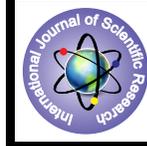


Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence of adolescents



Psychology

KEYWORDS : Adolescence, Emotional intelligence

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the gender differences in emotional intelligence of adolescents. The sample comprised of 973 Pre University college students ranging in age between 16-18 years studying in second year Pre University in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts of Karnataka. There were 464 male and 509 female adolescents. The participants were administered Emotional intelligence scale developed by Mangal & Mangal (2004). t test were used for analysis. The results of the study indicated significant difference between males and females only in two components of emotional intelligence. Male adolescents showed a higher intrapersonal awareness which means they have higher understanding of their own emotions and female adolescents showed higher ability to manage emotions in interpersonal relationships. These findings suggest a gendered emotional socialization reflective of Indian culture.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the capacity for recognizing one's own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and our relationships (Goleman, 1995). Emotionally intelligent person is skilled in four areas such as identifying, using, understanding and regulating emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1993). Demographic factors like gender, socioeconomic status, and family structure contribute to the differences in emotional intelligence. Studies have shown gender differences in emotional intelligence of females and males because the society socializes the two genders differently. (Sanchez-Nunez et al, 2004; Sandhu and Mehrotra 1999). Chu (2002) reported that males have higher level of emotional intelligence than females. Tapia (1999), reported girls were high on empathy, social responsibilities and interpersonal relationships than boys. They were more sensitive towards their relationships with parents, friends and siblings. Katyal and Awasthi (2005) found emotional intelligence higher among females than males among adolescents of Chandigarh, significant relationship between emotional intelligence and type of family, parents' educational qualification and mother's occupation. However, no significant relation of EI was found with monthly income, birth order and father's occupation (Katyal & Awasthi, 2006). Some studies found emotional intelligence higher among males than females (Petrides & Furnham, 2000), difference only in a few components of emotional intelligence and not global Emotional intelligence such as interpersonal skills (Reiff et al, 2001), and females being high on social skills (Petrides & Furnham, 2000). On the other hand Balci-Celik and Deniz (2008) investigated the difference in the EI levels of Turkish scouts and scouts from other countries with regard to age and gender and found no difference in emotional intelligence of boys and girls and with regard to age. In addition to this some factors like economic and social conditions could limit the development of emotional intelligence (Brown, George- Curran & Smith (2003). Low socio-economic status causes environmental deficiencies which results in low self esteem of students (US Department of Education, 2003).

In the Indian society which is largely patriarchal, boys are exposed to better social climate than girls. Biologically boys are able to control their emotions and express in a socially approved manner and thereby experience less anxiety and emotional conflicts (Audichya, 2005). But now, due to globalization and also schools and colleges providing equal opportunities in activities for self awareness and self expression, their emotional intelligence can be enhanced.

In the present study, recognising, using, understanding and regulating emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1993) is conceptualized as interpersonal and intrapersonal awareness, interpersonal and intrapersonal management.

Interpersonal awareness is the ability to perceive, communicate and manage emotions, knowing what one is feeling at the moment, using preferences to guide one's decision and realistic assessment of one's abilities and having a well grounded sense of self confidence. Intrapersonal awareness is self regulating ones emotions, handling emotions so that it facilitates rather than interferes with the task at hand. Interpersonal management is the ability to experience and communicate and sustain positive emotions and contain negative emotions. Intrapersonal management is motivating oneself, using ones deepest preferences to move and guide them towards goals, to take initiative and strive to improve, to persevere in the face of setbacks and frustrations.

Objectives

To analyse the difference in emotional intelligence of male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis

H₀ There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence of male and female adolescents.

Method

Participants

Participants included 973 pre university college students, ranging in age between 16 and 18 years, out of which 464 were male and 509 were female adolescents. The sample was selected by stratified random sampling from both private and government pre university colleges of Mangalore and Udupi districts of Karnataka. With respect to geographical background they were 53.9% urban and 46.1% rural. Therefore the sample was representative.

