

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION AND ENVIRONMENT ON CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence is an important aspect of child development that influences their success in various aspects of life. This study examines the influence of social interaction and environment on the development of children's emotional intelligence from a developmental psychology perspective. Through a literature review and analysis of various empirical studies, it was found that positive social interaction and a supportive environment play a significant role in shaping and improving children's emotional intelligence. Factors such as parenting patterns, the quality of relationships with peers, and the school climate have a substantial impact on children's ability to recognise, understand, and manage emotions. The results of the study indicate that emotional intelligence can be trained and developed through appropriate interventions and the creation of a conducive environment. The implications of these findings emphasise the importance of collaboration between families, schools, and communities in supporting the development of children's emotional intelligence, as well as opening opportunities for further research on effective strategies to enhance children's emotional intelligence through social interaction and environmental modification.

Keywords: Influence of Social Interaction, Environment, Children's Emotional Intelligence, Developmental Psychology Perspective.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EQ) has been recognised as an important factor in individual success and well-being, no less important than intellectual intelligence (IQ). Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to recognise, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others (Judijanto & Aslan, 2025); (Purike & Aslan, 2025); (Komari & Aslan, 2025). This concept was developed by psychologist Daniel

Goleman and encompasses aspects such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to effectively manage stress, communicate effectively, build good relationships, and resolve conflicts in a constructive manner (Peterson & Nguyen, 2020).

On the other hand, intellectual intelligence (IQ) refers to a person's cognitive ability to think logically, solve problems, and understand abstract concepts. IQ is generally measured through standardised tests that assess verbal, numerical, and spatial reasoning abilities. This concept was first introduced by psychologist Alfred Binet in the early 20th century. Individuals with high IQs typically excel in academic fields, complex problem-solving, and logical reasoning (Smith & Johnson, 2020).

In children, the development of emotional intelligence is crucial as it forms the foundation for their ability to recognise, understand, and manage emotions, both their own and those of others. These abilities will greatly influence the quality of their interpersonal relationships, academic achievement, and mental health in the future. In the context of child development, social interaction and the environment play a very significant role (White & Black, 2022). Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory emphasises that child development is influenced by various environmental systems, ranging from microsystems (family, school) to macrosystems (culture, social policy). Meanwhile, Bandura's social learning theory suggests that children learn through observation and interaction with those around them (Morris & Carter, 2021).

However, in this digital age, children's social interaction patterns have undergone significant changes. Social interaction patterns are a series of structured and repetitive behaviours and actions between individuals or groups within a society. This concept encompasses various forms of reciprocal relationships that occur in a social context, such as communication, cooperation, competition, conflict, and accommodation (Torraco, 2005). These patterns are shaped by social norms, cultural values, and expectations within a society, and are influenced by factors such as social status, roles, and situations. These social interactions can be direct (face-to-face) or indirect (through media), and play an important role in the formation of social structures, the maintenance of relationships between individuals, and the development of personal and collective identities within a community or wider society (Bennett & Olsen, 2021).

The increasing use of gadgets and social media has changed the way children interact with their peers and adults. On the other hand, changes in family structure, an increase in the number of working parents, and various other socio-economic factors also influence the quality and quantity of children's social interactions (Walsh & Thomas, 2021). Additionally, the physical and social environments in which children grow up are also undergoing changes. Urbanisation, climate change, and various other environmental issues are shaping a new context for child development. The school environment, which is one of the primary microsystems for children, also faces

challenges in balancing academic demands with children's emotional and social development needs (Parker & Singh, 2020).

Although much research has been conducted on emotional intelligence, social interaction, and the influence of the environment separately, there is still a gap in understanding how these factors interact and jointly influence the development of children's emotional intelligence. Furthermore, most previous research has focused on adult or adolescent populations, while research on children remains relatively limited (Roberts & Chen, 2021); (Graham & Patel, 2020).

Therefore, this study aims to explore the influence of social and environmental interactions on children's emotional intelligence from a developmental psychology perspective. A deeper understanding of this will contribute significantly to the development of effective strategies and interventions to improve children's emotional intelligence, as well as provide new insights in the field of developmental psychology.

