



## A STUDY OF CAREER MATURITY OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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### *Abstract*

*This study investigates the influence of emotional intelligence on the career maturity of senior secondary school students. Recognizing that emotional competence is a critical factor in adolescent development, the research explores whether different levels of emotional intelligence significantly affect students' readiness to make informed and mature career decisions. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and data were collected from a stratified random sample of 600 students (aged 16–18) enrolled in government and private schools across three districts of Haryana—Rohtak, Jhajjar, and Bhiwani. The Revised Career Maturity Inventory (Gupta, 2013) and Emotional Intelligence Scale – EIS-SANS (Singh & Narain, 2014) were used as primary data collection tools. Statistical analysis using SPSS v20.0 involved ANOVA, mean, standard deviation, and Tukey HSD Post Hoc tests. The findings revealed a strong and statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and career maturity. Students with higher emotional intelligence consistently scored higher in career maturity, indicating a direct link between emotional awareness and career-related clarity, decision-making, and adaptability. The results align with prior research and underscore the importance of integrating emotional intelligence training into educational and career guidance programs. The study concludes that fostering emotional intelligence in adolescents can lead to improved career maturity and long-term planning. The implications call for school-based interventions, teacher training, and curriculum development to nurture emotional and career competencies simultaneously.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Career Maturity, Adolescents, Career Decision-Making, Educational Psychology

### *Introduction*

In today's education system, the focus on cognitive development alone is no longer sufficient to prepare students for the complexities of modern careers. Emotional and psychological factors now play a crucial role in shaping a student's readiness for life after



school. One such critical factor is emotional intelligence (EI), which is defined as the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions effectively. When adolescents possess a high level of emotional intelligence, they are more likely to make thoughtful career decisions, plan ahead, cope with career-related stress, and develop long-term goals aligned with their personality and values.

Research supports the notion that career maturity—a student's preparedness to make sound career decisions—is positively linked with emotional intelligence. According to Rafli, Hambali, and Muslihati (2024), students with higher emotional intelligence were more inclined toward entrepreneurial careers and demonstrated strong planning abilities. Similarly, Santra and Mohapatra (2025) found that emotionally intelligent students were more confident and aware of their interests, helping them maturely evaluate career options. Furthermore, Jayman, Glazzard, Rose, and Quickfall (2025) emphasized that emotional and psychological well-being in schools led to better engagement in career development programs. These findings confirm that EI is not just a psychological construct but a crucial factor in career readiness.

At the senior secondary level, students face intense academic pressure along with the need to make life-defining career choices. This is particularly true in the Indian context, where societal and familial expectations weigh heavily on students. Emotional intelligence becomes an asset, helping students manage anxiety and make decisions that are not just practical but personally fulfilling. Yanuarti, Aryati, and Jaya (2025) highlighted that emotionally supportive teaching strategies led to stronger decision-making abilities among vocational students. In another study, Guo and Dong (2025) found that the inclusion of emotional learning significantly improved adolescents' ability to cope with career-related stress.

This study, therefore, investigates the impact of different levels of emotional intelligence on career maturity among senior secondary school students in Haryana. It aims to determine whether students with higher EI demonstrate greater maturity in career-related thinking and planning. As suggested by Smith, Hechter, Ebersöhn, and Swartz (2025), educational reforms that incorporate emotional intelligence tend to result in better academic persistence and career decision-making outcomes.

By exploring this relationship, the study seeks to offer insights that can guide educational stakeholders in developing interventions that integrate emotional learning with career guidance. Such programs could be instrumental in ensuring that students are not only academically capable but emotionally equipped to face the challenges of a dynamic and competitive career landscape.



