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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS CORRELATES AMONG STUDENTS: A NARRATIVE REVIEW WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL AND TEACHER EDUCATION

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI), the ability to perceive, understand, use and regulate emotions in oneself and others, is increasingly recognised as vital to learning, adaptive coping and personal growth in educational settings. This narrative review synthesises results from 46 studies published from 2005 to 2026, primarily with cohorts in India. It examines different models and assessment tools of emotions intelligence, and relates its research evidence to academic, institutional, psycho-social, and demographic correlates. It reveals that the association of emotional intelligence with self-efficacy, constructive coping mechanisms, psychological resilience, institutional adjustment and subjective well-being is well established in the literature. However, the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement remains inconclusive. Significant differences also seemed inconsistent across gender, geographic background, and academic discipline. The review highlights few limitations, such as the predominant use of Western self-report tools without local psychometric adaptation, substantial reliance on cross-sectional correlational designs, fragmented variable analysis, and a significant lack of research on teacher preparation programs. This analysis provides strategies for incorporating emotional literacy into teacher preparation programs and school curricula and identifies specific directions for future longitudinal research.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence; student well-being; academic achievement; institutional adjustment; teacher education; NEP 2020; narrative review*

Introduction

Emotions have a profound impact on how teachers and students think, communicate, make decisions, and handle stress in the classroom. For most of the 20th century, only cognitive tests such as the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) were used to evaluate academic achievement. However, cognitive aptitude alone cannot explain why some people thrive in harsh situations, sustain enduring bonds with others, or bounce from setbacks while others struggle. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a critical asset that enables individuals to identify, understand, and regulate interpersonal interactions and internal affective states (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

These socio-emotional skills have a direct effect on how students manage stage-to-stage transitions, regulate exam anxiety, and settle interpersonal conflict in campus settings (Bansal, 2021; Singh et al., 2022). In India, young adults are faced with high-stakes competitive exams, severe academic stress, and swift socioeconomic changes need to be trained on such socio-emotional learnings. The requirement also applies to teacher education, as aspiring teachers are required to manage their own emotions while teaching in the classroom and foster socioemotional literacy in their pupils. India's National Education Policy (NEP 2020) calls for the integration of socio-emotional learning and it provides a substantial policy push for exploring how emotional competency functions in educational ecosystems (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Despite an increase in the quantity of research on student emotional intelligence, it was found that published studies are dispersed, with a range of assessment tools, different demographics, and isolated outcome measures. Such fragmentation is problematic to school leaders, curriculum developers and teacher educators that would like to draw concrete insights from the empirical data. This gap is addressed here by reviewing and synthesising the existing literature, examining major correlates, demographic trends and methodological limitations to inform policy and practice in school and teacher education.

Objectives of the Study

The review pursues four primary objectives:

1. To outline the major conceptual models and measurement instruments of emotional intelligence.
2. To evaluate empirical studies on student emotional intelligence correlates.
3. To analyse differences in emotional intelligence among institutional and demographic variables.
4. To identify critical research gaps and outline practical implications for school and teacher education.

Materials and Methods: A thematic review design was utilized for this study. Since the synthesis was qualitative and narrative in character, therefore pooled effect sizes were not computed.

Data Sources: Databases and scholarly search engines, such as PsycINFO, ERIC, Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ScienceDirect, were used to obtain relevant literature published between 2005 and 2026. Terms such as self-efficacy, academic success, stress, coping, resilience, adjustment, well-being, gender, and locality were combined with variations of "emotional intelligence" in search strings. The last literature search concluded in September 2026. A total of 46 empirical studies were included, satisfying the inclusion requirements. The majority of these studies were conducted in India and were analyzed thematically.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: Studies were included if they met the following criteria:

- Examined emotional intelligence among school, undergraduate, postgraduate, or professional-course students.
- Published between 2005 and 2026.
- Reported correlational, comparative, or descriptive findings involving EI and its different correlates.
- Provided full-text availability with sufficient descriptive data.

