



Assessment of Level of Emotional Intelligence and Gender Differences among college going youth of Chandigarh

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Manuscript Received:03.01.2024; Accepted: 30.05.2024

Abstract

Emotion is an essential part of a person's life as it is involved in every activity, action and reaction of human being. Many students come to college, prepared academically but not emotionally. During higher education, the need of emotional intelligence increases as it helps students to reduce their academic pressure. Therefore, the present study was undertaken with the objective to determine the level of emotional intelligence as well as to find out the gender difference between emotional intelligence of college students. A total sample of 200 students in the age group of 18-24 years were selected using stratified random sampling. The data was analyzed with the help of standardized tool, percentage and frequency distribution, t-test and SPSS software. The results indicated that majority of boys and girls scored higher in domain motivating oneself and overall has average level of emotional intelligence. Significant gender differences were revealed where boys scored higher than girls in domain managing emotions and empathy.

Key words: Emotions, emotional intelligence, gender difference, relationships

India has been regarded as the youngest country in the world by the United Nations as it has the world's largest youth population where more than 365 million people are between the age group 10 and 24 years. The young person in India constitutes one of the precious resources of India characterized by growth and development and is a phase of vulnerability often influenced by several intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect their health and safety. As parents are responsible for promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to young adulthood (Thakur *et al.* 2012). They may differ in how they try to control or socialize their children and the extent to which they do so, it is assumed that the primary role of all parents is to influence, teach, and control their young children (Thakur *et al.* 2012). Young people undergo maximum emotional fluctuations in the process of transition from school to college. College students face many challenges that may affect their mental health including relationship

dynamics, academic pressures, and financial struggles. On a deeper level, at college, there are new and often unexpected challenges to their identity, sense of efficacy, mental health, personality, satisfaction etc. due to which understanding and honing the ability to identify, express, and manage emotions is just as important to them as studying for an exam. In today's time, the aim of education is not only to have individuals who have knowledge but also to have people with emotional intelligence (EI) with an effective use of it. Wherever there is a human component involved, there is also emotional intelligence in action.

Emotional Intelligence offers tremendous practical applications in the major part of our lives. It refers to the ability of an individual to recognize his own emotions and those of others, distinguish and differentiate between them and classify them appropriately. Thus, emotional intelligence is viewed as the ability of an individual to appropriately and successfully respond to a vast variety of emotional

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stimuli being elicited from the inner self and immediate environment (Singh 2003). People who show high levels of emotional intelligence are individuals who know themselves and their needs, strengths, weaknesses and manage to control themselves and forms sound relationships. The value of emotional intelligence is immense; developing emotional intelligence encourages many positive traits, from resilience to communication, motivation to stress management, all of which can be seen as conducive to effectively achieving personal, physical and occupational health, and success. Parents can empathize their child by using soothing words of affection which helps the child label the emotion he/she is feeling and offers guidance on regulating emotions. Therefore, the relationship between a parent and child is of utmost importance - the nature of interaction, discipline and dealing with the child's behaviour and emotions have an impact on the developing child. These examples set by parents is extremely important developing for interpersonal relations and social behavior (Rani and Singh 2014).

Therefore, once the nature and extent of their emotional intelligence is identified, it would enable teachers, parents, social workers and policymakers to plan and develop intervention strategies for improving their emotional intelligence. Improving emotional intelligence in college students can help them improve self-awareness, self-regulation, decision making, empathy, critical thinking, communication skills, boost self-motivation, social skills etc. and can reduce their risky behaviors. Therefore, the present study was conducted with objectives to determine the level of emotional intelligence and to find out the gender differences in emotional intelligence among college going youth of Chandigarh.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in selected educational institutions of Chandigarh. For the selection of colleges, a list of all co-education and girl's colleges in Chandigarh was obtained from the website of Director of Higher Education. Two co-education colleges and two girl's colleges were randomly selected from the obtained list. A total sample of 200, consisting of 100 boys and 100 girls were selected for the purpose of study. Using stratified

random sampling and questionnaire survey method, 50 undergraduate students within age range of 18-24 years from each college were selected. After data collection, the results were collected, arranged, tabulated, coded and analyzed using statistical tools such as percentage, frequency distribution, t- test. The analysis of data was done by using SPSS software.

For determining the emotional intelligence of the respondents, a standardized Emotional Intelligence Test developed by Dr. Ekta Sharma (2011) was used. It is one of the most popular instruments to measure emotional intelligence. The EIT constitutes of 60 items from five domains of Emotional Intelligence *i.e.*, Self-Awareness, Managing Emotions, Motivating Oneself, Empathy and Handling Relationships. All the 60 items are socially acceptable, though positively and negatively stated. The response pattern in the scale is of 5-point Likert-type ranging from strongly Always (5) to Never (1) and reverse for negative items. Thus total score was obtained from all items. In this way, the expected score may range from 60-300 with high score showing high degree of emotional intelligence and low score showing low score degree of emotional intelligence.

