

# Emotional Intelligence and Career Readiness in the Modern Economy: An Analysis of Indian Education and Global Best Practices

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Publication Date: 2025/03/28

**Abstract:** Emotional Intelligence (EI) is rapidly emerging as crucial for ensuring career readiness in today's competitive job market. As industries evolve quickly, candidates must possess expert knowledge and demonstrate proactive EI, which is essential in complementing adaptability, leadership, and communication skills. This study compares the Indian education system with global best practices to gain insights into how various stakeholders in India are preparing career aspirants with superior EI competencies. A systematic review of academic literature, institutional reports, and expert analyses indicates a substantial disparity between the emphasis on EI in Indian educational curricula and the growing industry demand for emotionally competent professionals. The gap suggests that academic institutions must reevaluate their curriculums to ensure they address this critical area effectively. This paper ultimately provides actionable policy recommendations to integrate EI training into India's educational framework, aligning it more closely with the expectations of emerging workforce needs and enhancing overall employability for graduates.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Career Readiness, Indian Education, Global Best Practices, Soft Skills, Employability.

**How to Cite:** Aparajita Indra; Prem Singh Parihar; Sachin Awasthi. (2025) Emotional Intelligence and Career Readiness in the Modern Economy: An Analysis of Indian Education and Global Best Practices. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(3), 1224-1230. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25mar1450>.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Background Context

The modern economy is undergoing rapid transformations driven by automation, artificial intelligence, and globalisation. Employers look for staff who demonstrate strong soft skills, such as adaptability, communication, teamwork, resilience, emotional intelligence, and technical skills [1]. Conventional education systems in India still emphasise academic knowledge rather than socio-emotional skills. This discrepancy causes a gap between the competencies of graduates and industry requirements.

### B. Problem Statement

Despite increasing awareness of EI's importance, Indian schools and universities lack structured training programs to develop these competencies. This research analyses the application of EI in career readiness, its execution difficulties in India, and the ideal global practices that can guide education reform.

### C. Research Objectives

- To determine the contribution of EI to career preparedness and employability.
- To analyse the level of EI integration into education in India.
- To juxtapose international best practices in EI training with the Indian model.
- To suggest policy interventions for improving EI education in India.

### D. Research Questions

- How does EI contribute to career readiness in the modern economy?
- What are the existing policies and practices for EI training in Indian schools and universities?
- How do global best practices in EI education compare to those in the Indian context?
- What policy changes are needed to include emotional intelligence in India's education?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Conceptual Foundations of Emotional Intelligence

Salovey and Mayer [2] introduced the concept of emotional intelligence as the ability to control and manage emotions in interpersonal relationships. Goleman [3] expanded the idea of making EI the core initiative for workplace success and leadership effectiveness. He identified five core components of EI that are crucial for professional development:

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Social skills

Over the years, companies have recognised the role of EI on organisational behaviour, with studies confirming its positive impact on overall performance and leadership [4]. Going further, research by Petrides and Furnham [5] presents the distinction between trait and ability EI and how individuals process emotional information. These developments have contributed to a clearer understanding of EI and its application in a professional context [6] [7].

### B. Impact of EI on Career Readiness

Emotional intelligence is an essential factor in career success. It affects job readiness, how employees engage at work, and how leaders develop. According to a study by Côté [8], individuals with higher EI demonstrate greater job satisfaction through improved team collaboration. Research further indicates that employees with well-developed EI competencies adapt more effectively to organisational changes and workplace challenges [9].

A study by Joseph and Newman [10] found a significant link between emotional intelligence and better job performance in various fields. They found that emotionally intelligent persons performed better at decision-making and problem-solving. They also demonstrated practical communication skills, leading to better team performance. Parker et al. [11] confirmed EI's advantage in highly competitive work environments and long-term career success.

A study by Robles [12] highlights that 93% of employers consider EI the most significant factor in recruiting. This is further validated in the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report [1], which states that EI is among the top 10 skills required for career success. The report recognises the growing role of EI in highly automated AI-driven workplaces. Managers with high EI display superior leadership traits and are more effective and successful. Goleman [3] noted that nearly 80% of competencies distinguishing top-performing leaders are related to EI rather than technical expertise. A report by McKinsey & Company [13] underscores that companies prioritising EI development among employees witness higher employee retention, productivity, and innovation levels.