Non-empirical articles such as theoretical essays, editorials, and opinion pieces were not included. Studies which focused on non-student populations such as corporate employees, working professionals and clinical population were excluded.

Data Analysis: Data was obtained for research design or method of study, sample characteristics, measuring instruments, variables, and major findings of each of the reviewed 46 studies. The literature was then thematically analyzed and grouped into four categories: conceptual foundations, theories and models of emotional intelligence, and measurements, psychological and academic correlates, and demographic and institutional variations. Correlation coefficients are reported as stated by the cited authors.

Conceptual Foundations

In the traditional intelligence, abstract problem-solving skills were given priority but real-world success frequently demands people to navigate challenging social situations, control their emotions, and adjust to unforeseen events (Murtza et al., 2021). The development of emotional intelligence as a psychological concept was inspired by this realization. The phrase was first used by Wayne Payne in 1985. Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) operationalised emotional intelligence (EI) as a collection of mental skills related to processing emotional information. Daniel Goleman's (1995) argues that socio-emotional skills frequently surpass standard IQ in predicting life outcomes, gave the concept international recognition (Grube, 2024).

To understand emotional intelligence, it is essential to explore the relationship between affective processes and human behaviour. Emotions represent subjective states and neurobiological reactions that prepare a person to act while cognition regulates abstract reasoning, logical analysis, and memory (Elpidorou, 2023). Emotional experiences can be positive like enthusiasm and curiosity to negative ones like worry, rage, and burnout. Emotions directly affect cognitive regulations, intrinsic motivation, and even performance in both personal and professional contexts (Parker & Grote, 2022).

In higher education, emotional intelligence is often discussed in relation to emotional quotient (EQ). It denotes how students use social skills, self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy in different settings (Alzoubi & Aziz, 2021). It is an active integration of cognitive and affective capacities to guide thought, behavioural choices, and coping mechanisms (Singh et al., 2022). By encouraging sustained engagement, peer collaboration, and constructive decision-making, emotional regulation shields college students from academic tiredness (Bru-Luna et al., 2021). By appraising their own emotional boundaries and reading social cues, learners with emotional intelligence translate their emotional awareness into adaptive academic and interpersonal outcomes (Bansal, 2021; Singh et al., 2022).

Emotional Intelligence: Origins and Models

The conceptual roots of emotional intelligence lie in the early questioning of social intelligence. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability that involves monitoring one's own and other's feelings and emotions and using this information to guide thought and action. This was further developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) into a four branch ability model. Goleman (1995) argues that emotional competence is on a par with IQ in predicting success in life. Over time, different theoretical models have been developed, which are either a cognitive ability, a set of behavioural competencies, or a personality trait (Table 1).

Emotion regulation is the top tier of the ability model. It is mostly cognitive and focuses on the performance in reasoning about emotional information (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mayer et al., 2004). Goleman's mixed approach has tremendous implications to institutional training since it connects emotional competencies with motivational and social drives. While the trait EI model defines emotional intelligence as a constellation of emotion-laden self-perceptions nested within personality structures, Bar-On's emotional–social model includes adaptation and stress management (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Thus, it is inferred that results from one model cannot be broadly applied to another because these frameworks conceptualise and assess EI via different lenses.

Table 1. Major Models of Emotional Intelligence

Model	Proponents	Major components	Primary focus
Ability model	Mayer & Salovey (1997)	Perceiving emotions; using emotions to facilitate thought; understanding emotions; managing emotions	Processing and reasoning with emotional information
Mixed/ Competency Model	Goleman (1995)	Self-awareness; self-management; motivation; empathy; social skills	Emotional and behavioural competencies
Emotional–Social Model	Bar-On (1997)	Intrapersonal; interpersonal; adaptability; stress management; general mood	Emotional–social functioning and adaptation
Trait EI model	Petrides & Furnham (2001)	Well-being; self-control; emotionality; sociability	Emotion-related self-perceptions within personality

Note. Compiled from the cited sources.