### *Review of Related Literature*

**Sugiyanto and Suyatno (2018)** investigated the influence of emotional intelligence on students' learning motivation and career decision-making in Indonesian high schools. The study revealed a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence and career maturity, with emotionally aware students showing greater clarity and readiness in career choices. **Susanti and Darmiyati (2019)** in a study exploring the link between career guidance and students' emotional development, they found that schools with structured career guidance programs based on emotional intelligence frameworks reported higher levels of student engagement in future planning. The research emphasized the dual role of cognitive and emotional guidance in fostering career maturity. **Asrori and Handayani (2020)** examined the psychological impact of emotional intelligence training on career attitudes in secondary school students. Their findings showed that students who underwent emotional intelligence workshops demonstrated significantly improved decision-making abilities and stronger vocational clarity, thus enhancing career maturity. **Yusuf and Fakhruddin (2021)** focused on the role of emotional intelligence in predicting students' adaptability to future careers. The authors found that students with higher emotional intelligence adapted more quickly to changing career aspirations and were more resilient when faced with setbacks, indicating better career maturity. **Park and Kim (2022)** analyzed emotional intelligence as a mediator between stress management and career maturity among Korean high school students. The study found that EI significantly reduced anxiety and increased students' ability to make rational, future-oriented career decisions, particularly in high-pressure environments. **Sharma and Chauhan (2023)** assessed how emotional intelligence influences career indecision. They found that students with low emotional intelligence scored higher on career indecision scales, suggesting an inverse relationship and highlighting EI's critical role in career maturity development. **Rafli, Hambali, and Muslihati (2024)** explored the predictive role of emotional intelligence in vocational students' entrepreneurial tendencies. Their research found that emotionally intelligent students were more likely to set clear career goals and follow through with action plans, thereby demonstrating higher career maturity. **Ibrahim and Irawan (2025)** investigated the link between test anxiety and career maturity through the lens of emotional intelligence. They reported that students with stronger emotional control exhibited lower anxiety and showed greater confidence in planning their professional futures, solidifying EI's role in career development.

### **Justification and Significance of the Study**

The transitional phase of senior secondary education is a critical period during which students face complex academic demands alongside crucial career decision-making responsibilities. In this context, understanding the psychological factors that contribute to



effective career planning becomes essential. Emotional intelligence (EI), which encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others, has emerged as a significant predictor of various personal and academic outcomes. However, its specific impact on career maturity—the ability to make informed, age-appropriate, and confident career decisions—remains underexplored in the Indian educational context, particularly among senior secondary students.

This study is justified by the urgent need to bridge the gap between academic preparation and emotional readiness for future careers. By analyzing differences in career maturity across varying levels of emotional intelligence, this research offers practical insights for educators, school counselors, and policymakers. The significance lies in its potential to inform the design of school-based interventions, such as life skills programs, emotional learning modules, and personalized career counseling strategies. Ultimately, the study contributes to a growing body of knowledge aimed at holistically developing students, ensuring they are not only academically competent but also emotionally equipped to make sound and confident career choices.

### **Statement of the problem**

**A Study of Career Maturity of Senior Secondary School Students with respect to different levels of Emotional Intelligence.**

### **Objective**

1. To find the difference in the career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to different levels of emotional intelligence.

### **Hypothesis**

1. There will be no significant difference between career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to different level of emotional intelligence.

### **Research Method Used**

A descriptive survey method was employed to investigate the career maturity of senior secondary school students in relation to varying levels of emotional intelligence, as this method allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data from a large population, enabling the researcher to identify patterns, relationships, and differences among variables in a natural educational setting

### **Population of the Study**

The target population consisted of all senior secondary school students aged 16–18 enrolled in government and private schools across Haryana. This stage of education is



crucial for career and personality development. The population was diverse in terms of socio-economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds across 22 districts.

### Sample of the Study

A sample of 600 students, both male and female, was selected to represent the population. This sample was drawn from senior secondary schools located in three districts of Haryana, ensuring balanced representation across different school types and student demographics.

### Sampling Method

The study used stratified random sampling to ensure fair representation of sub-groups like gender, school type, and location. Three districts—Rohtak, Jhajjar, and Bhiwani—were randomly chosen, and from each, 200 students were selected through balanced sampling of private and government schools.

### Area of the Study

The research was conducted in the districts of Rohtak, Jhajjar, and Bhiwani in Haryana. These were chosen for geographical proximity, administrative ease, and socio-cultural similarities, which helped maintain consistency, reduce extraneous variables, and enhance internal validity of the study.

### Tools Used for Data Collection

Data were collected using standardized and validated tools: the Revised Career Maturity Inventory (Gupta, 2013) and Emotional Intelligence Scale – EIS-SANS (Singh & Narain, 2014).

