Emotional Intelligence and Social Adaptation of School Children

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ABSTRACT The present study was carried out in Hisar district of Haryana in the year 2010 with an objective to find out the emotional intelligence level of school children and its relation with their adjustment. A total of 120 children falling in the age group of 16 to 18 years, 60 each from randomly selected school of urban and rural area were selected for the present study .Further thirty children, equally representing both the sexes, were considered on random basis. Adjustment of the children was taken as dependent variable, whereas, emotional intelligence, personal and socio-economic variables were considered as independent variables. Majority of the respondents had normal to high emotional intelligence and average to excellent adjustment. Urban children comparatively had slightly better emotional intelligence and adjustment against rural children. The emotional intelligence had significant positive relationship with adjustment of children. Caste, income and father's occupation were main contributing factors in deciding the emotional intelligence and adjustment of respondents.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions play a very important role in our lives. It is essential to know how they affect our personal and social adjustments. Adjustment is an important factor to complete a person's goal successfully. It is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs. Adjustment refers to the ability of an individual to fit into his environment. In recent years, there has been an increased interest in the role of emotional intelligence in both the academic success of students and their adjustment in school. Indeed, some authors (Romasz et al. 2004) suggest that acquisition of such skills is a prerequisite for students before they can access traditional academic material presented in the classroom. Emotional intelligence is the driving force behind the factors that affect personal success and everyday interactions with others. Studies of emotional intelligence have shown its relevance to many aspects of life and the role it plays in the interactions and adjustments in daily life. Safavi et al. (2008) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and socio-emotional adjustment in pre- university girl students in Tehran. The results of the study showed that there was a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and socio-emotional adjustment. Emotional intelligence has been found to be a predictor of life satisfaction, healthy psychological adaptation, positive interactions with peers and family, and higher parental warmth. Lower emotional intelligence has also been found to be associated with violent behaviour, illegal use of drugs and alcohol, and participation in delinquent behaviour. While it might be correct that there have been a lot of theorizing in the usefulness of emotional intelligence in helping the adolescent in adjustment to academic, social and school life, there is a paucity of empirical data in this regard. The purpose of the present study is to determine the extent of relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment of school adolescents, so that efforts can be made to develop a strategic plan for recommending to the school to improve the emotional intelligence of children and hence, helping the adolescents to make this period a more adjusting and enjoyable time leading to success in adolescents life. Therefore, the present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1 To study the emotional intelligence and adjustment level of school children.

2 To find out the relationship of socio-economic variables with emotional intelligence and adjustment level of school children.

METHODOLOGY

Locale

The present study was carried out in Hisar district of Haryana state.

Selection of Village/Area

To represent the rural sample, Ladwa and Muklan villages of Hisar district were selected

randomly. Senior secondary school of each village was taken to draw the sample. For urban sample, two schools viz. St. Sophia Senior Secondary School and Thakur Das Bhargava Senior Secondary School affiliated to CBSE board were selected randomly from Hisar city.

Selection of Respondents

For rural sample, lists of students from the selected schools falling in the age group of 16 to 18 years were prepared and thirty children equally representing both the sexes were selected on random basis from each school. Same procedure was followed to draw urban sample. Finally 120 children, 60 each from urban and rural area were selected for the present study

Parameters

Adjustment of the children was taken as dependent variable whereas emotional intelligence, personal and socio-economic variables were considered as independent variables.

Measures Used

Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Hyde and Dethe (2002) was used to measure the emotional intelligence of respondents. To assess children's adjustment, Adjustment Inventory for School Students developed by Sinha and Singh (2007) was used. Interview schedule was developed to get information regarding personal and socio-economic variables.

Data Collection

Data were collected on various selected parameters using the standardized scale and interview schedule on individual basis.

Statistical Analysis

To calculate statistical inference frequency and percentages, Z test and correlation coefficient were computed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

Personal

Sample was equally distributed, gender and education wise, that is, male and female study-

ing in 11th and 12th standard respectively. The personal profile data revealed that higher percentage (47.50%) of respondents from the total sample were under 16 years of age followed by under 17 (30.83%) and 18 (21.67%) years. Further regarding the birth order of respondents, Table1 highlights that 45 per cent respondents were of 1st birth order followed by 2nd (35.83%) and 3rd (19.17%) birth order.

