

Strategic Emotional Intelligence of Punjabi Adolescents

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ABSTRACT The study was conducted on 200 female adolescents (17–18 years), studying in schools affiliated to CBSE of Ludhiana city, Punjab. The socio-economic status (SES) of the respondents was assessed by administering a standardized socio-economic scale – urban by Shrivastava (1991) and MSCEIT (Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test, 2000) was used to assess strategic emotional intelligence. Results revealed that majority (86%) of the respondents exhibited high performance level for understanding emotion and remaining were almost equally distributed over the next two levels i.e. competent and consider developing. For managing emotions distribution of respondents over the three levels was equally distributed. Similar distribution was observed for strategic emotional intelligence. Further high performance for understanding emotions does not guarantee high performance for managing emotions high performance for both understanding and managing emotions makes an individual high performer for strategic emotional intelligence.

INTRODUCTION

With the dawn of the new millennium, adolescent development has emerged as a major area of psychological research. Adolescents as a group have long been regarded as a unique group with a wide range of difficulties and problems in their transition to adulthood. One aspect of adolescents is their emotions. Students are measured in terms of their performance and grades. However, an intrinsic aspect of adolescents as well as of us all, and one that is usually not assessed, is what has been defined as “emotional intelligence”. Although emotional intelligence has been adopted as a relatively new concept, it has always, even if largely unacknowledged, been part of our being. It is a recent area of research, especially with regard to testing emotional intelligence and in establishing the role of emotional intelligence during adolescence. This raised the interesting question “why is emotional intelligence getting so much attention today?” The new buzzword is no longer IQ, but EQ. In integrating this perspective with adolescents, it is important to acknowledge the benefits of recognizing emotional intelligence among adolescents and understanding how it may impact their growth and development. Mayer and Salovey (1993) define emotional intelligence as “a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions”. Mayer and Salovey (1997) proposed four branch model of emotional

intelligence that includes a) Emotional perception and expression b) Emotional facilitation of thought i.e. using emotional intelligence c) Emotional understanding d) Emotional management. The last two branches of this model constitute “*Strategic Emotional Intelligence*”. Emotional intelligence is now considered by many as being essential for successful living (Goleman, 1995). Teaching adolescents about their emotions and how they deal with others as well as their own actions can be very helpful in their daily struggles and maintaining good relationships. Emotional development in children and adolescents stems from their interactions at home with parents and siblings. Salovey et al. (2002) believes that the most valid approach for assessing emotional intelligence is the use of task-based ability measure as has been done in the present study.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sample (n=200) was drawn from the senior secondary schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education of Ludhiana city. Four such schools were selected randomly. The socio-economic status scale of Shrivastava (1991) was administered to retain only those who belong to the middle socio-economic status. A list was prepared of those female adolescents who met the following criteria:

1. They were from nuclear families.
2. Both parents were alive and living together.
3. Both parents were educated at least up to Matriculation.

- The female adolescents had at least one younger or older sibling alive and living with the family.

MSCEIT - Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (2000) was used to assess the strategic emotional intelligence of selected subjects. It is ability based scale i.e. it measures how well people perform tasks and solve emotional problems, rather than simply asking them about their subjective assessment of their emotional skill. The scoring criteria employed in the present study followed expert scoring approach. A group of 30 experts responded to the test items and their collective response indicate the correct answer. The “consensual” answer to each question was calculated and respondents were given points in proportion to how much they agree with the consensus. The different levels of performance for understanding, managing and strategic emotional intelligence were determined by using cumulative cube root frequency method. Pre-testing of the MSCEIT was done to find out the nature of responses and clarity of statements.

RESULTS

The figure 1 shows percentage distribution of adolescent girls performance over three levels namely high performance, competent and consider developing of “Understanding Emotions”, “Managing Emotions” and “Strategic Emotional Intelligence”. The distribution of respondents for “Understanding Emotions” over the three levels was found to be 86% (high performance), 7.5% (competent) and 6.5% (consider developing). Statistically significant difference was found between high

performance and competent ($p < 0.001$) and high performance and consider developing ($p < 0.001$) whereas no significant difference was found between competent and consider developing.

The distribution of respondents for “Managing Emotions” over the three levels of performance was 27.5% (high performance), 38% (competent) and 34.5% (consider developing). Statistically significant difference was found between high performance and competent ($p < 0.05$) whereas the other two combinations were statistically nonsignificant. “Understanding Emotions” and “Managing Emotions” combine to form “Strategic Emotional Intelligence”. The respondents in this category were distributed as 38.5 % high performance, 31.0 % competent and 30.5 % consider developing. All the three combinations i.e. high performance and competent, high performance and consider developing and competent and consider developing were statistically non-significant.

The first column of the table shows performance levels for “Understanding Emotions”. The second column of this table divides adolescents for “Managing Emotions” on the basis of “Understanding Emotions” (Table 1). The third column further sub-divides individuals in these levels to 9 sub-levels of performance for “Strategic Emotional Intelligence”. High performers within the first category of “Understanding Emotions”; gave out 33.14% high performers for “Managing Emotions”, 71.92% out of these continued to perform high for “Strategic Emotional Intelligence”, remaining 28.07 % were competent and none fell into the third slot. Out of the competent category of 67, equal number of 30