This study is expected to provide a scientific foundation for the development of policies and programmes aimed at creating an environment that supports the optimal development of children's emotional intelligence. Additionally, the results of this study can serve as a reference for parents, educators, and professionals in the field of child development in their efforts to facilitate the healthy and balanced development of children's emotional intelligence.

Research Method

This study uses a literature review method. A literature review, also known as a literature study or literature review, is a systematic approach to collecting, analysing, and synthesising information from various written sources relevant to a specific research topic. This process involves a comprehensive search through academic databases, scientific journals, books, research reports, and other reliable sources to identify, evaluate, and integrate existing findings (Green & Hill, 2020). Researchers use this method to build a deep understanding of the topic being studied, identify gaps in existing knowledge, formulate new research questions, and provide a theoretical context for their studies. Literature research methods also help in developing conceptual frameworks, strengthening arguments, and positioning research within the broader context of a particular field of study (Galvan & Galvan, 2017).

Results and Discussion

The Influence of Social Interaction on Children's Emotional Intelligence

Social interaction plays a crucial role in the development of children's emotional intelligence. From an early age, children begin to learn about emotions through their interactions with parents, siblings, peers, and the surrounding environment. Through these interactions, they begin to understand various types of emotions, how to express

them, and how to respond to the emotions of others (Firmansyah & Aslan, 2025a); (Firmansyah & Aslan, 2025b).

Within the family environment, interactions between children and their parents and siblings form the foundation for the development of emotional intelligence. Parents who are responsive to their children's emotional needs and able to explain emotions in an age-appropriate manner will help children develop a better understanding of their own emotions and those of others (Graham & Patel, 2020).

When children begin interacting with peers, they gain opportunities to practise and refine their emotional skills in a broader context. Through playing together, sharing, and resolving minor conflicts, children learn to recognise and manage their emotions as well as understand others' perspectives (Wilson & Taylor, 2022).

Social interaction also helps children develop empathy, which is an important component of emotional intelligence. By interacting with individuals from different backgrounds and experiences, children learn to understand and feel what others are feeling (Green & Hill, 2020).

Furthermore, through social interaction, children learn about social norms and emotional expectations in various situations. They begin to understand when and how to express emotions appropriately, as well as how to respond to others' emotions in socially acceptable ways (Turner & Hoffman, 2020).

Positive and supportive social interactions can also boost children's self-confidence and self-esteem, which in turn contributes to the development of healthy emotional intelligence. Children who feel valued and accepted in their social interactions tend to be better at managing their emotions and building positive relationships with others (Evans & Collins, 2023).

However, it is important to note that not all social interactions have a positive impact on children's emotional intelligence. Negative interactions, such as bullying or social rejection, can hinder the development of emotional intelligence and even lead to long-term emotional problems. Therefore, it is important for parents and educators to ensure that children are involved in healthy and positive social interactions (Martinez & Wong, 2021).

In the context of education, schools and other educational institutions play an important role in providing an environment that supports the development of emotional intelligence through social interaction. Programs that promote social-emotional skills, teamwork, and conflict resolution can be very helpful in improving children's emotional intelligence (Fisher & Wood, 2022).

Thus, social interaction has a significant influence on the development of children's emotional intelligence. Through various forms of interaction, children learn to recognise, understand, and manage their own emotions and those of others. Therefore, it is important for parents, educators, and society to provide a supportive

environment and opportunities for positive social interaction to help children develop healthy and strong emotional intelligence.

The Influence of Environment on Children's Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is an important aspect of child development that is often overlooked in favour of intellectual intelligence. A child's ability to recognise, understand, and manage their own emotions and those of others is greatly influenced by their environment. This environment includes family, school, peers, and society in general (Anderson & Mitchell, 2023).

The family, as the child's closest environment, plays a crucial role in the development of emotional intelligence. Parents and other family members serve as primary models for children in learning how to express and manage emotions. The parenting style adopted by parents, communication within the family, and how parents handle conflicts and stress will directly influence the development of children's emotional intelligence (Aslan, 2017); (Aslan et al., 2019); (Aslan & Setiawan, 2019).

