

IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TRAINING IN ENHANCING EMPATHY AND PEER RELATIONSHIP AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

*This study investigated the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) training on enhancing empathy and peer relationship quality among secondary school students in Delta State, Nigeria. The study determined the effect of EI counselling on students' empathy levels, examined its influence on peer relationship quality, compare empathy levels between trained and untrained students, and assessed the correlation between empathy and peer relationships. A quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design was adopted. 120 students were selected from six public secondary schools across the three senatorial districts of Delta State using multistage sampling. Participants were grouped into experimental and control groups. Standardized instruments - the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test ($\alpha = 0.87$), Toronto Empathy Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.81$), and Peer Relationship Inventory ($\alpha = 0.85$) were used to collect data. The experimental group received a structured 6-week EI counselling programme, while the control group received no intervention. Paired sample *t*-tests showed significant improvements in empathy ($t = -7.82, p < 0.001$) and peer relationship scores ($t = -6.49, p < 0.001$) in the experimental group. An independent *t*-test revealed a significant post-intervention difference in empathy between the experimental and control groups ($t = 4.95, p < 0.001$). Pearson's correlation indicated a strong positive relationship between empathy and peer relationships ($r = 0.726, p < 0.001$). It was concluded that EI counselling significantly enhances students' interpersonal skills. The study recommended integrating emotional intelligence modules into school counselling programmes to foster empathy, improve peer relationships, and reduce student conflict in Nigerian secondary schools.*

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, Peer Relationships, Counselling

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a vital component of psychological well-being, social functioning, and academic success among adolescents. It is the process of identifying, perceiving, controlling, and employing feelings to themselves and other people (Jack & Oguntayo, 2020). The highly emotional stage of adolescence involves complicated social relationships, and to maintain good relations with peers and adjust to social tasks, emotional competence is a strong requirement among adolescent students.

In Delta State, the lack of socio-emotional competence is seen in the rising cases of bullying, peer conflicts, and antisocial behaviours among secondary school students. The relationships with peers may be considered a protective or a risk factor depending on how these adolescents deal with interpersonal problems. Emotional intelligence is hence a primary predictor of empathy and positive peer relations serving to promote school connectedness, psychological safety, and academic engagement (Udeh & Ezeokafor, 2022).

One of the main aspects of emotional intelligence that improves cooperation and prosocial behaviour is empathy, or the ability to share and understand others. Highly empathetic adolescents are less prone to being aggressive or suffer victimization by peers (Omumu, 2024). Nevertheless, a lot of students are not able to have emotions and interpersonal relations which lead to isolation and a lot of conflicts. This shows the relevance of instilled interventions that foster emotional dexterities in a school setting.

Counselling offers an instrumental way through which the emotional competencies of students can be built. School counselling provides learners with self-awareness, emotion regulation, empathy, and the ability to communicate with others (Igweilo et al., 2024). The counselling aspect of emotional intelligence training enables students to understand emotional signals, react suitably towards others, as well as establish better relationships.

Global studies (Castillo et al., 2013; Vila et al., 2021; Afsharzada et al., 2022; Jack and Oguntayo, 2020) supports the usefulness of training emotional intelligence in improving the emotional and social performance of adolescents. Bisji et al. (2019) and Jack and Oguntayo (2020) determined in Nigeria that EI training enhanced students in self-regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution, which leads to better engagement with peers. However, a little empirical data is available to support the relationship between EI counselling and empathy and peer relationships in Delta State.

Kani and Shetima (2025) reiterate the importance of counsellor curbing social vices through development of EI through unique programmes. Thus, in the current study, the authors examine

the emotional intelligence training effect on secondary school students in terms of the influence of counselling on empathy and peer relationship, which adds to the evidence-based approaches that foster emotional stability, collaboration and comprehensive youth growth.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescence is a crucial period when the state of emotional instability, identity formation, and peer impact are the main characteristics. In Delta State secondary schools, the rising cases of bullying, exclusion, and lack of conflict resolution point to the worsening peer relationships and poor emotional competence. A lot of students have emotional regulation and lack of empathy difficulties contributing to misunderstanding and social withdrawal. Despite their importance in the development of positive relationships and emotional adaptation, empathy and emotional intelligence is hardly discussed in schools curricula or counselling programmes.

