

## Emotional Intelligence Across Cultures in Athletes and Non Athletes: A Comparative Study at a South Gujarat University in India among Indian and African Students

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### Abstract:

**Background:** This research explores the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in personal and professional success. EI, a multifaceted construct encompassing self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills, has significantly impacted academic performance, social interactions, and overall well-being. While extensively researched, the influence of cultural and athletic backgrounds on EI still needs to be explored, particularly in non-Western settings. **Objectives:** This research at P P Savani University at Surat Gujarat focuses on African and Indian students. It aims to assess and contrast emotional intelligence (EI) levels, particularly among athletes and nonathletes. The study investigates the impact of sports participation, cultural aspects, and social support structures and provides suggestions for improving EI and emotional wellness in this specific cultural setting. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted with 422 students, equally divided among Indian and African athletes and nonathletes. The study assessed EI using validated questionnaires measuring self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. Statistical analyses, including t-tests and ANOVA, were performed using SPSS software to analyze the influence of cultural and athletic factors on EI. **Results:** This study reveals variations in emotional intelligence aspects among the participants. African non-athletes demonstrated levels of self-awareness compared to athletes, with average scores of 37.673 and 35.655, respectively. Conversely, Indian athletes displayed more self-awareness than non-athletes, with mean scores of 37.832 and 35.282, respectively. Moreover, athletes generally exhibited skills than non-athletes, highlighting the influence of sports involvement on emotional intelligence. Furthermore, African students scored higher in self-motivation than their counterparts, indicating distinctions in motivational factors. These findings are thoroughly outlined in Table 3 of the results section, which presents the ANOVA analysis supporting these conclusions and showcasing the variance in self-awareness among these groups. Athletes generally demonstrated better social skills than nonathletes. Additionally, African students scored higher in self-motivation than Indian students, highlighting the significant impact of cultural and athletic backgrounds on various EI dimensions. **Conclusions:** The study's findings have significant practical implications. They underscore the importance of considering cultural and athletic contexts when developing interventions to enhance student EI. The study's results strongly support the need for tailored programs that address different cultural and athletic groups' unique needs. These programs, informed by the study's findings, can be instrumental in fostering emotional well-being and academic success, thereby contributing to students' overall development.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Comparative Analysis, African Student, Athlete Engagement, Cultural Influence.

## Introduction

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to identify, comprehend, and control one's emotions and those of others (Goleman, 1995). This intricate concept includes self-awareness, emotional regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Bar-On, 2006). EI is widely acknowledged as an element in attaining success in professional endeavors, significantly influencing academic performance, social relationships, and overall well-being (Petrides & Furnham 2001). This study at P P Savani University in South Gujarat, India, delves into the significance of EI among students from backgrounds with a specific focus on Indian and African students. The research seeks to evaluate and compare EI levels between student-athletes and non-athletes while specifically exploring how cultural diversity and participation in sports impact these dimensions. This emphasis is vital as most existing studies on EI have primarily concentrated on societies, leading to a lack of understanding of its implications in Western multicultural settings (Ciarrochi et al., 2000). The rationale behind this study lies in the growing acknowledgment of the role of EI in the development of individuals, particularly in enhancing emotional and mental well-being.

In places of learning, like the campus of P P Savani University, it is crucial to recognize the differences in intelligence among various student populations. This understanding can help shape tailored strategies to enhance success and foster an inclusive educational environment (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a concept that involves the ability to understand and manage both one's own emotions and those of others. It plays a role in developing, building solid relationships, and achieving success, especially in competitive sports. While there has been research on EI, there still needs to be a gap in understanding how cultural and athletic backgrounds impact EI in non-Western settings. This study aims to explore EI in environments focusing on P P Savani University students in South Gujarat, India, where it significantly influences students' academic performance, social interactions, and overall well-being.

