



Emotional Intelligence as a Predictor of Coping Strategies among B.Ed. Students in Haryana

Dr. Indu

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar, Haryana, India

Tanwarindu42@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The present study explores the predictive role of emotional intelligence (EI) in determining coping strategies among B.Ed. students in Haryana. Emotional intelligence is considered a key psychological construct that facilitates effective emotional regulation and stress management. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a sample of 300 students (150 males and 150 females) selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using standardized tools, namely the Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Coping Strategies Inventory. Statistical techniques including mean, standard deviation, and Pearson correlation were employed. The findings reveal a significant positive association between emotional intelligence and problem-focused coping, while a negative association was observed with avoidance-based coping strategies. The study underscores the importance of emotional intelligence in promoting adaptive coping and psychological well-being among students.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Coping Strategies, B.Ed. Students, Stress Management, Haryana

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving educational landscape, prospective teachers are required to navigate a wide range of academic, professional, and emotional challenges. Teacher education programs, particularly Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) courses, demand not only intellectual competence but also emotional resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms. These students often encounter stressors such as academic pressure, teaching practice responsibilities, classroom management concerns, and uncertainty regarding future employment.

In such contexts, the role of emotional intelligence (EI) becomes highly significant. Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions effectively in oneself and others. It encompasses key components such as emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle stressful situations, maintain psychological well-being, and build effective interpersonal relationships.

Coping strategies, on the other hand, refer to the cognitive and behavioural efforts employed by individuals to manage internal and external demands that are perceived as stressful. These strategies are broadly classified into problem-focused coping and emotion-focused or



avoidance coping. Problem-focused coping involves active efforts to address the source of stress, while avoidance coping reflects disengagement, denial, or withdrawal from stress-inducing situations.

The teaching profession, being inherently interactive and emotionally demanding, requires individuals to possess strong emotional competencies. Prospective teachers who lack effective coping mechanisms may experience burnout, anxiety, and reduced teaching effectiveness. Therefore, understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and coping strategies is crucial for enhancing teacher preparedness and professional success.

Although international research has extensively explored emotional intelligence, there is a relative paucity of empirical studies examining its predictive role in coping strategies among prospective teachers in the Indian context, particularly in Haryana. The present study aims to bridge this gap by investigating how emotional intelligence influences coping strategies among B.Ed. students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of emotional intelligence was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990), who defined it as the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions and to use this information to guide thinking and actions. Later, Goleman (1995) popularized the concept by emphasizing its role in personal and professional success.

Research has consistently demonstrated a strong relationship between emotional intelligence and adaptive coping mechanisms. Parker et al. (2004) found that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to employ more problem-focused coping strategies and fewer avoidance behaviors. Similarly, Austin et al. (2005) reported that emotional intelligence is positively associated with psychological well-being and effective stress management.

Ciarrochi et al. (2001) highlighted that emotionally intelligent individuals are more likely to engage in constructive coping strategies such as cognitive restructuring and seeking social support. In contrast, individuals with lower emotional intelligence often rely on maladaptive coping strategies such as denial, avoidance, and emotional disengagement.

Further, Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2004) emphasized that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in managing stress in both academic and professional environments. Their findings suggest that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to resilience and emotional stability.

In the Indian context, studies such as Salami (2010) and Adeyemo (2007) have also supported the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and stress management. These studies indicate that emotionally intelligent individuals demonstrate better academic adjustment and coping abilities.

Moreover, Extremera and Fernández-Berrocal (2006) found that emotional intelligence is strongly linked with mental health outcomes, suggesting that higher EI reduces vulnerability to stress and psychological distress. Similarly, Mikolajczak et al. (2007) reported that emotional intelligence enhances adaptive coping and emotional regulation.

Overall, the existing literature suggests that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of coping strategies. However, limited research has focused specifically on prospective teachers in Haryana, thereby justifying the need for the present study.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of emotional intelligence among B.Ed. students.
2. To examine the coping strategies adopted by students.
3. To analyse the relationship between emotional intelligence and coping strategies.

HYPOTHESIS

H1: Emotional intelligence is positively correlated with problem-focused coping.

H2: Emotional intelligence is negatively correlated with avoidance coping.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Descriptive survey method was used.

Sample: The study was conducted on 300 B.Ed students (150 males and 150 females) selected through stratified random sampling from Bhiwani district, Haryana.

Tools Used

- Emotional Intelligence Scale (Dr. Sheetala Prasad, 2009)
- Coping Strategies Inventory (A.K. Srivastava)

Reliability of Tools

- Emotional Intelligence Scale: 0.79–0.86
- Coping Strategies Inventory: 0.87

Statistical Techniques

- Mean and Standard Deviation
- Pearson Correlation

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Intelligence

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	124.36	15.28

Table 2: Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies

Variables	Correlation (r)	Significance
EI & Problem-focused Coping	+0.62	p < 0.01
EI & Avoidance Coping	-0.48	p < 0.01

DISCUSSION



The results clearly indicate that emotional intelligence significantly influences coping strategies among B. Ed students. A strong positive correlation was found between emotional intelligence and problem-focused coping, suggesting that students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to engage in active problem-solving and constructive behavioural responses. Conversely, a moderate negative correlation was observed between emotional intelligence and avoidance coping, indicating that emotionally intelligent individuals are less likely to rely on maladaptive coping strategies such as denial and withdrawal. These findings are consistent with existing literature, which emphasizes the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing resilience, stress tolerance, and adaptive functioning.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of coping strategies among students. Higher emotional intelligence is associated with adaptive coping, while lower emotional intelligence is linked with maladaptive coping.

IMPLICATIONS

Integration of emotional intelligence training in teacher education programs

Development of counselling interventions focusing on coping skills

Promotion of emotional awareness in academic settings

LIMITATIONS

- Study limited to one district
- Self-report measures

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