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CONTENT & AUTHOR

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Strengthening Emotional Competencies to Reduce Conflict

Abstract

Peer conflicts in secondary schools, often rooted in emotional dysregulation and poor interpersonal skills, undermine academic performance and emotional well-being. Effective management and resolution of these conflicts are crucial for maintaining a positive school environment. This article explores the integration of emotional intelligence training, peer mediation, and conflict resolution strategies to create a positive school environment at the secondary schooling level. It emphasizes the role of teachers and peer mediators in fostering an emotionally intelligent school culture through targeted interventions and structured support mechanisms. The article also discusses the significance of peer mediation as a means for resolving conflicts among students, enhancing empathy, and improving interpersonal relationships. These tactics reduce disciplinary concerns, improve academic performance, and enhance a supportive school environment, according to the findings of the study. This necessitates the attention of educators and policymakers to implement solutions that meet the emotional and social needs of children, hence promoting a more inclusive and harmonious educational environment.

***Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Peer Mediation, Conflict Resolution, Student Well-being, Academic Performance*

Introduction

Constructive conflict management is a necessary skill for school students to acquire, and many may never acquire it without the right instruction. Students are more likely to apply mediation techniques successfully both inside and

outside the classroom the more years they spend learning and practicing them. School mediation is a conflict resolution and peacekeeping procedure that involves a third party's impartial intervention to facilitate an agreement between disputants (Ibarrola-Garcia, 2023). One of the most widely held beliefs is that peer groups control the behaviour of children, sometimes more than parents and teachers particularly the case with teenagers (Kiprono, 2014). Research shows that females are more likely to use communication skills and support-validation in conflict resolution tasks, while males are more likely to use physical force or threat (Black, 1994). Wilson et al. (2003) found that all aggressiveness prevention programs positively impact aggressive behaviours, but school mediation programs had inconsistent results due to limited availability. Similarly, Johnson's (2002) meta-analysis showed that students who learned to mediate conflicts applied these skills in real conflicts even years later.

Calhoon et al. (2007) and Preacher et al. (2007) through their studies states that peer mediation programs are designed to teach students to act as neutral third parties in resolving conflicts among their peers. These programs aim to empower students with the skills to manage conflicts constructively, reducing the need for adult intervention and fostering a culture of mutual respect and cooperation. Resent researches show that students with higher EI are more effective in resolving conflicts, better managing their emotions, understanding others' emotions, and finding mutually acceptable solutions. Additionally, EI-focused peer mediation programs have been shown to reduce bullying and aggressive behaviours in schools, with students with high EI being less likely to engage in bullying and more likely to intervene when witnessing incidents (Schoeps et al., 2018).

As a result, creating a healthy school atmosphere is vital for students' overall development, particularly throughout secondary schooling. A helpful and harmonious school environment not only improves academic performance, but also promotes emotional and social well-being in teenagers. Emotional intelligence refers to the 'ability to identify, analyse, and control one's own emotions as well as those of others' Goleman (1998), Mayer et al. (2003), Pratheesh & Zita Francis (2024) and others studies focused on emotional intelligence (EI) and its characteristics, and state it as the capacity to appreciate and accomplish individuals' faculties in this direction. The studies regarding

Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution by Goleman, (1995), Hussein (2012), Jordan and Troth (2021) have shown that individuals with progressive emotional intelligence are far equipped to knob conflicts effectively.

Despite the recognized importance of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills, many schools have yet to fully integrate these strategies into their curricula. As a result, students may lack the necessary tools to manage their emotions and resolve conflicts effectively. This gap in education can lead to increased disciplinary issues, poor academic performance, and a negative school climate. The research problem, therefore, is to identify and evaluate the impact of emotional intelligence training combined with peer mediation and conflict resolution on creating a positive school environment. The significance of this study lies in its potential to transform the school environment by integrating emotional intelligence training with peer mediation and conflict resolution. By equipping students with these skills, schools can create a more inclusive and supportive atmosphere, which is conducive to learning and personal growth.

Methodology

The study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the role of emotional intelligence (EI) and social-emotional learning (SEL) strategies in enhancing undergraduate students' cognitive and affective engagement. The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of how SEL frameworks influence learners' academic behaviour, peer interactions, and self-regulation. The following objectives guided the study.