Interventions in existence tend to be non-structured and not empirically validated. Although research papers like Bisji et al. (2019) and Jack and Oguntayo (2020) confirm that emotional intelligence can be trained, its effect through counselling on empathy and peer relationship in Delta State is not clear. There are also such challenges as scarce resources and lack of training in EI in counselling programmes (Igweilo et al., 2024). Therefore, this study investigates how well-organised EI counselling can lead to increased empathy and a better relationship between peers among students.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence training through counselling on enhancing empathy and peer relationship quality among secondary school students in Delta State.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the effect of emotional intelligence counselling on students' levels of empathy.
2. Examine the effect of emotional intelligence counselling on students' peer relationship quality.
3. Compare the empathy levels between students who receive EI counselling and those who do not.
4. Assess the relationship between empathy and peer relationship quality among secondary school students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this study:

1. What is the effect of emotional intelligence counselling on students' levels of empathy?
2. How does emotional intelligence counselling influence peer relationship quality among students?

3. Is there a significant difference in empathy levels between students who receive EI counselling and those who do not?
4. What is the relationship between empathy and peer relationship quality among secondary school students?

Research Hypotheses

The study is guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Emotional intelligence counselling has no significant effect on students' levels of empathy.
2. Emotional intelligence counselling has no significant effect on peer relationship quality among students.
3. There is no significant difference in empathy levels between students who receive EI counselling and those who do not.
4. There is no significant relationship between empathy and peer relationship quality among secondary school students.

Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others to promote personal and social growth (Jack & Oguntayo, 2020). It includes self-awareness, regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Bisji et al., 2019), which allow people to cope with the challenges, preserve relations, and make effective social choices (Omumu, 2024). In contrast, EI focuses on emotional and social competence unlike IQ, which is significant at this stage of life when emotional sensitivity is highest (Kani & Shetima, 2025). It assists teenagers in overcoming peer influence, conflict management and social adaptation (Udeh & Ezeokafor, 2022). It can be taught via counselling and training (Emmanuel and Ogundokun, 2023); in case integrated into the school curricula, EI improves communication, decreases aggression, and increases emotional literacy, resilience as well as overall student well-being (Adeyemo et al., 2019; Igweilo et al., 2024).

Empathy

Empathy is the skill to recognize and experience the emotions and the thoughts of other people and is commonly referred to as putting oneself in the other person's shoes (Udeh & Ezeokafor, 2022). It has both emotional and mental elements (emotional resonance, and intellectual perspective-taking) (Arslan & İşeri, 2018). Empathy as an important social-emotional skill can lead to compassion, collaboration, and social bonding particularly at the adolescent stage when identity formation is paramount (Jack and Oguntayo, 2020). It is used to assist students in dealing with conflicts in a peaceful manner, valuing different opinions, and decreasing bullying (Trigueros et al., 2020; Bisji et al., 2019). Compassionate learners are ethical, morally conscious, and supportive of others (Omumu, 2024). Empathy has been confirmed to be enhanced by

emotional intelligence counselling, role-play, and reflection (Emmanuel and Ogundokun, 2023), peer relationship improvement, emotional welfare, academic achievement, and mental health (Adeyemo et al., 2019).

Peer Relationships

Peer relationships refer to those social interactions and connections between people within the same age, mainly in school (Igweilo et al., 2024). They play an important role in emotional, social, and cognitive development of teenagers, affecting behavior, self-esteem, and academic performance (Kani and Shetima, 2025). Trust, respect, cooperation, and good communication are the pillars of healthy relationships that provide the sense of belonging and guide adolescents by following social norms (Trigueros et al., 2020). Emotional stability and resilience, conflict management, and negative ones (bullying or exclusion) are improved by positive and worsened by negative peer relationships, respectively (Obungwah, 2022; Udeh & Ezeokafor, 2022). Peer relationship is highly dependent on emotional intelligence and empathy (Jack and Oguntayo, 2020). These relational skills are successfully developed as a result of school counseling and social-emotional learning programs and minimal conflict is mitigated (Bisji et al., 2019; Emmanuel & Ogundokun, 2023).