Measurements of Emotional Intelligence : The present review revealed that there were three major types of instruments utilised to assess emotional intelligence among students, such as self-report questionnaires, other-report assessments, and performance-based tests. Performance-based measures assess objective correctness on emotionally-oriented activities, self-report scales ask people to assess their own emotional characteristics, and other-report scales record observer judgements (Bru-Luna et al., 2021). The key tools used in empirical research are presented in Table 2.

Further, it was found that most of the reviewed studies employed self-report measures. These were Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) and Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue). Besides, a few locally created inventories were also utilized. These tools assess subjective perceptions rather than objective competency and many of them were standardized outside of India. Therefore, researchers must be cautious about the cross-cultural validity of these self-report questionnaires when interpreting results among Indian cohorts.

Table 2. Representative Instruments for Measuring Emotional Intelligence

Instrument	Authors (year)	Items	Dimensions	Type	Theoretical orientation
Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)	Schutte et al. (1998)	33	Emotional appraisal, regulation of emotion, utilization of emotion	Self-report	Salovey and Mayer's ability model
Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i)	Bar-On (1997)	133	Intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, general mood	Self-report	Emotional–social model
Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue)	Petrides & Furnham (2001)	153	Well-being, self-control, emotionality, sociability	Self-report	Trait EI model
Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)	Wong & Law (2002)	16	Self-emotional appraisal, others' emotional appraisal, use of emotion, regulation of emotion	Self-report	Ability/ competency-oriented
Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI)	Boyatzis et al. (2000)	110+	Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management	Other-report (360°)	Competency model
Mayer–Salovey–Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)	Mayer et al. (2002)	141	Perceiving emotion, facilitating thought, understanding emotions, managing emotion.	Performance	Ability model

Note. Item counts reflect figures reported by original scale developers.

Correlates of Emotional Intelligence among Students: Of the 46 studies that were analysed, 35 studies examined the different correlates of emotional intelligence. A brief of their supporting findings summarized in Figure 1 and Table 3.

Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence: The present review brought out that six studies documented consistent positive correlations between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy with varied samples. Sailo et al. (2026) conducted a study and utilized the WLEIS among 265 Aizawl higher secondary students showed a positive correlation with r value of .41 between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence. Similarly, Kumar & Majhi (2026) reported r value of .48 among 268 Odisha teenagers, indicating a positive association between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence. Sun & Lyu (2022) reported r value of .55 among 717 Chinese undergraduate students, which indicates a positive correlation between self-efficacy and emotional

intelligence. Further, they reported that coping strategies mediated the association between emotional intelligence and self efficacy. Their findings suggested that emotionally intelligent people use adaptive coping skills to increase their self-confidence. In a similar vein, Gharetepeh et al. (2015) found that strong academic achievers scored higher on both variables among 129 public health students. It reported that self-awareness and self-motivation were the main predictors of self-efficacy among low achievers, while social consciousness was a major contributor among high achievers. Further, it was found that emotional intelligence significantly predicted self-efficacy across all achievement tiers. In their study of 150 Malaysian university students, Abdul Aziz et al. (2020) using Bar-On EQ-i found that EI, self-efficacy, and academic achievement were significantly correlated. On the other hand, among 151 scientific education students, Bacsarpa and Codilla (2025) conducted a study reporting strong associations between academic self-efficacy and emotional intelligence, albeit both showed a weak negative link with achievement. Thus, it may be concluded that students with greater emotional intelligence have stronger self-efficacy beliefs, although causal pathways need further research.

Academic Achievement and Emotional Intelligence : Academic achievement and emotional intelligence were found to have a less consistent association throughout the reviewed studies. Like, a positive correlation was documented in six out of nine studies. Correlations between school cohorts reached r=.543 among 200 higher secondary students in Jammu (Kour, 2025) and r=.56 in a stratified sample of 616 secondary students (Moshahid & Muntazim, 2019), while Kumar and Majhi (2026) found r=.52. Besides , Lawrence and Jeyanthi (2023) also found a significant positive association among 952 secondary students in Chennai.52. However, despite frequently low EI baselines, positive trends also appeared among Malaysian undergraduates (Abdul Aziz et al., 2020) and Indian nursing students (Kumar et al., 2016).

