



# Understanding the Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Risk Taking Behaviour

**Ms. Pritika Srivastav<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Prakriti Sushmita<sup>2</sup>**

PhD. Scholar<sup>1\*</sup>, Department of Psychology, Nims University Rajasthan, Jaipur  
Assistant Professor<sup>2</sup>, Department of Psychology, Nims University Rajasthan, Jaipur

\*Corresponding Author: **Ms. Pritika Srivastav,**

## Abstract

**Background:** The relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and risk-taking behaviour (RTB) has garnered significant interest in psychological and behavioural research. This study explores how emotional intelligence influences risk-taking behaviour in uncertain situations.

**Aims and Objectives:** The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour in young adults. Specifically, the study seeks to understand how emotional intelligence might influence decision-making under conditions of risk.

**Methodology:** A sample of 105 young adults, aged 18 to 29, from urban Jaipur, India, participated in a correlational study. Emotional intelligence was measured using the Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale (BEIS-10), and risk-taking behaviour was assessed using the Domain-Specific Risk-Taking Scale for Adults (DSRTS).

**Results:** Statistical analysis revealed a weak positive correlation ( $r = 0.148$ ) between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour, though the relationship was not statistically significant ( $p = 0.1318$ ). The coefficient of determination indicated that only 2.2% of the variance in risk-taking behaviour could be explained by emotional intelligence.

**Conclusion:** These findings suggest that emotional intelligence plays a limited role in shaping risk-taking behaviour, and that other factors such as personality traits and context-specific variables may influence decision-making under risk. The study highlights the need for further research to examine the role of emotional intelligence in different domains of risk and its interaction with other psychological factors in decision-making.

**Key words:** emotional intelligence, risk-taking behaviour, decision-making, domain-specific risk, emotional regulation

## Introduction

Emotions play an integral role in human decision-making and behaviour, particularly in situations involving uncertainty and risk. As individuals navigate their personal and professional lives, they are constantly interacting with their own emotional experiences and that of others around them.

These emotional experiences, whether positive or negative, influence how individuals assess and



respond to risks. In contexts where there is a potential for loss, such as financial decisions or health-related choices, emotions can greatly shape the decisions an individual makes. Emotional intelligence (EI), which is defined as the ability to identify, understand, and regulate one's emotions and the emotions of others, provides an important framework for understanding how emotions impact decision-making (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Humans are inherently social creatures, and the emotions we experience are often influenced by the people around us. Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci (1985) and expanded by Ryan (2000), focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that drive behaviour. It posits that individuals are more likely to engage in risk-taking when they feel autonomous and competent, as these feelings enhance motivation and engagement. This interconnectedness that we experience is grounded in our evolutionary history, where cooperation and group cohesion played a vital role in the survival of our species. Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci (1985) and expanded by Ryan (2000), focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that drive behaviour. It posits that individuals are more likely to engage in risk-taking when they feel autonomous and competent, as these feelings enhance motivation and engagement. This paper explores how emotional intelligence affects decision-making and risk-taking behaviour in uncertain situations, focusing primarily on how emotional intelligence influences individual risk perceptions and behaviours. Speaking of individuals with higher emotional intelligence, they are thought to have better emotional regulation and awareness, it is thus expected that they might assess and approach risk differently than those with lower emotional intelligence.

Despite the growing body of research examining emotional intelligence and decision-making, the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour has not been fully understood. Some studies point in the direction that emotional intelligence helps individuals make better decisions in risky situations, as it enables them to process emotional information and regulate their emotions more effectively (Hildebrand & Killgore, 2023). On the other hand, other studies indicate that emotional intelligence might lead to an increase in risk-taking, especially when an individual is confident in their emotional regulation and ability to navigate uncertainties (Sánchez-López et al., 2022). This research seeks to examine the extent to which emotional intelligence influences risk-taking behaviour, particularly in contexts where individuals are



confronted with uncertainty and potential loss. The study also aims to explore how this relationship is affected by different levels of emotional intelligence.

### **Research Hypothesis**

Based on previous literature and the research objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- There will be no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour.
- Emotional intelligence influences the decision-making of an individual when risk is involved.

In testing these hypotheses, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of how emotional intelligence influences decision-making in uncertain situations. By examining the correlation between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour, the study will add valuable insight into the role that emotional awareness and regulation play in shaping decisions that involve risk.