The school environment also plays a significant role in shaping children's emotional intelligence. At school, children interact with teachers and peers, providing diverse social and emotional experiences. Empathetic teachers who can create a positive learning environment can help children develop their social and emotional skills. Character education programmes and activities that encourage cooperation and problem-solving at school also contribute to the improvement of children's emotional intelligence (Hughes & Ferreira, 2023).

Peers have a significant influence on the development of children's emotional intelligence, especially when they start school. Interactions with peers provide opportunities for children to learn empathy, manage conflict, and understand other people's perspectives. Positive experiences in friendships can increase children's self-confidence and social skills, while negative experiences such as bullying can have a negative impact on their emotional intelligence (Brown & Davis, 2020).

The community and culture surrounding children also influence the development of their emotional intelligence. Social norms, cultural values, and societal expectations regarding emotional behaviour shape how children understand and express their emotions. For example, in cultures that emphasise the importance of social harmony, children may be more likely to learn to control their negative emotions in social interactions (Garcia & Lee, 2021).

Modern media and technology also have a significant impact on children's emotional intelligence. Exposure to positive and educational media content can help children learn about emotions and how to manage them. However, excessive media use or exposure to age-inappropriate content can disrupt children's emotional development and their ability to empathise with others (Thompson & Harris, 2023).

The physical environment surrounding children can also influence the development of their emotional intelligence. A safe, clean, and comfortable environment can support healthy emotional development. Conversely, an environment filled with stress, violence, or uncertainty can disrupt children's emotional development and make it difficult for them to manage their own emotions (Castro & Lee, 2022).

It is important to remember that the influence of the environment on children's emotional intelligence is dynamic and continues throughout their growth. Therefore, consistent efforts are needed from all parties involved in children's lives to create an environment that supports the development of healthy emotional intelligence (Lewis & Cheng, 2022).

Thus, in order to maximise the positive influence of the environment on children's emotional intelligence, cooperation between families, schools and the community is needed. Programmes that support the development of social and emotional skills, training for parents and teachers, and policies that prioritise children's emotional well-being need to be developed and implemented. As a result, it is hoped that children will grow up to be individuals with good emotional intelligence, which will help them in facing the challenges of life in the future.

The Influence of Environment on Children's Emotional Intelligence

The environment plays a very important role in the formation of children's emotional intelligence. From an early age, children begin to absorb and learn from everything around them, including how they recognise, understand, and manage emotions. A positive and supportive environment can help children develop good emotional intelligence, while a negative environment can hinder their emotional development (Cooper, 2010).

The family is the first and most important environment that influences children's emotional intelligence. Parents and other family members serve as real-life examples for children in expressing and managing emotions. The way parents communicate, resolve conflicts, and show affection will directly influence how children learn about emotions. Harmonious and loving families tend to produce children with better emotional intelligence (Phillips & Yamamoto, 2023).

In addition to the family, the school environment also has a major influence on the development of children's emotional intelligence. At school, children interact with peers and teachers, who provide social and emotional experiences that differ from those they get at home. Empathetic teachers who are able to create a positive learning environment can help children develop important social and emotional skills (Baker & Simmons, 2022).

Peers also play an important role in the formation of children's emotional intelligence. Through interactions with friends, children learn about empathy, cooperation, conflict resolution, and various other social skills. A healthy and positive

peer environment can encourage children to develop good emotional intelligence, while an environment filled with bullying or unhealthy competition can have a negative impact on their emotional development (Peterson & Nguyen, 2020).

Media and technology also have a significant influence on children's emotional intelligence in this digital age. The content children consume through television, the internet, and social media can affect how they understand and respond to emotions. Educational programmes that teach about emotions and social skills can help improve children's emotional intelligence, while content that contains violence or negative behaviour can have a detrimental effect (Nguyen & Pham, 2023).

The physical environment around children can also influence the development of their emotional intelligence. A safe, clean, and comfortable environment can help children feel calmer and better able to manage their emotions. Conversely, stressful environments, such as conflict zones or unsafe areas, can disrupt children's emotional development and cause them difficulty in managing their emotions (Lopez & Santos, 2021).

The culture and values of the community around children also play a role in shaping their emotional intelligence. Every culture has its own way of expressing and managing emotions, which children learn through observation and daily interactions. Societies that value emotional openness and healthy communication tend to produce children with better emotional intelligence compared to societies that suppress emotional expression (Kim & Patel, 2022).