On the other hand, three studies revealed no significant positive correlation. Like, Bacsarpa and Codilla (2025) documented a moderate negative correlation while Lawrence and Deepa (2013) reported no correlation at all among Kanyakumari high school students. Similarly, Jenaabadi (2014) found no association among 300 postgraduate students in Iran. These differences are likely caused by differences in how emotional intelligence and academic achievement are measured (e.g., GPA versus examination marks). Therefore, in the majority of samples, emotional intelligence functions as a modest, positive correlate of achievement; nonetheless, anomalous results emphasise the need for cautious interpretation.

Stress, Coping and Emotional Intelligence: The present review identified that healthier coping mechanisms and less perceived stress were consistently associated with students' emotional intelligence. Fteiha and Awwad (2020) conducted a study among 265 students and reported a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence, active problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies. In another study which was conducted among 413 Tehran University students by Noorbakhsh et al. (2010) where it was observed that individuals with higher emotional intelligence reported a stronger reliance on problem-focused and positive emotional coping with a decreased negative coping.

These patterns are also consistent with Indian samples on emotional intelligence and academic stress. Kesarwani et al. (2025) reported a significant predictive effect of emotional intelligence on academic stress among 200 university students in Bathinda. Similarly, Sethi (2023) reported a strong inverse relationship among 300 undergraduates in Balasore. Also, Roy et al. (2021) found significant associations among 119 undergraduates in Kerala while Kauts (2016) identified elevated stress among low-EI students in Jalandhar colleges, where science-stream students reported higher stress than their humanities or commerce peers. To put it briefly, it can be inferred that higher emotional intelligence promotes adaptive coping strategies, which act as a buffer against academic stress.

Resilience and Emotional Intelligence : The present review identified four studies where emotional intelligence was reported to be a positive predictor or correlate of resilience. Abdelrahman et al. (2025) conducted a study with 1,833 students in Egypt, Jordan, and Oman and did regression analysis which revealed a significant effect of emotional intelligence on students' academic resilience. Likewise, Fatima et al. (2024) reported significant predictive effects of emotional intelligence among 538 undergraduates' resilience in Lahore. Manacy (2024) found a strong positive correlation with a sample of 300 Standard XII students in Thiruvananthapuram. In a similar vein, Kausar (2025) observed a highly significant correlation among students at Lahore University, indicating that stress management and emotional control strengthen academic resilience.

Adjustment and Emotional Intelligence: Positive correlations were often found in adjustment studies, even if there were slight variations. Emotional intelligence indicated a positive correlation with peer, school, and home adjustment in secondary cohorts, including 302 students in Purulia (Kar et al., 2016) and adolescents attending government and private schools (Goyal & Malik, 2023). Ampa (2019) found that secondary transition students in Papumpare with high and average emotional intelligence had a substantial positive association, but not those with below-average emotional intelligence, indicating a non-linear advantage. Also, Saini and Tyagi (2024) revealed a strong relationship between university students' home, health, social, emotional, and academic adjustment domains.

Research with preservice teachers produced more circumspect results. While students with high overall EI demonstrated better global adjustment, Kumar (2019) found that the majority of EI dimensions were nonsignificantly related to adjustment components among B.Ed. students in government teacher training colleges, showing slight negative associations with value orientation, altruistic behaviour, and empathy. Among 269 postgraduate students, Mishra (2015) found an exceptionally high correlation (r=.96) between EI and social adjustment, which calls for caution with regard to sampling or measurement limitations. While Bhardwaj and Sharma (2021) found gender variations in EI but not in adjustment among 100 undergraduates, Bharvad (2015) found substantial disparities in EI and adjustment across faculties, locations, and sexes. As a result, although the EI-

adjustment relationship is typically positive, the data from teacher education is still equivocal, and it differs among life domains and baseline EI thresholds.

