



Emotional intelligence in relation to mental health and adjustment among students

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Abstract

The importance of feelings and emotions and their impact on people's lives is a new trend that has recently been in the forefront of people's lives as they try to deal with their environments. Life is a continuous process of adjustment. Each day a person makes countless adjustment, most of them apparently insignificant and many of them carried out more or less automatically, with no particular thought and often without awareness. Developing emotional skills surely can lead to better mental health and adjustment leading to effective living. People who are emotionally intelligent, who know how to manage their feelings well and who can deal effectively with others feelings are at an advantage in every domain of life. The present study aims to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence, mental health and adjustment. The data was collected on a sample of 100 students between the age range of 13-15 years of Ambala using Emotional Intelligence Scale (Singh & Narain, 2014), Adjustment Inventory for School students (Sinha and Singh, 2010) and Mental Health Battery (Singh and Gupta, 2000). The correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Adjustment as well as Emotional Intelligence and Mental health came out to be significant in case of both boys and girls. Moreover significant difference was found in the Mental health of boys and girls.

Keywords: mental health, emotional intelligence, adjustment

Introduction

Emotional intelligence

The importance of feelings and emotions and their impact on people's lives is a new trend that has recently been in the forefront of people's lives as they try to deal with their environments. The concept of EI emerged in the field of psychology at the end of 1930 when Thorndike wrote about social intelligence and defined it as "the ability to understand and manage social relations and the ability to behave wisely with others" (Gardner, 2000).

EI is defined as the ability to know and interpret emotions and to recognize their significance and relation to problems, including their causes and solutions (Mayer & Salovey, 1999). However, the best definition of EI is the accepted definition of Meyer & Salovey (1999) ^[12]: the process of dealing with emotions including the ability to have appropriate responses to show emotions and expression, both with the same person or with others.

Mental Health

Mental health is a vital component of the total health of an individual because our entire thought process takes place in mind, ideas originate in mind and all kinds of directions are issued from mind which guide, shape and regulate communication, conduct and behavior and determine personal and social functioning as well as adjustment (Bhargava and Raina, 2007) ^[1]. Good health depends on the state of both mind and body. Health generally means sound condition, or well-being, or freedom from disease. Mental health, therefore, may refer to a sound mental condition or a state of psychological well-being or freedom from mental diseases. One's body and mind function harmoniously; it is said that

sound body presupposes a sound mind and a sound mind exists in a sound body in so much so that any understanding of personality requires proper analysis of body and mind. Mental health, thus, is the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality (Hadfield, 1952) ^[8].

Adjustment

Life is a continuous process of adjustment. Each day a person makes countless adjustment, most of them apparently insignificant and many of them carried out more or less automatically, with no particular thought and often without awareness. In psychology, adjustment, like adaptation in biology, refers to an individual's relationship with his environment - the way he attempts to achieve harmony between his own drives and desires and the demands or restraints of the environment. The concept of adjustment was originally biological one and was used in Darwin's theory of evolution (1859) and was termed as adaptation. Man, among the living beings, has the highest capacity to adapt to new situations. Man as an animal not only adapts to physical demands but also adjust to social pressure in the society.

Review of related literature

Singh (2015) conducted a study on "Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students In Relation To Emotional Intelligence and Mental Health". The study was undertaken to investigate the significance of relationship of adjustment with emotional intelligence and mental health of senior secondary school students. The study was conducted on 600 senior secondary school students selected from Government Schools from seven districts of Punjab. Indian adaptations of adjustment inventory (Sharma, 1988), Emotional intelligence

scale (Hyde, Pethi, and Dhar, 2002)^[9], and Mental health battery (Singh and Sengupta, 2009) were used for data collection. Results of the study revealed significant positive relationship between adjustment and emotional intelligence and also between adjustment and mental health.

Significance of the study

Emotional Intelligence is one of the recent developments in the area of intelligence and personality. It is now well known that intelligence Quotient accounts for only 20% of the success while the rest is attributed to Emotional Quotient (EQ), the way we handle our emotions and deal with them.

But the process of adjustment or of attaining and enjoying good mental health is not always easy. Our needs cannot always be adequately satisfied in all situations. We have to face other’s attitudes that are sometimes hostile and deal with criticism, fault finding, nagging, scolding, scorn and ridicule. So only a person who is emotionally intelligent will have a better adjustment with himself as well as others. Developing emotional skills surely can lead to better mental health leading to effective living. People who are emotionally intelligent, who know how to manage their feelings well and who can deal effectively with others feelings are at an advantage in every domain of life.

The present study aims to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence, mental health and adjustment. Not much work has been done on Emotional Intelligence of school going adolescents, who are at a stage when their emotions are controlling their decision making capacity. Therefore there is a great need to work in this area.