Notwithstanding these discoveries, EI training receives little attention in conventional education systems, especially in India. The minimal integration of EI-based programs within Indian schools and universities results in technically skilled graduates without critical workplace skills [14]. Filling this shortage by incorporating EI development into education curricula can enhance students' career preparedness and long-term professional achievement.

Research consistently demonstrates that EI predicts career success, influencing job satisfaction, leadership capabilities, and workplace relationships [8]. The meta-analysis by Joseph and Newman [10] found a positive correlation between EI and job performance across industries. Employers increasingly view EI as essential for handling workplace stress and fostering collaboration [12]. Additionally, studies indicate that EI enhances career adaptability, particularly in dynamic and technology-driven job markets [9].

### C. EI in Indian Education

India's education system has traditionally prioritised rote learning and standard testing with little attention to developing emotional intelligence among students [15]. The traditional academic system favours theoretical knowledge and exam performance at the expense of soft and emotional skills. As a result, graduates remain primarily unprepared for dealing with modern workplace challenges [14]. Mishra and Singh [13] indicate in their study that Indian universities recognise the importance of soft skills but do not have a standardised method of imparting emotional intelligence. Unlike Western nations, where social-emotional learning (SEL) forms part of the school curriculum, Indian schools tend not to include special training for EI. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) [17] and the University Grants Commission (UGC) [18] have recently recommended soft skills training, but how it's put into practice varies among different schools.

In addition, research has indicated that Indian students face severe challenges in adapting to the competitive workplace due to insufficient EI-oriented education. In the survey conducted by the Confederation of Indian Industry [19], it was reported that 65% of Indian employers that new graduates do not have key EI competencies, mainly leadership, teamwork, and communication. Moreover, a National Skill Development Corporation [20] study revealed that merely 30% of Indian graduates possess adequate socio-emotional skills to achieve career success. Some programs have sought to bridge this gap. Private institutions like Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and some IITs have integrated leadership and soft skills training into their curriculum [21]. These are not typical, though, and most Indian universities continue to do without structured EI development programs [22].

Teachers' roles in EI development are equally important, yet Indian educators lack training in socio-emotional learning. Research conducted by Gupta & Reddy [23] identified that more than 75% of teachers in India have never attended EI training sessions, restricting the promotion

of emotional abilities among learners. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) launched life skills training modules recently, but their dissemination and impact are limited [24].

If India does not implement a clear policy for emotional intelligence education, it may struggle to prepare students for the psychological challenges of today's economy. The current gaps require a holistic approach to including EI initiatives in student curricula and teacher training programs. The industry must be involved in suggesting the appropriate psychological profiles preferred and assisting in developing experiential learning opportunities.

#### D. Global Best Practices in EI Education

Many countries have added emotional intelligence training to their schools with organised plans and new ideas. Below are some examples of effective practices from around the world:

- **Finland:** Finland has long been regarded as a leader in education reform, and its emphasis on emotional intelligence training is a key component of its success. The Finnish National Core Curriculum incorporates **socio-emotional learning (SEL)** as an integral part of primary and secondary education. Schools focus on developing self-awareness, empathy, and resilience through project-based learning and personalised education plans [25]. Research shows that Finnish students demonstrate higher employability rates and workplace adaptability due to this comprehensive EI education [26].
- **Singapore:** Singapore has integrated emotional intelligence training into its **Character and Citizenship Education (CCE)** framework, which is compulsory for students from primary school to pre-university levels [27]. The CCE framework emphasises self-management, responsible decision-making, and interpersonal skills. Additionally, career guidance programs in Singapore are designed to foster EI, helping students develop adaptability, resilience, and problem-solving skills. Studies have shown that graduates from Singaporean institutions with EI training have higher career success rates and workplace satisfaction [28].
- **United States:** The United States has implemented EI training through **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)** programs promoted by organisations such as the **Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)**. SEL programs are embedded in K-12 education across various states, focusing on emotional regulation, self-awareness, and relationship skills [29]. Studies have demonstrated that students who undergo SEL programs show improved academic performance, reduced behavioural issues, and greater career readiness [30].
- **United Kingdom:** The UK has added emotional intelligence education through initiatives like the **Resilience and Well-being Education Program**, which focuses on managing stress through emotional regulation [31]. The UK recognises the importance of EI in managing work stress and career adaptability. Therefore,

it introduced mental health education in schools because EI is essential for adjusting to different jobs. Research by the British Psychological Society[32] indicates that UK students with EI training exhibit higher employability rates and are more effective in workplace environments.

