

RESEARCH ARTICLE :

A study on social intelligence among emerging adults

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SUMMARY : A study on social intelligence among emerging adults was carried out in Dharwad, Hubli and Ranibennur cities, Karnataka state. The sample for the study comprised of 659 graduating emerging adults among them 198 respondents from medical stream, 164 respondents from engineering stream and 297 respondents from agriculture streams were selected. General information schedule was used to collect background information and Social intelligence scale by Dr. Mathur (2007) was used to assess social intelligence among graduating emerging adults. Results revealed that majority of the agriculture graduating emerging adults were observed in high level social intelligence. There was significant association between subject stream and social intelligence. Female graduating emerging adults poses high social intelligent than male graduating emerging adults.

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KEY WORDS :

Emerging adults,
Social intelligence,
Subject stream

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Emerging adulthood is a state of cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioural transformation and establishment. This group is of particular interest because of the great changes and exploration that occurs for individuals within this age group. It is a phase of the life span between late adolescence and early adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Arnett (2004) provides a useful outline of the important qualities of developmental stage of emerging adulthood, which extends from age 18 to 25 years of age. Emerging adulthood is a phase of identity exploration and self-focus, as well as of possibilities in terms of career and relationships (Arnett, 2007; Carbonell *et al.*, 2005 and Sneed *et al.*, 2007). However, this

bridging time is also characterized by instability and change and is often experienced as the age of feeling in-between, which is distinctive from the traditional adult status attainment of three decades ago (Arnett, 2007 and Fussell and Furstenberg, 2005).

Emerging adulthood may also be a key time for the development of the socialization, that of learning role taking skills, strategies for resolving conflicts, and ways of viewing relationship. One of the social changes that have led to the development of emerging adulthood is the increased incidence of post secondary education and training, where emerging adults acquire from elders the skills that will enable them to participate in the modern economy. This process involves acquiring not only knowledge and behaviours

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but also values such as reliability and motives such as the accomplishment of self sufficiency. In industrialized cultures, all three goals of socialization arguably continue to be developed in emerging adulthood. Self regulation is by no means attained by the end of adolescence, for most people. With respect to emotional self regulation, mood fluctuations are common. Socialization is incomplete at the end of adolescence and continues into emerging adulthood. Most notably, in western societies, a central cultural standard is that, in order to attain adult status, young people should learn to become self sufficient, to accept responsibility for themselves (Arnett, 1998). Emerging adulthood may also be a period for development of the third goal of socialization, that of learning role taking skills, strategies for resolving conflicts and ways of viewing relationship (Arnett, 2004).

The concept of social intelligence was first introduced by Thorndike (1920); according to him social intelligence is the person's ability to understand and manage other people and to engage in adaptive social interaction. Social intelligence has two key constituents which are distinctly personal and social in nature, one is intrapersonal intelligence and other is interpersonal intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence is the person's ability to gain access to his or her own internal, emotional life while interpersonal intelligence is the individual's ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals. Several definitions of social intelligence have been accessible by theorists, but all share two common components (a) the awareness of others (b) their response and adaptation to other and the social situations (Kobe *et al.*, 2001). The socially intelligent person has the ability of getting along well with people and makes friends easily and is sensitive and understanding in human relationship. Socially intelligent people behave tactfully and prosper in life. Thus social intelligence is an important developmental aspect of education. It is difficult to lead a successful life in a society without social intelligence. Good interpersonal and social skills not only indicate the success a person achieves in his human relationships but also in his job pursuits as one needs to be socially skilled particularly with jobs that involve direct contact and communication with other people (Srivastava *et al.*, 2016). Saxena and Jain (2013) reported that female student's possess more social intelligence than male students. Rai and Singh (2014) found that female college students possess more social intelligent than male college students. Based on the literature review, no study was

found by the authors that address gender and social intelligence among medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults in Karnataka state, India. It is based on this that the study formulated the following objectives.

Objectives of the study :

- To assess the level of social intelligence of medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults
- To assess the differential effect of gender on social intelligence of medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The target population of the study was medical, engineering and agriculture undergraduating emerging adults studying in Dharwad, Hubli and Ranibennur cities. SDM Medical College Dharwad, Karnataka Institute of Medical sciences, Hubli, SDM College of Engineering and Technology Dharwad, Sri Taralabalu Jagadguru Institute of Technology, Ranibennur, College of agriculture Dharwad and college of agriculture Hanumanamatti, were selected purposively. The details were informed clearly about the process of giving their responses to the items and statements of the questionnaires. The clarifications were made whenever the students raised the doubts. The students had taken 60-80 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The sample for the study comprised of 659 graduating emerging adults among them 82 male and 116 female respondents from medical stream, 89 male and 75 female respondents from engineering stream and 130 male and 167 female respondents were from agriculture streams. General information schedule was used to collect background information and Social intelligence scale by Dr. Mathur (2007) was used to assess social intelligence among graduating emerging adults.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Association between social intelligence and subject stream among graduating emerging adults are presented in Table 1. In case of medical stream, with respect to social intelligence, 36.40 per cent were in average level followed by 34.80 per cent in high and 28.8 per cent were in low level. Subsequently, 41.50 per cent, 34.80 per cent and 23.80 per cent of engineering graduating

emerging adults were observed under low, average and high category of social intelligence, respectively. While for agriculture stream, 37 per cent, 36 per cent and 26.90 per cent were in high, average and low level, respectively. The chi square value of 13.6 was significant at 0.01 level of probability. Subject stream showed significant association with social intelligence. Hamidifar (2004) reported that emerging adults are matured enough to convey ideas to people, confident and adaptable in presenting their ideas and effectively utilize a variety of modes to present the ideas, such as face to face/ remote, written/spoken, public/private, group/individual. They have the capacity to construct reasonable, rational, logical arguments and to arrange evidence appropriately to support an argument, moreover listen and read others communications and understand in better way (Farley *et al.*, 2009). Gnanadevan (2007) found that higher secondary students had high level of social intelligence.