Despite the emotional intelligence research, there still needs to be a significant gap in our understanding of how EI varies among individuals from diverse cultural and athletic backgrounds in non-Western contexts. This research seeks to bridge this gap by analyzing emotional intelligence levels among Indian and African students, focusing specifically on differences between athletes and non-athletes. This study's primary objectives include:

- Examining and contrasting EI levels across these groups.
- Investigating the influence of sports participation and cultural elements on EI.
- Exploring how social support systems shape emotional intelligence and overall well-being.
- Offering recommendations for improving EI through educational initiatives and sports programs.

Recognizing the relationship between diversity and emotional intelligence is vital for developing social skills and enhancing student outcomes. The anticipated insights gained from this research

will help design personalized interventions for EI that could impact educational strategies and practices.

### **Methodology**

This research methodology involved a study at P.P. Savani University in South Gujarat, India, with 422 students. The study divided the participants into four categories: 105 athletes, 105 nonathletes, 105 African athletes, and 105 African nonathletes. This division ensured representation across nationalities and athletic statuses for an in-depth emotional intelligence (EI) analysis based on these variables. The participants' ages ranged between 18 and 35, and they were all proficient in English to understand and complete the questionnaires.

**Study Setting:** the study took place at P.P. Savani University in South Gujarat, India, which provided an exclusive cultural and educational setting. The university's mixed student body permitted exploring EI across cultural and athletic contexts within the academic institution.

**Study Design:** This research offers a framework for examining intelligence (EI) in different cultural and sports settings, providing valuable insights for targeted interventions. A comparative study design assessed and compared EI levels among athletes and non-athletes from African backgrounds. This design is suitable for identifying variations in EI among groups at a point in time.

**Sampling Technique:** The sampling approach combined convenience and purposive sampling methods. The purposive selection was utilized to choose participants who met the criteria for the study goals, such as cultural background (Indian or African) and involvement in athletics (athletes or non-athletes). This method guaranteed the inclusion of individuals with characteristics to understand how cultural and athletic backgrounds influence EI. The convenience sampling method helped reorganize the data collection by selecting easily reachable and willing participants. This two-way split method guaranteed an inclusive selection of P P Savani University students, enhancing the study's applicability and significance.

**Data Collection:** Data was gathered through a combination of methods, including surveys via Google Forms and face-to-face surveys conducted by this researcher. This approach aimed to satisfy participants' preferences, improve response rates, and promote inclusivity. This process helped maintain consistency and dependability, ensuring that all participants received instructions and consent before participating.

Quantitative data was obtained using established questionnaires from Leadership toolkits. These tools were tailored to evaluate aspects of intelligence such as self-awareness, emotion regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. Utilizing these validated instruments guaranteed the collected data's accuracy and reliability, enhancing the study's strength and credibility.

**Assessment Measures:** This study ultimately adapted versions of the leadership Toolkit box. The Emotional Intelligence questionnaire and the Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) were used to assess intelligence. These tools examined EI dimensions such as self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. The study confirmed the reliability and validity of these assessment instruments within both African and Indian contexts. Moreover, demographic data, including nationality and sports participation details, were also gathered.

**Statistical Analysis:** The data was rigorously analyzed using SPSS version 25.0. The study used Descriptive statistics to outline the characteristics and EI scores of the sample group. In contrast, inferential statistics, such as t-tests and ANOVA, were employed to compare EI dimensions among groups. The analysis aimed to identify variations in EI levels based on background and athletic status, with post hoc tests conducted to delve into specific group distinctions. The study also calculated Pearson correlation coefficients to explore relationships between EI dimensions. All statistical tests utilized the significance levels set at  $p < 0.05$  throughout the study. The study results shape interventions to boost emotional intelligence, demonstrating the study's practical implications.

**Ethical Considerations:** The study followed standards approved by the institutional review board at PP Savani University. All participants provided consent, ensuring they understood their rights and the purpose of the study. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained, with data securely stored and accessible to the research team.

