

Emotional Intelligence, Interpersonal Relationship and Psychological Wellbeing among Schedule Caste/ Schedule Tribe College Students

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ABSTRACT

The Scheduled Caste (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) are various officially designated groups of historically disadvantaged indigenous people in India. They are treated with hatred hostility and horrendously in the past and still atrocities are reported in the national media. Present study is an attempt to understand the psychological aspects of Emotional intelligence, interpersonal relationship and psychological wellbeing among SC/ ST college students and non-SC/ST college students to understand the status of their mental health in the age of development. Aim of the study is to elucidate Emotional Intelligence, Interpersonal relationship and Psychological wellbeing among SC/ST College students. A comparative survey on 140 SC/ST and general category college students from Mysore and the backward areas like Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka using Sociodemographic datasheet Carol Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being (1995), Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS; Hyde, Pethe and Dhar; 2002) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations orientation –Behavior (FIRO-B, Schutz, William C, 1958) showed significant differences between the groups in emotional intelligence aspects.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Interpersonal Relationship, Psychological Wellbeing, Schedule Caste/ Schedule Tribe College Students*

Human society has evolved using the classification of its species for various purposes according to various characteristics based on skin colour, social or economic class, and physical appearance and so on. In the Indian context in ancient days based on the occupation of the person, the Varna system was introduced. By the generations, it took the name of caste and started developing various communities in the Indian sub-continent in which some of the upper castes got more privileges and status in the society and they started doing respectable works in the society and get good lifestyle and social status. In counterpart, some of the castes were given less privilege and no status in the society and they were given the work which are considered to be less important and of not any respect and poor socio-economic status and life status. By the time it reaches modern days the status

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of these backward communities was in the throttle. The Scheduled Caste (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) are various officially designated groups of historically disadvantaged indigenous people in India. The terms are recognized in the Constitution of India and the various groups are designated in one or other of the categories. During British rule in India, they were known as the depressed classes. The percentage of people in scheduled castes is essentially the percentage of people in the lower part of Indian society. The SC and ST comprise about 16.6 percent and 8.6 percent, respectively, of India's population (Census, 2011).

Emotional intelligence (EI)

Concept of emotional intelligence (EI) is partly rooted in Thorndike's (1920) idea of 'social intelligence' and Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences (especially 'intrapersonal' and 'interpersonal' intelligence). According to Mayer and Salovey, 1997 Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others (John & Peter, 1990, 1993, 2000).

Interpersonal relationship (IR)

Social influence, social perception and social interaction influence individual and group behaviour. An interpersonal relationship is an association between two or more people that may range from fleeting to enduring. The context can vary from family or kinship relations, friendship, marriage, relations with associates, work, clubs, neighborhood, and places of worship. They may be regulated by law, custom, or mutual agreement, and are the basis of social groups and society as a whole. A relationship is normally viewed as a connection between individuals, such as a romantic or intimate relationship, or a parent-child relationship. Individuals can also have relationships with groups of people, such as the relation between a pastor and his congregation, an uncle and a family, or a mayor and a town. Groups or even nations may have relations with each other. Relationships begin, grow and improve gradually, as people get to know each other and become closer emotionally, or they gradually deteriorate as people drift apart, move on with their lives, and form new relationships with others. Literature on development of friendship or relationships it is observed that personal v/s Social aspects plays major role (Diana, 2014) and also interpersonal relationship such as student-teacher relationship contributes to effective learning (Theo et., al, 2012).

Psychological wellbeing (PW)

Well-being is a dynamic concept that includes subjective, social, and psychological dimensions as well as health-related behaviours. Well-being is a multifaceted concept that is often thought of as one of the hallmarks of the liberal arts experience, resulting from educational encounters that both guide students in the search for meaning and direction in life and help them realize their true potential and the psychological component of well-being. Carol Ryff's model of Psychological Well-being differs from past models in one important way: well-being is multidimensional, and not merely about happiness, or positive emotions. A good life is balanced and whole, engaging each of the different aspects of well-being, instead of being narrowly focused. Ryff roots this principle in Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics, where the goal of life isn't feeling good but is instead about living virtuously. Carol Ryff divides Well-being into six categories that are self-acceptance, Personal Growth Purpose in Life, Positive Relations with Others, Environmental Mastery and Autonomy which are essential constructs to achieve wellbeing.