#### E. Challenges in Implementing EI Training in India

Incorporating emotional intelligence training in India is confronted with several systemic, educational, and infrastructural challenges. The following are the main hindrances to effective incorporation of EI into the Indian education system:

- **Shortage of Trained Teachers in EI Methodologies:** The lack of formal EI training programs restricts teachers from effectively teaching socio-emotional skills to students. Gupta & Reddy [23] discovered in a study that more than 75% of Indian teachers have never undergone any formal training in socio-emotional learning. Without trained teachers, EI is still an intangible concept and not a tangible skill students can learn in classrooms. This leads to the absence of emotional regulation and interpersonal skill-building experiences for students.
- **Resistance from Traditional Academic Frameworks:** The Indian education system is firmly entrenched in a strict, examination-oriented method emphasising rote learning rather than developing soft skills [33]. Most schools and institutions of higher education are hesitant to implement EI-centered programs because they fear taking away attention from basic academic subjects. Resistance from stakeholders such as teachers, policymakers, and parents further slows down reforms for EI training integration.
- **Lack of Standardised Measurement Instruments for EI Competencies:** Unlike cognitive skills, which are assessed via standardised questionnaires, EI does not have a standard methodology for measurement across Indian schools [34]. The lack of specific metrics for measuring students' emotional competencies hinders institutions' ability to monitor improvements and justify curricular inclusion of EI training. It has led to uneven adoption across schools and universities.
- **Limited Industry-Academia Partnerships for EI Skill Development:** Industry captains underscore the significance of EI in professional success. Still, there is little partnership between academics and employers to develop EI-based training programs [22]. The absence of formal industry-academic alliances keeps students from practical exposure to the emotional and interpersonal challenges of the workplace. Singapore and Finland have been able to incorporate EI into career readiness training, but India is behind in developing such collaborative frameworks. Therefore, India, too, must ensure the practical and effective development of EI-based programs and implement them across all educational institutions.

### III. KEY FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

To validate the contribution of EI to career preparedness, we provide empirical evidence from different studies illustrating its influence on job performance,

leadership effectiveness, and workplace relationships. We also contrast the inclusion of EI training in educational

systems worldwide, focusing on the gaps and opportunities in the Indian context.

Table 1: Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Career Success Metrics

Metric	Findings	Source
Job Performance	EI influences job performance by 58%; 90% of top performers have high EI.	Zoe Talent Solutions
Leadership Effectiveness	EI accounts for 80-90% of competencies differentiating top performers; twice as predictive of performance as IQ.	Association for Talent Development
Employee Engagement & Productivity	Organizations emphasizing EI report higher productivity and employee engagement.	Niagra Institute
Job Burnout	High EI negatively correlates with job burnout, enhancing employee well-being.	PMC (Gong, Zhun et al.)

These findings validate EI’s crucial role in various career stages, from individual performance to organisational health.

A. Comparative Analysis: India vs. Global Models

To assess the integration of EI in educational systems, we compare India’s approach with global best practices.

Table 2: Integration of Emotional Intelligence in Educational Systems

Aspect	India	Global Best Practices
Curriculum Integration	Minimal integration of EI; focus remains on academic achievements.	Countries like France have mandated teaching empathy in primary schools to address social challenges.
Teacher Training	Limited EI training for educators; lack of structured programs.	Educators are trained to manage emotions, positively impacting school communities.
Student Outcomes	Students face challenges in adaptability and soft skills in the workforce.	Integrating EI fosters empathy, self-awareness, and relationship management, preparing students for diverse environments.
Policy Implementation	Absence of national policies promoting EI in education.	Only 11% of countries have fully integrated social-emotional learning into their education systems, indicating a global recognition of its importance.



This comparative analysis highlights the need for India to adopt comprehensive EI training programs within its educational framework to enhance career readiness among students.

#### *B. Policy Gaps in India*

Even as EI is increasingly recognised as a key competency for career preparedness, India's education system has not yet systematically incorporated EI into curricula. Many policy gaps prevent the effective implementation of EI-based education and training:

