

A Study of Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Learning Behaviour among Children

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to assess the gender differences in emotional intelligence and learning behaviour among children. Taken into consideration the purpose of the study, 100 children (50 boys and 50 girls) studying in secondary school especially, 5th and 6th grade located in Kolhapur district were selected randomly as a sample. The age range of the selected sample was 11 to 12 years. Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale – 2004 (MEIS) of Shanwal was used to measure emotional intelligence. Learning behaviour is measured to by Students Learning Behaviour Scale (2002). Data analysis was done by using various statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation and t test of significance through SPSS. Results show that boys tend to be significantly higher score in learning behaviour than that of girls. However study fails to show any significant gender differences with respect to emotional intelligence and its all dimensions (Identification of emotions, Assimilation of Emotions, Understanding of Emotions and Regulations of Emotions). This Study will encourage the students to improve their own emotions in sound direction and will help to manage their behavior so that better adjustment may take place. Study also will helps to children to develop the learning strategies among them.

Keywords: *Learning Behaviour, Emotional Intelligence, Gender Differences*

Lot of researches over two decades intended to find out the role of emotional intelligence and learning behaviour in the life success, educational success, personality development. They indicate that emotional intelligence as well as learning pattern of the children associated with various behavior aspects in a wide range of human life domains.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence was formally proposed by Yale psychologists Salovey and Mayer in 1990 in the 'Journal of Emotional intelligence and personality' and the concept was popularized by Goleman (1995) through some popular books. At the most general level, Emotional Intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and others (Goleman, 2001). Again he defined emotional intelligence as: 'the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing

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emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships (Goleman 1998). His framework included 25 emotional competencies which can be grouped into five clusters, namely, self awareness, self regulations, self motivation, self empathy and social skills. Salovey and Mayer (1997) defined emotional intelligence as: “the ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand emotions and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth”. Bar-On (1997) called it “an array of non-cognitive abilities, competencies and skills that influence one’s ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.” Heinz (2000) thinks, “Emotional Intelligence is the mental ability underlying the emotional sensitivity, awareness, and management skills which help us maximize our long term health, happiness and survival.” Hence we can say that the term Emotional Intelligence refers to emotional reasoning used to understand and manage the expressions of emotions of self and others.

Learning Behaviour

Learning behaviour is very crucial and dynamic aspect of student’s educational attainment because it directly affects on their ability of learning pattern. Radiant children always perform superior in school and they enjoy in learning process. They are characterized by enthusiastic, adjustable in school, resourcefulness, creative thinkers, imaginative activities, sustained attention etc. Healthy learning behaviour always leads to constructive learning outcomes and well-being among children. Constructive learning behaviour is a holistic school approach to construct a positive, secure and caring school climate in which students can learn and develop. The students having positive learning behaviour they are more interested in reading, writing and understanding. Learning behaviour depends upon emotional and social climate of the home and school. Favorable emotional and social climate leads to positive learning behaviour and vice-versa. Modern school always implicating such things to provide better school environment and try to develops better learning behaviour among children (Saxena, 2002). Learning behaviour emphasize the vital relation between ‘how person learn’ and their ‘social knowledge and behaviour’.

Basis of Gender Differences

From the literature available on emotional intelligence it found that, there are several factors that directly or indirectly help to develop the emotional intelligence; gender is one of them. Gender discrimination is a common phenomenon in almost all the culture. Basically male and females naturally differ on the basis of their physiological and biological characteristics. They also differ in various psychological attributes, because these physiological differences predispose men and women to certain behavior and aptitude learning. One another reason of gender difference regard with to psychological attribute is ‘*nature of treatment*’ given by family. In Indian culture male & female child receive different treatment in the same family. Even the child rearing practices adopted while rearing up the male and female children are radically different. Many educated, urban parents openly deny this established fact, but the reality observed in Indian society, the social scientists cannot ignore the above fact (Parit, 1999). This discrimination among boys and girls influence several psychological developmental aspects, it includes emotional intelligence and learning behaviour too.

Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence

In the recent field of research on emotional intelligence it is found that EI is closely linked to gender and this fact is detected in childhood, adolescence and adulthood also. Grossman and Wood (1993) reported that females rate personal emotions as greater in intensity than males, although no differences were found in types of self-reported emotions. Goleman (1998) asserts that no gender differences in emotional intelligence exists, admitting that while men

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and women may have different profiles of strengths and weaknesses in different area of emotional intelligence, their overall level of emotional intelligence are equivalent. However, studies by Mayer and Gehar, 1996; Mayer Caruso, & Salovey, 1999, and more recently Mandell and Pherwani (2003) have found that women are more likely to score higher on measures of emotional intelligence than men, both in professional and personal settings. Study conducted by Babu and Rath (2007), Mathur et. al. (2005), Pandit (2004), and Bar-On (2000) revealed that there is no gender differences in emotional intelligence. One another approach in this regards is found that gender difference discovered or not depending on the kind of assessment tool used, either self report or performance measures. Above studies were show controversies in results. In some studies females score higher than males, some studies show vice-versa and some studies do not tend to gender differences in emotional intelligence.

Gender Differences in Learning Behaviour

Meyer (1995) conducted a study to explore the structural gender differences in the learning behaviour. First year University students incorporated in the study as a sample. Recall of study content (final secondary school) was compared among male and female students. It is argued that gender-sensitive sources of variation, as manifested, are valuable of further investigation. Lee (2013) conducted a study to examine the relationship among students learning related behaviors and gender in relation to writing performance. Author reported that gender differences were more important in attitudes than learning behaviour among children. Author reports medium effect sizes of gender difference in writing scores were present. It was observed that the females were engaged in more “desirable” learning behaviors than their male. Mary & Jebaseelan (2014) conducted a empirical study to find out the student learning behavior. The students studding in 9th grade rural, urban and a semi-urban school in Tiruchirapalli are taken into consideration in the study. Students learning behavior is measured by Student Learning Behavior Scale (Saxena, 2002). Results of the study revealed that girls learning behaviour is significantly higher that boys. Samuelsson & Samuelsson (2016) conducted a study to examine the gender differences in the perception of classroom setting. Study also focuses on how classroom setting related with achievement in mathematics and aspects of self-regulated learning skills. They studied 6758 Swedish students from 120 different schools. Study reported that boys feel that they use group work more than the girls do and they have an influence over the content and are more involved during the lesson than girls. Study also revealed that boys give more importance to mathematics than girls. Yemane et. al. (2017) conducted a study to access gender difference on learning style preference among students studding in College of Health science of Mekelle University. Data collected from 415 students from College of Health science of Mekelle University. Results revealed that preference differences among male and female students, significant associations between gender and learning style preferences were not found.

Objectives

1. To study the gender difference in students learning behaviour among the children.
2. To study the gender difference in global emotional intelligence among the children.
3. To examine the effect of gender on ability of identification of emotions among children.
4. To study the influence of gender on ability of assimilation of emotions among children.
5. To assess the effect of gender on ability of understanding of emotions among children.
6. To examine the effect of gender on ability of regulation of emotions among children.

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Hypotheses

1. There would be significant difference in boys and girls with respect to their learning behaviour.
2. There would be significant gender differences in global emotional intelligence among children.
3. Gender would be significantly influence on ability of identification of emotions among children.
4. Assimilation of emotions among children would be significantly influenced by gender.
5. Gender would be significantly influence on ability of understanding of emotions among children.
6. Regulation of emotion among children would be significantly influenced by gender.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Sample consisted of 100 children studding in fifth and sixth grade English medium school from Kolhapur district, in which 50 boys and 50 girls included in the study. A technique of simple random sampling method was employed to collect the data. All sample were more or less similar with respect to socioeconomic status and cultural background. Data was analyzed by using various statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation and t test of significance through SPSS.

Tool used in the study

1. Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS - 2004)

MEIS is developed by Shanuwal (2004) to measure the emotional intelligence of children having age range of 8 to 12 years. This scale consists of 141 items and four dimensions of emotional intelligence, with different number of items namely, 1) Identification of emotion (50 Items), 2) Assimilation of emotion (57 Items), 3) Understanding of emotion (25 Items) and 4) Regulation of emotion (9 Items). High score is the indication of high emotional ability and vice-versa. The scale provide sound psychometric properties.