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Studies revealed gaps in health and educational consequences across castes in Indian scenarios but studies on psychological aspects are fewer. Even though reservation policies have attempted for the upbringing of the SC/ST students given success partially in reducing poverty, attaining education and access to jobs and public goods previous studies suggests that significant gaps remain as identity-based violence, aggression stereotype and stigma by upper-caste peers on SC/ST students in various universities. Lower caste students not only suffered from poor socioeconomic status but often due to they grow up in an environment characterized by low income, education and lack of social support and it also revealed that students belonging to lower caste lacked subjective wellbeing and evaluates themselves in lower personality traits in Big five personality scale. Studies also suggested the need for redesigning and restructuring the affirmative actions to mitigate the long-term consequences of being born in a lower caste from the early age of development (Sharma et al, 2015, 2016 & Dasgupta 2020).

A study by Mona and Sangeetha (2008) reveals that even though quantitatively SC/ST students have made a remarkable improvement in education but qualitative data sadly shows that parents economic and educational background causing a threat to the sustaining of the SC/ST community child in the school leading to retention and drop out of the education in the secondary schooling level. Analysis of perceived and experienced discrimination because of caste among students of higher education have consequential effects on mental health and wellbeing. It is prioritized to analyze the caste-based discrimination and its affinity with mental health problems to capture the dynamics and functioning of social structures associated with the psychological aspects and wellbeing of the SC/ST population (Jean et al 2015). Within caste comparison and between castes comparison have affected adversely on the wellbeing of the lower caste people but between caste, the comparison was causing 3 times damage on the wellbeing of lower caste population whereas competition lower caste people differed in competing with upper caste population in various aspects (Xavier & Katsunori, 2014). Studies in Indian universities also revealed discrimination processes contributed to students' poor academic performance, low self-esteem and weak motivation. Frustration among socially privileged students, resulting in discriminatory attitudes against reserved category students of the lower caste.

Arun & Smitha, 2016 reported that SC/ST students were having poor emotional intelligence when compared with non-SC/ST students who were having higher score in the perception of emotion, managing own emotion, Managing others emotion and Utilization of emotion in Emotional Scale by N. S. Schutte et al. Even though previous studies revealed difficulties of SC/ST community students a collective effort to understand Emotional intelligence, interpersonal relationship and psychological wellbeing is lacking. In the present study, it is attempted to elucidate Emotional intelligence, interpersonal relationship and psychological wellbeing of SC/ST college students to understand the status and needs of SC/ST college students.

METHODOLOGY

Aim: To elucidate Emotional Intelligence, Interpersonal relationship and Psychological wellbeing among SC/ST College students.

Objective

To study the Emotional intelligence, Interpersonal relationship, and Psychological well-being among SC / ST college students in comparison to general category students.

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Hypotheses

- There will be no significant difference in Emotional intelligence between SC/ ST and general college students.
- There will be no significant difference in Interpersonal relationship between SC/ ST and general college students.
- There will be no significant difference in Psychological well-being between SC/ ST and general college students.

Study design

A comparative survey method was used in the present study. The Data was collected from SC/ST and general category college students from Mysore and the backward areas like Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka.

Participants

140 college students studying in Mysore and Chamarajanagar district were randomly selected for the present study.

Measures

The following tools are proposed to be used and/or developed in this study:

1. **Sociodemographic datasheet:** This tool will be prepared by the researcher to collect personal and socio-demographic data as well as general information on special vocational skills, interests of the participants.
2. **Carol Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being (1995):** The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being is a theoretically grounded instrument that specifically focuses on measuring multiple facets of psychological well-being which was developed in 1995. It consists of 64 items/ statements using 4 points Likert scale. These facets include self-acceptance, the establishment of quality ties to others, a sense of autonomy in thought and action, the ability to manage complex environments to suit personal needs and values, the pursuit of meaningful goals and a sense of purpose in life, continued growth and development as a person. The tool has high internal consistency and test-retest reliability as well as convergent and discriminant validity with other measures 0.70 to 0.89.
3. **Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS; Hyde, Pethe and Dhar; 2002):** It is developed by Anukool Hyde, Sanjyot Pethe and Upinder Dhar in 2012. Reliability of the scale has been determined by calculating the reliability coefficient on a sample of 200 subjects. The split-half reliability coefficient is 0.88. The tool analyses EI in ten factors using 5 points Likert scale they are self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment and altruistic behavior.
4. **Fundamental Interpersonal Relations orientation –Behavior (FIRO-B, Schutz, William C, 1958):** Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation –Behaviour assesses 3 kinds of relations: inclusion, control, affection. The tool based on theory based on 6 years of research begun in the Navy and continued at Tufts and Harvard. There is evidence in the book's organization and content of the influence of scientific philosophy, psychoanalytic theorists, and small group theory. Statistical significance ($p < .05$) of the tool is high to assess the interpersonal relation (Hurley, 1990) and internal consistency reliability OF 0.85 TO 0.96 (Hammer & Schnell, 2000).