### Statistical Techniques Used

The analysis was carried out using SPSS Version 20.0. Techniques such as mean, standard deviation, and ANOVA were applied to study differences in emotional intelligence with respect to different level of emotional intelligence.

### Data Analysis

The first objective of the study is “To find the differences in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to different level of emotional intelligence” ANOVA analysis was used to analyze the data given in tables 1 to 1.3 below:

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of types of Emotional Intelligence**

Types of emotional intelligence	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students with Low emotional	183	81.15	8.095



intelligence			
Students with Average emotional intelligence	89	88.96	6.385
Students with High emotional intelligence	328	101.47	5.920
Total	600	93.42	11.380

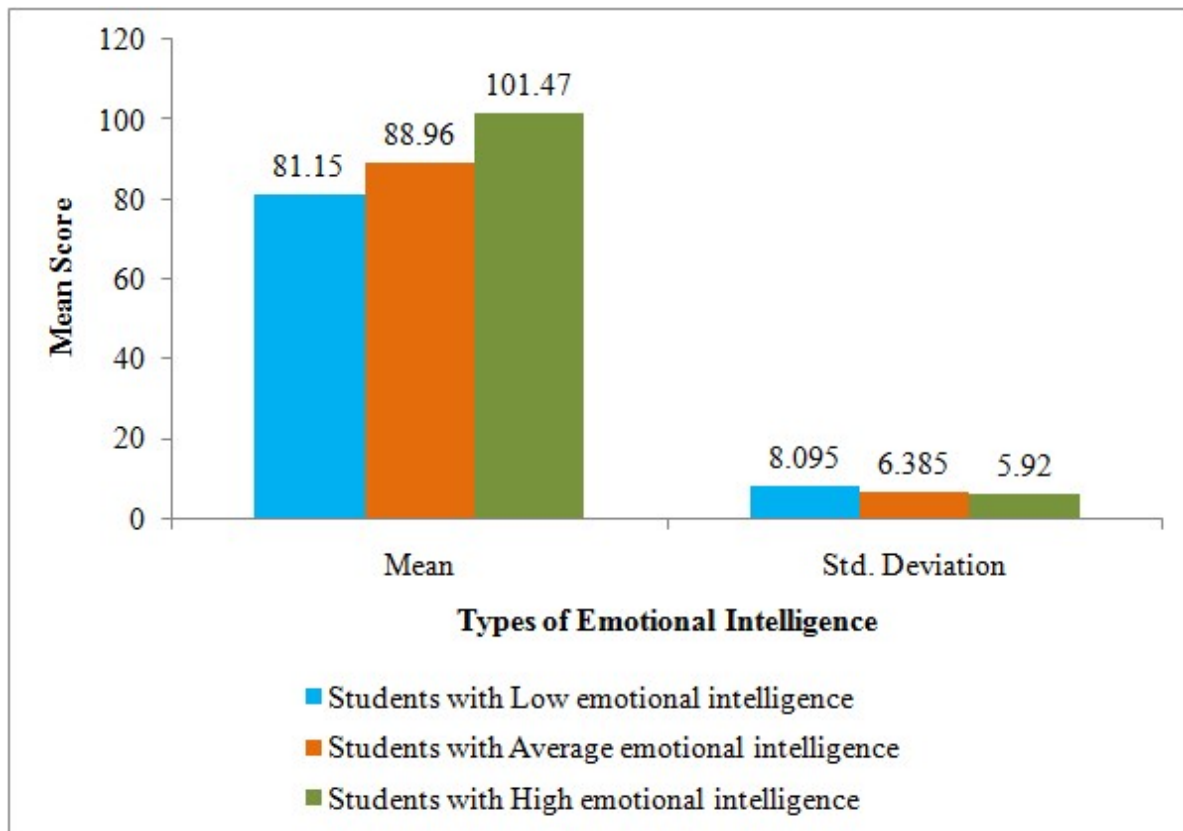


Fig. 1: Descriptive Statistics of types of Emotional Intelligence

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for students categorized by their levels of emotional intelligence (EI). Students with low EI (N=183) had a mean career maturity score of 81.15, those with average EI (N=89) scored 88.96, and students with high EI (N=328) had a substantially higher mean score of 101.47. The overall mean score across the full sample (N=600) was 93.42, indicating that career maturity increases with higher emotional intelligence.