2. Student Learning Behavior scale (SLBS - 2002)

This scale is developed by Saxena (2002) to measure the students learning behaviour having 6 to 12 years. This scale consisted of 40 items which were highly discriminating. High score is the indication of high learning behaviour and vice-versa. The reliability of the test is calculated by two approaches; one is test-retest method of one moth interval and second is Kuder-Rechardson formula and it is found 0.83 and 0.89 respectively. The Validity of the test computed by teachers and parents on 5 point scale and correlation coefficient was 0.76 and 0.79. No time limit to complete the scale test.

Statistical Interpretation of Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the gender differences in terms of mean scores of learning behaviour among children. Mean score of learning behaviour for male children is 22.12 (SD = 4.56) and it is significantly greater than the mean score of learning behaviour for female children i.e. 19.60 (SD = 4.97). Calculated 't' value 2.64 (df = 98) is significant at 0.01 level of significance. So it can be inferred that, the male children have significantly higher on learning behavior than female children. This result is supported to first hypothesis "there would be significant difference in boys and girls with respect to their learning behavior".

Table 2 shows gender differences in terms of mean score of emotional intelligence and its areas. Mean score of emotional intelligence for male children is 534.78 with 40.25 standard

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deviation and it is greater than the mean score of emotional intelligence for female children i.e. 528.68 with 35.65 standard deviation. However, calculated 't' value 0.80 (df = 98) is not significant at 0.05 level. So it can be inferred that, the male and female children do not have significantly differ on their global emotional intelligence. This result is rejected to second hypothesis "there would be significant gender differences in global emotional intelligence among children". In the same table it can also observed that the male and female children do not differ in terms of sub-features of emotional intelligence namely, identification of emotions, assimilation of emotions, understanding of emotions and regulation of emotions. These results also found to be against to hypotheses number three to six.

Psychology is based on basic assumption of individual differences. However, nobody is genetically similar, or resembles each other. This uniqueness of a person is what we call personality. Our personality and behavior is shaped by our physical and social world. In other words, our each personality factors is influenced by our physical and social experiences. The experiences of male and female children were varied. Hence the gender has been found to play an important role in influencing emotional intelligence. However, some researcher provides controversy in results. Study conducted by Babu and Rath (2007), Mathur et. al.(2005), Pandit (2004), and Bar-On (2000) revealed that there is no gender differences in emotional intelligence. One another approach in this regards is found that gender difference discovered or not depending on the kind of assessment tool used, either self report or performance measures. Above studies supported the conclusion drawn in present study.

Table 1 Shows comparison of scores of learning behavior among children against gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t value
Learning Behaviour	Boys	50	22.12	4.56	98	2.64**
	Girls	50	19.60	4.97		

Table 2 Shows comparison of scores of emotional intelligence among children against gender

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t value
Identification of Emotions	Boys	50	216.86	24.720	98	0.78 NS
	Girls	50	213.28	20.922		
Assimilation of Emotions	Boys	50	200.46	19.926	98	0.65 NS
	Girls	50	197.96	18.517		
Understanding of Emotions	Boys	50	85.42	7.872	98	0.41NS
	Girls	50	86.06	7.590		
Regulation of Emotions	Boys	50	32.04	4.920	98	0.70 NS
	Girls	50	31.38	4.513		
Emotional Intelligence	Boys	50	534.78	40.251	98	0.80 NS
	Girls	50	528.68	35.653		

CONCLUSIONS

- 1 There is significant gender differences in learning behavior among children, in which male children have significantly higher on learning behavior than female children.
- 2 The male and female children do not have significantly differ on their global emotional intelligence.
- 3 Gender do not significantly influence on various dimensions of emotional intelligence namely, identification of emotions, assimilation of emotions, understanding of emotions and regulation of emotions

IMPLICATIONS

Study help to understand the learning behavior among children. Study also will encourage the students to improve their own emotions in proper sense and will help to manage their behavior so that better adjustment may take place. Similarly one can make others aware about others emotions and motivate others to improve others emotions in proper directions.

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Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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