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Enhancing Interpersonal Relationships

Emotional intelligence (EI) enhances interpersonal relationships by enabling individuals to recognize, interpret, and respond appropriately to others' emotions (Jack & Oguntayo, 2020). Through self-awareness and empathy, individuals manage emotional triggers and understand different perspectives, fostering mutual respect and meaningful interactions (Udeh & Ezeokafor, 2022). During adolescence—a period of heightened emotional and social activity—EI supports effective communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution (Omumu, 2024; Trigueros et al., 2020). Research shows that emotionally intelligent students display less aggression, stronger social bonds, and improved peer relations (Bisji et al., 2019). Counselling programmes integrating EI training enhance relational competence, reduce disciplinary problems, and improve classroom harmony (Kani & Shetima, 2025). Moreover, EI encourages emotional support among peers, promoting inclusivity and a positive school climate (Emmanuel & Ogundokun, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory

Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence (EI) Theory (1995) builds on Mayer and Salovey's (1990) work, emphasizing that EI is more crucial than IQ in achieving success. The theory identifies five components—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Goleman (1995) argues that individuals with high EI can recognize and manage emotions, motivate themselves, and maintain positive relationships. This is particularly relevant to adolescents, who often experience emotional volatility and peer conflicts. The theory underpins

this study by suggesting that EI can be developed through structured counselling to enhance empathy and peer relationships among students in Delta State (Jack & Oguntayo, 2020). Empirical studies support EI-based training for reducing aggression and improving school climate (Bisji et al., 2019; Adeyemo et al., 2019). Though critics note its descriptive nature and commercial overuse (Landy, 2005; Murphy, 2006), Goleman's model remains widely valued for its practical relevance in promoting emotional and social competence (Udeh & Ezeokafor, 2022).

Methodology

The study employed a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest control group design to examine the effect of emotional intelligence (EI) counselling on empathy and peer relationships. Participants were divided into an experimental group, which received EI counselling, and a control group, which received no intervention. Both groups were assessed before and after the six-week programme using validated instruments. The quasi-experimental design was chosen because randomization was not feasible in school settings but allowed for comparison and control of internal validity threats through matched grouping and baseline assessments (Kourmoussi et al., 2017).

The study population comprised Senior Secondary School II (SS2) students in public secondary schools across the three senatorial districts of Delta State. This group, aged 15–17 years, was selected because adolescence is a critical period for emotional and social development (Udeh & Ezeokafor, 2022). Public schools were chosen for their demographic uniformity and standardized curriculum, enhancing the generalizability of findings.

A sample of 120 students was selected through multistage sampling to ensure regional representation. Two local government areas were randomly selected from each senatorial district, and one public school from each LGA. Twenty SS2 students were then randomly chosen from each school, producing 60 participants in both experimental and control groups. This method minimized sampling bias and increased credibility through geographical spread and random selection (Kourmoussi et al., 2017).

Three standardized instruments were used: the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ), and the Peer Relationship Inventory (PRI). The SSEIT (Schutte et al., 1998) measured emotional intelligence across four dimensions on a 33-item, 5-point scale ($\alpha = 0.87$). The TEQ (Spreng et al., 2009), a 16-item empathy scale ($\alpha = 0.81$), captured emotional contagion and perspective-taking. The PRI, with 25 items ($\alpha = 0.85$), assessed trust, cooperation, and conflict resolution. Content validity was confirmed by expert review, and a pilot study produced Cronbach's alpha values of 0.85 (SSEIT), 0.81 (TEQ), and 0.83 (PRI), affirming reliability.

