

Impact of social intelligence on emotional competence of the adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to investigate the impact of social intelligence on the socio-emotional competence of adolescents. The sample comprised of 200 adolescents (100 rural and 100 urban) equally distributed over the two genders (50 girls and 50 boys) in the age range of 15-18 years, randomly selected from four school of Ludhiana district. A self-structured general information form was used to collect the information about socio-personal characteristics of the adolescents. Social Intelligence Scale (Chadha and Ganesan, 2009) was used to assess the social intelligence of the respondents. Scale of Emotional Competence (Sharma and Bharadwaj, 2007) was used to assess the emotional competence of the adolescents. Results revealed that out of eight dimensions of social intelligence only one dimension *i.e.* patience was found to have positive and significant impact on emotional competence of male adolescents. The data also revealed that there was no significant impact of social intelligence on emotional competence of the female respondents. Patience was found to have positive impact and co-operativeness was found to have negative impact on emotional competence of the adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the time of life from onset of puberty to full adulthood. The exact period of adolescence, which varies from person to person, falls approximately between the ages 12 and 20 and encompasses both physiological and psychological changes. The physical changes signal a range of psychological changes, which manifest themselves throughout adolescence, varying significantly from person to person and from one culture to another. Psychological changes generally include questioning of identity and achievement of an appropriate sex role; movement toward personal independence; and social changes in which, for a time, the most important factor is peer group relations. Adolescence is a critical period for individual and social development in which youngsters face different situations that involve their emotional intelligence and social skills. One of the most significant challenges for the adolescent is social acceptance, expresses through popularity, indifference or rejection from peers (Zovala

et al., 2008).

Social Intelligence (SI) is the ability to get along well with others, and to get them to co-operate with you. Sometimes referred to simplistically as “people skills,” SI includes an awareness of situations and the social dynamics that govern them and knowledge of interaction styles and strategies that can help a person achieve his or her objectives in dealing with others. It also involves a certain amount of self-insight and a consciousness of one’s own perceptions and reaction patterns. According to Goleman (2006) psychologist Edward Thorndike developed the original conceptualization of social intelligence in 1920 as a mental ability distinct from abstract and mechanical intelligence. Weschler (1958) defined intelligence as “The aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally and to deal effectively with his environment. And ability to adapt to several situations and facing life situations successfully” whereas Thorndike (1920) defined social intelligence as “the ability to act wisely in human relations”. Ford and Tisak (1983) defined social intelligence as “one’s ability to accomplish relevant objectives in specific social

settings". Marlowe (1986) equated social intelligence to social competence. He defined social intelligence as "the ability to understand the feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of persons, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and to act appropriately upon that understanding."

An emotional competence is a learned capacity based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work. For superior performance in jobs of all kinds, emotional competence matters twice as much as IQ plus technical skill combined. Emotional competence is what results and enhances our personal, relational and professional performance, and what ultimately helps us attain an overall increase in our quality of life. According to Daniel Goleman (1995), Emotional Competence is a learned ability grounded in Emotional Intelligence. Emotional Intelligence influences our potential for learning the practical emotional competencies, and developing the emotional literacy necessary for quality of life, life satisfaction, and overall happiness. Such skills include the development of the following: Self/Social/Relational Awareness and Competence, and Self/Social/Relational Management and Competence.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Ludhiana district of the Punjab state. The respondents of the study were school going adolescents (age 15-18 years) during the session 2011-12 from various Government High and Senior Secondary schools in Ludhiana district. The sample for the study was selected by using multistage sampling procedure. A list of all the Government High and Senior Secondary schools was procured from the District Education Officer (DEO) Ludhiana. Out of this list, a representative sample of two schools was randomly selected from rural and urban areas. Following the selection of schools the investigator contacted the respective principals of the school with a letter of request and explained the purpose of the study. After obtaining the permission from the school principals, the class teachers were then personally approached and lists of students belonging to nuclear and

intact Punjabi origin families of middle socio-economic status were prepared. Hundred adolescents were randomly selected from the schools that belonged to urban areas of Ludhiana city. Similarly 100 adolescents studying in the rural schools of Ludhiana district were selected to constitute the rural sample.

Tools :

The following research instruments were used to collect the requisite data for socio-economic status, loneliness and mental health of adolescents.

Social intelligence scale :

The scale developed by Chadha and Ganesan (2009) was used to assess social intelligence in adolescents. This scale consists of 66 items which measure 8 dimensions *viz.*, patience, co-operativeness, confidence, sensitivity, recognition of scale environment, tactfulness, sense of humour and memory.