**Results**

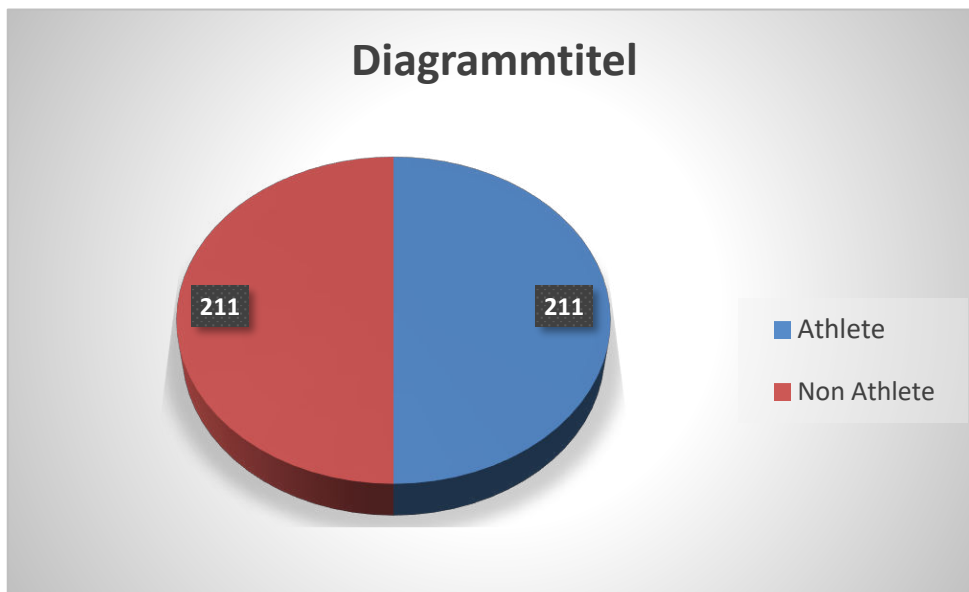
Demographics of the participants: Table 1 breaks down the nationality and level of involvement among the 422 individuals who participated in this study.

**Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Nationality and Athletic Participation**  
N=422

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Nationality</b>	<b>African</b>	211	50.0%
	<b>Indian</b>	211	50.0%
<b>Are you an athlete in any sports</b>	<b>Athlete</b>	211	50.0%
	<b>Non-Athlete</b>	211	50.0%

**Table 1** shows the frequency and percentage distribution of nationality and athletic participation. The sample is evenly split among the categories of African, Indian, athlete, and non-athlete to allow for comparisons between groups. This equal representation helps reduce any biases that could affect the Analysis, allowing for an examination of how cultural and athletic aspects impact intelligence.

**Figure 1: Athletic Status by Frequency Distribution**



**Figure 1** shows the distribution of participants based on their status, dividing them evenly into athletes and non-athletes. Each group comprises 50% of the sample size, promoting representation and reducing study biases. This equal division is essential for comparing intelligence between athletes and non-athletes. By maintaining this sample, the study enhances the generalizability of its results, making them more applicable to an audience. This approach allows insights into how athletic involvement influences intelligence while ensuring accuracy, fairness, and broad relevance in interpreting the findings.

