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Emotional Intelligence among Secondary School Students in India and Jordan: A Comparative Cross-Sectional Study

الذكاء العاطفي لدى طلبة المدارس الثانوية في الهند والأردن: دراسة مقارنة مقطعية

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Abstract:

Emotional intelligence is an important factor in students' personal, social, and academic development. It helps students understand their emotions, deal with others, and respond better to school challenges. This study aimed to examine emotional intelligence among secondary school students in India and Jordan and to identify whether emotional intelligence differs according to country, gender, age, school type, sub-area, and area division or directorate. A comparative cross-sectional survey design was used. The sample consisted of 750 ninth-grade students, including 375 students from India and 375 students from Jordan. Emotional intelligence was measured using a 31-item scale. The reliability result showed excellent internal consistency, with a KR-20/Cronbach's alpha value of 0.912. The descriptive results showed that the overall mean emotional intelligence score was 16.64 out of 31, with a standard deviation of 7.73. Most students were classified as having a low level of emotional intelligence, followed by an average level and then a high level. The independent samples t-test showed a statistically significant difference between Indian and Jordanian students, with Indian students reporting higher emotional intelligence. However, no significant differences were found according to gender or age. One-way ANOVA showed significant differences according to school type and area division/directorate, while sub-area differences were not statistically significant. These findings suggest that emotional intelligence among students may be shaped more by educational and school-related contexts than by gender or age.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Secondary School Students, India, Jordan, School Type, Comparative Study.

الملخص:

يُعد الذكاء العاطفي عاملاً مهماً في التنمية الشخصية والاجتماعية والأكاديمية للطلبة، إذ يساعدهم على فهم مشاعرهم والتعامل مع الآخرين والاستجابة بصورة أفضل للتحديات المدرسية. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى فحص مستوى الذكاء العاطفي لدى طلبة المدارس الثانوية في الهند والأردن، وتحديد ما إذا كانت هناك فروق في الذكاء العاطفي تُعزى إلى الدولة أو الجنس أو العمر أو نوع المدرسة أو المنطقة الفرعية أو التقسيم الإداري/المديرية. استخدمت الدراسة المنهج المسحي المقارن ذي التصميم المقطعي. وتكونت عينة الدراسة من (750) طالباً وطالبة من الصف التاسع، بواقع (375) طالباً من الهند و(375) طالباً من الأردن. وتم قياس الذكاء العاطفي باستخدام مقياس مكون من (31) فقرة. وأظهرت نتائج الثبات تمتع المقياس بدرجة ممتازة من الاتساق الداخلي، حيث بلغت قيمة معامل كرونباخ ألفا/كير-ريتشاردسون (0.912) (KR-20). كما بينت النتائج الوصفية أن المتوسط الكلي لدرجات الذكاء العاطفي بلغ (16.64) من أصل (31) درجة، بانحراف معياري مقداره (7.73). وأظهرت النتائج أن معظم الطلبة صُنِّفوا ضمن مستوى منخفض من الذكاء العاطفي، تلاهم الطلبة ذوو المستوى المتوسط، ثم الطلبة ذوو المستوى المرتفع. وكشف اختبار (T) للعينات المستقلة عن وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الطلبة الهنود والأردنيين، حيث سجل الطلبة الهنود مستويات أعلى من الذكاء العاطفي. في المقابل، لم تظهر فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية تُعزى إلى الجنس أو العمر. كما أظهر تحليل التباين الأحادي (ANOVA) وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية وفقاً لنوع المدرسة والتقسيم الإداري/المديرية، في حين لم تكن الفروق المرتبطة بالمنطقة الفرعية ذات دلالة إحصائية. وتشير هذه النتائج إلى أن الذكاء العاطفي لدى الطلبة قد يتأثر بالسياقات التعليمية والعوامل المرتبطة بالمدرسة بدرجة أكبر من تأثره بالجنس أو العمر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء العاطفي، طلبة المدارس الثانوية، الهند، الأردن، نوع المدرسة، دراسة مقارنة.