Mental Health, Well-Being and Emotional Intelligence: Emotional Intelligence and psychological well-being were connected in five studies. Salami (2010) observed that student academic behaviours and attitudes were significantly predicted by emotional intelligence (EI), self-efficacy, and psychological well-being (happiness, life satisfaction, and depression). EI has a negative correlation with depression and a positive correlation with self-esteem among Pakistani teenagers (Mehmood & Gulzar, 2014). Positive correlations between EI and students' psychological well-being were confirmed by Kaur (2015) and Shaheen & Shaheen (2016). In a similar vein, Akbari and Khormaiee (2015) found that among 405 high school students, resilience partially mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and well-being, suggesting that EI has both direct and indirect effects on mental health.

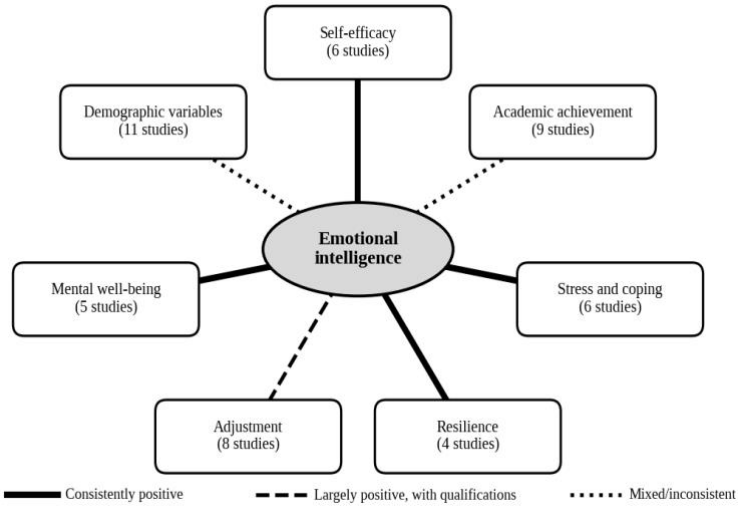


Figure 1. Summary of the evidence on emotional intelligence and its correlates

Table 3. Summary of Evidence on the Correlates of Emotional Intelligence

Outcome	Studies (n)	Typical finding	Overall pattern
Self-Efficacy	6	Moderate positive correlation (r = .41–.55 in reporting studies)	Consistent
Academic Achievement	9	Positive in six studies (r = .52–.56); non-significant or weak negative in three	Mixed
Stress and Coping	6	Higher EI linked to lower academic stress and adaptive coping	Consistent
Resilience	4	EI positively predicts resilience (β = .66 in the largest sample)	Consistent
Adjustment	8	Mostly positive; occasional non-linear or domain-specific patterns	Largely positive, with qualifications
Mental Well-Being	5	Positive link with well-being/self-esteem; inverse link with depression	Consistent

Note. Three studies (Abdul Aziz et al., 2020; Bacsarpa & Codilla, 2025; Kumar & Majhi, 2026) appear across multiple outcome categories.

Emotional Intelligence and Institutional and Demographic Factors

Gender: Throughout the evaluated literature, gender comparisons produced the most ambiguous and inconsistent results (summarised in Table 4). Studies by Sharma (2021), Shaheen & Shaheen (2016), Kant (2019), and Kumar (2020) that used the Bar-On scale with a sample of 300 higher secondary students found that female cohorts scored much higher. In other samples, however, male cohorts showed higher EI scores: among Kerala undergraduates (Roy et al., 2021); among higher secondary students in Aizawl evaluating EI and self-efficacy (Sailo et al., 2026); and on well-being and sociability dimensions among 340 West Bengal undergraduates evaluated via the TEIQue (Jana et al., 2024). While Alam (2018) and Moshahid and Muntazim (2019) reported significant gender variances, a major number of research detected no statistically significant gender differences (Ayan et al., 2017; Kesarwani et al., 2025; Kour, 2025; Mathur et al., 2005; Singh & Thapa, 2023).

