

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ADJUSTMENT IN ADOLESCENTS

*RASHMI SINGH**

*D. B. SINGH***

Emotions play a very important role in our lives and emotional intelligence has been found to be 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. Emotional intelligence was described formally by Salovey and Mayer (1990). They defined it as 'the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thought and actions'. They also provided an initial empirical demonstration of how an aspect of emotional intelligence could be measured as a mental ability (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990). The concept of Emotional Intelligence is a complex phenomenon that occurs in early adolescent. There has been a growing interest in the emotional functioning of early adolescents (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Stover, 2003). Adolescents who are academically brilliant may sometimes be socially and interpersonally inept. Despite possessing a high IQ, success may not automatically follow. But by increasing their emotional quotients, the adolescents can become more productive and successful at what they do and they can also help others become more productive and successful too. Early adolescence is marked by significant maturational processes that can increase vulnerability to various stressors. Research suggests that these stressors can affect male adolescents and female adolescents differently. Male adolescents tend to present externalizing problem behaviours, while female adolescents demonstrate internalizing behaviours. These behaviours often impede educational, social and emotional development. Increasing research suggests that evidence-based school programs designed to educate early adolescent youth about stress and to teach useful coping mechanisms can have a positive effect on psychological adjustment (Durlak & Wells, 1997). In psychology, adjustment is the behavioural process of balancing conflicting needs, or needs against obstacles in the environment. Humans and animals regularly do this, for example, when they are stimulated by

* Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, M. G. Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi.

** Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Govt. Degree College, Dhanapur, Chandauli.

their physiological state to seek food, they eat (if possible) to reduce their hunger and thus adjust to the hunger stimulus. Adjustment means the reaction to the demands and pressures of social environment imposed upon the individual. The demand to which the individual has to react may be external or internal. Psychologists have viewed 'adjustment' from two important perspectives. For one, adjustment is an achievement and for another, adjustment is a process. The first point of view emphasizes the quality or efficiency of adjustment and the second lays emphasis on the process by which an individual adjusts to his external environment.

In the words of Shaffer "Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs." A person does not always get success according to his desires and efforts. There are so many factors which can influence the process of adjustment such as level of aspiration, socioeconomic status, family environment, school environment, anxiety, frustration, etc. Therefore it is essential to know how emotional intelligence affects our personal and social adjustments. Adjustment is an important factor to complete a person's goal successfully. 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.

While it might be correct that there have been a lot of theorizing in the usefulness of emotional intelligence in helping the adolescents 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 adolescents. By knowing this relationships efforts can be made to develop a strategic plan for recommending improvement in the emotional intelligence of children and hence, helping the adolescents to make this period a more adjusting and enjoyable time leading to success in adolescent life.

Objective

Objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To examine and compare the emotional intelligence of adolescents.
2. To assess and compare the adjustment of adolescents.
3. To see the relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment of adolescents.

Hypotheses

1. There exists significant difference between boys and girls on emotional intelligence.
2. There exists significant difference between boys and girls on adjustment.
3. There exists positive relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment.

Methodology

Sample

Total 100 adolescents (50 boys and 50 girls) in the age range 13 to 19 years were randomly selected for the present study.

Tools used

Emotional intelligence scale by Pandey and Anand and adjustment inventory by Asthana were administered on the subjects. Sample was selected from the different schools and colleges of Varanasi city.

Behavioural measures- The following behavioural measures were administered on participants:

1. Multidimensional Self Report Emotional Intelligence Scale (MSREIS-R; Pandey and Anand, 2008): This scale was constructed and standardized by Pandey and Anand (2008). The scale consists of 51 items with four dimensions such as ability to express and appraise emotions, ability to utilize emotions, ability to manage emotions in self and ability to manage emotions in others on six point rating scale (strongly disagree, moderately disagree, disagree to some extent, agree to some extent, moderately agree and strongly agree). The reliability of the scale was 0.915 and validity of the scale was 0.87.

2. Adjustment Inventory (Asthana, 1988): This scale was constructed and standardized by Asthana (1988). The scale consists of 42 items. Reliability of the scale is 0.80 and validity is 0.89.

Result and discussion

After scoring the responses of the behavioural measures as per the predetermined scoring procedure score was analyzed by calculating mean, SD and t-score. The result and discussion of the present study are as follows:

Table-1: Showing Mean, SD and t- score of boys and girls on ability to express and appraise emotions.

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t- Value
Ability to express and appraise emotions	Boys	82.68	8.30	3.25*
	Girls	73.8	10.95	

** $p < .05$ level of confidence

Result (vide table- 1) reveals that mean score of boys ($M = 82.68$, $SD = 8.30$) is higher than girls ($M = 73.8$, $SD = 10.95$). This difference is found to be significant at .05 level of confidence ($t = 3.25$, $P = < .05$). The core capacities to express and appraise emotions are identification of one's feelings and thought process. These processes as well as the ability of expression enable a person through proper and appropriate words. It also helps a person to understand the feelings of others and discriminate between real and unreal emotional expression. The results reveal that boys are more expressive than girls and are capable of appraising others emotions better than that of girls.

Table-2: Showing Mean, SD and t- score of boys and girls on ability to utilize emotions dimension of emotional intelligence

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t- Value
Ability to utilize emotions	Boys	75.24	6.76	1.64*
	Girls	71.68	8.49	

* $p < .05$ level of confidence

Result (vide table- 2) reveals that mean score of boys ($M = 72.24$, $SD = 6.76$) is higher than girls ($M = 71.68$, $SD = 8.49$). This difference is found to be significant at .05 level of confidence ($t = 1.64$, $P = < .05$). The core abilities required to utilize emotions are using emotions in one's thought by giving proper attention to useful intimations, providing appropriate judgment and memory concerning feeling. This ability also includes emotional facilitation to be optimistic, using emotions in tasks requiring reasoning as well as creativity. Boys show this type of behavior every time in their life but girls are mostly sentimental.