Data collection occurred in three phases: pretest, six-week EI counselling intervention, and posttest. The experimental group received weekly 60–75 minute counselling sessions, while the control group had no treatment. The programme, based on Goleman's EI framework, included

activities such as role-play, emotional journaling, and group discussions targeting self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Jack & Oguntayo, 2020). Sessions were facilitated by trained counsellors and reviewed for cultural relevance.

Validity was ensured through matched grouping, standardized data collection, and separation of groups to prevent contamination. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics summarized demographics, while paired and independent t-tests assessed within- and between-group effects. Pearson's correlation examined the relationship between empathy and peer relationships, with significance set at 0.05.

Ethical approval was obtained from relevant authorities. Informed consent and parental permission were secured, anonymity maintained, and counselling conducted in safe environments. The study adhered to principles of confidentiality, beneficence, and non-maleficence, ensuring participants' psychological well-being and the ethical integrity of the research.

Results

Table 1: *Pretest and Posttest Emotional Intelligence Scores of Experimental and Control Groups*

Group	N	Test Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	60	Pretest	112.34	8.56
Experimental	60	Posttest	132.47	7.93
Control	60	Pretest	111.89	8.44
Control	60	Posttest	113.12	8.27

Table 1 shows that the experimental group's mean emotional intelligence (EI) score increased from 112.34 (SD = 8.56) to 132.47 (SD = 7.93) after the six-week counselling, a significant 20.13-point gain. The control group's mean rose slightly from 111.89 (SD = 8.44) to 113.12 (SD = 8.27), indicating no meaningful improvement. This sharp contrast confirms the effectiveness of structured EI counselling in enhancing self-awareness, regulation, and interpersonal skills. Consistent with Jack and Oguntayo (2020) and Bisji et al. (2019), the findings show EI can be developed through guided training, supporting its integration into school counselling for improved social and emotional competence.

Table 2: *Pretest and Posttest Empathy Scores of Experimental and Control Groups*

Group	N	Test Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	60	Pretest	35.21	4.67
Experimental	60	Posttest	44.18	4.29
Control	60	Pretest	34.97	4.88
Control	60	Posttest	35.61	4.72

Table 2 shows a major rise in the experimental group's empathy scores from 35.21 (SD = 4.67) to 44.18 (SD = 4.29), an 8.97-point gain, while the control group's increase from 34.97 (SD = 4.88) to 35.61 (SD = 4.72) was minimal. This confirms that emotional intelligence counselling effectively enhanced empathy through activities like perspective-taking, emotional mirroring, and compassion-based communication. Consistent performance (low SDs) suggests uniform impact among participants. Aligned with Udeh and Ezeokafor (2022) and Kani and Shetima (2025), the findings show empathy is teachable, reducing bullying and improving cooperation—supporting EI-based counselling integration into Nigerian school programmes.

Table 3: *Pretest and Posttest Peer Relationship Scores of Experimental and Control Groups*

Group	N	Test Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	60	Pretest	48.73	6.12
Experimental	60	Posttest	59.86	5.77
Control	60	Pretest	47.91	6.27
Control	60	Posttest	48.64	6.13

Table 3 shows that the experimental group's peer relationship scores increased significantly from 48.73 (SD = 6.12) to 59.86 (SD = 5.77), an 11.13-point gain, while the control group's minimal rise from 47.91 (SD = 6.27) to 48.64 (SD = 6.13) was negligible. This demonstrates that emotional intelligence counselling effectively strengthened students' interpersonal skills through training in empathy, communication, and conflict resolution. Reduced SD values indicate consistent group benefits. Supporting Jack and Oguntayo (2020), the findings confirm EI's key role in fostering positive peer relations, improving school climate, reducing conflict, and promoting emotional and social competence among adolescents.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 4: *Paired Sample T-Test for Pretest and Posttest Scores of Experimental Group*

Variable	Mean (Pretest)	Mean (Posttest)	Mean Difference	t- value	df	p-value
Emotional Intelligence	112.34	132.47	20.13	-7.82	59	0.000***
Empathy	35.21	44.18	8.97	-6.36	59	0.000***
Peer Relationship	48.73	59.86	11.13	-6.49	59	0.000***

