Emotional Intelligence of High School Students in relation to their self-concept

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Abstract
Emotional intelligence (EI) involves the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought. We discuss the origins of the EI concept, define EI, and describe the scope of the field today. Emotional intelligence (EI) has become one of the new management ‘buzz’ terms. It is suggested that this is the missing ingredient that separates average from top management or performance. However, despite its potential relevance for social work practice, there has been little investigation and few reports about its application in social work settings. This paper seeks to stimulate debate about the role of EI in social work practice by considering its development, definitions and problematics. Whilst the empirical evidence supporting the existence of a separate and measurable EI is ambiguous and emergent, the role of emotion in the organization of human behaviour is more firmly established. The paper examines the role of EI and emotion in relation to five core social work tasks: engagement of users; assessment and observation; decision making; collaboration and co-operation; dealing with stress. The paper situates itself in the rapidly changing context of social work: the merger of social services departments with larger more powerful bureaucracies; the movement towards integrated service delivery; and the new social work degree. It is argued that social work needs to identify its claims to professional competence at a time of such change, one of which is the ability to use relationships to address users’ needs. This requires the capacity to handle both one’s own and others’ emotions effectively. The Discussion section is followed by a list of summary points and recommended issues for future research.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Core Social Work Tasks, Integrated Service Delivery, Social Services Departments, School Settings, Self-Concept, School Children
1 Introduction

Emotional Intelligence is a new concept which needs to be researched in school settings. It refers to emotional awareness and emotional management skills which enable one to balance emotions and reason to maximize long-term happiness. It is the ability to understand emotions and their causes as well as the capability of effectively regulating these emotions in oneself & others.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence is a new one in the literature of educational and psychological studies. Historically, speaking, the term Emotional Intelligence was introduced in 1990 by two American University Professors Dr. John Mayer and Dr. Peter Salovey in their attempt to develop a scientific measure for knowing the difference in people’s ability in the areas of emotion. However, the credit for popularizing the concept of Emotional Intelligence goes to another American Psychologist Daniel Goleman. It was in 1995 when Daniel Goleman published his most popular book ‘Emotional Intelligence’. With the publication of this book research work in the field of ‘Organizational behaviour’ started in America. In India the research work on Emotional Intelligence in the area of Educational Psychology was undertaken only a few years back.

Emotional Intelligence is a single important factor in predicting success while the other important factors like technical skills, mental abilities, physical fitness, aspirations and career goals, physical appearance and circumstances around either support or hinder performance.

Emotional intelligence has, in recent years, been popularized and the research into its many components has multiplied. It is the latest development in understanding the relation between reason and emotion. Emotional intelligence is the single most important factor in predicting success and other important factors are: technical skills, specific knowledge, mental abilities, physical fitness, physical appearance, and interest in a particular type of work, aspirations and career goals and life circumstances that either support or hinder performance.

The concept of emotional intelligence has gained popularity and accepted over in the recent years. The ability to appropriately identify, recognize and manage your emotions for one’s own well being as well as the well-being of people around you is what is described as emotional intelligence.

According to the exponents of emotional intelligence, a person’s emotional make-up largely determines his or her professional success. They believe that EQ is the most important determinant to the extent of professional and personal success in life. It is interesting to note that so many people with high IQ fail whereas those with less intellectual endowment are extremely successful. It is increasingly recognized that IQ may account for only about 20% of a person’s success in life. The remaining 80% depends largely on a person’s emotional intelligence.

EQ can be instrumental in achieving success in many areas of professional life and can help in increasing productivity, speeding up adaptation to change, developing leadership skills and stimulating creativity. People with high E.Q. are happier, healthier and more successful in social relationship in their profession. They are aware of their own feelings, show empathy and compassion for others and have high self-esteem.

2 Objective

The present study was conducted in view of the following objectives:

(i) To make comparison of emotional intelligence and self-concept on the basis of sex, location of the schools (rural and urban) and type of schools (Govt & Private).

(ii) To study the differences on different components of emotional intelligence between three types of students with high, average and low self-concept.
(iii) To establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept of school children.

2 Need of the Study

Children of today are the assets of the nation tomorrow. We have to nurture them to harness their potential and use it for future. We have to mold their personality according to their abilities, capacities and capabilities. It is the duty of the parents as well as the teachers to explore their inner power and develop it accordingly. Every child has his own personality construct.

The concept of emotional intelligence is a new one and is now well known in the field of education. The latest thinking is that 80% success in life is due to the high level of emotional intelligence. The study of emotional intelligence is at its crawling stage in India, where we need to know its various facets at different stages of development. The research in this field becomes all the more desired in case of school students, as they are going through the emotional turmoil, where they are confronted with the situation and problems which cannot be solved by intelligence only, for which emotions are equally required.