Table 1.1: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Career Maturity
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Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
4.179	2	597	.000

In Table 1.1, the Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances shows a significant result ( $p = .000$ ), indicating that the variances in career maturity scores across the three EI groups are not equal. This result justifies the use of a robust ANOVA test for comparing group means, since the assumption of homogeneity is violated.

**Table 1.2: ANOVA Summary of types of Intelligence**

Career Maturity					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	50605.244	2	25302.622	559.996	.000
Within Groups	26974.590	597	45.184		
Total	77579.833	599			

Table 1.2 presents the ANOVA summary, which reveals a statistically significant difference in career maturity scores among the three emotional intelligence groups, with  $F(2, 597) = 559.996, p = .000$ . This large F-value suggests that the differences in career maturity are not due to chance, and that emotional intelligence levels significantly affect career maturity.

**Table 1.3: Post Hoc Tests (Homogeneous Subsets)**

Career Maturity				
Tukey HSD				
Types of EI	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
Students with Low emotional intelligence	183	81.15		
Students with Average emotional intelligence	89		88.96	
Students with High emotional intelligence	328			101.47
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000



Finally, Table 1.3 shows the results of a Tukey HSD Post Hoc test, which confirms that all three groups differ significantly from one another. Students with low EI (mean = 81.15), average EI (mean = 88.96), and high EI (mean = 101.47) each fall into distinct homogeneous subsets, indicating that career maturity scores increase consistently and significantly across the three emotional intelligence levels.

### **Findings of the Study**

The study revealed a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and career maturity among senior secondary school students. Descriptive statistics indicated that students with high emotional intelligence scored significantly higher in career maturity compared to their peers with average or low EI levels. ANOVA results showed statistically significant differences in career maturity across the three emotional intelligence groups, confirmed by Tukey's post hoc test, where each group belonged to a distinct subset, highlighting consistent and measurable differences in their career maturity scores. These findings suggest that as emotional intelligence increases, so does a student's ability to make informed and mature career decisions.

### **Discussion of Results**

The results of this study clearly indicate a significant and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and career maturity among senior secondary school students. This aligns with the findings of Sugiyanto and Suyatno (2018), who demonstrated that emotionally intelligent students exhibited greater clarity and readiness in making career-related decisions. The current study supports their conclusion, showing that students with higher emotional intelligence consistently achieved higher scores in career maturity.

Moreover, the present findings reinforce the observations of Susanti and Darmiyati (2019), who emphasized the importance of integrating emotional development within structured career guidance programs. Their research highlighted that emotional intelligence frameworks foster better engagement in career planning, which was similarly observed in this study, especially among students in the high-EI group. The statistically significant results obtained through ANOVA and the clear distinctions observed in Tukey's post hoc test further validate the claims made by Asrori and Handayani (2020) that emotional intelligence training improves decision-making and vocational clarity. Similarly, Yusuf and Fakhruddin (2021) noted that emotionally intelligent students are more adaptable and resilient, traits that contribute significantly to career maturity. This study also echoes the findings of Park and Kim (2022), who found emotional intelligence to be a buffer against stress, thereby enabling clearer and more rational career choices. The inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and career indecision noted by Sharma and Chauhan (2023) further substantiates the conclusion that higher EI equips



students to overcome confusion and anxiety in career planning. Finally, consistent with Rafli, Hambali, and Muslihati (2024) and Ibrahim and Irawan (2025), the current research affirms that emotional intelligence enhances not only confidence but also long-term planning—two essential aspects of career maturity.

### Conclusion and Implications of the Study

In conclusion, the study affirms that emotional intelligence significantly influences career maturity among adolescents. This emphasizes the importance of integrating emotional development into school curricula to foster well-rounded students who are equipped to make thoughtful career choices. The results have practical implications for educators, counselors, and policymakers, suggesting a stronger emphasis on emotional intelligence training could enhance students' career readiness. Furthermore, the study provides a foundation for future research on the interplay between psychological traits and educational outcomes, encouraging more targeted interventions that promote emotional resilience and long-term academic success.

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