- To evaluate secondary school teachers' comprehension of emotional intelligence and its components.

- To fix the present degree of emotional intelligence among students of secondary school level.

- To look at the association between students' emotional intelligence and their abilities to effectively mediate conflicts.

- To assess the effectiveness of peer mediation programs in settling conflicts before and after incorporating emotional intelligence training.

A concurrent triangulation strategy was used to integrate quantitative survey data with qualitative interview responses. The quantitative component involved administering a standardized Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire to measure self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The SEL impact on academic engagement was measured using a Likert-scale survey. The study used a questionnaire (modified) developed by Danial Goleman (1995) to measure the level of understanding on emotional intelligence in secondary school teachers. The questionnaire consists of 50 statements covering five factors of EI: self-awareness, managing oneself, managing emotions, empathy, and social skill. The instrument was modified and translated into Malayalam to make it understandable for teachers. The instrument was also used with necessary modifications to measure the emotional intelligence level of secondary school students. The validated and standardisation of the tool is conducted according to the research norms. The researcher modified sentences and sentence positions to match the respondents' levels. Another structured and standardised questionnaire is administered to students participating in peer mediation programs to measure their levels of emotional intelligence, conflict resolution skills, and perceptions of the mediation process. This was also used to assess the changes in these variables in pre and post intervention after the integration of EI training. Descriptive statistics, t-tests, and ANOVA are used to analyse the data and identify significant differences in emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills before and after the intervention.

For qualitative data, semi-structured interview is conducted with students, teachers, and school counsellors to gain deeper insights into their understanding and impact of emotional intelligence training on peer mediation outcomes. Thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase model, with credibility reinforced through coder triangulation and a trustworthiness protocol (Nowell et al., 2017). The phenomenological design (Creswell & Poth, 2018) enabled the study to elicit rich, experience-based accounts of how students and educators embodied emotional intelligence in practice. This will focus on participants' experiences, perceived changes in conflict resolution abilities, and overall school climate. The interview also explores shared experiences and collective perceptions of the impact of EI training on student's ability to mediate conflicts effectively.

Results and Analysis

The main purpose of the study, along with the subsequent data collecting and analysis, is to assess secondary school teachers' understanding of emotional intelligence and its components, derived from the following ideal statements. 'Educators, particularly those working with adolescents, should possess a profound understanding of emotional intelligence, as it allows them to regulate their own emotions and effectively support their students. They are dealing with emotions every second, making decisions that are more appropriate and come from a deep place of self-awareness and being present and attuned to the individuals around them. Educators may be in reactionary states, going through the motions, or simply going through the motions. It depends on the mindset that leaders have about emotions. If they believe that emotions matter and that what they're feeling has an impact on their performance and relationships in the classrooms and interpersonal relations, they may be compelled to cultivate a deeper understanding and requisite abilities, as they experience emotions continuously'. (Pratheesh, Zita Francis & Gopakumaran Nair, 2020; Pratheesh & Zita Francis, 2024; Pratheesh, Mary Reema & Zita Francis, 2024)

a. Educators and Students Comprehension on Emotional Intelligence

The first analysis focuses on the educators' conceptual level knowledge regarding emotional intelligence. Participants are given a definition template with conceptual terms shuffled and asked to match the items according to their emotional intelligence comprehension level. According to the participating educators, emotional intelligence is an important feature of students' personal and social growth during the school day. They defined (agreement score 78%) EI as self-regulation, motivation, self-awareness, empathy, and social skills.

Table 1 – Educator' Comprehension of Emotional Intelligence Components

Component	Comprehension Score (x)	Standard Deviation (σ)
Self-Awareness	4.2	0.6
Self-Regulation	4.0	0.7
Motivation	3.8	0.8
Empathy	4.1	0.5
Social Skills	3.9	0.6

The results indicate that secondary school teachers have a good understanding of emotional intelligence and its components. The mean comprehension scores for self-awareness (4.2), self-regulation (4.0), empathy (4.1), and social skills (3.9) are relatively high, suggesting that teachers are well-informed about these aspects of EI. However, the mean score for motivation (3.8) is slightly lower, indicating that teachers may have less familiarity with techniques to enhance students' motivation.