Table 1: Profile of respondents

Variable/Area	Rural	Urban	Total
Personal Profile			
Age			
<16 Years	26(43.33)	31(51.67)	57(47.50)
<17 Years	19(31.67)	18(30.00)	37(30.83)
<18 Years	15(25.00)	11(18.33)	26(21.67)
Birth Order			
1st Born	23(38.33)	31(51.67)	54(45.00)
2nd Born	22(36.67)	21(35.00)	43(35.83)
3rd Born	15(25.00)	8(13.33)	23(19.17)
FamilyEducational Status			
Low	11(18.33)	0 (0.00)	11(9.17)
Medium	28(46.67)	12(20.00)	40(33.33)
High	21(35.00)	48(80.00)	69(57.50)
Socio-economic Profile			
Caste			
Low	19(31.67)	6(10.00)	25(20.83)
Medium	10(16.67)	13(21.67)	23(19.17)
High	31(51.67)	41(68.33)	72(60.00)
Type of Family			
Nuclear	37(61.67)	41(68.33)	78(65.00)
Joint	23(38.33)	19(31.67)	42(35.00)
No. of Siblings			
1-3	48(80.00)	55(91.67)	103(85.83)
4-6	8(13.33)	4 (6.67)	12(10.00)
7and above	4 (6.67)	1 (1.66)	5 (4.17)
Father's Occupation			
Farming	34(56.67)	5 (8.33)	39(32.50)
Labour	14(23.33)	0 (0.00)	14(11.67)
Buisness	4 (6.67)	14(23.33)	18(15.00)
Service	8(13.33)	41(68.33)	49(48.83)
Mother's Occupation			
House wife	52(86.67)	52(86.67)	104(86.67)
Farming	5 (8.33)	1 (1.67)	6 (5.00)
Labour	1 (1.67)	0 (0.00)	1 (0.83)
Service	2 (3.33)	7(11.67)	9 (7.50)
Family Income			
Up to Rs 10000	26(43.33)	8(13.33)	34(56.67)
Rs 10001-20000	23(38.33)	19(31.67)	42(35.00)
Rs 20001 and above	11(18.33)	33(55.00)	44(36.67)

Educational status of respondent's family indicated that more than 50 per cent respondents were in high family educational status category (57.50%) followed by medium (33.33%) and low (9.17%). Area wise comparison shows that in urban area majority of respondents (80%) were in high family educational status against only 35 percent rural respondents in this category.

Socio-economic

The data portraits that 60 per cent of the respondents belonged to higher caste having nuclear (65%) family system. Majority of respondents had 1-3 siblings (85.83%) and the trend was same for both rural (80%) and urban (91.67%) area.

The data pertaining to the occupation of fathers indicated that in rural area the highest percentage of fathers were in farming class (56.67%) followed by labour (23.33%) and service class (8%), whereas, the trend was reverse in urban area, where highest percentage of fathers were in service (68.33%) followed by business (23.33%) and farming class (8.33%).

As far as mother's occupation is concerned, in both the areas equal percentage of respondent's mothers were housewives (86.67%). Almost equal percentage of respondents was in the category of Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 20,000 and above Rs. 20,001 monthly income.

Levels of Emotional Intelligence (E.I) and Adjustment

Table 2 highlights area-wise distribution of respondents for emotional intelligence and adjustment. The data indicated that maximum percentage of respondents were in normal to high category of emotional intelligence (82.50%). Area wise differences were also seen as 46.67 per cent of urban respondents against 35 per cent rural counterpart were in normal emotional intelligence category. Regarding adjustment of respondents, the data indicated that higher percentage of rural against urban counterpart respondents had average to excellent adjustment. The results of the present study are in line with the findings of Katyal and Awasthi (2005), who suggested that majority of sample had good followed by low emotional intelligence. Results pertaining to adjustment pattern of the sample are also inconsonance with the findings of Abdullah and Maria (2008) which showed that majority of the students has a moderate overall adjustment level.

Area and Gender-Wise Mean Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Adjustment

Area and gender wise means for emotional intelligence and adjustment are given in Table 3. Statistically significant differences in emo-

Table 2: Area-wise distribution of adolescents for Emotional Intelligence (E.I) and adjustment

S. No.	Area/Variables	Rural n=60 f (%)	Urban n=60 f (%)	Total N=120 f (%)
1	*Emotional Intelligence*			
	Low	09(15.00)	12(20.00)	21(17.50)
	Normal	21(35.00)	28(46.67)	49(40.83)
	High	30(50.00)	20(33.33)	50(41.67)
2	*Adjustment*			
	Very unsatisfactory	04(06.67)	12(20.00)	16(13.33)
	Unsatisfactory	08(13.33)	01(01.67)	09(07.50)
	Average	16(26.67)	21(35.00)	37(30.83)
	Good	24(40.00)	21(35.00)	45(37.50)
	Excellent	08(13.33)	05(08.33)	13(10.83)

tional intelligence (Z=2.60*) and adjustment of children (2.36*) were observed on the basis of area and gender (Z = 2.80* and 3.19* respectively) at 5% level of significance. The urban adolescents had comparatively better emotional intelligence and adjustment against rural counterparts. Gender wise, females displayed higher emotional intelligence and better adjustment against their counterparts. The obtained results related to emotional intelligence are in line with the findings of studies reported by Wing and Love (2001) and Singh (2002). They all found females to have higher emotional intelligence than the males. However, study by Chu (2002) revealed that males have higher level of emotional intelligence than the females. With regard to gender wise differences in adolescents, results are in contradiction with the findings of Abdullah and Maria (2008) who suggested that male students' overall level of adjustment was found to be higher as compared to female students.