Table-3: Showing Mean, SD and t- score of boys and girls on ability to manage emotions in self dimension of emotional intelligence

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t- Value
Ability to manage emotions in self	Boys	54.92	9.26	.51
	Girls	52.84	6.93	

Result (vide table- 3) reveals that mean score of boys ($M = 54.92$, $SD = 9.26$) is higher than girls ($M = 52.84$, $SD = 6.93$). But this difference is not found to be

significant at .05 level of confidence. Thus it can be concluded that boys and girls do not differ significantly in their ability to manage emotions in self.

Table-4: Showing Mean, SD and t- score of boys and girls on ability to manage emotions in others dimension of emotional intelligence

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t- Value
Ability to manage emotions in others	Boys	39.72	3.94	1.20
	Girls	38.16	5.16	

Result (vide table- 4) reveals that mean score of boys ($M = 39.72$, $SD = 3.94$) is higher than girls ($M = 38.16$, $SD = 5.16$). This difference is not found to be significant at .05 level of confidence. Thus the findings suggest that there exists no significant difference amongst boys and girls in their ability to manage emotions in others.

Table-5: Showing Mean, SD and t- score of boys and girls on overall emotional intelligence

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t- Value
Overall emotional intelligence	Boys	252.36	19.66	3.39*
	Girls	236.16	27.61	

** $p < .05$ level of confidence

Result (vide table- 5) reveals that mean score of boys on overall emotional intelligence ($M = 252.36$, $SD = 19.66$) is higher than girls ($M = 236.16$, $SD = 27.61$). This difference is found to be significant at .05 level of confidence ($t = 3.39$, $P = < .05$). This finding is supported by the study of Tiwari & Srivastava (2004) who found significant difference between boys and girls on self reported emotional intelligence. Regarding the dimensions of emotional intelligence Bar-On model (Bar-On, 1997) reveals that women are more aware of emotions, demonstrate more empathy, relate better interpersonally and are more socially responsible than men. On the other hand, men appear to have better self-regard, are more self-reliant, cope better with stress, are more flexible, solve problems better, and are more optimistic than women.

Table-6: Showing Mean, SD and t- score of boys and girls on adjustment

Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t- Value
Adjustment	Boys	154.84	18.57	3.23*
	Girls	140.48	12.35	

* $p < .05$ level of confidence

Result (vide table- 6) reveals that mean score of boys ($M = 154.84$, $SD = 18.57$) is higher than mean score of girls ($M = 140.48$, $SD = 12.35$). This difference

is found to be significant at .05 level of confidence ($t = 3.23, P < .05$). Results of the present study has been supported by previous studies showing that males have higher adjustment, where as females are more successful than males in terms of social relationship (Enochs & Roland, 2006; Demir & Urberg, 2004). Aquino (2003), Brackett & Mayer (2003), Brackett, Rivers et al. (2006).

Table-7: Showing Relationship between adjustment and emotional intelligence over these dimensions for boys and girls

Dimension/Measures	Girls	Boys
	Adjustment	Adjustment
Ability to express and appraise emotions	0.49*	0.48*
Ability to utilize emotion	0.52*	0.61*
Ability to manage emotions in self	0.47*	0.42*
Ability to manage emotions in others	0.42*	0.51*
Overall emotional intelligence	0.46*	0.67*

* $p < .05$ level of confidence

Result (vide table-7) reveals that there is positive relationship between ability to express and appraise emotions and adjustment ($r = 0.48$), ability to utilize emotion and adjustment ($r = 0.61^*$), ability to manage emotions in self and adjustment ($r = 0.42^*$) and ability to manage emotions in others and adjustment ($r = 0.51^*$) and overall emotional intelligence and adjustment ($r = 0.67^*$) for boys. Table also reveals positive relationship between ability to express and appraise emotions and adjustment ($r = 0.49^*$), ability to utilize emotion and adjustment ($r = 0.52^*$), ability to manage emotions in self and adjustment ($r = 0.47^*$) and ability to manage emotions in others and adjustment ($r = 0.42^*$) and overall emotional intelligence and adjustment ($r = 0.46^*$) for girls.

Several studies suggested that emotional intelligence skills are strong predictors of student's adjustment and that emotional intelligence is positively correlated with students' adjustment and academic achievement. Safavi et al., (2008); Adeyemo (2003) also showed that there was a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and socio-emotional adjustment. Engelberg and Sjoberg (2004) identified that emotional intelligence predict student's social adjustment and satisfaction of their social relationships. Yip & Martin (2006) identified that the ability to manage and regulate emotions positively contribute to personal sense of humour. Furthermore, the outcome of the study revealed that emotional intelligence contributes positively to social competence as well as plays an important role in academic success. Abdallah et al. (2004) found a positive and significant relationship between student's level of emotional intelligence and academic adjustment among first year university students.

Conclusion

The present research examined the relationship between exogenous variable (emotional intelligence) and endogenous variable (adjustment) in adolescence. All the hypotheses of the present study were accepted. Overall implications of the results manifest that significant relationship exists between emotional intelligence and adjustment for adolescent boys and girls. Further boys revealed greater abilities than adolescent girls in expressing and appraising emotions, ability to utilize emotions, and scored greater on overall emotional intelligence. Hence, they were found to be better adjusted than girls.

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