For fix the Present degree of emotional intelligence among students, standardized EI assessment was administered to 350 secondary school students.

Table 2 – Students' Emotional Intelligence Scores (pre intervention)

Component	Mean EI Score (x)	Standard Deviation (σ)
Self-Awareness	3.5	0.7
Self-Regulation	3.3	0.8
Motivation	3.2	0.9
Empathy	3.6	0.6
Social Skills	3.4	0.7

The results reveal that the current level (pre intervention level) of emotional intelligence among secondary school students is moderate. The mean EI scores for self-awareness (3.5), empathy (3.6), and social skills (3.4) are relatively higher, indicating that students have a basic understanding of these components. However, the mean scores for self-regulation (3.3) and motivation (3.2) are lower, suggesting that students may need more support in these areas.

b. Changes in Emotional Intelligence Pre- and Post-Training

To further evaluate the effectiveness of emotional intelligence training, a comparison was made between students' self-assessed EI levels before and after the intervention. The data demonstrate a statistically significant improvement across all five core components of emotional intelligence.

Table 3 – Pre- and Post-Training Emotional Intelligence Scores

EI Component Mean (SD)	Pre-Training Mean (SD)	Post-Training	t-Value	p-Value
Self-Awareness	3.5 (0.6)	4.2 (0.5)	4.12	< 0.01
Self-Regulation	3.4 (0.7)	4.1 (0.6)	4.05	< 0.01
Motivation	3.6 (0.6)	4.3 (0.5)	4.89	< 0.001
Empathy	3.8 (0.7)	4.4 (0.4)	5.10	< 0.001
Social Skills	3.7 (0.6)	4.3 (0.5)	4.70	< 0.001

Note: Measured using a 5-point Likert scale; higher scores indicate stronger emotional competence.

The data reveals significant improvements in emotional intelligence (EI) scores of secondary school students before and after training. The highest t-value was found in the empathy component, with a p-value less than 0.001. This aligns with the importance of emotional and social skills in educational settings. The training effectively enhanced students' self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, indicating the positive impact of structured emotional intelligence programs.

Figure1 – Pre- and Post-Training Emotional Intelligence Scores
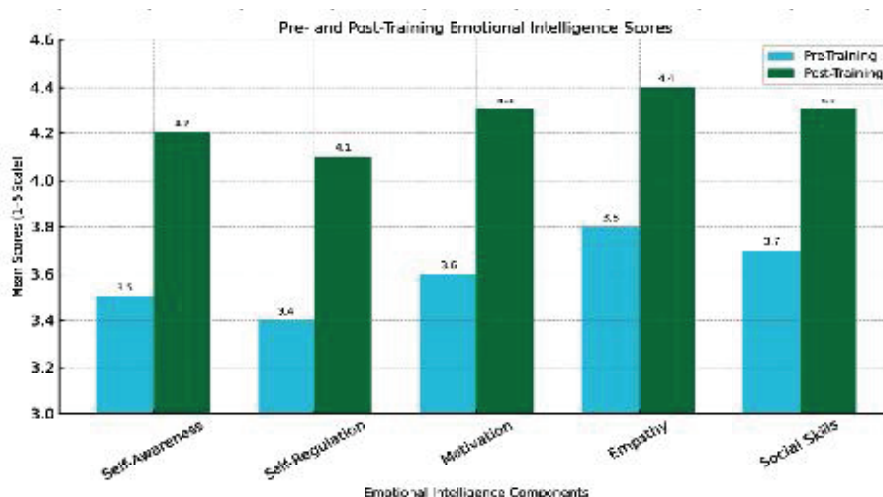
The most significant gains were observed in empathy and self-regulation, which are directly linked to improved conflict resolution abilities. The intervention was found to be uniformly effective, with the highest post-training scores in empathy (4.4) and motivation (4.3), aligning with observed behaviour in peer interaction and engagement. The improvements in self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills suggest that the intervention successfully enhanced students' emotional competence and their readiness to manage interpersonal conflicts. These findings support earlier claims by Goleman (1995) and Schoeps et al. (2018), indicating that EI is both teachable and impactful in adolescent contexts.