Scale of emotional competencies :

This scale was developed by Sharma and Bharadwaj (2007). This scale has 30 items which measure five emotional competencies (Adequate depth of feeling (ADF), Adequate expression and control emotions (AEC), Ability to function with emotions (AFE), Ability to cope with problem emotions (ACPE) and Enhancement of positive emotions (EPE), where each competency could be measured by six items selected for the purpose.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 evaluated the multiple linear regression analysis of dimensions of social intelligence on emotional competence among male adolescents. A close examination of the data reveals that among males, patience (0.77) was positively and highly significant at one per cent level of significance. The regression co-efficient value in the data indicated that with the unit increased in the value of patience, there would be 0.77 unit increased in the value of emotional competence of males. The data further indicated that all the dimensions jointly explained

Factor	Co-efficients	Standard error	t-value	P-value
Patience	0.77**	0.28	2.73**	0.01
Co-operativeness	-0.27	0.33	0.83	0.41
Confidence level	0.00	0.35	0.01	0.99
Sensitivity	-0.57	0.34	1.68	0.10
Recognition of social environment	-0.46	1.00	0.46	0.65
Tactfulness	0.65	0.63	1.02	0.31
Sense of humour	-0.46	0.43	1.07	0.29
Memory	-0.18	0.30	0.60	0.55

R²= 0.107

** indicate significance of value at P=0.01

10.7 per cent ($R^2 = 0.107$) variation in the emotional competence of the male respondents. This may be due to the reason that men usually do not react abruptly as compared to females in any critical situation, thus they keep themselves calm and are more emotionally balanced. The regression co-efficient value in the data indicated that with the unit increased in the value of patience, there would be 0.77 unit increased in the value of emotional competence of males. The data further indicated that all the dimensions jointly explained 10.7 per cent ($R^2 = 0.107$) variation in the emotional competence of the male respondents. All the other dimensions of social intelligence were found to be non-significantly associated with emotional competence. Some of the dimensions like co-operativeness, sensitivity, recognition of social environment, sense of humour and memory showed negative but non-significant results. A study conducted on "Social competence as a development construct" supported the fact that different forms of social control such as patience, sharing, temper management, empathy with others had a great impact on social competence (Water and Sroufe 1983, Saarni, 2000).

Table 2 depicts multiple linear regression analysis of dimensions of social intelligence on emotional competence among female adolescents. The results showed that the different dimensions of social intelligence *i.e.* patience, confidence level, sensitivity, recognition had a positive but non-significant impact on emotional competence. It shows that the dimensions of social intelligence do not affect emotional

competence of female adolescents. Basically, social intelligence is the ability to get along well with others, and to get them to co-operate with you. Sometimes referred to simplistically as "people skills", social intelligence includes an awareness of stimulations and the social dynamics that govern them and knowledge of interactions styles and strategies that can help a person achieve his or her objectives in dealing with others. It also involves a certain amount of self-insight and a consciousness of one's own perceptions and reaction patterns (Albrecht, 2006). The data further indicated that all the dimensions jointly explained 8.2 per cent ($R^2 = 0.082$) variation in the emotional competence of the female respondents.

Table 3 presents the multiple linear regression analysis of dimensions of social intelligence on emotional competence of total respondents. The results in the given table revealed that patience (0.54) was positively and highly significant at one per cent level. It is inferred from some of the studies conducted on social intelligence and emotional competence that patience (as a dimension of social intelligence) affects the emotional capabilities of the individual. The results further show that co-operativeness (-0.49) was negatively significant at five per cent level of significance. The data further indicated that all the dimensions of social intelligence jointly explained 6.2 per cent ($R^2=0.062$) variation in the emotional competence of the total respondents. Further probing into the data depicted that with the unit increased in the value of patience and co-operativeness each, there would be 0.54 unit increase and 0.49 unit decrease

Table 2 : Multiple linear regression analysis of dimensions of social intelligence on emotional competence among female adolescents

Factor	Co-efficients	Standard Error	t-value	P-value
Patience	0.32	0.38	0.85	0.40
Co-operativeness	-0.42	0.31	1.33	0.19
Confidence level	0.04	0.50	0.09	0.93
Sensitivity	0.33	0.38	0.87	0.39
Recognition of social environment	0.93	0.96	0.97	0.33
Tactfulness	0.97	0.88	1.10	0.27
Sense of humour	-0.43	0.56	0.76	0.45
Memory	0.52	0.40	1.29	0.20

$R^2 = 0.082$

Table 3 : Multiple linear regression co-efficient of dimensions of social intelligence on emotional competence of total respondents

Factor	Co-efficients	Standard error	t-value	P-value
Patience	0.54**	0.22	2.47**	0.01
Co-operativeness	-0.49*	0.22	2.23*	0.03
Confidence level	0.04	0.28	0.14	0.89
Sensitivity	-0.12	0.25	0.48	0.63
Recognition of social environment	0.30	0.67	0.45	0.66
Tactfulness	0.86	0.49	1.74	0.08
Sense of humour	-0.53	0.33	1.60	0.11
Memory	0.03	0.22	0.15	0.88

$R^2 = 0.062$ * and ** indicate significance of values at $P=0.05$ and 0.01 , respectively

in the emotional competence of the respondents. Two dimensions of social intelligence *i.e.* sensitivity (-0.12) and sense of humour (-0.53) are negatively but non-significantly affecting the emotional confidence of the total respondents. Confidence level (0.04), memory (0.03) and tactfulness (0.86) are positively but non-significantly are having an impact upon emotional competence of all the adolescents.

Conclusion :

Out of eight dimensions of social intelligence only one dimension *i.e.* patience was found to have positive and significant impact on emotional competence of male adolescents. The data also revealed that there was no significant impact of social intelligence on emotional competence of the female respondents. Patience was found to be positively significant and cooperativeness was found to have negatively significant impact on emotional competence of total respondents. This study can be useful in helping teachers or parents to guide adolescents to enhance their social and emotional skills which fosters well being and interpersonal relationship – need of the hour. Better social intelligence is a valuable individual skill and resource and is an indicator of positive mental health.

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