

Gender differences in emotional maturity among early adults

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ABSTRACT

Proper emotional development is essential for appropriate use of emotions. Emotional maturity is essential particularly in young population as they face huge amount of emotional turmoil. The present study attempts to study the role of emotional maturity on gender among early adults. The sample consisted of 100 participants aged 18-22 who completed the Emotional Maturity Scale developed by Singh and Bhargava. The results indicated that there were significant gender differences among early adults in emotional maturity on the dimensions of emotional stability, social maladjustment, personality disintegration and lack of independence, however, no differences were found on the dimension of emotional regression.

Keywords: *Emotional Maturity, Gender, Adults*

Development of emotions is one of the essential characteristics of the development of humans. The social and moral growth of an individual is manipulated by the mood, emotions and personal experiences of an individual. Emotional maturity is the ability to establish relationships and maintain relationships. It also includes being empathetic and assuming responsibility to meet them. Kaplan and Baron (1986) described the attributes of an emotionally mature individual as someone who has the competence to survive when there is interruption in gratification of their needs, one who prepares long-term strategies and one who is able to make adjustments according to the requirement of the environment.

According to Hugh Downs (1973): "The way to emotional maturity – Maturity involves remaining formative for as long as one lives. When we stop forming it is because we stop learning and growing. We become crystallized, vulnerable to shocks, large and small". Dosanjh (1960) states that "Emotional maturity means a balanced personality. It means the ability to govern disturbing emotion, show steadiness and endurance under pressure and be tolerant and free from neurotic tendency".

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Cole (1954) states that, “The chief index of emotional maturity is the ability to bear tension”. This opinion has put major focus on ‘self-control’ rather than ‘self-fulfillment’. Kalaiselvan & Maheswari (2016) conducted study found that 45.5 percent of the respondents had moderate level of emotional maturity. Most of the past studies have depicted that females are inclined to be fairly more expressive than males. It is neither necessary nor automatic that emotional growth goes hand in hand with physical growth. The present study was aimed to find gender differences in emotional maturity among early adults.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Aleem (2005) outlined in his study that males were more emotionally stable than females. The degree of emotional quotient was observed to be more in females than the males (Chauhan & Bhatnagar, 2003). It was found that females showed higher emotional maturity than their male counterparts (Krishnamurty, 2011). It was inferred that the emotional maturity among youngsters is determined by gender, females had higher emotional maturity than males (Manoharan, Louis & Doss, 2007).

In a study conducted to study the relationship of emotional maturity and family relationship it was disclosed that there exists a substantial association between emotional maturity and family relationship (Kumar, 2014). Wani and Masih (2015) conducted a research and the findings established that males were comparatively emotionally immature than females particularly on the personality disintegration dimension of emotional maturity.

Significant gender differences were observed in emotional maturity in a sample of internet users aged between 18 to 25 years (Dangwal & Srivastava, 2016). The findings suggest that gender differences existed among males and females in emotional maturity (Shafiq & Khan, 2016). Contrarily, no gender differences were found in emotional maturity among college students. However, it was discovered that most of the college students were emotionally unbalanced (Subbarayan & Visanathan, 2011).

Hypothesis

There shall be significant differences among males and females in emotional maturity.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The main aim of the research is to assess the emotional maturity of among early adults, for which a sample of 100 students was taken. The sample was collected from Government College and Jat College located in Hisar district of Haryana. The sample was divided into 50 males and 50 females. The data consisted of early adults aged 18-22 studying in above mentioned colleges. The sample was collected through purposive random sampling method.

Measures

Emotional Maturity Scale (Singh & Bhargawa, 1990)

There are 48 statements in this scale. There are five options of each statement very much, much, undecided, probably, and never. In this scale, there are five dimensions which are emotional stability, emotional regression, social maladjustment, personality disintegration and lack of independence. These five dimensions show the individual relation with emotional maturity.

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RESULT

The total mean score of males and females is 121, 146.5 respectively. The Standard deviation of emotional maturity for males and females is 16.23, 15.19 respectively.

	F	Sig.	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Level of Significance
Emotional instability	4.086	.046	98	.022	.05
Emotional regression	.629	.430	98	.91	NS
Social maladjustment	2.232	.138	98	.003	.01
Lack of Independence	.020	.888	98	.000	.01
Personality disintegration	.642	.425	98	.008	.01

The result shows that there are significant differences among males and females on the emotional instability dimension of emotional maturity as the $F = 4.086$ ($df = 98$) which is significant at $p < .05$ level. There are no significant gender differences among males and females on the dimension of emotional regression. There are significant differences on the dimension of social maladjustment where the $F = .629$ ($df = 98$) which shows the significance at $p < .01$ level. On the dimension of Lack of Independence, the $F = .02$ ($df = 98$), which is significant at $p < .01$ level which means there are significant gender differences on this dimensional of emotional maturity. There are significant differences on the dimension of personality disintegration where the $F = .642$ ($df = 98$) which shows the significance at $p < .01$ level. This shows that the hypothesis that "There shall be significant differences among males and females in emotional maturity" stands true except on the dimension of emotional regression.

DISCUSSION

The objective of the present research was to study the effect of gender on emotional maturity among early adults. The results of the present research showed that there were significant differences among males and females in emotional maturity among early adults, however, no differences were found on the dimension of emotional regression.

The findings of the present study are also supported by Panth, Chaurasia & Gupta (2015) who found that there are significant gender differences in emotional maturity and that females showed better control over emotions than males. Wani & Masih (2015) found that some differences exist between males and females in emotional maturity on personality disintegration dimension while no significant differences were found on the other dimensions of emotional maturity namely, emotional stability, emotional regression, social maladjustment and lack of independence.

Mahanta & Kannan (2015) found in their study that females mature faster than males but there were no significant differences in their levels of emotional maturity. In a study conducted by Govindraju & Ramesh (2016), it was found that there were significant differences on the dimensions of emotional stability, social adjustment and independence. Swenson (1961) and Aleem (2005) found that gender differences exist among college students in emotional maturity. Kumar & Sunilima (2016) found that there are gender

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differences in emotional maturity. The conclusion that was reached through this study was that males and females vary in their level of emotional maturity significantly.

Limitations

The present study was conducted on a small sample of 100 college students. The sample was collected only from students of two colleges of Hisar, Haryana. A large sample needs to be taken so that it could be generalized to a wider population. Various other factors such as parenting, family relationships, emotional intelligence, anxiety, locality, frustration also influence emotional maturity of early adults. So, effect of such factors also needs to be studied while studying gender difference in emotional maturity. But these factors and other possible determinants of emotional maturity were not considered in this study.

Future Implications

Emotional maturity is a very vast field in psychology which needs wider attention of Indian researchers. More research work needs to be conducted to study emotional maturity of people across various age groups. Researchers also need to study various determinants and factors affecting emotional maturity. Steps that can help people to become emotionally mature should be studied. There is particular need for carrying out researches among youngsters as these people are especially vulnerable to emotional conflicts and complexities of modern world's competitive life. Correlational studies can be conducted to determine the relationship of emotional maturity with other factors.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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