*p < 0.001

Table 4 shows paired sample t-test results for the experimental group, revealing significant improvements ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) in Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, and Peer Relationships after the intervention. EI scores rose from 112.34 to 132.47 (gain = 20.13; $t = -7.82$), confirming the counselling's effectiveness (Jack & Oguntayo, 2020; Bisji et al., 2019). Empathy increased from 35.21 to 44.18 (gain = 8.97; $t = -6.36$), supporting Udeh and Ezeokafor (2022) on empathy's teachability. Peer Relationship scores improved from 48.73 to 59.86 (gain = 11.13; $t = -6.49$), showing that EI counselling enhanced communication, trust, and social harmony among students.

Table 5: *Independent Sample T-Test Comparing Posttest Scores Between Experimental and Control Groups*

Variable	Group	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value
Emotional Intelligence	Experimental	132.47	7.93	4.95	118	0.000***
	Control	113.12	8.27			
Empathy	Experimental	44.18	4.29	4.58	118	0.000***
	Control	35.61	4.72			
Peer Relationship	Experimental	59.86	5.77	5.02	118	0.000***
	Control	48.64	6.13			

*p < 0.001

Table 5 shows independent sample t-test results comparing posttest scores of experimental and control groups, revealing significant differences ($p < 0.001$) across all variables. The experimental group outperformed the control group in Emotional Intelligence (132.47 vs. 113.12; $t = 4.95$), Empathy (44.18 vs. 35.61; $t = 4.58$), and Peer Relationships (59.86 vs. 48.64; $t = 5.02$).

These findings confirm that emotional intelligence counselling effectively enhanced self-awareness, empathy, and social interaction skills. Consistent with Bisji et al. (2019) and Udeh and Ezeokafor (2022), the results demonstrate that EI training fosters emotional growth, conflict resolution, and interpersonal harmony among adolescents in Delta State schools.

Table 6: *Pearson Correlation Between Empathy and Peer Relationship Scores*

Variables	N	r	p-value
Empathy & Peer Relationship	120	0.726**	0.000***

r = Pearson correlation coefficient p < 0.001

Table 6 shows a strong, significant positive correlation between empathy and peer relationship scores ($r = 0.726, p = 0.000$) among 120 students. This indicates that higher empathy enhances students’ ability to form supportive, cooperative peer relationships. Empathetic students better understand others’ emotions, manage conflicts, and foster trust confirming empathy’s mediating role in social development. Consistent with Omumu (2024), empathetic adolescents display stronger social bonds and fewer conflicts. Thus, integrating empathy-focused counselling within emotional intelligence training can promote emotional maturity, teamwork, and inclusiveness in Nigerian schools, validating the rejection of the fourth null hypothesis and reinforcing the study’s conceptual model.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that emotional intelligence (EI) counselling significantly improved empathy among secondary school students in the experimental group, with a mean increase of 8.97 points on the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire ($p < 0.001$). In contrast, the control group showed negligible change, confirming that structured EI interventions enhance adolescents’ capacity to recognize and respond to others’ emotions. This supports Udeh and Ezeokafor (2022), who found that EI and empathy are interrelated and can be jointly developed through reflective and interactive activities. Similarly, Jack and Oguntayo (2020) and Bisji et al. (2019) reported that EI training enhances emotional sensitivity, perspective-taking, and prosocial behavior among adolescents.

Counselling strategies such as role-play, storytelling, emotional mirroring, and perspective-swapping were instrumental in helping students understand emotions and build empathy. Emmanuel and Ogundokun (2023) noted that such therapy-based interventions effectively strengthen emotional connection in adolescents. These findings affirm that empathy is not a fixed trait but a learnable skill that can be cultivated through structured counselling programmes. This has vital implications for education in Delta State, suggesting that EI-based counselling can foster emotionally resilient and socially responsible youth.