Every child has his own image. Children live in their own world. They build their self-picture according to the circumstances in which they live. Self-image leads to self-prestige, self-esteem and self-believe. All these components of personality are the outcome of self-concept. It is also necessary to assess the self-concept of school children.

Since emotional intelligence is expected to play a major role in academic success, so it will be desirable to study emotional intelligence among high school children and also to find out the relationship of emotional intelligence with the personality construct of self-concept.

3 Review of Literature

Petrides and Furnham (2000) conducted a study on two hundred and sixty predominantly white participants who completed a measure of trait emotional intelligence and estimated their scores on 15 facets on a normal distribution with 100 points as the mean and 15 points as a SD. Females scored higher than males on the “social skills” factor of measured trait EI. However, when the 15 facets of self-estimated EI were combined into a single reliable scale and the participants’ measured trait EI scores were held constant, it was demonstrated that males believed they had higher EI than females. Most of the correlations between measured and self-estimated scores were significant and positive, thereby indicating that people have some insight into their EI. Correlations between measured and self-estimated scores were generally higher for males than females, and a regression analysis indicated that gender was a significant predictor of self-estimated EI.

Ciarrachii, Chan and Caputi (2000), posit that emotional intelligence may protect people from stress and lead to better adaptation.

Schuttle et al (2001) examined the link between emotional intelligence and interpersonal relations. Participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence have higher scores for empathic perspective taking and self-monitoring in social situations. Social skills displayed more cooperative responses towards partners. They also found higher scores for close and affectionate relationship.

Ciarrachi, Chan and Bajgar (2001) have found that emotional intelligence has an impact on psychological health-particularly occupational stress.

Caruso, Mayer and Salovey (2002) concluded a study to examine the ability test of emotional intelligence and its relationship to personality test variables to determine the extent to which these constructs overlap. Results revealed that emotional intelligence was measured reliably and was
relatively independent of traditionally defined personality traits, supporting the discriminant validity of the emotional intelligence construct.

Duke (2002) said gifted children who have low levels of emotional intelligence are at risk of social or emotional problems. Children with ADHD are usually low in emotional intelligence because their disorder affects the areas of the brain that manage emotions. They tend to experience greater frustration, lower self-esteem and more peer rejection than most gifted children. Their low emotional intelligence makes life harder for them both at home and at school.

In response to general press assertions that training emotionally intelligent children will lead to great rewards, the study conducted by O’Connor and Little (2003) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic achievement in college students, using both self-report and ability-based measures of EI. Specifically, the Mayer, Salovey, Caruso’s Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT, an ability-based measure and the Bar-on Emotional Quotient (EQ-i.e.; self-report measure) were used to predict academic achievement. Achievement was operationalized as the respondents’ cumulative GPA. Results indicated that EI is not a strong predictor of academic achievement regardless of the type of instrument used to measure it. However, a construct validity examination revealed that the MSCEIT correlated highly with indices of cognitive ability but minimally with personality dimensions. In contrast, the EQ-i failed to correlate with indices of cognitive ability but correlated substantially with numerous dimensions.

Chan (2003) studied 259 gifted adolescents who were assessed on their emotional intelligence and social coping strategies using the Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Social Coping Questionnaire. An item factor analysis yielded four dimensions of emotional intelligence, leading to the construction of four empirical scales of emotional intelligence. Students scored most highly on social skills and self-management of emotions, followed by empathy, and utilization of emotions. In coping with their being gifted, students endorsed to different degrees their use of six coping strategies, which were valuing peer acceptance, involvement in activities, attempting avoidance, denying giftedness, prizing conformity, and discounting popularity. Social Skills emerged as the most important component of emotional intelligence predicting the use of strategies of valuing peer accepting and involvement in activities. Implications of the findings for enhancing emotional intelligence of adolescents in coping with problems arising from their being gifted are discussed.

Mayer, Salovey, Caruso and Sitarenios (2003) in their study on “Measuring Emotional Intelligence with the MSCEIT V2.O” asked the question “Does a recently introduced ability scale adequately measure emotional intelligence skills?” Using the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso’s Emotional intelligence Test, the authors examined (i) whether members of a general standardization sample and emotions experts identified the same test answers as correct, (ii) the test’s reliability, and (iii) the possible factor structures of EI. Twenty-one emotion experts endorsed many of the same answers, as did 2112 members of the standardized sample and exhibited superior agreement. The MSCEIT achieved reasonable reliability and confirmatory factor analysis supported theoretical models of EI.

Sharma and Sharma (2004) studied the emotional competence in children and the results indicate that interpersonal world helps to animate their emotions to this texture and character to each child’s life. Sharma and Sharma (2004) also studied the emotional competence among 70 adolescents by discovering the varied understanding and use of emotions in children’s everyday lives. Their developing awareness of emotions as means of describing oneself demonstrated the interplay of thought and feelings. Results indicated that interpersonal world helps to animate their emotions of this given texture and character to each child’s life.