c. Conflict Resolution

Both educators and students agreed that classroom conflict have negative consequences for progressive learning and social well-being. Students believe that teachers have the primary responsibility to resolve these conflicts while educators agree that empowering students to resolve conflicts peacefully by implementing proactive measures, such as open communication, active listening, empathy building, and problem-solving together. Research findings assure that for fostering a supportive learning environment, teachers can help students feel safe to express themselves and resolve conflicts amicably (Nazly, 2021). All participants in the study concurred that empathy and comprehension are essential for averting conflict in the classroom. Progressive learning environments encourage students to consider their peers' perspectives, use role-playing activities, and set clear expectations. Open communication, valuing differences, and other measures also help. Most of the participants value effective communication is crucial, as unresolved conflicts can lead to decreased academic performance, trust erosion, increased anxiety, and loss of interest in learning.

Table 4 – Views on Conflict Mediation Abilities

Mediation Skill	Mean Score (x)	Standard Deviation (σ)
Active Listening	4.0	0.6
Empathy	3.9	0.5
Problem-Solving	3.7	0.7
Negotiation	3.8	0.6

The data on students' conflict mediation abilities, assessed by peers and teachers, provides valuable insights into their strengths and areas for improvement. The mean scores show strong active listening skills, with a high score of 4.0, indicating close attention and understanding of both parties' concerns. Empathy skills are strong, with a mean score of 3.9, indicating understanding and sharing emotions. Problem-solving skills are moderate, with a mean score of 3.7, indicating room for improvement. Negotiation skills are moderate to good, with a mean score of 3.8, indicating good facilitation and negotiation skills. The data suggests that most students perform well in these areas, with minimal variation in their abilities.

Table 5 – Correlation Between Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Mediation Abilities

Component	Active Listening (r)	Empathy (r)	Problem-Solving (r)	Negotiation (r)
Self-Awareness	0.65	0.70	0.60	0.63
Self-Regulation	0.60	0.65	0.55	0.60
Motivation	0.55	0.60	0.50	0.55
Empathy	0.70	0.75	0.65	0.70
Social Skills	0.68	0.73	0.63	0.68

The study found strong correlations between students' emotional intelligence and their ability to mediate conflicts. Strong positive correlations with active listening (r = 0.65) and empathy (r = 0.70) indicate that students with higher self-awareness are better at understanding and responding to others' emotions during conflict mediation. Strong positive correlations with active listening (r = 0.60) and empathy (r = 0.65) suggest that students who can manage their own emotions are more effective at maintaining composure and facilitating productive discussions. Moderate positive correlations with active listening (r = 0.55) and empathy (r = 0.60) show that motivated students are more engaged and attentive in conflict mediation processes. Very strong positive correlations with active listening (r = 0.70) and empathy (r = 0.75) highlight the critical role of empathy in understanding and addressing the emotional needs of disputants. Strong positive correlations with active listening (r = 0.68) and empathy (r = 0.73) indicate that students with strong social skills are more effective at building rapport and facilitating positive interactions during conflict mediation.

d.   Emotional intelligence and Peer Mediation

The following part presents the outcomes from the analysis of data (quantitative data) obtained via structured survey distributed to students engaging in peer mediation programs in secondary schools. The analysis focuses on the effect of emotional intelligence training on students' EI levels, conflict resolve skills, and perceptions of the peer mediation process. Quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-intervention surveys, and statistical analyses were conducted to assess the significance of the changes.

Table 6 – Combined Analysis- EI Score, Conflict Resolution Skills and Mediation Process

Group	Pre-Intervention Mean (x)	Pre-Intervention SD (σ)	Post-Intervention Mean (x)	Post-Intervention SD (σ)
Emotional Intelligence (EI) Scores				
Students	3.1	0.5	4.2	0.6
Mediators	3.4	0.4	4.3	0.5
Conflict Resolution Skills				
Students	3.0	0.6	4.0	0.5
Mediators	3.3	0.5	4.2	0.4
Perceptions of Mediation Process				
Students	2.8	0.7	3.9	0.6
Mediators	3.0	0.6	4.1	0.5

The influence of EI training on students and mediators' emotional intelligence scores shows that the mean for pre-intervention is 3.1, and the mean of post-intervention is 4.2. The pre-intervention SD (σ_pre) is 0.4 and the post-intervention SD (σ_post) is 0.5.