Operational Definitions

1. Emotional Intelligence: Singh (2003) defined emotional intelligence as the ability of an individual to appropriately and successfully respond to a variety of emotional stimuli elicited from the inner self and immediate environment.

In the present study the variable of Emotional Intelligence has been analyzed through Emotional Intelligence Scale (Singh & Narain, 2014)^[13]. The scale consists of four dimensions: Understanding Emotions, Understanding Motivation, Empathy, Handling relations.

2. Adjustment: According to Srivastava (1996)^[16]: “Adjustment is the harmonious relationship with the environment in which most of the individual needs are satisfied in socially acceptable ways and resulting in forms of behavior which may range from passive conformity to vigorous action.”

In the present study the variable of Adjustment has been analyzed through Adjustment Inventory for School Students (Sinha & Singh, 2010).

3. Mental Health: A 'state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community' (World Health Organization).

In the present study the variable of Mental Health has been analyzed through Mental Health Inventory (Singh and Gupta, 2000)^[12] which have five health indices -

emotional stability, over all adjustment, autonomy, security - insecurity and self-concept.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the emotional intelligence in relation to mental health of students.
2. To study the emotional intelligence in relation to adjustment of students.
3. To study the difference in Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls.
4. To study the difference in mental health of boys and girls.
5. To study the difference in adjustment of boys and girls.

Hypotheses of the study

1. There exists a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and mental health of boys and girls.
2. There exists a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and adjustment of boys and girls.
3. There exists significant difference in the Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls.
4. There exists significant difference in the adjustment of boys and girls.
5. There exists significant difference in the mental health of boys and girls.

Research Method

The present study has been conducted by employing descriptive survey method of research.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprises the students between the age range of 13-15 years of Ambala. A sample is a small representation of large whole. In the present study, a sample of 100 students of Class IXth (age range 13-15 years) was chosen using stratified convenience sampling from three schools of Ambala i.e. Tulsi Public school, Hisar road Ambala city, Dayanand public School, Hisar road, Ambala city and Ambala Public School, Hissar Road, Ambala City. The Sample comprised of 50 boys and 50 girls.

Tools used

1. Emotional Intelligence Scale. (Singh & Narain, 2014)^[13].
2. Adjustment Inventory for School students (Sinha and Singh, 2010)
3. Mental Health Battery (Singh and Gupta, 2000)^[12]

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis I: There exists a positive relationship between the Mental Health and Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls.

Table 1: The coefficient of correlation between the Mental Health and Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls

Variable	N	df	Pearson’s Coefficient of Correlation
Mental Health	50 boys	98	0.314**
Emotional Intelligence	50 boys		
Mental Health	50 girls	98	0.300**
Emotional Intelligence	50 girls		

**p< 0.01.

Discussion

Table 1 shows that the coefficient of correlation between mental health and emotional intelligence is 0.314 in case of boys and 0.300 in case of girls. The calculated value of correlation is greater than the table value at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the relationship between mental health and emotional intelligence is positive and significant. Hence the hypothesis may be accepted.

Mental health and success in learning are very closely related. Mental health and emotional intelligence are positively related as a person high on mental health is more likely to be emotionally intelligent and vice versa. The results of the study (Singh, 2015) also revealed similar results.

Hypothesis II- There exists a positive relationship between the Adjustment and Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls.

Table 2: The coefficient of correlation between the Adjustment and Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls

Variable	N	df	Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation
Adjustment	50 boys	98	-0.240*
Emotional Intelligence	50 boys		
Adjustment	50 girls	98	-0.301**
Emotional Intelligence	50 girls		

** p< 0.01 *p< 0.05.

Discussion

Table 2 shows that the correlation between the Adjustment and emotional intelligence is -0.240 in case of boys which is greater than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. And the calculated correlation is -0.301 in case of girls which is greater than the table value of r at 0.01 level of significance. Thus, the relationship between Adjustment and Emotional Intelligence is significant and negative. The coefficient of correlation comes out to be negative because the high scores on Adjustment Inventory correspond to maladjustment

whereas high scores on Emotional Intelligence Scale correspond to good emotional intelligence. Hence the hypothesis may be accepted.

Emotional Intelligence and adjustment are positively related as a person high in emotional intelligence will have good adjustment. The results of the study (Singh, 2015) also revealed similar results.

Hypothesis III- There exists significant difference in the Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls.