Figure 2: Nationality by Frequency Distribution

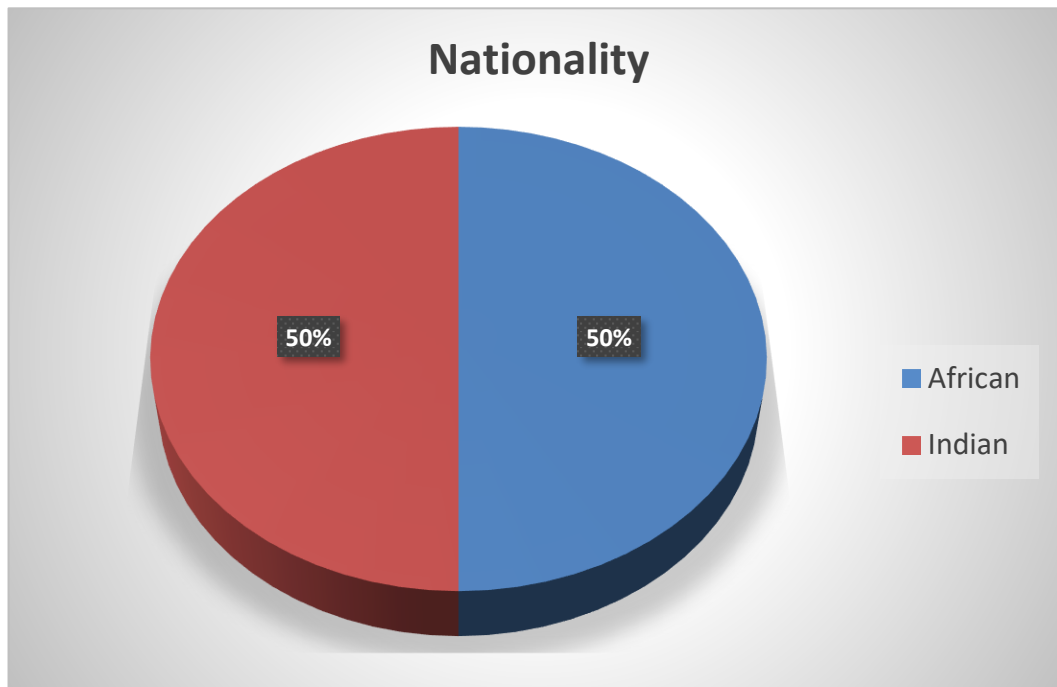


Figure 2 displays the distribution of participants based on their nationality Indian students. Both nationalities are equally represented in the sample of 422 participants, ensuring a representation for a comparative analysis. This balanced approach minimizes. Enables an assessment of how cultural factors impact emotional intelligence. As a result, the study's findings are likely to be accurate, impartial, and broadly relevant for understanding intelligence across cultural settings.

**Emotional Intelligence Dimensions by Nationality and Athletic Status:**

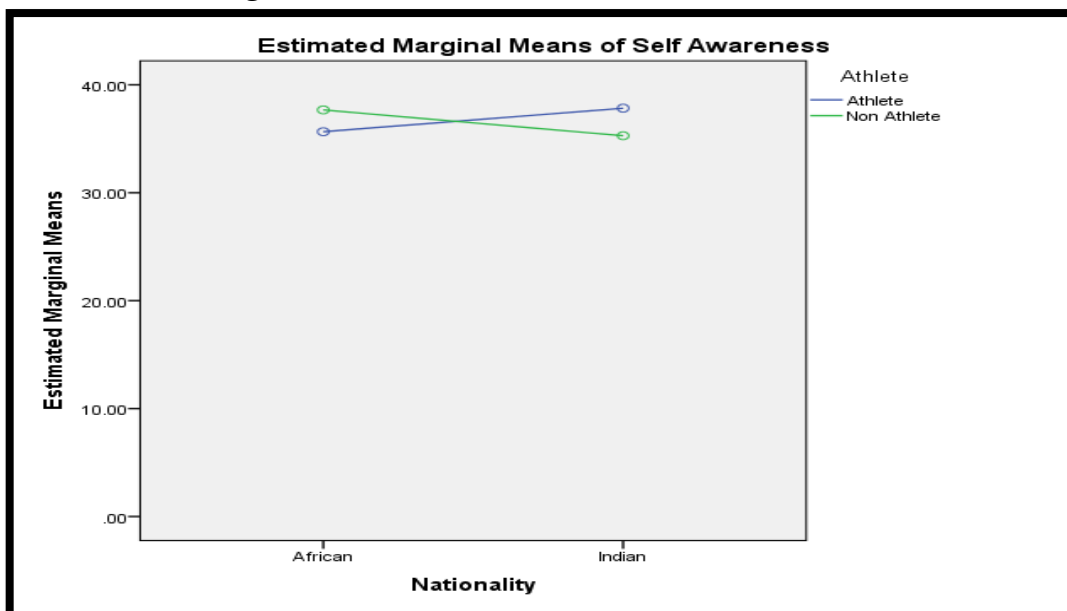
Table 2: T-tests Analysis by Nationality and Athletic Status