Results and Discussion

The percentage distribution of college going students with regard to their socio-demographic attributes, as reported by them, has been presented in Table 1. Results in Table 1 indicates that the majority (45% and 53%, respectively) of sample was in the age group of 20-22 years and belonged to Hindu religion (69% and 78% respectively). Majority of boys (45%) were studying in 1st year while most of the girls (61%) in 2nd year. Most of the boys (67%) as well as girls (77%) belonged to nuclear families and were first born (51% and 48%, respectively). It was also found that majority of mothers (71% and 76%, respectively) of both the samples were not working while the fathers (52% and 57%, respectively) were employed in private sector. A large number of boys (54%) defined themselves as serious and determined while the girls (63%) see themselves as easy going. But both the samples scored higher (39% and 44%, respectively) on over thinking. Maximum number of boys (36%) reported to join civil services as their aim of life unlike most of the girls who fall under miscellaneous category

Table 1. Socio-demographic information among sample of 200

Variables	Categories	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
● Age	18-20years	37.0	32.0	34.5
	20-22years	45.0	53.0	49.0
	22-24years	18.0	15.0	16.5
● Standard	1st year	45.0	28.0	36.5
	2nd year	36.0	61.0	48.5
	3rd year	19.0	11.0	15.0
● Religion	Hindu	69.0	78.0	73.5
	Sikh	23.0	16.0	19.5
	Muslim	3.0	2.0	2.5
	Others	5.0	4.0	4.5
● Type of Family	Nuclear	67.0	77.0	72.0
	Joint	33.0	23.0	28.0
● Birth Order	1st born	51.0	48.0	49.5
	2nd born	30.0	36.0	33.0
	3rd born	19.0	16.0	17.5
● Occupation(Father) (Mother)	Govt.	48.0	43.0	45.5
	Private	52.0	57.0	54.5
	Working	29.0	24.0	26.5
	Housewife	71.0	76.0	73.5
● Challenges	Very Emotional	26.0	27.0	26.5
	Over Thinks	39.0	44.0	41.5
	Self-Criticism and Lack of Confidence	22.0	20.0	21.0
	Others	13.0	9.0	11.0
● Define Themselves As	Serious and determined	54.0	37.0	45.5
	Easy Going	46.0	63.0	54.5
● Aim	Medical Profession	11.0	9.0	10.0
	Bank Professional	10.0	8.0	9.0
	Civil Services	36.0	22.0	29.0
	Education	13.0	26.0	19.5
	Miscellaneous	30.0	35.0	32.5

which included fashion designing, dietician, psychologist, artist, singer etc.

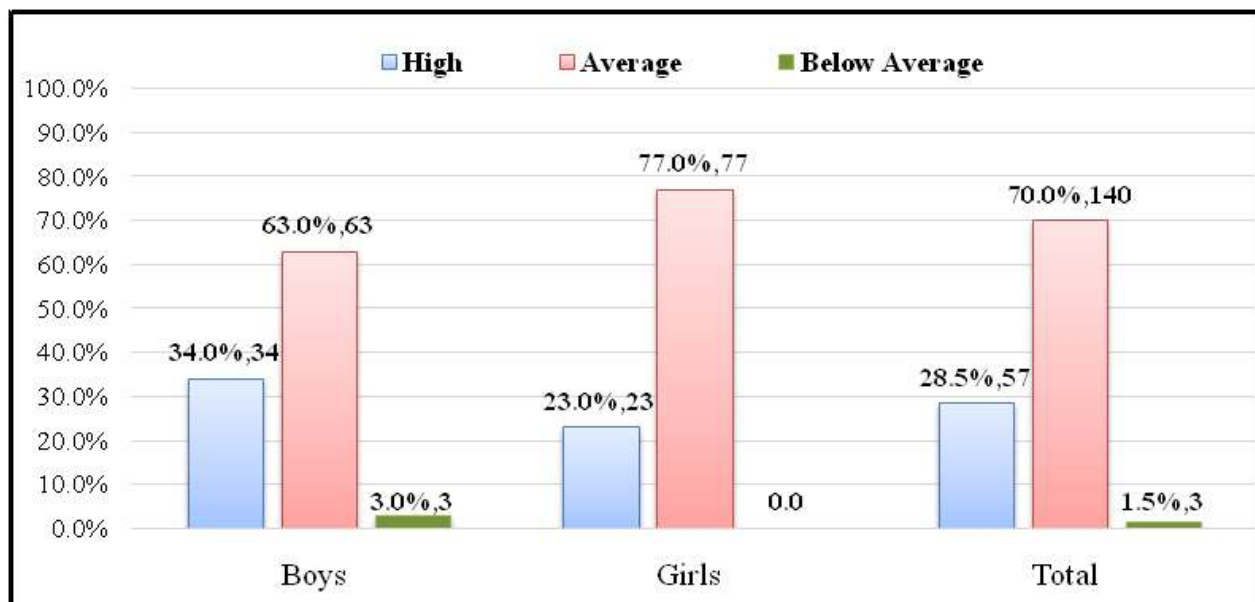
The percent distribution of emotional intelligence among college going young adults revealed that more than half of boys 58% and girls 54% scored high only in the category of motivating oneself followed by 39% boys and 46% girls in average level respectively (Table 2). In general, more than half of sample also showed high level under this category. Majority of participants including boys and girls have scored in average level for remaining four categories. Most of the boys 89% have achieved highest average scored in managing emotions and about 83% girls scored under average