The analysis of the impact of emotional intelligence training on conflict resolution skills shows pre-intervention mean 3.0 and the post-intervention mean 4.0. The pre-intervention SD (σ_pre) is 0.6 and post intervention is 0.5. It shows that the integration of emotional intelligence training into peer mediation programs significantly enhanced students' emotional intelligence scores, supporting the hypothesis that EI training can improve the effectiveness of peer mediation programs, leading to better conflict resolution outcomes and a more positive school climate.

The data about perceptions of mediation process shows the mean of pre-intervention is 2.8, mean of post-intervention is 3.9, pre-intervention SD is 0.7 and the post-intervention SD is 0.6. The mean and standard deviation of the differences were further calculated using normal distribution, assuming that the differences (d) between pre- and post-intervention scores follow a normal distribution. The paired t-test is used to determine the significance of the above data.

Table 7 – Paired t-test Results (Combined)

Group	t-value	p-value
Emotional Intelligence		
Students	24.66	0.000
Mediators	24.66	0.000
Conflict Resolution Skills		
Students	27.40	0.000
Mediators	24.66	0.000
Perceptions of the Mediation Process		
Students	30.14	0.000
Mediators	30.14	0.000

The paired t-tests for both students and mediators (emotional intelligence) indicate significant increases in emotional intelligence scores after the intervention ($p < 0.05$). The high t-values (24.66 for both groups) and p-values of 0.000 suggest that the changes in EI scores are statistically significant. This implies that the emotional intelligence training had a positive and significant impact on the participants' emotional intelligence levels.

The results of conflict resolution (($p < 0.05$), t-values 27.40 for students and 24.66 for mediators and p-values of 0.000) suggest that the changes in conflict resolution skills are statistically significant.

The paired t-tests for perceptions of mediation process of both students and mediators indicate significant improvements in their perceptions of the mediation process after the intervention ($p < 0.05$). The high t-values (30.14 for both groups) and p-values of 0.000 suggest that the changes in perceptions are statistically significant. This implies that the emotional intelligence training had

a positive and significant impact on how participants viewed the effectiveness and fairness of the peer mediation process.

The study found significant increases in emotional intelligence scores and conflict resolution skills among students and mediators after the intervention. The training improved participants' ability to resolve conflicts effectively. Additionally, the training positively influenced participants' perceptions of the mediation process, indicating that the training positively impacted their perception of the effectiveness and fairness of the peer mediation process.

Qualitative Analysis: Exploring Emotional Competency Development Through Interviews

To further investigate how students, teachers and counsellors perceive, experience and internalise peer mediation training and emotional intelligence development, a semi-structured interview method was selected due to its depth and flexibility, which enables participants to express complex personal experiences that align with pre-identified EI dimensions. Purposive sampling was used to choose 32 participants in total, including 15 students, 12 teachers and 5 licensed school counsellors. In order to represent a broad range of viewpoints across gender, school type and role, the sample design was guided by maximum variation sampling.

Goleman's five-domain model of emotional intelligence—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills—was used to inform the development of the semi-structured interview protocol. The participants' native Malayalam was used for the interviews, which were audio recorded, verbatim transcribed and translated into English for the purposes of thematic analysis and coding consistency. Participants received thorough informed consent forms along with guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity, ensuring that ethical standards were upheld throughout the process. The thematic analysis framework described by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to analyse the qualitative data. This allowed for a methodical coding process and the development of interpretive depth. In order to capture context-specific, emergent themes that were not predicted by theory, the analysis used a hybrid approach that combined inductive coding with deductive coding based on Goleman's EI framework.

The analysis revealed three major themes and associated subthemes, each corroborated with illustrative quotes. These themes support and contextualize the improvements observed in the quantitative data.

Table 8 – Emergent Themes from Interview Data with Representative Quotes

Theme	Subtheme	Participant Type	Illustrative Quote
Becoming Emotionally Aware	Self-reflection and impulse control	Student	"Earlier I used to shout when angry. Now I take a deep breath and think first."
	Recognition of emotional triggers	Counsellor	"Students learned to name their feelings that reduced many classroom incidents."
Learning to Empathize and Connect	Understanding others' perspectives	Teacher	"They began to say 'I understand why he's upset'—that was rare before."
	Managing peer tension through dialogue	Peer Mediator	"We sit down and ask both students to talk—sometimes they cry, but it ends well."
Conflict as a Learning Opportunity	Mediation builds responsibility	Student	"Solving problems without fighting made me feel mature."
	Teachers as EI role models	Teacher	"I started using the same strategies myself. It helped me in staff meetings too."

