

# A Study on Emotional Competence among College Students

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## Abstract

This paper is aimed to report the findings of a study done on emotional Competence among college students in Tiruchirappalli city. The data were collected from 408 undergraduate college students studying in leading college in Tiruchirappalli. A questionnaire consisted of general information and Emotional Competence Scale was used collect the data from them. The final data were analyze and it was found out that the level of perception of emotional competence, emotional sensitivity, emotional insulation and emotional withdrawal among the students are not equal and high. There is no significant difference in the perception of emotional competence among the students exist based on their domicile of the students. But there are significant difference found in emotional sensitivity, emotional insulation and emotional withdrawal among students based on their gender and stream of study. Further it was observed that there is significant correlation among these emotional discontent factors among the students

**Keywords:** Emotional Competence, Emotional Sensitivity, Emotional Insulation, Emotional Withdrawal and College Students.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The recent marked shift from the sole focus on the core cognitive competence of adolescents to their holistic development has emphasized the development of various personal and interpersonal competencies. Social, emotional, moral competencies are some of the competencies considered necessary for positive adolescent development. Social and emotional competencies have been related to positive adaptive outcomes, psychological well-being (Chau & Lee, 2011; Williams & Galliher, 2006), and school, home and peer adjustment (Mpfu, Thomas & Chan, 2004; Chen et al., 2010) among adolescents. The quality of the interpersonal interaction with the peers and other significant people at school and home are extremely important for positive adolescent adaptive outcomes. Such interactions obviously involve the ability for emotional management and regulation. Devassy and Raj (2012) conceptualized social competence in terms of three sub domains: cognitive, behavioural and adaptive outcomes. They defined social competence as the ability of an individual to recognize and accept social situation and the ability to effectively deal with those social contexts making all the resources to produce positive outcome for oneself and others.

Social competence encompasses many related interpersonal skills and is manifested in emotional self-regulation, social cognition, positive communication, and pro-social relationships with family members, peers, and teachers (Bornstein, Hahn & Haynes, 2010). Social and emotional competencies are very closely related, yet they are different too. While emotional competence may be seen as the ability to manage one's emotions and inner strengths for positive relationships, the social competence goes beyond the one-person psychology to two-person psychology (Goleman, 2007). All emotions are generally developed in either direct or indirect social contexts and hence all emotions are social in nature. Goleman defined emotional competence as the learned skill for realizing ones' own and others' emotions, for motivation of self and for managing emotions in us and in others' (Goleman, 1999). He identified six factors of emotional competence: 'self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skills and group working skills'. It is assumed that social and emotional competence of adolescents can be learned with training and experience. Various ways to develop train and nurture the adolescent social and emotional competence have been identified. Developmental counselling, mentoring and education interventions have been found useful in promoting adaptive functioning of individuals.

## 2. OBJECTIVES:

- To find out the level of emotional competence among the college students.
- To find out is there any significant difference in the perception of emotional competence among the comparable sub groups of students with reference to their gender, domicile and stream of study.
- To find out is there any significant relationship among the four factors of emotional competences exist among the college students.

### 2.1 METHODS

As the present study is a descriptive in nature, the survey technique was followed to collect the primary data from the students. A sample of 408 students were selected randomly from the students studying undergraduate students from leading college in Tiruchirappalli. The Stratified Proportionate Random Sampling technique was adopted based on the grouping variables as gender, residence of students, and stream of study.

### 2.2 Tool for data collection

In order to collect the data from the students a tool which is based on self-report measure was used by the researcher. The name of the tool was Emotional Competence developed and validated by Latha, V.Surendran, and A.Suresh-2002. Earlier the internal consistency and construct validity and the reliability of the tool have been verified by the researcher by conducting a pilot study on selected sample of 30 students.

### 3. Analyses & Interpretation

**Table – 3.1**

**The Distribution of the Frequency of the Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency (N=408)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	175	42.9
Female	233	57.1
Total	408	100.0
<b>Domicile</b>	<b>Frequency (N=408)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Rural	164	40.2
Urban	244	59.8
Total	408	100.0
<b>Stream of Study</b>	<b>Frequency (N=408)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Arts	161	39.5
Science	247	60.5
Total	408	100.0

The observed from the above table that the demographic characteristics of the respondents (N = 408) of these 175 (42.9%) of male, 233 (57.1%) of female. The majority of the respondents 244 (59.8%) were coming from urban area. The majority of the respondents 247 (60.5%) have studying in science group stream.

In order to find out the level of emotional competency among students the mean value was taken to fix the high and low levels. The table No.2 explains the distribution of students based on their level of emotional competencies.

**Table No. 3.2**

**Distribution of the Respondents by their Perceived Level of Emotional Competence**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Sub Group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Emotional Competence	Low	209	51.2
		High	199	48.8
2	Emotional Sensitivity	Low	226	55.4
		High	182	44.6
3	Emotional Insulation	Low	359	88.0
		High	49	12.0
4	Emotional Withdrawal	Low	329	80.6
		High	79	19.4

It is observed from the above table that 51.2% of the respondents' perceived low level of emotional competence, 48.8% of the respondents perceived high level of emotional competence. It is inferred from the above table 55.4% of the respondents have low level of emotional sensitivity, 44.6% of the respondents perceived high level of emotional sensitivity. It is observed from the above table 88% of the respondents have low level of emotional insulation, 12% of the respondents perceived high level of emotional insulation. It is inferred from the above table 80.6% of the respondents have low level of emotional withdrawal, 19.4% of the respondents perceived high level of emotional withdrawal. In order to find out the significant differences in the perception of emotional competencies among the sub groups 't' test was conducted. The result of the test is given in table no 3.