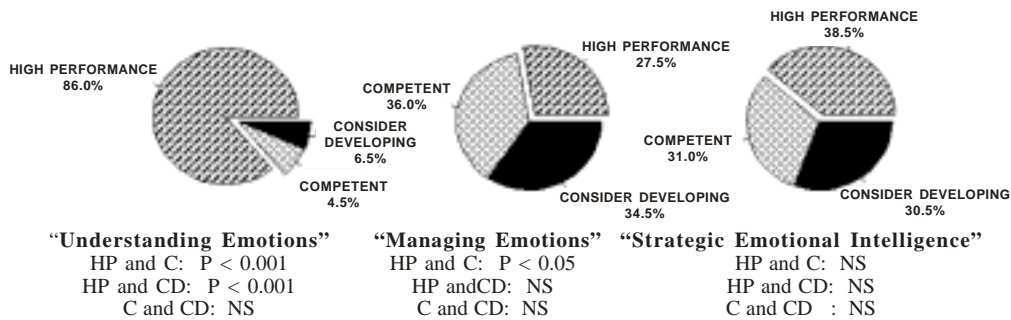


Fig.1. Percentage distribution of adolescent girls’ performance over three levels of ‘Understanding Emotions’, ‘Managing Emotions’ and ‘Strategic Emotional Intelligence’.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of adolescent girls (n=200) over various levels of their performance for "Strategic Emotional Intelligence" as per the levels of "Managing Emotions"

Performance levels For 'Understanding Emotions'	Performance levels for "Managing Emotions" on the basis of 'Understanding	Performance Emotions' level For 'strategic Emotional Intelligence' on the basis of "Managing Emotions"	Percentage distribution of Respondents		Statistical significance of difference between proportions		
			n	%	Chi-square value	Significance level	
High Performance (HP)172 (86%)	High Performance (HP)57 (33.14%)	High Performance	41	71.92	45	P<0.001	
		Competent	16	28.07			
	Competent (C) 67 (38.95%)	High Performance	Consider Developing	0	0	16.2	P<0.001
			High Performance	30	44.70		
		Competent	30	44.70			
		Consider Developing	7	10.4			
Consider Developing (CD)48 (27.90%)	High Performance	High Performance	3	6.25	16.7	P< 0.001	
		Competent	20	41.7			
	Consider Developing	25	52.1				
	High Performance	0	0				
Competent (C)15 (7.5%)	High Performance (HP)1 (6.66%)	High Performance	0	0	Not Applicable	-	
		Competent	0	0			
	Competent (C) 4 (26.66%)	High Performance	Consider Developing	1	100	Not Applicable	-
			High Performance	0	0		
		Competent	0	0			
		Consider Developing	4	100			
Consider Developing (CD)10 (66.66%)	High Performance	High Performance	0	0	Not Applicable	-	
		Competent	0	0			
	Consider Developing	Consider Developing	10	100			
		High Performance	0	0			
Consider Developing (CD)13 (6.5%)	High Performance (HP)1 (7.7%)	High Performance	0	0	Not Applicable	-	
		Competent	0	0			
	Competent (C) 3 (23.1%)	High Performance	Consider Developing	1	100	Not Applicable	-
			High Performance	0	0		
		Competent	0	0			
		Consider Developing	3	100			
Consider Developing (CD)9 (69.2%)	High Performance	High Performance	0	0	Not Applicable	-	
		Competent	0	0			
	Consider Developing	9	100				

each (44.70%) were found to be high performers and competent for "Strategic Emotions". A quick perusal of the table 1 shows that competent and consider developing levels of "Understanding Emotions" remain consistently on the third rung down to the performance levels for the "Strategic Emotional Intelligence". This refurbishes the belief that "Understanding Emotions", "Managing Emotions" and "Strategic Emotional Intelligence" are closely inter-related for performance. The chi-square values for the sub-levels of high performers are fairly high (45.0, 16.2 and 16.7 for 2 degrees of freedom) showing deviations from simple statistical expectations.

Being a recent field of research, similar work is hard to come across. Vitello-Cicciu (2001) administered the MSCEIT to 50 nursing leaders, and then interviewed the extreme highest and lowest scoring groups. High scorers tended to

use self-help books and meditation to manage their emotions. Striking differences emerged in leadership style between the two groups in the qualitative analyses. Pusey (2000) administered the MSCEIT to 42 United Kingdom employees. Emotional intelligence scores were correlated with job performance ratings. Total EI scores (and individually, the facilitation branch) correlated with job performance.

CONCLUSION

It could be inferred that 'High Performance' for 'Understanding Emotions' does not guarantee 'High Performance' for 'Managing Emotions'. There is equal chance of their being in any of the three levels of performance for 'Managing Emotions'.

The chance of performing at 'Consider

Developing' level of 'Managing Emotions' is two third times for an individual operating either at 'Competent' or 'Consider Developing' levels of 'Understanding Emotion'. Similarly, it is over one third times likely that the individual shall perform at 'Competent' level for 'Managing Emotions' if 'Understanding Emotions' level is 'Competent' or 'Consider Developing'.

It could be concluded that 'High Performance' level for 'Understanding Emotions' makes an individual more likely to be 'High Performer' or 'Competent' for "Strategic Emotional Intelligence" with one fifth of the chance of his doing at 'Consider Developing' level of "Strategic Emotional Intelligence". However, 'Competent' and 'Consider Developing' level of 'Understanding Emotions' allow an individual to operate only at the lowest level (consider developing) of "Strategic Emotional Intelligence".

'High performance' level for 'Understanding Emotions' though necessary but does not guarantee 'High Performance' level of "Strategic Emotional Intelligence".

'High performance' level of "Strategic Emotional Intelligence" requires 'High Performance' levels at 'Understanding Emotions' and 'Managing Emotions'.

Accordingly 30% of adolescents of 'Consider Developing' level of "Strategic Emotional Intelligence" and 33% of them of 'Competent' level of "Strategic Emotional Intelligence" need intervention so as to improve their performance level.

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