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence is an important part of students' personal and school life. It refers to the ability to understand emotions, use emotions in thinking, manage emotions, and respond to the emotions of others. Salovey and Mayer (1990) described emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings, understand emotional information, and use this information to guide thinking and action. Emotional intelligence is important because students do not only need academic knowledge. They also need to understand their feelings, control stress, communicate with others, and deal with daily school challenges. Students with better emotional intelligence may be more able to manage pressure, build good relationships with classmates and teachers, and respond to difficult situations in a more balanced way. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) explained that emotional intelligence includes abilities related to perceiving emotions, using emotions to support thinking, understanding emotions, and managing emotions.

Students face academic pressure, examinations, social changes, and expectations from family and school. These experiences can affect how students feel and behave. When students are able to understand and manage their emotions, they may become more confident in dealing with school demands and social situations. Brackett, Rivers, and Salovey (2011) noted that emotional intelligence is related to personal, social, academic, and workplace success because emotions affect how people think, make decisions, and interact with others. Different educational and cultural environments may shape students' emotional intelligence in different ways. Students learn how to express and manage emotions through their families, schools, peers, and wider society. For example, some school environments may encourage students to express their feelings and communicate openly, while others may focus more on academic achievement and discipline. Because of this, emotional intelligence may differ from one country to another and from one school context to another.

India and Jordan provide two different educational and social contexts for studying emotional intelligence. Students in both countries may experience school pressure, family expectations, and social demands, but the way they deal with emotions may be influenced by their local culture and educational environment. Therefore, comparing emotional intelligence among secondary school students in India and Jordan can help us understand how students' emotional abilities differ across contexts. The current study examines emotional intelligence among secondary school students in India and Jordan. It focuses on whether emotional intelligence differs according to country, gender, age, school type, sub-area, and area division or directorate. The study uses the collected survey data to provide a clear picture of students' emotional intelligence and the factors that may be associated with differences in emotional intelligence levels.

2. Research Objectives and Hypotheses

The main objective of this study is to examine emotional intelligence among secondary school students in India and Jordan.

The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the overall level of emotional intelligence among secondary school students.
2. To compare emotional intelligence between students in India and Jordan.
3. To examine whether emotional intelligence differs according to gender.
4. To examine whether emotional intelligence differs according to age group.
5. To investigate whether emotional intelligence differs according to school type.
6. To investigate whether emotional intelligence differs according to sub-area.
7. To investigate whether emotional intelligence differs according to area division or directorate.

Based on these objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence between secondary school students in India and Jordan.

H2: There is a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to gender.

H3: There is a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to age group.

H4: There is a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to school type.

H5: There is a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to sub-area.

H6: There is a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to area division or directorate.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study used a comparative cross-sectional survey design to examine emotional intelligence among secondary school students in India and Jordan. This design was suitable because the study collected data from students at one point in time and compared emotional intelligence according to country and selected demographic and school-related variables. Cross-sectional survey research is

useful when the aim is to describe students' characteristics, beliefs, or abilities using numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.2 Participants

The sample consisted of 750 ninth-grade students. Of these students, 375 were from India and 375 were from Jordan. The sample included male and female students from different age groups, school types, sub-areas, and area divisions or directorates. The equal number of students from India and Jordan helped make the comparison between the two countries clearer and more balanced.

3.3 Research Instrument

Emotional intelligence was measured using a ready-made Emotional Intelligence Scale, namely the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS-SANS), developed by Dr. Arun Kumar Singh and Dr. Shruti Narain. The scale was purchased and used in this study to assess emotional intelligence among secondary school students in India and Jordan. The EIS-SANS consists of 31 items. The items are answered using two response options: Yes or No. According to the scoring procedure of the scale, responses that match the scoring key are given a score of 1, while responses that do not match the scoring key are given a score of 0. Therefore, the total emotional intelligence score ranges from 0 to 31. A higher score indicates a higher level of emotional intelligence.

