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Assessment of emotional intelligence among post-graduating agricultural students

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Abstract

The present study focuses on assessing the level of emotional intelligence (EI) among post-graduating students of agriculture, a critical competency in modern professional and social environments. Emotional intelligence, as defined by Daniel Goleman, encompasses five major components: self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills. A total of 173 students from three agricultural colleges affiliated with VNMKV, Parbhani, were surveyed using a standardized emotional intelligence scale. The findings revealed that a majority (67.63%) of students exhibited a medium level of emotional intelligence, followed by 17.92% with low and 14.45% with high EI. Component-wise analysis also showed medium dominance across all five domains, with slightly higher high-level scores in empathy and self-awareness. These results emphasize the need for integrating emotional development strategies into higher agricultural education to prepare emotionally resilient professionals capable of navigating both academic and real-world challenges in agriculture.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, agricultural students, postgraduate education

1. Introduction

Daniel Goleman (1995) ^[1] explains “Emotional intelligence” as the capacity for recognising one’s own and others’ feelings for motivating and managing emotions within relationships and ourselves. Emotional intelligence (EI) has become an essential focus in education, particularly for students preparing to enter demanding professional sectors. For agriculture graduates, the ability to manage emotions, empathize with farmers, and communicate effectively is as important as technical knowledge. Post-graduating students of agriculture are at a critical career transition point where they must interact with diverse stakeholders—farmers, researchers, administrators, and policymakers.

Daniel Goleman’s framework outlines EI as a composite of five key emotional and social competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation (managing emotions), motivation, empathy, and social skills. These competencies influence how students manage stress, collaborate in teams, and perform under academic and professional pressure. Given the importance of these skills, the second objective of the present study focused on evaluating the overall and component-wise emotional intelligence levels among post-graduating agricultural students.

2. Methodology

The study was conducted across three agricultural colleges: College of Agriculture, Parbhani; College of Agriculture,

Latur; and College of Agriculture, Badnapur, all under the jurisdiction of Vasantao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani. A total of 173 post-graduate students were selected using proportionate random sampling, i.e. 30% of the total postgraduate students admitted during 2023-24 and 2024 - 25. The variable employed here is Emotional intelligence, which is a dependent variable. Ex-post facto research design is used for this study. Daniel Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence Scale (1995) ^[1] tool was used. Statistical data analysis tools, such as Frequency and percentage distribution, were used to interpret the results.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Emotional Intelligence Level of students

The dependent variable, emotional intelligence of the student respondents, is calculated based on Daniel Goleman’s scale (1995) ^[1] with correlating factors self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills.

3.1.1. Self - awareness

Sr. No.	Self-awareness	Respondents = 173	
		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	30	17.34
2.	Medium	116	67.05
3.	High	27	15.61
Total		173	100.00

It is observed that the majority of the students of students (67.05%) possess a medium level of self-awareness

3.1.2. Managing emotions

Sr.no.	Managing emotions	Respondents = 173	
		Frequency(n)	Percentage(%)
1.	Low	30	17.34
2.	Medium	118	68.21
3.	High	25	14.45
Total		173	100.00

It is observed that the majority of the students of students (68.21%) possess a medium level of managing emotions.

3.1.3. Motivating oneself

Sr.no.	Motivating oneself	Respondents = 173	
		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	30	17.34
2.	Medium	116	67.05
3.	High	27	15.61
Total		173	100.00

It is observed that the majority of the students of students (67.05%) possess a medium level of motivating oneself

3.1.4. Empathy

Sr.no.	Empathy	Respondents = 173	
		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	33	19.08
2.	Medium	104	60.12
3.	High	33	19.08
Total		173	100.00

It is observed that the majority of the students of students (60.12%) possess a medium level of empathy.

3.1.5. Social skills

Sr.no.	Social skills	Respondents = 173	
		Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	31.00	17.92
2.	Medium	114	61.90
3.	High	28	16.18
Total		173	100.00

It is observed that the majority of the students of students (61.90%) possess a medium level of social skills.

Overall emotional intelligence

Sr. No.	Overall Emotional intelligence	Respondents = 173	
		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	31	17.92
2.	Medium	117	67.63
3.	High	25	14.45
Total		173	100.00

By summing up the components of emotional intelligence, the level of overall emotional intelligence of post-graduating agricultural students falls under the medium level category (67.63%).

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that the emotional intelligence of post-graduating agricultural students is predominantly at a medium level, both overall and across its five dimensions. While most students are emotionally functional and adaptable, a relatively small percentage demonstrate advanced emotional competencies. This pattern is both an indicator of the current strengths of the academic environment and a signal of the need for emotional skill enhancement. For agricultural students transitioning into roles that involve decision-making, team leadership, rural extension, and community engagement, strengthening emotional intelligence is not optional but essential. The results highlight the importance of integrating emotional learning into the academic system to produce emotionally mature and socially responsive agricultural professionals.

5. Implications

- **Emotional Intelligence Workshops:** Colleges should organize regular training programs focusing on building EI components through interactive methods.
- **Curriculum Integration:** Emotional intelligence education should be embedded in subjects related to communication, extension education, or personality development.

6. References

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