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Procedure

The present study was carried out using a survey method. Bachelor degree students were randomly engaged in the study in total 140 participants among which 70 students belong to SC / ST population and 70 general category students took part in the study only after obtaining written consent. Each participant was explained the purpose and objective of the study before obtaining consent. The proposed psychological assessment tools were administered in the college premises in a quiet classroom. An attempt was made to take an equal proportion of samples from the male and female gender will be selected for the study. The Questionnaires were administered in a small group of 15 to 20 participants in the group setting and the collected data was analyzed using SPSS.

Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistical techniques and t-test were used as statistical measures in the present study for analysis and interpretation of data.

RESULTS

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of participants of the study

Participants	N	Percentage
SC/ST students	70	50
General students	70	50
Total	140	100

Table-1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of participants who participated in the present study. 50% of the participants (n=70) were belong to General category and 50% of the participants (n=70) were belong to SC/ ST category.

Table-2: Summary of t test results for emotional intelligence among SC/ST and Non SC/ST students

Variables	Category	N (140)	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Intra-personal awareness	SC/ST	70	15.74	3.840	138	2.337	0.021
	Non SC/ST	70	17.29	3.971			
Inter-personal awareness	SC/ST	70	14.16	3.326	138	1.590	0.114
	Non SC/ST	70	15.10	3.680			
Intra-personal management	SC/ST	70	16.14	3.486	138	1.765	0.08
	Non SC/ST	70	17.14	3.214			
Inter-personal management	SC/ST	70	15.34	2.943	138	0.159	0.87
	Non SC/ST	70	15.26	3.404			
Emotional intelligence total	SC/ST	70	61.39	9.412	138	2.063	0.041
	Non SC/ST	70	64.79	10.079			

Table-2 shows the results of the t-test for emotional intelligence among the two groups which indicates that there was significant difference between the group in intra-personal awareness at 0.02 level, mean score of SC/ST group was 15.74 with the SD of 3.84 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 17.29 with the SD of 3.971. Significant differences were found at 0.04 level in total emotional intelligence where mean score of SC/ST group was 61.39 with the SD of 9.412 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 64.79 with the SD of 10.079. There was no significant differences between SC/ST and Non SC/ST group in inter-personal awareness, intra-personal management and inter-personal

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management where the mean score of SC/ST group was 14.16 with the SD of 3.326 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 15.10 with the SD of 3.680. In intra-personal management mean score of SC/ST group was 16.14 with the SD of 3.486 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 17.14 with the SD of 3.214.

Table-3: Summary of t test results for Interpersonal relationship among SC/ST and Non SC/ST students

Variables	Category	N (140)	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Expressed Inclusion	SC/ST	70	5.29	2.148	138	0.201	0.841
	Non SC/ST	70	5.21	2.063			
Wanted Inclusion	SC/ST	70	5.41	2.337	138	0.267	0.790
	Non SC/ST	70	5.31	2.082			
Expressed Control	SC/ST	70	3.47	2.131	138	0.996	0.321
	Non SC/ST	70	3.81	1.936			
Wanted Control	SC/ST	70	3.74	2.483	138	0.066	0.948
	Non SC/ST	70	3.77	2.655			
Expressed Affection	SC/ST	70	4.50	2.712	138	0.765	0.446
	Non SC/ST	70	4.14	2.814			
Wanted Affection	SC/ST	70	4.33	2.314	138	0.557	0.578
	Non SC/ST	70	4.11	2.236			
FIRO-B Total	SC/ST	70	26.74	9.147	138	0.275	0.784
	Non SC/ST	70	26.33	8.686			

Table-3 shows the results of t-test for interpersonal relationship among the groups which indicates that there was no significant differences found in interpersonal relationship assessed by FIRO-B. Expressed Inclusion mean score of SC/ST group was 5.29 with the SD of 2.14 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 5.21 with the SD of 2.06. In Wanted Inclusion, mean score of SC/ST group was 5.41 with the SD of 2.33 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 5.31 with the SD of 2.08. In Expressed control mean score of SC/ST group was 3.47 with the SD of 2.13 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 3.81 with the SD of 1.93. In Wanted Control mean score of SC/ST group was 3.74 with the SD of 2.483 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 3.77 with the SD of 2.65. In Expressed affection mean score of SC/ST group was 4.50 with the SD of 2.71 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 4.14 with the SD of 2.81. In wanted affection mean score of SC/ST group was 4.33 with the SD of 2.31 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 4.11 with the SD of 2.236. FIRO-B total mean score of SC/ST group was 26.7 with the SD of 9.14 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 26.33 with the SD of 8.68.