Table 3: Significance of difference in the Emotional Intelligence of boys and girls

Variable	Sex	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t-ratio
Understanding Emotions	Boys	50	2	2.21	98	1.81
	Girls	50	3	3.22		
Understanding motivation	Boys	50	4	2.24	98	1.62
	Girls	50	5	3.74		
Empathy	Boys	50	6	5.4	98	1.11
	Girls	50	7	3.30		
Handling relations	Boys	50	5	2.11	98	3.37**
	Girls	50	4	3.22		

*p< 0.05 **p< 0.01

Discussion

Table 3 shows that the t-ratios between the boys and girls on dimensions of Emotional Intelligence which are 1.81, 1.62, 1.11 & 3.37 on understanding emotions, understanding motivation, empathy and handling relations respectively. The calculated t-values on understanding emotions, understanding motivation, empathy are less than the table value of t at both the levels whereas calculated t-value on handling relations is greater than the table value of t at 0.01 level of significance. Hence our hypothesis which states that there is significant

difference in the emotional intelligence of boys and girls may be partially accepted. The boys and girls do not differ on the dimension handling relations whereas girls have higher mean on the other three dimensions i.e. understanding emotions, understanding motivation, empathy. Thus girls are more emotionally intelligent. The results of the study (Sharma, 2000) also found no significant differences in the emotional intelligence of boys and girls.

Hypothesis IV – There exists significant difference in the adjustment of boys and girls.

Table 4: Significance of difference in the Adjustment of boys and girls

Adjustment	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-ratio
Emotional	Boys	50	15	2.12	98	0.501
	Girls	50	17	2.10		
Social	Boys	50	12	2.24	98	1.62
	Girls	50	13	3.74		
Educational	Boys	50	14	5.4	98	1.11
	Girls	50	15	3.30		

*p< 0.05 **p< 0.01.

Discussion

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-ratio for boys and girls on three dimensions of adjustment namely Emotional, Social & Educational is 0.501, 1.62 & 1.11 respectively at 98 degree of freedom. The calculated values are less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the difference between the

adjustment of boys and girls students is not significant. Thus the hypothesis that there exists a significant difference in the adjustment of boys and girls may be rejected.

Hypothesis V – There exists significant difference in the mental health of boys and girls.

Table 5: Significance of difference in the Mental Health of boys and girls.

Mental Health	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-ratio
Emotional Stability	Boys	50	38	2.24	98	6.68**
	Girls	50	40	3.74		
Overall Adjustment	Boys	50	2	2.11	98	3.37**
	Girls	50	3	3.22		
Autonomy	Boys	50	9	2.10	98	4.64**
	Girls	50	11	2.22		
Security-Insecurity	Boys	50	8	2.41	98	1.76
	Girls	50	9	3.20		
Self-Concept	Boys	50	9	1.15	98	5.31**
	Girls	50	7	2.41		

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$.

Discussion

Table 5 shows that the calculated t-ratio for boys and girls on Mental Health is 6.68, 3.37, 4.64 & 5.31 at 98 degree of freedom. The calculated values are more than the table value of t at 0.01 level of significance showing that difference is significant on four dimensions of mental health namely, Emotional Stability, Overall adjustment, Autonomy & self concept whereas the calculated value of t i.e. 1.76 is less than the table value on the dimension security- Insecurity. Hence the hypothesis which states that there is significant difference in mental health of boys and girls may be accepted. The results of the study (Mangotra, 1982) ^[11] also found differences in the mental health of boys and girls. The mental health of boys was dominated by the feelings of depression and neurotic behavior. On the other hand, girls were found to be suffering from a sense of insecurity and anxiety.

Implications

The present study has wide implications -

1. Emotional intelligence being a significant factor in future success should be more emphasized in educational situations.
2. Development of healthy social relationships and well balanced personality is possible through the knowledge of Emotional Intelligence.
3. This study suggests that more frequent experience should be provided to adolescents in development of emotional intelligence, mental health and adjustment as these factors help in the development of a right attitude.
4. This study is very significant for parents and teachers as this study shows how the development of emotional intelligence can lead to better mental health and proper adjustment of children in society.
5. Adolescence is age where child needs more concentration and affection from the family. Therefore parents should treat children as a friend so as adolescents get a open environment to express himself /herself.
6. School environment should be encouraging for adolescents. They should be counseled for their career

ahead as teenage is a stage of choosing next upcoming career. This counseling may help a child to get serious for their future.

7. Parents should allow children to go for excursion so as they may be become more expressive and responsible.
8. Adolescents should not be burdened for extra classes other than studies to face competition as this may make a child lack behind others.
9. Parents should not compare child's performance with other as every child has an ability which can be harnessed properly if given direction.
10. A teenager should be given open family environment where he can think for himself/ herself. This may help a child.

Delimitations of the study

1. The area of study is delimited to the schools of Ambala only.
2. The study is delimited to a sample of 100 students (50 boys and 50 girls).
3. The study is confined to the students of age range 13-15 years only.

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