### **Methodology**

#### **Demographics**

This correlational study was conducted in urban Jaipur, India, in February 2025, and involved a sample of 105 young adults ranging from 18 to 29 years old. Participants for the study were recruited from local universities and community centers using convenience sampling.

#### **Study Structure**

The study was designed to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour, particularly in the context of decision-making under uncertainty. The main goal of the study was to explore how individuals with higher emotional intelligence approach risk differently compared to those with lower emotional intelligence.

**Psychological Tools:** To measure the key variables of the study, emotional intelligence, and risk-taking behaviour, the following tools were used:



Domain-Specific Risk-Taking Scale for Adults (DSRTS): This scale was used to assess the participants' risk-taking behaviour across several domains, including financial, health, social, and recreational risks. The DSRTS allows for the evaluation of how individuals are likely to engage in risk-taking behaviours in various aspects of their lives. It has been widely used and has been shown to provide reliable measurements of risk-taking tendencies.

Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale (BEIS-10): The BEIS-10 is a 10-item scale that measures emotional intelligence, assessing abilities such as emotional awareness, emotional regulation, and the capacity to empathize with others. Emotional intelligence, as measured by this scale, helps to understand how individuals recognize and manage their emotions, which may directly influence their decision-making and behaviour.

### Study Procedure

Each participant completed both the Domain-Specific Risk-Taking Scale for Adults (DSRTS) and the Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale (BEIS-10) in a controlled environment to ensure that they understood the items and could respond honestly. Participants were asked to self-report their emotional intelligence and their tendencies to engage in risk-taking behaviour. Data was collected anonymously to ensure privacy and to encourage honest responses from the participants.

### Results

**Table 1:** Demographic details of participants.

Age Range	Female	Male	Total
18–20	16	17	33
21–23	16	19	35
24–26	10	9	19
27–29	10	8	15
Total	52	53	105



**Table 2:** Correlation and Statistical Measures of Emotional Intelligence and Risk-Taking Behaviour

Parameter	Value
Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	0.148
Coefficient of determination (r <sup>2</sup> )	0.02192
P-value	0.1318
Covariance	33.0484
Sample size (n)	105
Test statistic	1.5193

The statistical analysis revealed several key findings regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour revealed that the Pearson correlation coefficient between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour was found to be  $r = 0.148$ , indicating a weak positive correlation. This suggests that there is a slight tendency for individuals with higher emotional intelligence to engage in more risk-taking behaviour.

The coefficient of determination was  $r^2 = 0.02192$ , meaning that only 2.2% of the variance in risk-taking behaviour can be explained by emotional intelligence. This suggests that while emotional intelligence has some relationship with risk-taking behaviour, other factors likely also play a larger role in influencing risk-related decisions.

The p-value for the correlation between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour was 0.1318, which exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05. This indicates that the correlation between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour is not statistically significant at the 5% level, suggesting that emotional intelligence alone is not a reliable predictor of risk-taking behaviour.

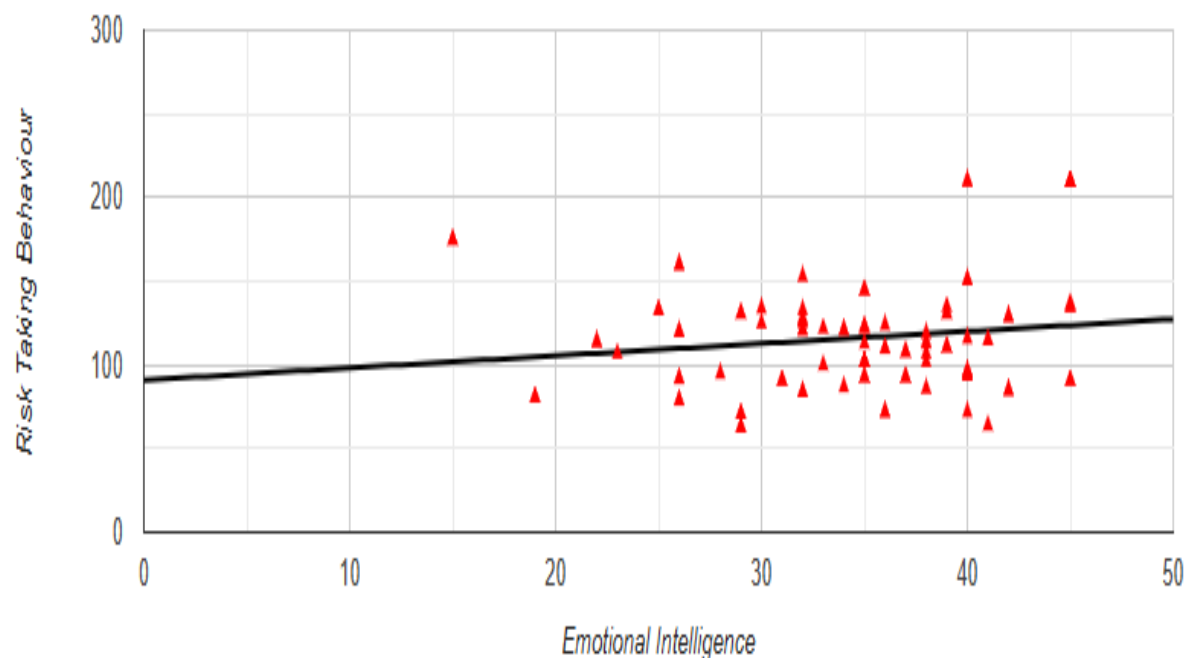
The covariance between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour was 33.0484, which indicates that the two variables tend to change together, but the relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant.