Instruments

Emotional intelligence scale developed by Mangal & Mangal (2004) was used to measure the emotional intelligence of the participants. It consisted of 100 items measuring four components of emotional intelligence: a) intrapersonal awareness b) inter personal awareness c) intrapersonal management d) interpersonal management each having 25 items. The participants were required to respond either yes or no. The scoring was one mark for yes and zero for no response. For the present study, the Cronbach alpha for the Kannada translation of the scale was established and the value obtained was .78.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to the participants during their regular college hours. The participants responded to the instrument for a period of one hour in the presence of the researcher. Before taking the test the participants were instructed by the researcher that their participation is voluntary and they

have the right to withdraw from participating in the study. The participants filled out a personal data blank with demographic details such as age, sex, socio economic status and geographical area.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Mean, SD,'t' Value for the four components of emotional intelligence based on gender (Male, N=464, Female, N=509)

Emotional intelligence components	Male		Female		t value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Intrapersonal awareness	15.82	3.67	15.02	3.70	3.368**
Interpersonal awareness	14.24	4.11	13.81	3.60	1.737
Intrapersonal management	16.12	4.25	16.14	3.80	.088
Interpersonal management	15.41	3.57	16.30	2.73	4.403**
Total emotional intelligence	61.60	11.74	61.29	10.22	.441

** $p < 0.01$

Results indicate significant difference in emotional intelligence of male and female adolescents. Among the four components of emotional intelligence independent t- test indicated a higher level of intrapersonal awareness among males ($M = 15.8$, $SD = 3.6$) than females ($M = 15.0$, $SD = 3.7$), $t(971) = 3.368$, $p = .001 < 0.01$. In the area of interpersonal management females had a significantly higher interpersonal management ($M = 16.3$, $SD = 2.7$) than males ($M = 15.4$, $SD = 3.5$), $t(971) = 4.403$, $p = .001 < 0.01$. No significant difference was found between gender in the components of interpersonal awareness ($M = 14.24$, $SD = 4.11$), ($M = 13.81$, $SD = 3.60$), $t(971) = 1.737$, $p = .083 > 0.01$, intrapersonal management ($M = 16.12$, $SD = 4.25$), ($M = 16.14$, $SD = 3.80$), $t(971) = .088$, $p = .930 > 0.01$, and total emotional intelligence ($M = 61.60$, $SD = 11.74$), ($M = 61.29$, $SD = 10.22$), $t(971) = .441$, $p = .659 > 0.01$.

Results showed gender differences only on two components of emotional intelligence such as intrapersonal awareness and interpersonal management with males having a higher intrapersonal awareness and females having higher interpersonal management. This disparity between males and females on two components may be attributed to the Indian society which socializes the two genders differently where girls experience better emotional warmth and high self esteem and boys experience

more rejection from their fathers (Rai, Pandey & Kumar, 2009).

Girls are traditionally socialized to fit into the needs of the larger society (Menon, 2000) and understanding, accepting and adjusting is an important cultural value (Raval & Martini, 2011) that is ingrained in Indian cultures everyday interpersonal interactions which makes girls adept at interpersonal skills. In Indian families parents emphasize on relational socialization which is understood in terms of interdependence and relatedness (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Kagitcibasi, 2005). In these cultures emotions are experienced but expression is avoided keeping in view the larger goal of maintaining harmonious social relation and also a sense of self from being disturbed. (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

In contrast to earlier study (Ciarrochi et al, 2001; Katyal & Awasthi 2005; Hassan, Sulaiman & Ishak, 2009; Nandwana & Joshi, 2010) no significant difference was found between males and females on global emotional intelligence. But the significant difference in some components of emotional intelligence is supported by previous study which shows females as more perceptive, empathic and adaptable than males (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

Conclusion

Therefore in the present study male adolescents showed higher intrapersonal awareness which means they have higher understanding of their own emotions and females showed higher ability to manage emotions in interpersonal relationships. So future research can extend the study to other regions to compare the differences in emotional socialization across India.

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