Locality, Institution, Socio-Economic Status, Stream and Level of Study: Rarely did geographic location have a statistically significant impact; most studies found no urban-rural differences (Alam, 2018; Ayan et al., 2017; Sharma, 2021). However, Kant (2019) found slightly higher mean scores among rural students that did not reach statistical significance. Institutional and familial environmental contexts played a more significant role. In Kalimpong (Singh & Thapa, 2023) and East Singhbhum (Alam, 2018), EI varied significantly by school management type, with students from high socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds consistently outperforming their low-SES peers across all sub-dimensions (Khan & Dar, 2016).

There were contradictory patterns in empirical observations about academic discipline. While Kumar (2020) and Bhardwaj and Sharma (2021) revealed no stream-based divergences, science students scored higher than arts students across multiple EI components, however statistical significance was limited to the well-being subscale (Jana et al., 2024). There was not a significant difference between the undergraduate and graduate cohorts in Kant's (2019) university sample, although students from the School of Education showed higher baseline EI than those from the School of Law and Governance. While research on Turkish nursing students showed that EI scores varied significantly across grade levels and financial status, along with generally lower baseline emotional self-awareness (Cerit & Beser, 2014), first-year undergraduates in West Bengal reported higher EI than their senior peers (Jana et al., 2024). Table 4 presents an overall thematic analysis of these institutional and societal patterns.

Table 4. Summary of Demographic and Institutional Variations in Emotional Intelligence

Variable	Pattern across Studies	Illustrative Studies
Gender	Mixed: female advantage (4 studies), male advantage (3), no difference (5)	Sharma (2021); Sailo et al. (2026); Ayan et al. (2017)
Locality	Predominantly no significant difference	Alam (2018); Ayan et al. (2017); Kant (2019)
School Type/ Management	Significant institutional variations	Singh & Thapa (2023); Alam (2018)
Socio-Economic Status	Elevated scores among high-SES students	Khan & Dar (2016)
Academic Stream	Mixed empirical findings	Jana et al. (2024); Kumar (2020); Bhardwaj & Sharma (2021)
Level/ Year of Study	Inconsistent: higher in first year; grade variations; no UG–PG gap	Jana et al. (2024); Cerit & Beser (2014); Kant (2019)

Note. Compiled from cited literature.

Discussion and Limitations

Across the reviewed correlational literature, the most robust pattern is the positive association of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, adaptive coping, resilience, adjustment, and psychological well-being. Emerging mediation evidence indicates that these outcomes operate as an interconnected ecosystem, wherein EI exerts its effects partly through coping strategies (Sun & Lyu, 2022) and resilience pathways (Akbari & Khormaiee, 2015). By contrast, relationships with academic achievement and demographic variables remain inconsistent, indicating that EI should not be viewed as a standalone predictor of grade or demographic advantages.

Emotional intelligence is positively correlated with self-efficacy, adaptive coping, resilience, adjustment, and psychological well-being, based on reviewed correlational literature. These outcomes function as an interconnected ecosystem in which resilience pathways (Akbari & Khormaiee, 2015) and coping techniques (Sun & Lyu, 2022) are two ways that EI influences these outcomes. EI should not be seen as a stand-alone predictor of grade or demographic advantages, however, as connections with academic achievement and demographic characteristics continue to be inconsistent.

There are a few methodological issues that should be specifically mentioned:

- **Cross-Sectional Designs:** While high EI may promote adaptive coping, successful and well-adjusted students may also inflate self-reported EI ratings. This is due to the strong reliance on cross-sectional correlational studies, which prevents causal inferences.
- **Measurement Constraints:** Nearly all research used self-report tools that were created decades ago or in Western settings (e.g., Bar-On EQ-i, SSEIT), raising concerns about their cross-cultural validity for Indian learners
- **Univariate Isolation:** Few research looked at multivariate models that included social intelligence, adjustment, or well-being (Kumar & Kumar, 2022; Bhardwaj & Sharma, 2021). The majority of studies looked at outcomes in isolation.
- **Under-representation of Teacher Education:** Kumar (2019) is the only B.Ed. study in this dataset, which limits generalisability. Teacher preparation cohorts remain critically under-represented.
- **Academic Achievement Heterogeneity:** Cross-study comparability is hampered by inconsistent operationalisation of academic performance (e.g., GPAs versus exam scores).
- **Sampling and Intervention Scarcity:** Overall confidence in the evidence base is limited by methodological anomalies (e.g., extreme correlations in Mishra, 2015), reliance on small purposive samples limited to individual districts, and lack of experimental intervention research (Nelis et al., 2009).