Dimension	Nationality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-value	P-value
Self-Awareness	African	211	36.621	7.218	.166	.868
	Indian	211	36.502	7.459		
Managing Emotions	African	211	30.692	7.076	.819	.413
	Indian	211	31.284	7.772		

Motivating Oneself	African	211	35.412	7.541	2.369	.018
	Indian	211	33.626	7.946		
Empathy	African	211	33.962	7.368	.360	.719
	Indian	211	34.232	8.022		
Social Skill	African	211	33.611	8.169	.017	.986
	Indian	211	33.626	9.047		

**Table 2** The study compared the Emotional Intelligence Dimensions between participants from Africa and India, including self-awareness, managing emotions motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills. Key finding: Regarding self-awareness, there was no distinction between Indian participants (t value; 0.166 p-value; 0.868). Both groups showed no differences in managing emotions (t value; 0.819, p-value; 0.413). African participants demonstrated higher levels of self-motivation than Indian participants (t-value: 2.369, p-value: 0.018). The Analysis did not reveal any significant variance in empathy between Indian participants (t-value: 0.360, p-value: 0.719). Similarly, the two groups had no differences in social skills (t value; 0.017 p-value; 0.986). These results suggest that while both groups generally display intelligence levels, cultural or situational factors may impact specific areas, like self-motivation.

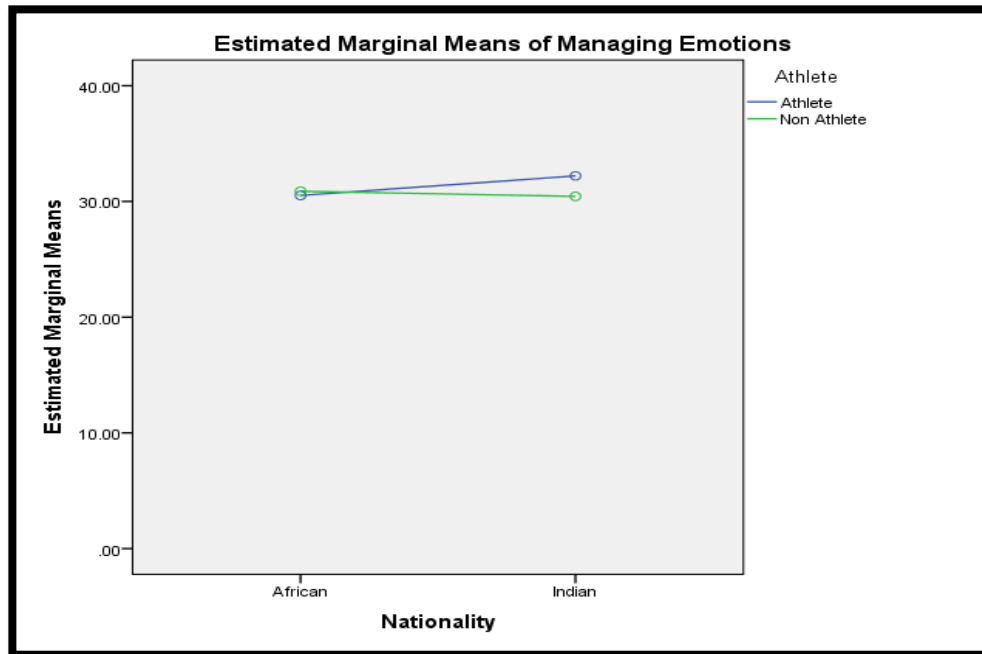
**Figure 3: Estimated Marginal Means of Self-Awareness.**



**Figure 3** shows how nationality (African and Indian) and athletic status (Athlete and Non-Athlete) relate to levels of self-awareness. The findings reveal that African athletes exhibit self-awareness compared to non-athletes, and Indian non-athletes demonstrate higher self-awareness than Indian athletes. The results suggest that cultural and contextual elements linked to

nationality play a role in shaping the impact of involvement on self-awareness. Recognizing these nuances is crucial for designing tailored interventions that consider cultural influences and athletic backgrounds to improve intelligence.

