family. Regarding this the researcher would like to bring into consideration the influence of myriad factors that go to make a family life, such as the type of parenting, the cohesiveness, the communication, the crisis and the like. Findings suggest that, to make conclusive statements was not possible as many other factors needed to be considered. Therefore, structure of the family provides little evidence, compared to the many influential factors that had been overlooked in all research findings.

In the present study, it was observed that the type of family was not significantly associated with the total Emotional Intelligence as well as with any of the dimension of Emotional Intelligence. The finding is supported by the study conducted by Uma and Devi (2005)²¹ who found no significant association between type of family and Emotional Intelligence. However, the result is in contrast with the study conducted by Katyal and Awasthi (2006)⁹ who found significant correlation between type of family and Emotional Intelligence.

Afzal and Afzal (2016)¹ had found negative correlation between family structure and Emotional Intelligence which were consistent with the findings of Ozabaci (2006)¹⁷ and Blake (1989)³ and also Barbar, Christenson and Barchard (2004)², Cherian (1990)⁴ and Blake (1989)³.

Therefore, it can be stated that rather than the type

of family the effect of family dynamics needs to be explored.

Emotional Intelligence and type of Family:

Present research evidence does not prove that larger families are more conducive for adolescents' emotional development. The reason mentioned was that as family size increases with a greater number of siblings, the interaction with parents and their supervisors decreases. Regarding this the researcher would like to bring into consideration the influence of myriad factors that go to make a family life, such as the type of parenting, the cohesiveness, the communication, the crisis and the like. Findings suggest that, to make conclusive statements was not possible as many other factors needed to be considered. Therefore, structure of the family provides little evidence, compared to the many influential factors that had been overlooked in all research findings. In the present study, it was observed that the type of family was not significantly associated with the total emotional intelligence as well as with any of the dimension of emotional intelligence. The finding is supported by the study conducted by Uma and Devi (2005) who found no significant association between type of family and emotional intelligence. However, the result is in contrast with the study conducted by Katyal and Awasthi (2006)⁹ who found significant correlation between type of family and emotional intelligence in the present study, it was observed that the type of family was not significantly associated with the total

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Results that indicated the negative co-relation between family structure and Emotional Intelligence can be supported by Devi and Rayal's (2004) study on 224 adolescents. The results of this study indicated that the adolescents who perceived that their families were cohesive, expressive, accepting, caring and

having control were highly empathetic. Adolescents from highly cohesive and expressive families maintained good interpersonal personal relations. The results further showed that the adolescents who perceived that their families had less conflicts and who had independence at home showed high impulse control which was essential for attaining long term goals and could manage stress.

Therefore, it can be stated that rather than the type of family the effect of family dynamics needs to be explored.

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