Table 3: Mean differences in the Emotional Intelligence (E.I) and adjustment on the basis of area and gender

Variables	Emotional intelligence mean	Z values	Adjustment mean	Z values
Area				
Rural (n=60)	76.76	2.60*	13.68	
Urban (n=60)	85.20		17.86	2.36*
Gender				
Male (n=60)	76.45	2.80*	13.00	
Female (n=60)	85.51		18.55	3.19*

Significant at 5% level

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Adjustment

The data in Table 4 portrays the correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment.

Emotional intelligence and adjustment of adolescent were found to be significantly correlated (r = 0.443*) at 5 per cent level of significance. The sub-aspects of emotional intelligence and adjustment also had a significant correlation with each other, except self-development aspect of emotional intelligence which had non-significant correlation with overall adjustment and its sub-aspects.

Table 4: Correlation between Emotional Intelligence (E.I) and adjustment (N=120)

Adjustment/ Emotional intelligence	Overall adjust-ment	Emo-tional adjust-ment	Social adjust-ment	Educa-tional adjust-ment
Overall emotional intelligence	0.443*	0.293*	0.263*	0.484*
Self autonomy	0.311*	0.270*	0.260*	0.313*
Empathy	0.252*	0.190*	0.128*	0.282*
Self –motivation	0.296*	0.224*	0.279*	0.303*
Emotional stability	0.267*	0.138*	0.246*	0.328*
Managing relations	0.281*	0.223*	0.186*	0.352*
Integrity	0.302*	0.184*	0.186*	0.352*
Self -development	0.017	0.068	0.060	0.033
Value orientation	0.409*	0.231*	0.279*	0.459*
Commitment	0.438*	0.332*	0.227*	0.468*
Altruistic behaviour	0.250*	0.186*	0.267*	0.212*

*Significant at 5 % level of significance

Results are in contention with Engelberg and Sjoberg (2004),Adeyemo (2005), and Safavi et al. (2008), who preached that emotional intelligence was related quite strongly to social adjustment.

The probable reason for the present findings might be due to the fact that emotional intelligence primarily deals with managing and expressing one's emotions as well as social skills. Since females tend to be more emotional and intimate in relationships as compared to males, so their emotional intelligence ought to be higher than that of males. This is perhaps because of the society, which socializes the two genders differently as has been found in studies by Duckelt and Raffalli (1989) and Sandhu and Mehrotra (1999). Moreover, higher emotional intelligence among girls can also be explained in terms of some of their personality characteristics. Similar findings were reported in studies by Tapia (1998) and Dunn (2002). They observed that girls score higher with regard to empathy, social responsibilities and interpersonal relationships than boys. They are more sensitive towards their relationships with par-

ents, friends and siblings. All these traits help them to acquire more emotional intelligence as compared to boys. The urban adolescents had comparatively better emotional intelligence and adjustment as against their rural counterparts. This might be due to being prevalent nuclear family units in urban area where parents feel more concerned of their wards activities and provide suitable guidance and emotional support to their children. This study is only a stepping stone in the field of emotional intelligence. This aspect requires much more exploration as there is dearth of research work, especially in India. Findings of this research study will prove beneficial for educators, parents, counselors etc. for providing better knowledge about this vital component of success and its important predictors. An understanding of all these aspects will provide a better insight into the success equation required in life.

CONCLUSION

Majority of the respondents had normal to high level of emotional intelligence and average to excellent adjustment. Rural respondents were slightly better in their emotional intelligence, whereas, urban respondents were better adjusted against their counterparts. The emotional intelligence had significant positive relationship with adjustment of children. Caste, income and fathers' occupation were main contributing factors in deciding the emotional intelligence and adjustment of respondents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Program for parents and teachers on strategies to improve the emotional intelligence and adjustment of children especially in economically poor class involved in labour work may be developed and implemented.

2. Teachers should play a role of counselor and should encourage the children to participate in group activities which will help them to interact, understand emotions and share their feelings with fellow students.

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