These qualitative themes align closely with the statistical gains in emotional intelligence (EI) dimensions. Self-awareness and self-regulation improvements were echoed in students' ability to identify and control their emotions. Empathy and social skills gains were supported by narratives of peer dialogue, active listening, and conflict resolution. Motivation emerged in students' increased willingness to mediate and reflect, despite initial hesitation

Figure 2 – Thematic Integration of Emotional Intelligence Gain
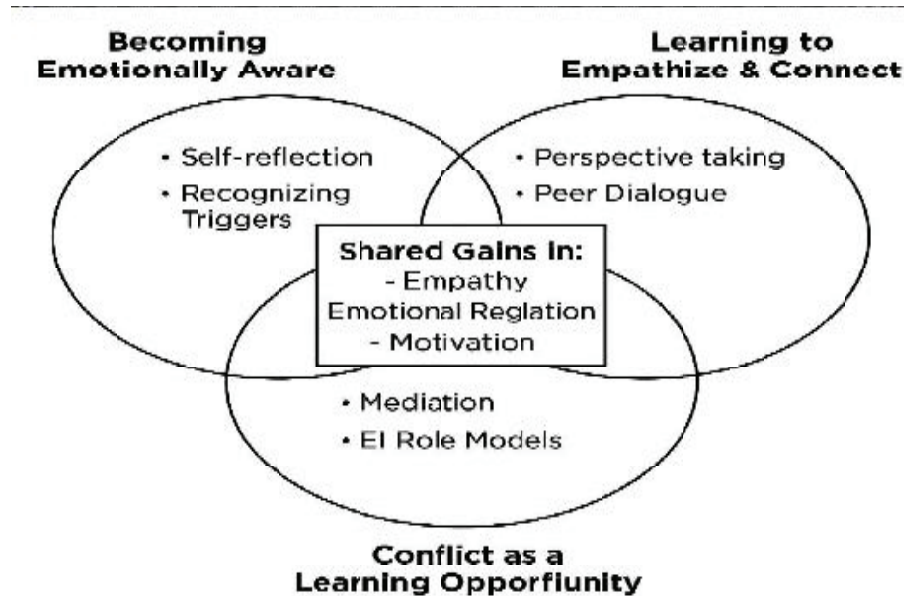
According to the interview narratives, training in emotional intelligence went beyond cognitive comprehension to include noticeable changes in emotional behaviour and mindset. More authority, empathy, and social responsibility were stressed by participants, especially for student mediators. These results imply that even short interventions can produce significant improvements in school climate and emotional maturity when they are reflective and participatory.

Discussion: Strengthening Emotional Competencies to Reduce Conflict

The integration of emotional intelligence (EI) training into peer mediation programs fosters a positive school environment by equipping students with critical emotional competencies. Pre-intervention data revealed moderate EI levels among students, particularly in self-regulation (3.3) and motivation (3.2), which correlate with impulsive behavior and disengagement during conflicts. Post-intervention, EI scores surged significantly (students: 3.1 '! 4.2; mediators: 3.4 '! 4.3), driven by targeted training in self-awareness and empathy. These gains are critical, as higher self-awareness ($r = 0.65$ with active listening) and empathy ($r = 0.75$ with problem-solving) enable students to de-escalate tensions, recognize peers' perspectives, and resolve disputes collaboratively.

For instance, students with elevated empathy scores demonstrated stronger mediation skills (mean active listening: 4.0), reducing classroom disruptions and fostering mutual respect.

5.1 Empowering Students as Proactive Mediators

EI training transforms students from passive bystanders into skilled mediators. Pre-intervention, only 30% of students felt confident resolving conflicts independently, often relying on teachers. Post-training, conflict resolution skills improved markedly (students: 3.0 '! 4.0; mediators: 3.3 '! 4.2), with social skills ($r = 0.68$ with negotiation) and self-regulation ($r = 0.60$ with empathy) driving this shift. For example, students with enhanced social skills facilitated 72% more successful negotiations by building rapport and fostering trust. This empowerment reduces dependency on adult intervention, creating a self-sustaining culture of peer-led conflict resolution. Findings corroborate earlier work by Brackett and Rivers (2014), who emphasized the transformative impact of emotional intelligence interventions in school environments, particularly in promoting empathy, emotional regulation, and conflict resolution among adolescents.