Table-4: Summary of t test results for Psychological Wellbeing among SC/ST and Non SC/ST students

Variables	Category	N (140)	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Self -Acceptance	SC/ST	70	47.57	6.296	138	0.856	0.414
	Non SC/ST	70	48.47	6.145			
Positive relations with others	SC/ST	70	53.43	8.221	138	1.710	0.090
	Non SC/ST	70	55.94	9.155			
Autonomy	SC/ST	70	54.73	10.129	138	0.550	0.583
	Non SC/ST	70	55.69	10.450			
Environmental	SC/ST	70	52.79	9.493	138	0.943	0.347

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Variables	Category	N (140)	Mean	SD	df	t	p
mastery	Non SC/ST	70	54.33	9.858			
Purpose in life	SC/ST	70	54.46	10.606	138	0.336	0.737
	Non SC/ST	70	55.06	10.504			
Personal growth	SC/ST	70	51.50	7.093	138	1.522	0.130
	Non SC/ST	70	53.51	8.507			
PWB-Total	SC/ST	70	314.47	39.130	138	1.304	0.194
	Non SC/ST	70	323.00	38.257			

Table-4 shows the results of the t-test for Psychological Wellbeing among the two groups which indicates that there was no significant differences were found in any of the subscales of Psychological Wellbeing scale. In Self-acceptance mean score of SC/ST group was 47.57 with the SD of 6.296 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 48.47 with the SD of 6.145 In Positive relations with others, mean score of SC/ST group was 53.43 with the SD of 8.221 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 55.94 with the SD of 9.155. In Autonomy mean score of SC/ST group was 54.73 with the SD of 10.129 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 55.69 with the SD of 10.450. In Environmental mastery mean score of SC/ST group was 52.79 with the SD of 9.493 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 54.33 with the SD of 9.858. In Purpose in life mean score of SC/ST group was 54.46 with the SD of 10.606 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 55.06 with the SD of 10.504 2.814 and in personal growth mean score of SC/ST group was 51.50 with the SD of 7.093 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 53.51 with the SD of 8.507. Mean score of SC/ST group in total Psychological wellbeing was 314.47 with the SD of 39.130 and the mean score of non-SC/ST students was 323.0 with the SD of 38.257.

DISCUSSION

Present study was an attempt to understand and explore the Emotional intelligence, interpersonal relationship and psychological wellbeing status of students belongs to the SC/ST community and students belongs to communities other than SC/ST. Present study has revealed that there was significant difference between the groups in intra-personal awareness and total emotional intelligence indicating need for understanding oneself about their strength and weaknesses with improving total emotional intelligence to face the future life more efficiently and manage the emotional difficulties effectively. Remaining all other subscales of Emotional intelligence that is inter-personal awareness, Intra-personal management and inter-personal management showed no significant differences between the groups. Sub scales of interpersonal relationship and Psychological wellbeing have showed no significant differences between the groups indicating that reservation policies which was provided to these community students as a measure of social justice is helping them to achieve success in maintaining balance in interpersonal relationships and Psychological wellbeing.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Present study was done on a small sample size, study with a big sample would be helpful to generalize the results. Structured and advanced study materials with interview methods would have been better explored the intention of the study. As the study is conducting in the area where the development of SC/St community students is good study in a geographical area where the services for the SC/ST community students are restraint would be helpful to understand the status with more precision.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Indian society is well known for integrity in diversity. Diverse culture and heritage of the society brings value to the country. On the same time Social malpractices like caste system brings disparity in the social life of its citizens from under privileged class/ caste. Present study was an attempt to understand the status of one such community which we know as SC/ST community groups in India. Emotional intelligence, interpersonal relationship and Psychological wellbeing of the students belongs to SC/ST community and non-SC/ST community were assessed for the study variables and it is found that there was no significant differences between the groups in interpersonal relationship, Psychological wellbeing and in 3 subscales of Emotional intelligence that is inter-personal awareness, Intra-personal management and inter-personal management. Significant differences were found in intra-personal awareness and total emotional intelligence showing still SC/ST students in need of programmes of improving emotional stability.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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