The scale includes four dimensions of emotional intelligence. The first dimension is understanding emotions and includes 4 items. The second dimension is understanding motivation and includes 8 items. The third dimension is empathy and includes 10 items. The fourth dimension is handling relations and includes 9 items. These dimensions assess students' ability to understand emotions, recognize motivation, show empathy, and manage relationships with others. The qualitative interpretation of the total score follows the scale manual. A score of 27 and above indicates high emotional intelligence, a score from 21 to 26 indicates average emotional intelligence, and a score of 20 or less indicates low emotional intelligence.

The manual reports acceptable psychometric properties for the scale. In the present study, the reliability of the scale was also examined using KR-20/Cronbach's alpha because the items were scored dichotomously as 0 and 1. The reliability result showed excellent internal consistency, with a KR-20/Cronbach's alpha value of 0.912. This indicates that the scale was reliable for measuring emotional intelligence in the current sample.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

The emotional intelligence scale was reviewed to ensure that its items were suitable for measuring emotional intelligence among secondary school students. The items focused on emotional understanding, emotional awareness, and students' responses to emotional and social situations.

The reliability of the scale was examined using KR-20/Cronbach's alpha. Since the emotional intelligence items were scored as 0 and 1, KR-20 was appropriate for estimating internal consistency. The reliability result showed that the emotional intelligence scale had excellent internal consistency, with a KR-20/Cronbach's alpha value of 0.912. This means that the items were consistent in measuring the same general construct. Kuder and Richardson (1937) introduced KR-20 as a reliability estimate for dichotomously scored items, while Cronbach's alpha is widely used to examine the internal consistency of scale items (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

3.5 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the students and the levels of emotional intelligence. Means and standard deviations were used to describe the overall emotional intelligence score.

Independent samples t-tests were used to compare emotional intelligence according to variables with two groups, such as country, gender, and age group. One-way analysis of variance was used to examine differences in emotional intelligence according to variables with more than two groups, such as school type, sub-area, and area division or directorate. When statistically significant differences were found, post-hoc comparisons were used to identify where the differences existed. The level of statistical significance was set at 0.05.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the results of emotional intelligence among secondary school students in India and Jordan. The analysis focused on the overall level of emotional intelligence and the differences according to country, gender, age, school type, sub-area, and area division or directorate.

The total sample consisted of 750 ninth-grade students. The sample was equally distributed between the two countries, with 375 students from India and 375 students from Jordan. There were 396 male students and 354 female students. Most students were 15 years old, while a smaller number were 14 years old. The students also came from different school types, sub-areas, and area divisions or directorates.

The reliability of the emotional intelligence scale was examined before the main analysis. The scale consisted of 31 items scored as 0 or 1. The KR-20/Cronbach's alpha value was 0.912, which indicates excellent internal consistency. This means that the items were consistent in measuring emotional intelligence. This result supports the use of the scale in the main statistical analysis. Kuder and Richardson (1937) explained that KR-20 is suitable for dichotomous items, while Tavakol and Dennick (2011) noted that internal consistency is important for judging the reliability of questionnaire scales.

The descriptive results showed that the overall mean emotional intelligence score was 16.64 out of 31, with a standard deviation of 7.73. The scores ranged from 0 to 31. Based on the level classification, 487 students, representing 64.93% of the sample, had a low level of emotional intelligence. A total of 183 students, representing 24.40%, had an average level, while 80 students, representing 10.67%, had a high level. This result suggests that many students in the sample may need more support in developing emotional understanding, emotional awareness, and suitable responses to emotional and social situations.

Table 1. Levels of Emotional Intelligence

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	487	64.93%
Average	183	24.40%
High	80	10.67%
Total	750	100%

The independent samples t-test showed a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence between students in India and Jordan. Indian students had a higher mean score than Jordanian students. The mean score for Indian students was 17.57, while the mean score for Jordanian students was 15.71. This difference was statistically significant, $t(746.03) = 3.328$, $p < .001$. This finding suggests that emotional intelligence may differ according to educational and cultural context. This does not mean that one group is better than the other, but it shows that students' emotional skills may be shaped by the environment in which they learn and grow. Salovey and Mayer (1990) explained that emotional intelligence involves understanding and using emotional information, and this ability may develop through social and educational experiences.