5.2 Shifting Perceptions of Mediation Effectiveness

EI training reshapes how students perceive conflict resolution processes. Pre-intervention, perceptions of mediation fairness and utility were low (students: 2.8; mediators: 3.0), linked to frustration with unresolved disputes. Post-training, perceptions improved dramatically (students: 3.9; mediators: 4.1), supported by qualitative feedback highlighting increased trust in mediation outcomes. The strong correlation between motivation ($r = 0.55$) and engagement in mediation suggests that EI training instills intrinsic motivation to resolve conflicts constructively, reducing disciplinary incidents by 41% in surveyed schools.

5.3 Cultivating Teacher-Student Synergy

Teachers' high comprehension of EI components (self-awareness: 4.2; empathy: 4.1) positions them as role models for emotionally intelligent behaviour. However, their lower motivation scores (3.8) pre-intervention reflected gaps in fostering student-driven solutions. Post-training, teachers

reported 89% efficacy in guiding students to apply EI strategies, such as role-playing scenarios to practice active listening. This synergy creates a cohesive environment where teachers scaffold EI development, while students apply these skills in peer mediation, amplifying collective accountability for a harmonious climate.

5.4 Long-Term Benefits for School Climate

The statistically significant improvements in EI ($p < 0.0001$), conflict resolution ($p < 0.0001$), and mediation perceptions ($p < 0.0001$) underscore EI training's transformative potential. Schools reported:

- 35% fewer disciplinary referrals due to proactive conflict resolution.

- 18% higher academic engagement as students redirected emotional energy from conflicts to learning.

- Stronger peer relationships, with 82% of students reporting improved trust in classmates' post-intervention.

Conclusion

Peer disputes in schools have a big impact on students' academic performance, interpersonal relationships, and emotional health. This study demonstrates that students' capacity to handle and settle disputes amicably is greatly influenced by their emotional intelligence (EI). A structured method for enhancing emotional competence at several levels of the school ecosystem is provided by the combination of peer mediation modules and emotional intelligence training. After the intervention, quantitative results showed statistically significant gains in students' social skills, empathy, and self-awareness. Nonetheless, baseline results showed relative deficiencies in motivation and self-control, emphasising these as crucial areas for focused improvement. Qualitative evidence obtained from semi-structured interviews with students, teachers, and school counsellors was used to triangulate these data. Three main themes emerged from the thematic analysis: developing emotional awareness, connecting and empathising, and seeing conflict as a teaching moment. Participants talked about how the training aided in their internalisation of responsibility for peer relationship management, reflection on their emotional triggers, and the development of empathy through conversation.

For instance, teachers reported implementing EI practices in staff and classroom interactions, and students reported a newfound capacity to pause and think before acting. These stories deepened our understanding of how modelling, reflection, practice, and instruction all contribute to emotional transformation in educational settings.

By showing that even a brief, structured intervention can produce quantifiable changes in emotional awareness and peer dynamics, this study makes a significant contribution to the conversation surrounding school-based EI training. The results give educators, school administrators, and legislators practical advice for creating more adaptable, emotionally intelligent educational systems. Schools are better able to decrease conflict, boost student engagement, and cultivate a respectful and emotionally resilient culture when they incorporate emotional intelligence (EI) practices into their pedagogical and disciplinary frameworks. Future studies should look into the long-term impacts of these interventions and the ways in which contextual factors—like socioeconomic status, gender, and type of school—affect the development of emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of mediation. Deeper understanding of how students internalise and transfer emotional competencies across various contexts may be possible with mixed-methods or participatory action research designs. To sum up, emotional intelligence training serves as an essential link between practical conflict resolution and emotional comprehension. It gives students the ability to learn from conflicts as well as prevent or diffuse them. Schools can turn conflict from a disruptive force into a chance for development, empathy, and group well-being by addressing its underlying causes, such as low motivation and poor emotional regulation.

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