- **No clear National EI Curriculum:** Unlike Finland and Singapore, India does not have a standard way to teach emotional intelligence in schools and universities. The National Education Policy (NEP) [15] mentions the importance of soft skills but does not require specific EI programs or assessments to be included. As a result, schools and universities struggle to include EI in their curriculum without clear policy guidelines.
- **No Compulsory EI Training for Teachers:** While teachers are tasked with developing students' emotional well-being, there are no specific programs to prepare the faculty to address real-world stress that students face during their educational journey and their career progression. Several surveys and studies show that over 75% of Indian teachers have never undergone formal EI training, which prevents the faculty from emotionally preparing students for the challenges ahead [23]. This situation differs from international best practices, where countries such as the UK and the US mandate EI-based teacher training as a prerequisite [32].
- **Absence of Public-Private Partnerships for Career-Readiness Training:** India's partnership between industries and educational institutions is deplorable. While other global models prioritise experiential learning through industry-academic collaborations, Indian schools and universities hardly partner with businesses to create EI-based training programs [22]. Limited participation by industries leads to a lack of correlation between academic learning and actual career requirements.
- **Inconsistent Implementation Across Schools:** As per a study conducted by CBSE [24], there was an evident lack of consistency in implementing and assessing life skills training modules across schools. Further, these modules did not address the emotional aspect of student development nor have the flexibility of personalised assessment. Adding to these national-level challenges were conflicting state-level policies and respective financial limitations. Consequently, students were exposed to varying learning experiences, and most did not meet industry demands.

Closing these policy loopholes calls for a strategic process of national-level reforms, teacher training initiatives, and increased interaction between academia and industry to make EI an integral part of India's education system.

#### **IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE POLICIES**

A structured policy intervention is necessary to effectively integrate Emotional Intelligence (EI) into India's education system and enhance career readiness. The following recommendations provide a roadmap for improving EI education through curriculum reforms, teacher training, and collaboration between academia and industry.

##### *A. Integrating EI into School and University Curricula*

- **Introduce Experiential Learning Modules:** In consultation with the industry and academia, design engaging coursework that focuses on practical applications of EI. The learning process must include proactive role-playing to stimulate decision-making through consultative activities. Students must learn to consider others' viewpoints and sensitivities while arriving at mutually agreed solutions to problems and situations.
- **Standardised EI Assessment Metrics:** Create assessment tools where students can self-monitor their progress and improve their skills with proper faculty supervision. Assessment metrics must include participation levels, behavioural observations, and peer review.
- **Policy Alignment with NEP 2020:** Revise existing education policies to officially include EI as an integral part of comprehensive student development.

##### *B. Teacher Training and Professional Development*

- **Compulsory EI Training for Teachers:** Train educators using proven EI techniques. This involves incorporating creative and engaging EI activities into their teaching methods. The goal is to improve their engagement and connection with their students.
- **Ongoing Professional Development:** Conduct annual workshops and certification courses for working teachers nationwide. These programs will help teachers learn to train students in consensus-building through empathy and conflict resolution through proactive engagement.
- **Improve Classroom Engagement:** Teachers should be motivated to apply interactive pedagogical approaches to teach students about human responses and emotions. Writing down one's feelings, stories, and group discussions can assist students in realising their emotions and relating to other people. Through these approaches, teachers can enhance emotional learning within the classroom.
- **Incentivise the Faculty for EI Training:** Offer monetary rewards and career advancement to those teachers who receive EI training and incorporate it into their pedagogical strategies.

##### *C. Collaboration Between Academia and Industry*

- **Industry Participation in EI Development Curriculum:** The industry must be invited to contribute suggestions and frameworks based on current workplace

requirements. Corporate executives, HR managers, and psychologists must participate in all discussions and workshops on emotional intelligence programs.

- **Mentorship and Coaching Programs:** Engage organised mentorship programs through which the industry can mentor faculty on emerging workplace challenges and guide them on effective ways to tweak their teaching methods on EI.
- **Internship Programs with EI Elements:** Internships with the industry must be made mandatory. Students will

be exposed to real-world interpersonal and team conflicts and learn how to resolve them. It will help them be better prepared for their first job interviews.

- **Define Guidelines for Public-Private Partnership Initiatives:** Clear guidelines must be defined for effective collaboration between the industry and academia. It will help establish a standard national template for engagement.

Table 3: Expected Impact of Policy Implementation

Policy Recommendation	Expected Outcome
Mandatory EI Courses	Improved emotional adaptability in students
EI Teacher Training	Enhanced emotional awareness and student engagement
Industry-Academia Collaboration	Increased employability and workplace readiness
Standardised EI Assessments	Measurable improvement in socio-emotional competencies

## V. CONCLUSION

India is poised to equip its students for the changing and emotionally challenging future workplace if it incorporates EI in curricula, provides EI training for teachers, and collaborates with industry-academic partners. These changes connect academic learning with practical career preparedness, making graduates technically sound and emotionally intelligent professionals.

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