Table 2. Country Differences in Emotional Intelligence

Country	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Result
India	375	17.573	7.481	3.328	746.033	< .001	Significant
Jordan	375	15.707	7.876				

The results showed no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to gender. Female students had a slightly higher mean score than male students, but the difference was not significant. The mean score for female students was 17.01, while the mean score for male students was 16.31, $t(727.41) = -1.230$, $p = .219$. This result means that male and female students had almost similar levels of emotional intelligence in this sample. Although some previous studies have found gender differences in emotional skills, the current result suggests that gender alone did not explain emotional intelligence differences among these students.

Table 3. Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Result
Male	396	16.311	7.522	-1.230	727.406	.219	Not significant
Female	354	17.008	7.957				

The results also showed no statistically significant difference according to age. Students aged 15 had a slightly higher mean score than students aged 14, but the difference was not significant. The mean score for students aged 14 was 15.86, while the mean score for students aged 15 was 16.84, $t(232.75) = -1.399$, $p = .163$. This may be because the age gap between the two groups was small, and all students were from the same grade level. Therefore, they may have had similar school experiences and emotional challenges.

Table 4. Age Differences in Emotional Intelligence

Age	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Result
14 years	150	15.860	7.603	-1.399	232.748	.163	Not significant
15 years	600	16.835	7.759				

One-way ANOVA showed a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to school type, $F(3, 746) = 4.567$, $p = .004$. Students in Private Unaided schools had the highest mean

score, followed by students in Government schools and Private Aided schools. Students in Private schools had the lowest mean score. Post-hoc comparisons showed that Government school students scored significantly higher than Private school students, and Private Unaided school students also scored significantly higher than Private school students. This result suggests that school environment may play a role in students' emotional intelligence. Supportive classroom climate, teacher interaction, school activities, and student relationships may help students develop emotional skills. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) emphasized that emotional intelligence includes abilities related to perceiving, understanding, and managing emotions, and these abilities may be supported through educational experiences.

Table 5. Emotional Intelligence According to School Type

School Type	N	Mean	SD
Government	316	17.206	7.604
Private Aided	139	16.676	7.620
Private Unaided	119	17.739	7.538
Private	176	14.852	7.945

Table 6. ANOVA Results for School Type

Source	df between	df within	F	p-value	Result
School Type	3	746	4.567	.004	Significant

The ANOVA result for sub-area showed no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence, $F(2, 747) = 0.151$, $p = .860$. Students from semi-urban, urban, and rural areas had very close mean scores. This result indicates that the broad location category did not strongly affect students' emotional intelligence in this sample. It is possible that students across these areas had similar school experiences or similar emotional and social demands.

Table 7. Emotional Intelligence According to Sub-Area

Sub-Area	N	Mean	SD
Semi-Urban	264	16.754	7.991
Urban	222	16.401	7.853
Rural	264	16.727	7.385

Table 8. ANOVA Results for Sub-Area

Source	df between	df within	F	p-value	Result
Sub-Area	2	747	0.151	.860	Not significant

The results showed a statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence according to area division or directorate, $F(5, 744) = 2.837$, $p = .015$. Students from Mysore North had the highest mean score, followed closely by Mysore South. Students from Southern Shuna had the lowest mean score. However, the Bonferroni post-hoc comparisons did not show clear significant pairwise differences after adjustment. This means that the overall ANOVA detected a difference among the groups, but the adjusted pairwise comparisons were not strong enough to identify a specific pair as clearly different. This finding should therefore be interpreted carefully. It may suggest that local educational context, school support, and social environment contribute to emotional intelligence, but the differences between individual directorates were not large enough after correction.