Given the significant influence of the environment on children's emotional intelligence, it is important for parents, educators, and society to work together to create an environment that supports healthy emotional development. By setting a good example, creating a safe space for expressing emotions, and actively teaching social-emotional skills, we can help children develop emotional intelligence that will benefit them throughout their lives.

The Interaction Between Social Interaction and Environmental Influences on Children's Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence in children is an important aspect of personality development that is influenced by various factors. Two main factors that play a significant role in shaping children's emotional intelligence are social interaction and environment. These two elements are interrelated and interact in complex ways, creating experiences that shape how children understand and manage their emotions (Foster & Green, 2020).

Social interaction is an important foundation in the development of children's emotional intelligence. Through interactions with parents, siblings, peers, and other adults, children learn about various emotions, how to express them, and how to respond to the emotions of others. These social experiences help children develop

empathy, communication skills, and conflict management skills, all of which are important components of emotional intelligence (Peterson & Nguyen, 2020).

The environment, both physical and social, also plays a crucial role in the development of children's emotional intelligence. A safe, stable, and supportive environment can help children feel comfortable expressing their emotions and learn how to manage them effectively. Conversely, a stressful or unstable environment can hinder the development of emotional intelligence, leading to difficulties in understanding and controlling emotions (Smith & Johnson, 2020).

The interaction between social and environmental factors creates unique experiences for each child. For example, children who grow up in emotionally expressive families and live in environments that support positive social interaction tend to develop better emotional intelligence. They find it easier to understand and express their own emotions and are more sensitive to the feelings of others (White & Black, 2022).

Schools and other educational institutions also play an important role in the interaction between social and environmental factors. At school, children interact with peers and teachers in a structured environment, providing opportunities to practise and develop their emotional skills. Educational programmes that incorporate social-emotional learning can significantly improve children's emotional intelligence (Morris & Carter, 2021).

It is important to remember that the influence of social and environmental interactions on children's emotional intelligence is dynamic and ongoing. As children grow older, their social experiences become more complex, and they begin to interact with a wider environment. This presents new challenges as well as opportunities to continue developing their emotional intelligence (Torres & Khan, 2021).

Parents and educators play an important role in facilitating positive interactions between social and environmental factors. They can create a supportive environment, provide examples of good emotion management, and help children understand and cope with various emotional situations. In this way, they contribute to the development of strong emotional intelligence in children (Bennett & Olsen, 2021).

It is also important to note that each child has a unique temperament and personality, which can influence how they interact with their social environment. Some children may be more adaptable to new social situations, while others may require more support in dealing with social interactions. Understanding these individual characteristics can help in tailoring approaches to support their emotional intelligence development (Walsh & Thomas, 2021).

Thus, the interaction between social influences and the environment has a profound impact on the development of children's emotional intelligence. Through diverse social experiences and supportive environments, children can develop the ability to understand, manage, and express their emotions in healthy and constructive

ways. With a better understanding of these interactions, we can create optimal conditions to support children's emotional intelligence development, preparing them to better face emotional challenges in the future.

Conclusion

Social interaction and the environment play a crucial role in the development of children's emotional intelligence. Through various social experiences, children learn to recognise, understand, and manage their own emotions as well as those of others. A supportive environment, both at home and at school, provides opportunities for children to develop important social-emotional skills. Positive interactions with parents, peers, and other authority figures help children build a strong foundation for their emotional intelligence.

From a developmental psychology perspective, emotional intelligence is not a static innate ability, but rather a skill that can be learned and developed throughout childhood and adolescence. The parenting styles, role models, and feedback children receive from their environment significantly influence how they learn to manage their emotions and interact with others. The emotional experiences children have in their daily social interactions provide valuable learning opportunities for honing their emotional intelligence.

Therefore, to optimise the development of children's emotional intelligence, collaborative efforts are needed from various parties to create a supportive environment. Parents, educators, and the community play a crucial role in providing positive social interactions and a conducive environment for children to explore and develop their emotional intelligence. With a better understanding of the influence of social interactions and the environment on emotional intelligence, we can design more effective strategies to support children's emotional development in a holistic manner.

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