level for same category. Whereas almost all girl's 91% have highest average scored for empathy while most of boys 77% scored average under this category. In the category of self-awareness only 67% boys and 78% girls showed average level. Half of the boys 56% and girls 66% obtained average score with regard to handling relationships category.

The sample of both boys and girls (63% and 77%, respectively) have an average level of emotional intelligence (Figure 1). As a whole, more than half of participants, 70%, were showing average level of emotional intelligence. Similar results are found in studies of (Aleena and Vignaanth 2021; Kumar 2020;

Table 2. Percentage distribution of emotional intelligence among the sample

Category	Sub Category	Boys (%) [n=100]	Girls (%) [n=100]	Total (%) [N=200]
Self-Awareness	High	30.0	22.0	26.0
	Average	67.0	78.0	72.5
	Below Average	3.0	0.0	1.5
Managing Emotions	High	9.0	7.0	8.0
	Average	89.0	83.0	86.0
	Below Average	2.0	10.0	6.0
Motivating Oneself	High	58.0	54.0	56.0
	Average	39.0	46.0	42.5
	Below Average	3.0	0.0	1.5
Empathy	High	19.0	9.0	14.0
	Average	77.0	91.0	84.0
	Below Average	4.0	0.0	2.0
Handling Relationships	High	41.0	34.0	37.5
	Average	56.0	66.0	61.0
	Below Average	3.0	0.0	1.5

**Figure 1. Level of emotional intelligence of boys, girls and total sample**

Llego *et al.* 2019; Sowmyashree and Sreenivas 2019; Thamizhselvan and Vembu 2019; Sinha *et al.* 2017; Thomas and Arjunan 2016; Anitha and Jebaseelan 2014; Joshi *et al.* 2012; Katyal and Awasthi 2005) who have reported that more than half of the students had an average level of emotional intelligence.

Based on t-test, the gender differences in emotional intelligence of college going young adults (Table 3) revealed that there existed a statistically significant difference with regard to managing

emotions ($t=-2.456$, $p<0.05$) and empathy ($t=-1.87$, $p<0.10$) referring that boys are more empathetic and manage their emotions better than girls. Similar results are found in studies of (Chu 2002; Dunn 2002; Singh 2002; Mishra and Ranjan 2008; Ahmad *et al.* 2009; Joibari and Mohammadtaheri 2011; Lenka and Kant 2012; Khan and Bhat 2013; Mokhlesi and Patil 2018; Usha and Solomon 2022) and revealed in their studies that boys were found to be having significantly higher score on emotional intelligence and are more

Table 3. Difference between emotional intelligence based on gender

Dimensions	Gender	Mean	SD	SEM	t-value	p-value
Self-Awareness	Girls	39.87	5.15743	0.51574	-0.678	0.499
	Boys	40.45	6.83185	0.68319		
Managing Emotions	Girls	20.25	3.16667	0.31667	-2.456	0.015**
	Boys	21.32	2.99117	0.29912		
Motivating Oneself	Girls	52.42	7.38984	0.73898	0.036	0.971
	Boys	52.38	8.34336	0.83434		
Empathy	Girls	30.06	3.80011	0.38001	-1.87	0.063*
	Boys	31.31	5.49875	0.54988		
Handling Relationships	Girls	67.6	6.27485	0.62748	0.73	0.467
	Boys	66.68	10.93588	1.09359		
Overall Emotional Intelligence	Girls	210.57	15.01801	1.5018	-0.51	0.611
	Boys	212.16	27.31733	2.73173		

Significance Levels: ***99% **95% *90%

empathetic than the girls. In contrary, Alam (2018) found significant difference of emotional intelligence among adolescents with reference to gender and socio-economic status.

Conclusion

Summarizing the results, it was concluded that majority of boys and girls showed average level of emotional intelligence and scored higher on the

category of motivating oneself. Significant gender differences were revealed with regard to managing emotions, empathy where boys scored higher than girls. This may be due to the reason that boys show more assertiveness, self-recognition about themselves and show more independence and management according to the situations than the girls.

Conflict of Interests: Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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