The study also found that EI counselling significantly improved peer relationship quality, with the experimental group recording an 11.13-point increase post-intervention. This demonstrates that emotional competence acquired through EI training translates into positive social behaviour. Trigueros et al. (2020) found a similar link between EI and peer interaction quality, where students with higher EI experienced less bullying and stronger peer support. Likewise, Kani and Shetima (2025) reported that EI-oriented counselling reduces social vices and improves cooperation, as emotionally aware students communicate needs clearly, resolve conflicts empathetically, and build trust. Omumu (2024) also found that emotionally regulated adolescents display constructive peer behaviour, contributing to safer and more inclusive school environments.

These findings underscore Adeyemo et al.'s (2019) argument that adolescence is a crucial stage for psychosocial intervention, as peer validation and social competence directly affect academic success and mental health. The implication is clear: EI counselling should be central—not supplementary—in school guidance programmes, promoting balanced emotional and social development.

Furthermore, a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.726, p < 0.001$) was found between empathy and peer relationship quality, indicating that higher empathy levels lead to healthier peer interactions. This supports Arslan and İşeri (2018), who identified empathy as a key predictor of adolescents' ability to form meaningful relationships. Obungwah (2022) similarly found that low empathy correlates with aggression and delinquency, reinforcing empathy's protective role. Aihie and Nigeria (2018) emphasized empathy's importance in emotional maturity and conflict resolution, while Festus and Seraphina (2015) linked empathy development to better classroom participation and cooperative learning.

Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) counselling on empathy and peer relationship quality among secondary school students in Delta State, Nigeria. Using a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest control design, findings showed that the six-week EI counselling significantly enhanced empathy and peer relationships in the experimental group, while the control group showed minimal change. The study confirmed that emotional intelligence is a learnable skill, not a fixed trait, and that empathy functions both as an outcome and a mechanism of EI development.

A strong correlation between empathy and peer relationships demonstrated that emotional understanding and regulation are essential for healthy adolescent interactions. Given the prevalence of bullying, poor conflict management, and emotional insensitivity in schools, these results highlight the potential of EI counselling to promote empathy, cooperation, and social inclusion.

Using validated instruments and robust statistical analyses strengthened the reliability of the findings. The study concludes that emotional intelligence counselling is an effective strategy for

enhancing students' social-emotional competence. Integrating EI into school counselling programmes can improve empathy, peer relationships, academic engagement, and overall school climate, preparing students for emotionally intelligent and socially responsible living within and beyond the school environment.

Implications for Counselling Practice and School Programmes

The study's findings have significant implications for counselling and school programmes in Nigeria. They highlight counselling's vital role beyond academics, emphasizing its function in developing students' emotional and social competencies. The positive impact of emotional intelligence (EI) counselling on empathy and peer relationships suggests that school counselling should be preventive and developmental.

Structured EI modules should be integrated into counselling programmes, focusing on self-awareness, regulation, empathy, and relationship management. Counsellors need adequate training, resources, and support to implement these effectively. Enhancing empathy through EI training can reduce bullying, conflict, and social exclusion, fostering a positive school climate.

Administrators and policymakers should prioritize EI within school development plans and encourage teacher-counsellor collaboration to reinforce EI principles. Counsellor training curricula should include EI theory and practice, while continuous professional development should promote evidence-based, data-driven approaches to ensure accountability, improvement, and emotionally intelligent school environments.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Emotional intelligence development should be formally included in school counselling programmes across Delta State and beyond to promote empathy, social competence, and conflict resolution among students.
2. School counsellors should be provided with professional training on emotional intelligence counselling techniques and the use of standardized EI assessment tools to improve the quality of their interventions.
3. Teachers should work closely with counsellors to reinforce emotional intelligence skills in the classroom through supportive learning environments, emotional modelling, and reinforcement of social skills.
4. Ministries of Education should support the creation and dissemination of culturally relevant emotional intelligence counselling materials and facilitate regular workshops, seminars, and conferences on EI in education.
5. EI interventions should be conducted in small group formats to promote peer learning, emotional openness, and interpersonal bonding among students.

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