The sample size of 105 participants was sufficient to detect medium to large effects, yet the weak correlation observed suggests that the influence of emotional intelligence on risk-taking behaviour may be more complex and potentially moderated by other factors.

The test statistic was 1.5193, further supporting the conclusion that the correlation between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour is not statistically significant.

**Figure 1:** Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Risk Taking Behaviour



## Discussion

The results of this study suggest that emotional intelligence has a weak influence on risk-taking behaviour. While the correlation between emotional intelligence and risk-taking was positive, it was not statistically significant. Thus, emotional intelligence, as measured in this study, does not serve as a strong predictor of an individual's tendency to engage in risky behaviour.

These findings align with previous research suggesting that the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour is complex and context-dependent (Sánchez-López et al., 2022). In particular, while some studies have found that emotional intelligence may promote optimal decision-making, others have suggested that individuals with high emotional intelligence



may take more calculated risks, as they are better able to regulate their emotions and process emotional information (Hildebrand & Killgore, 2023). However, this study found that the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour was weak and non-significant, implying that other factors, such as individual differences, environmental influences, or domain-specific contexts, play a more significant role in shaping risk-taking behaviour.

One possible explanation for the weak correlation could be that emotional intelligence, as measured in this study, does not fully capture the complexity of decision-making processes. Emotional intelligence encompasses several facets, including emotional awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy. Each of these facets may influence risk-taking behaviour differently, depending on the context in which decisions are being made. For example, emotional intelligence may be more strongly related to risk-taking in specific domains, such as financial or health-related decisions, but less so in other areas. Future studies could benefit from exploring the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour across different domains of risk.

Additionally, it is possible that other psychological factors, such as personality traits (e.g., sensation-seeking, impulsivity), have a stronger influence on risk-taking behaviour than emotional intelligence. Previous researches have shown that individuals high in sensation-seeking are more likely to engage in risky behaviour (Zuckerman, 1994), and these traits may be more directly related to risk-taking than emotional intelligence.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Given the findings of this study, several avenues for future research are suggested:

- **Larger, More Diverse Samples:** Future studies should include a larger and more diverse sample to increase the generalizability of the findings. A more varied sample would allow for a deeper understanding of how emotional intelligence influences risk-taking across different populations.
- **Longitudinal Studies:** Longitudinal research could provide insights into how emotional intelligence affects risk-taking behaviour over time. Such studies could help determine whether emotional intelligence has a long-term impact on decision-making and whether its effects are consistent across different life stages.



- **Context-Specific Research:** Future research should explore how emotional intelligence influences risk-taking behaviour in specific domains, such as financial decision-making, health-related choices, or social risk-taking. This would help clarify whether emotional intelligence has a stronger influence in certain contexts.
- **Exploring Other Psychological Factors:** Future studies should consider other psychological factors, such as personality traits, cognitive biases, and social influences, to better understand the complex relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour.

## Conclusion

This study explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour in a sample of young adults in Jaipur, India. The findings suggest that while there is a weak positive correlation between emotional intelligence and risk-taking behaviour, the relationship is not statistically significant. This implies that emotional intelligence alone may not be a strong predictor of risk-taking decisions. The results highlight the complexity of decision-making under risk and suggest that future research should explore the role of emotional intelligence in specific risk domains and in conjunction with other psychological factors.

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