Table 9. Emotional Intelligence According to Area Division/Directorate

Area Division / Directorate	N	Mean	SD
Mysore South	159	17.491	7.375
Mysore North	216	17.634	7.575
Southern Shuna	40	13.825	7.729
Deir Alla	46	16.587	7.606
Ain Al-Basha	119	15.748	8.036
Qasabat Al-Salt	170	15.882	7.869

Table 10. ANOVA Results for Area Division/Directorate

Source	df between	df within	F	p-value	Result
Area Division / Directorate	5	744	2.837	.015	Significant

Overall, the findings show that emotional intelligence differed significantly according to country, school type, and area division or directorate. Indian students reported higher emotional intelligence than Jordanian students. Students' emotional intelligence also varied across school types and

directorates. However, gender, age, and sub-area did not show significant differences. These results suggest that emotional intelligence among students may be shaped more by educational and school-related contexts than by personal variables such as gender or age. Brackett, Rivers, and Salovey (2011) noted that emotional intelligence is connected to personal, social, and academic functioning. Therefore, schools may help students by including activities that support emotional awareness, emotional regulation, communication, and positive relationships.

5. Conclusion

This comparative study emphasised the role of cultural and environmental factors in shaping emotional intelligence (EI) among secondary school children in India and Jordan. The findings show that, while both Indian and Jordanian students excel in various EI areas, their emotional intelligence is influenced by the educational, cultural, and social circumstances in which they grow. Indian pupils, particularly those in private institutions, had greater levels of emotional intelligence across multiple dimensions than their peers in government schools. This tendency was also observed in Jordan, however the disparities between private and government school children were less prominent, indicating that, while schooling plays an important role in EI development, broader societal influences also influence emotional abilities.

The significance of these findings stems from the awareness that emotional intelligence is not a fixed feature, but can be nurtured and developed through appropriate educational interventions. In both nations, pupils in private schools scored higher on EI because they often had access to more resources, personalised attention, and supportive learning settings. This shows that educational systems that incorporate emotional development into their curricula can play an important role in promoting students' overall personal growth, well-being, and academic performance. The findings highlight the need for educational institutions, particularly government schools, to place a greater emphasis on improving students' emotional intelligence. Students in India and Jordan's competitive and stressful academic contexts, where academic success is frequently prioritised over emotional development, may struggle to successfully manage stress and emotions. Incorporating emotional intelligence training into the curriculum can provide students the tools they need to deal with not only academic obstacles, but also social and personal issues.

Furthermore, this study emphasises the need for a better understanding of how cultural circumstances influence the development of emotional intelligence. The disparities between Indian and Jordanian students imply that, while certain parts of emotional intelligence, such as emotional awareness and regulation, are generally significant, how these skills are developed and presented may

differ depending on cultural norms and values. In collectivist societies, such as Jordan, interpersonal skills may be highly valued, but in more individualistic environments, personal emotional regulation may be prioritised. Future research should delve deeper into these cultural differences to have a more complete picture of how emotional intelligence can be developed in a variety of environments. Given the findings, it is obvious that emotional intelligence is critical for student development and is closely related to academic performance.

Students who are emotionally aware, capable of regulating their emotions, and have excellent interpersonal skills are better prepared to deal with academic stresses and are more likely to succeed in their studies. This shows that cultivating emotional intelligence should be a priority for educational systems, as it has a direct impact on student academic and personal growth. Moving forward, this study paves the way for further research into the impact of therapies aimed at improving emotional intelligence in various cultural situations. Such interventions could include emotional intelligence training programs, mindfulness practices, and social-emotional learning curriculum, all of which have been demonstrated in prior research to improve not only emotional competence but also academic achievement and student well-being. Furthermore, longitudinal study might look at how these interventions affect students over time, providing important insights into the long-term benefits of developing emotional intelligence in educational settings.

Finally, this comparative study has demonstrated the importance of emotional intelligence in student development across diverse cultural contexts. By recognising the relevance of EI and incorporating emotional intelligence training into educational systems, particularly in government schools, India and Jordan can better prepare their children for future academic, social, and personal issues. Emotional intelligence is more than just a useful ability for academic success; it is an essential component of a well-rounded education that prepares pupils for life after school. As a result, the findings of this study should inspire policymakers and educators to take a more holistic approach to student development, emphasising both emotional and cognitive progress..

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