Sibia, Mishra and Srivastava (2004) examined the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) in the Indian
socio-cultural context. An attempt was made to discern the indigenous notion of EI based on the perspectives of people (parents, teachers and children) in the contemporary Indian society, where people exhibit a relational and context sensitive construct of self. Results indicate that Indian view of EI is embedded in its highly valued social concerns, virtues, cultural traditions and practices.

Emotional Intelligence has its roots in the concept of social intelligence first identified by E.L. Thorndike in 1920. Social intelligence is the ability to understand and relate to people. Thorndike defined social intelligence as “the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls—to act wisely in human relations.”

Mc-Clelland (1973) contended that conventional concept of I.Q. simply could not predict how well people would perform in the whole work place. Later on, Garder(1983) talked about multiple intelligence theory including intrapersonal intelligence and interpersonal intelligence. He conceptualized intrapersonal intelligence as the ability to understand one’s own emotions and intentions. It correlates with E.I.

E.Q. is largely learned and continues to develop throughout life and is conditioned by life’s experiences. Unlike I.Q., Emotional Intelligence can be improved throughout life. In the normal course of a life time, emotional intelligence tends to increase as you learn to be more aware of your moods, to effectively handle distressing emotions and to listen and empathize. As you become more matured, you can acquire certain emotional competencies that lead to outstanding performance at work. It also focuses on personal qualities such as initiative, empathy, motivation and awareness. It can also create an enthusiastic work environment, reduce stress levels and resolve emotional issues, improve the well-being of the persons and improve their relationship all-round.

4 Research Methodology

Research Design

In the present study, descriptive and survey method was used. For measuring two variables of the study, three questionnaires/inventories were administered to the subjects. Here, self-concept was the independent variables, whereas emotional intelligence was dependent variable. Besides these, (i) gender i.e. male and female students, (ii) location of the schools, i.e. rural schools and urban schools and (iii) type of schools, i.e.; Government schools and private schools were also independent variables.

Sample
A sample of 400 students of 9th and 10th classes was selected randomly; out of which 200 were male students (100 rural and 100 urban schools) and 200 female students (again 100 rural and 100 urban schools) studying in government and private schools. The students from government and private schools were taken equally. The sample distribution is shown in the following figure.

5 Tests / Tools Used

1. **Ekta's Emotional Intelligence Scale**- This test was constructed and standardized by Ekta Sharma and consists of 60 statements measuring five aspects of emotional intelligence i.e.; (i) self-awareness (ii) managing emotions; (iii) self-motivation; (iv) empathy and (v) handling relationships.

2. **Emotional Intelligence Test**: Mangal test of Emotional Intelligence was also used for measuring emotional intelligence of the students. This test consists of 100 items of four different areas such as (i) intra-personal awareness (own emotions), (2) inter-personal awareness (other emotions), (3) intrapersonal management (own emotions), (4) inter personal management (other emotions). It is meant for the adolescents in the age group of 14+, for both males and females.

6 Procedure

After collecting the data, the response sheets of all these tests were scored on the basis of scoring keys provided in their respective manuals. The raw scores were statistically analyzed.

**Statistical Techniques used**: The following statistical techniques were used on the raw data in order to find out the results:

(i) The means, SDs, and SEs of the scores of all the variables belonging to different groups were calculated,

(ii) t-ratios were found out in order to know the significant differences between two groups formed on the basis of sex, types of schools and location of the schools.

(iii) ANOVA was applied on the scores of dependent variables in order to find out the significant differences among the different groups formed on the basis of independent variables.

These results were interpreted and discussed by drawing out the tables and graphs. Hypotheses of the study were tested on the basis of the previous studies already conducted and available in the literature. Conclusions were drawn and suggestions were given to chalk out the strategies for the educational programme of school children.

7 Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study:

- On emotional intelligence; male and female students differ on third aspect and total EI; but not on the other aspects. Rural and urban students have differences on the first three aspects and total EI; but not on the fourth and fifth ones. But rural and urban students do not differ on almost all components.

- Sex differences are not found on many aspects of emotional intelligence on Mangal’ test except fourth but differences exist between rural and urban school students and rural students have higher level of emotional intelligence except first and fourth. The students of Govt. and private schools also do not differ with each on almost all aspects of emotional intelligence except first component.
On self-concept, differences are not significant between male and female students (except 3rd and 4th dimension) as well as students of Govt. and private school; but differences are significant on the basis of location of schools of the school students. The rural school students have better self-concept than those of urban schools.

Students of three levels of self-concept i.e. high, average and low differ with each other on all aspects of emotional intelligence. And the students with high level of self-concept are more emotionally intelligent than those of low self-concept. So there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept.

Students with high, average and low emotional intelligence also differ on all dimensions of the self-concept and students with high level of emotional intelligence have better self-concept. It has established a positive relationship between self-concept and emotional intelligence.

There is a positive relationship between self-concept and emotional intelligence of the school students.

8 References

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