Implications for School and Teacher Education in the Light of NEP 2020

Although the existing literature is largely correlational, it has a number of practical implications for educational practices.

Teacher Education Programmes: Pre-service programs might include structured avenues for emotional awareness and regulation because emotional intelligence is trainable (Nelis et al., 2009) and it correlates with coping, adjustment, and well-being. Activities like peer mentorship, classroom conflict role-plays, and reflective journaling should be strategically

incorporated. Additionally, developing emotional literacy in young students requires prospective teachers to be emotionally competent. The limited data from B.Ed. cohorts (Kumar, 2019) emphasises the need for these interventions to be carefully planned, carried out, and assessed.

Schools: Emotional intelligence training should be incorporated into life-skills curricula, counselling services, and mentoring frameworks due to the profound links between emotional intelligence and academic stress (Kauts, 2016; Sethi, 2023) and institutional adjustment during significant educational transitions (Ampa, 2019). Particular attention should be directed toward transitional periods, such as the start of secondary school and the early years of college, where students' stress levels rise (Jana et al., 2024).

Assessment Practices: Given mixed empirical evidence regarding the relationship between EI and academic accomplishment, emotional intelligence (EI) metrics should be used diagnostically to assess learner requisites rather than for student labelling or grade prediction. Self-report data should be triangulated with behavioural observations or peer/teacher evaluations, and instruments psychometrically standardised on Indian samples are greatly favoured over imported scales.

Teacher Educators and Policy : India's National Education Policy (NEP 2020) sets the 4-year integrated B.Ed. as the minimum teaching degree by 2030 and requires that education foster socio-emotional skills in addition to cognitive development (Ministry of Education, 2020). A perfect opportunity to directly incorporate emotional intelligence training into curricula and practical supervision in addition to traditional pedagogical courses is provided by ongoing restructuring of teacher programs.

Conclusion

This study summarised empirical research on emotional intelligence in students in school and higher education, emphasising its demographic variances and correlates. Improved self-efficacy, adaptive coping, resilience, institutional adjustment, and mental well-being are all reliably linked to higher emotional intelligence. Mediation studies have confirmed that EI functions in conjunction with individual resources including coping methods and resilience. Therefore, rather than being a stand-alone factor in determining student achievement, EI is better viewed as a component of an interconnected network of psychological assets.
Two primary ambiguities persist: the relationship with academic achievement ranges from robustly positive to negligible, and demographic patterns across gender, locality, and academic stream remain inconsistent, varying by sample, instrument, and institutional environments. These conclusions are tempered by methodological constraints, including cross-sectional designs, heavy reliance on self-report measures, and a dearth of research focusing on higher education and teacher training cohorts. Thus, by consolidating scattered findings, this review maps existing literature gaps and underscores that educational institutions must treat emotional competence as a core component of student support systems. Future research should focus on multivariate studies that use culturally validated questionnaires to examine EI, adjustment, and well-being in higher education cohorts.

Suggestions for Future Research

The following priorities should be the focus of future studies:

- To determine causal directionality and assess EI intervention programs in Indian schools and teacher training facilities, use experimental and longitudinal methods.
- Use multivariate and mediation models to examine EI in conjunction with adjustment, well-being, and related dimensions.
- Include B.Ed., D.El.Ed., and active in-service teachers in the participant demographics.
- Examine EI in a variety of school, college, and university contexts, looking at psychological factors as well as institutional and familial correlations.
- Utilize culturally validated instruments in addition to performance-based or other-report measures.
- To comprehend how emotional competence is perceived and enacted in regular classroom activities, use qualitative narratives from educators and teacher educators.

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