The examination of Table 2 exhibits the comparison between medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults on social intelligence. There were significant differences between graduating emerging adults from different subject streams with regard to social intelligence. The F value of 7.07 was found to be significant at 0.01 level of probability. The mean score of agriculture undergraduates was high (66.23) than the mean score of engineering graduating emerging adults

(61.94). Agricultural communication is done formally and informally by agricultural extension and is considered related to science communication. The academic field originated from communication courses that taught students in the agricultural sciences how to communicate. The students of agriculture stream are greatly concerned with the study of rural life, attitude and behaviour of people. Agriculture graduating emerging adults study social situations and collect the knowledge pertaining to farmers, groups, organisations and leaders to achieve the objective or agricultural development. This helps in identify problems of farmers and develop an extension programme for solving the problems of farmers. Based on the social facts they develop educational programmes. This helps the agriculture students to build relationships, share information, and connect with diverse audience of people.

A perusal of Table 3 reveals the comparison of mean scores of social intelligence by gender. In medical stream the comparison of mean score revealed no significant difference between female and male graduating emerging adults with regard to social intelligence (65.75 and 63.82, respectively). Hence, the t-value of 1.05 was not significant. There was significant difference between male and female engineering graduating emerging adults, the comparison of mean score revealed that female graduating emerging adults (64.81) had higher mean score

Table 1 : Association between subject stream and social intelligence among graduating emerging adults (n=659)

| Social intelligence levels | Subject stream | | | | Total | χ ² |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------|-------|----------------|
| | Medical (n=198) | Engineering (n=164) | Agriculture (n=297) | Total | | |
| High | 69(34.80) | 39(23.80) | 110(37.00) | 218(33.08) | | |
| Average | 72(36.40) | 57(34.80) | 107(36.00) | 236(35.81) | | 13.6** |
| Low | 57(28.80) | 68(41.50) | 80(26.90) | 205(31.11) | | |
| Total | 198(100) | 164(100) | 297(100) | 659(100) | | |

Figure in the parenthesis represents percentage, **indicates significance of value at P=0.01 levels

Table 2 : Comparison between medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults on social intelligence (n=659)

| Subject stream | Mean ± SD | F-test |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------|
| Medical | 64.96 ^b ± 12.67 | |
| Engineering | 61.94 ^a ± 10.88 | 7.07** |
| Agriculture | 66.23 ^b ± 11.59 | |

Figure in the parenthesis represents percentage, **indicates significance of value at P=0.01 level
Mean value with different superscript indices differ significantly (*Post Hoc Duncan*)

Table 3 : Comparison of mean scores of social intelligence by gender (n=659)

| Gender | Medical(n=198) | | Engineering(n=164) | | Agriculture(n=297) | |
|--------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| | Mean ±SD | t- Value | Mean ±SD | t- Value | Mean ±SD | t- Value |
| Male | 63.82±13.43 | 1.05 ^{NS} | 59.50±10.02 | 3.19** | 63.31±11.98 | 3.90** |
| Female | 65.75±12.08 | | 64.81±11.22 | | 68.48±10.77 | |

**indicates significance of value at P= 0.01 level, NS=Non-significant

than male graduating emerging adults mean score (59.50). The t-value of 3.19 was found to be significant at 0.01 level of probability. The comparison of mean score revealed that female graduating emerging adults (68.48) had higher mean score than male graduating emerging adults mean score (63.31) which was significant at 0.01 level of probability (Table 3). The t-value was 3.90. The probable reason is men are seen to have a rather poor way of interacting with the people around them due to their firm nature which makes him aggressive towards those that transgress rules. On the other hand, women accomplish tasks and still restrain aggression and anger toward others. Women are known to be nurturing, tender, sensitive, and intuitive in nature. The gender division of social intelligence exists between adolescents in schools and homes. Women are better at social thinking and interactions than men, while men are more abstract and task-orientated. Women are more attuned to words and sound and are normally better at learning languages. This is why women are normally better at communication and verbal expression of emotions. Female tends to be better at emotional empathy than men, in general. This kind of empathy fosters rapport and social relationships. This result supports the findings indicated by Rani and Sangwan (2016) found that female adolescents' were more socially intelligent than male adolescents. Females have more patience, co-operativeness, confidence and sensitivity, better sense of humour and memory than their male counterparts. Srivastava *et al.* (2016) noted that girls possessed better social intelligence than boys. Saxena and Jain (2013) indicate that females are more socially intelligent than males. Also, females have more patience and sensitivity, better cooperativeness and recognition of social environment than their counterparts. At the same time confidence level, tactfulness, sense of humour and memory are the dimensions in which males and females do not have any significant difference. Snehlata and Narayan (2013) concluded that female students had high social intelligence than their male counterparts. Gender is an important aspect that must be considered in social intelligence, in the sense that there is a significant difference between men and women on social intelligence.

Summary and Conclusion :

The study results indicated that social intelligence among graduating emerging adults differ by subject stream where in agriculture graduating emerging adults

had higher social intelligence scores than graduating emerging adults from medical and engineering streams. Results also found that female graduating emerging adults are more socially intelligent than male graduating emerging adults. Around 42 per cent of engineering, 29 per cent of medical and 27 per cent of the agriculture undergraduates had low level of social intelligence. This highlights the scope for developing social intelligence among graduating emerging adults. So the parents, schools, colleges and society have to provide opportunities to emerging adults for development of intimate relationships with primary groups by involving in different seminar, workshops, talk shows and public lectures, group discussion and curricular activities.

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