**Figure 4: Estimated Marginal Means of Managing Emotions.**



**Figure 4** shows how emotional levels are managed based on nationality (African and Indian) and athletic status (Athlete and Non-Athlete). It highlights the impact of nationality and athletic status on management. Indian athletes exhibit emotional management more than Indian non-athletes.

There were less significant differences in management between athletes and non-athletes among both groups of participants. This Analysis indicates that cultural and situational factors linked to nationality affect how athletic involvement influences regulation. Recognizing these dynamics is essential for crafting strategies to enhance intelligence across diverse cultural and sporting environments.

**Table 3: Comparison of Self-Awareness Using Two-Way ANOVA**

<b>Two ways ANOVA</b>			
Dependent Variable: Self Awareness			
Descriptive Statistics			
<b>Dependent Variable: Self Awareness</b>			
<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>



<b>African</b>	<b>Athlete</b>	35.655	7.621	110
	<b>Non-Athlete</b>	37.673	6.630	101
	<b>Total</b>	36.621	7.218	211
<b>Indian</b>	<b>Athlete</b>	37.832	7.467	101
	<b>Non-Athlete</b>	35.282	7.273	110
	<b>Total</b>	36.502	7.459	211
<b>Total</b>	<b>Athlete</b>	36.697	7.608	211
	<b>Non-Athlete</b>	36.427	7.059	211
	<b>Total</b>	36.562	7.331	422

**Table 3** indicates a link between nationality, athletic status, and self-awareness. It shows that African athletes tend to have higher levels of self-awareness than non-athletes, whereas Indian nonathletes demonstrate greater self-awareness than Indian athletes. These findings imply that cultural influences play a role in how engagement in sports impacts one's self-awareness. To effectively boost self-awareness, interventions should consider these athletic distinctions, encouraging African sports participation and nonsporting activities for Indians.

### Discussion

This study found differences in emotional intelligence (EI) aspects; African athletes displayed levels of self-awareness compared to non-athletes, and this study reveals variations in emotional intelligence aspects among the participants. African non-athletes demonstrated levels of self-awareness compared to athletes, with average scores of 37.673 and 35.655, respectively. Conversely, Indian athletes displayed more self-awareness than non-athletes, with mean scores of 37.832 and 35.282, respectively. Moreover, athletes generally exhibited skills than non-athletes, highlighting the influence of sports involvement on emotional intelligence. Furthermore, African students scored higher in self-motivation than their counterparts, indicating distinctions in motivational factors. These findings are thoroughly outlined in Table 3 of the results section, which presents the ANOVA analysis supporting these conclusions and showcasing the variance in self-awareness among these groups.

Athletes generally demonstrated better social skills than nonathletes. Additionally, African students scored higher in self-motivation than Indian students, highlighting the significant impact of cultural and athletic backgrounds on various EI dimensions.

Moreover, athletes generally showed abilities in managing emotions and social interactions than non-athletes. These results indicate that cultural backgrounds and participation in sports play a role in influencing EI dimensions like self-motivation, which was significantly higher among students.

**Implications:** The findings highlight the significance of considering athletic factors when developing interventions to enhance intelligence. Modifying educational and sports programs to

these contexts promotes student's well-being and academic achievement. Universities should incorporate training into their academic curricula and extracurricular activities to create more student inclusivity and a supportive environment for the diverse backgrounds of different students.

**Strengths and Limitations:** This study's equal distribution of samples contributes to the credibility of the results by reducing biases. The use of measurement tools further reinforces the reliability of the data collected. Nonetheless, reliance on self-reported assessments may introduce response biases, while the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to establish the connection. Although suitable for observations, the sample size suggests that more varied samples are required in upcoming studies to improve overall applicability.

**Conclusion:** This study emphasizes the impact of athletic backgrounds on college students' emotional intelligence. The results lay a foundation for designing programs that enhance emotional intelligence, foster emotional resilience, and achieve academic achievement in various educational environments.

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**Conflicts of Interest:** There were no conflicts in this study.

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