**Table No. 3.3**

**The Mean, standard deviation and ‘t’ values of Emotional Competence among the respondents of comparable sub groups**

Variables	Characters	Sub group	N	Mean	S.D	t	Significant	
Emotional Competence	Gender	Male	175	14.56	5.718	2.114	P < 0.05	
		Female	233	15.73	5.421		Significant	
Emotional Sensitivity		Male	175	3.7029	1.80	2.294	P < 0.05	
		Female	233	4.11	1.76		Significant	
Emotional Insulation		Male	175	2.86	1.33	2.639	P < 0.05	
		Female	233	3.22	1.34		Significant	
Emotional Withdrawal		Male	175	2.72	0.95	2.275	P > 0.05	
		Female	233	2.52	0.924		Not Significant	
Emotional Competence		Domicile	Rural	164	14.87	5.20	1.065	P > 0.05
			Urban	244	15.47	5.81		Not Significant
Emotional Sensitivity	Rural		164	3.89	1.73	0.369	P > 0.05	
	Urban		244	3.96	1.83		Not Significant	
Emotional Insulation	Rural		164	2.99	1.32	0.945	P > 0.05	
	Urban		244	3.12	1.37		Not Significant	
Emotional Withdrawal	Rural		164	2.63	0.86	0.633	P > 0.05	
	Urban		233	2.57	0.99		Not Significant	
Emotional Competence	Stream of Study		Arts	161	13.75	5.55	4.405	P < 0.05
			Science	247	16.19	5.38		Significant
Emotional Sensitivity			Arts	161	3.34	1.63	5.554	P < 0.05
			Science	247	4.31	1.78		Significant
Emotional Insulation		Arts	161	2.58	1.27	6.131	P < 0.05	
		Science	247	3.38	1.30		Significant	
Emotional Withdrawal		Arts	161	2.86	0.87	4.821	P < 0.05	
		Science	247	2.42	0.94		Significant	

It is observed from above table that there are significant differences found in the perception of emotional competence, emotional sensitivity and emotional insulation except emotional withdrawal between male and female students. In general female students have more emotional competence than the male students.

It was also observed from the table that there are no significant differences found in the perception of emotional competence, emotional sensitivity, emotional insulation and emotional withdrawal between rural and urban area students.

It is inferred from the above table that there are significant differences found in the perception of emotional competence, emotional sensitivity, emotional insulation and emotional withdrawal between Arts and Science students. In general, the students study in science stream have more emotional competency than the arts students. In order to find out the significant correlation among the study variables, Pearson product moment test has conducted the table shows the result of the test.

**Table No. 3.4**

**The Correlation Co-efficient values between the study variables**

Variables	Emotional Competence	Emotional Sensitivity	Emotional Insulation	Emotional Withdrawal
Emotional Competence	-	0.851	0.838	0.727
Emotional Sensitivity	0.851	-	0.869	0.730
Emotional Insulation	0.838	0.869	-	0.700
Emotional Withdrawal	0.727	0.730	0.700	-

P is < 0.01

It’s observed from the table that there are significant positive and high correlation exist among the three emotional discontent factors among the respondents. It is inferred here that the state of emotional competence, emotional sensitivity, emotional insulation and emotional withdrawal contributes and enhance each other factors among the students.

#### 4. Discussion

The emotional competence is generally hypothesized to be a good predictor of one's sense of subjective well-being. In educational settings college success and job attainment are crucial development of students. The result of the present study is consistent with few other studies. It is evident from the study that around half of the students perceived high level of emotional competency as well as low level of emotional competency. However, around 90% students have low level of negative dimension of emotional competency such as emotional insulation and withdrawal. Moreover, there is a gender difference exist between male and female students, and arts versus science students in the perception of emotional competencies. This present study reveals that students with better academic achievements have better management of emotional dimension including all factors involving in the presents study.

#### 5. Conclusion

Emotional Competence of important aids them in focusing on their own and other's feelings in a situation. Plutchik points out that an emotional competence is not simply a feeling state it's a complex chain of loosely connected events, the chain begins with a stimulus and includes to action, and specific goal-directed behavior. In other words, feelings do not happen in isolation. They are responses to significant situations in the life of an individual, and often they motivate actions. In order to teach the students that more than one emotional competence can be felt at a time. No wonder it is sometimes difficult to understand what we are feeling. At the same time self-science curriculum teaches students regarding emotional competence and facilitates the use of those emotional competence in decision making, look forward and plan. On the basis of present study it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the perception of emotional competence among the students exist based on their domicile of the students. But there are significant difference found in emotional sensitivity, emotional insulation and emotional withdrawal among students based on their gender and stream of study. Further it was observed that there is significant correlation among these emotional discontent factors among the students.

#### Intervention

- Increasing the self-confidence, self-awareness of the students.
- Encouraging the students and conducting the awareness programme.
- Teaching and training of attitude behavior in the classrooms, predicted to be associated with learning and academic process for cognitive, emotional and interpersonal relationship.
- Conducting the awareness programme for parents, teachers and the student community.

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