



Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Social Adjustment among School Students

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which gender acts as a factor in the relationship between emotional intelligence and social adjustment in children who are of school age. A total of fifty male and fifty female students from a variety of educational institutions comprised the sample. For the purpose of assessing the participants' social adjustment and emotional intelligence, standardized adjustment inventories and an emotional quotient exam were used, respectively. There is a negative link between the two variables, as shown by the fact that students who scored higher on the emotional intelligence exam also scored higher on the social adjustment test. In addition, when it came to the management of typical social and emotional concerns, female students consistently fared better than male students. It was because of their improved capacity to regulate their emotions and adapt to a variety of social situations that they achieved this. Results such as these demonstrate how gender influences emotional intelligence and how essential it is for children of school age to be able to adjust to different social circumstances.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Social Adjustment, Gender Differences, School Students, Emotional Regulation, Adjustment Problems, Adolescent Development

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INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) is defined as the ability to identify, name, and classify one's own emotional states as well as those of other people, as well as to exercise control over those moods. Children need to develop emotional intelligence (EI) because it enables them to form positive connections, improve their academic performance, and better manage the challenges they face in their social and emotional lives. Students who are emotionally intelligent are more likely to be able to handle pressure, resolve arguments in a civil manner, and demonstrate compassion for both their teachers and their peers.

Social Adjustment and Its Importance

The capacity of students to integrate themselves into the functioning of the educational environment, cultivate positive connections, and conform to societal norms is referred to as social adjustment. The ability to participate in school activities, make meaningful connections, and maintain emotional control is enhanced for students who have effectively adjusted to their social situations. There is a correlation between emotional intelligence and social adjustment. This is due to the fact that children who are able to effectively manage their feelings also have an easier time fitting in with their own classmates.

Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Social Adjustment

The degree to which adolescents are able to manage social circumstances and the degree to which they are

emotionally intelligent seems to be influenced by gender. Students who identify as female are more likely to improve their social adjustment, sensitivity, and knowledge of their own feelings than students who identify as male. Students who are masculine may have difficulty expressing and controlling their emotions, which may have an effect on their capacity to adapt socially. This is despite the fact that they have cognitive talents. It may be beneficial for educators and counselors to have an awareness of these differences and construct interventions in accordance with them in order to improve emotional and social well-being across genders.

Significance of the Study

When it comes to meeting their classmates, dealing with the pressures of academics, and confronting challenges that arise outside of the classroom, one of the most crucial places for children to be is at school. Studying the relationship between emotional intelligence (EQ) and social adjustment, with a particular focus on how the two are related to gender, is one method that may assist students in developing into well-rounded individuals. By using gender-specific strengths and limitations, it is possible to enhance a variety of aspects of a school environment, including emotional intelligence, social competence, and a caring atmosphere.

OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the connection between schoolchildren's social adjustment and emotional intelligence.
2. To look at how male and female schoolchildren vary in terms of emotional intelligence and social adjustment.

HYPOTHESIS

H1: There is no correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment issues among schoolchildren.

H2: There is no correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment issues among female schoolchildren.

H3: There is no correlation between male schoolchildren's emotional intelligence and adjustment issues.

H4: When it comes to emotional intelligence and adjustment issues, there are no appreciable gender differences.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

The sample consisted of one hundred high school students, with about fifty males and fifty females, ranging in age from seventeen to nineteen years old. Schools in and around Kerala were utilized to form the sample. These students were selected via the use of accidental sampling.

Instruments

1. Social Adjustment Scale

A Social Adjustment Scale was designed by the researcher under the direction of the study supervisor in order to evaluate the extent to which high school students were able to adjust to the new social circumstances in which they found themselves. The social adjustment scale was developed after an exhaustive review of the relevant literature and theoretical frameworks. Empathy, social skills, self-awareness, self-monitoring, motivation, relationship management, and self-management are the seven pillars that are derived from a variety of theoretical frameworks by the American Psychological Association. The scale is designed to assess the degree to which children are able to adjust to their social situations within educational settings. Through the use of scoring answers, the degree of social adjustment may be determined; higher scores imply a greater degree of adjustment. In order to ensure that the scale would be valid and reliable for the individuals who were going to take part in the study, it was standardized while the research was being conducted.

2. Emotional Intelligence Scale

The Hyde et al. (2004) Emotional Intelligence Scale was used in order to evaluate the students' emotional intelligence (EQ). There are ten components of emotional intelligence that are measured by this 34-item scale. These components include self-awareness, commitment, emotional stability, self-development, integrity, managing relations, and altruistic behavior. This questionnaire had twenty-two questions that were geared toward the specific circumstances. In order to arrive at the findings, the points for each statement were collected and added together. Regarding the scale, the reliability was found to be 0.94, and the validity was found to be 0.89.

Statistical analyses

The bar graphs illustrate the relative averages of men and women with regard to emotional intelligence and difficulties in adjusting to new situations. Interpersonal adjustment problems and emotional intelligence were two of the elements that were investigated via the use of a correlation analysis that was carried out with the assistance of SPSS. The major objective of doing the t-test was to determine whether or not there was a statistically significant difference between the sexes in terms of emotional intelligence and difficulty in adjusting to new situations.

RESULT

The major objective of the study was to investigate the emotional intelligence and Social adjustment problems that are prevalent among persons of school-going age. In order to sort through the results on the measures of emotional intelligence and adaptability, we used a battery of statistical tests.

Table 1: Mean Social Adjustment Issues for Men and Women

Gender	Mean Social Adjustment Problems
Females	22

Males	57
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Table 2: Mean Male/Female Emotional Intelligence

Gender	Mean Social Emotional Intelligence
Females	355
Males	270

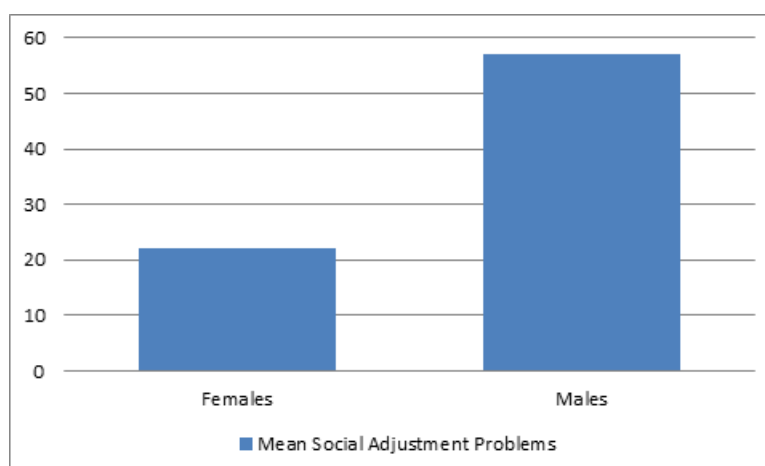


Figure 1: Bar graphic showing female and male social adjustment difficulty mean.

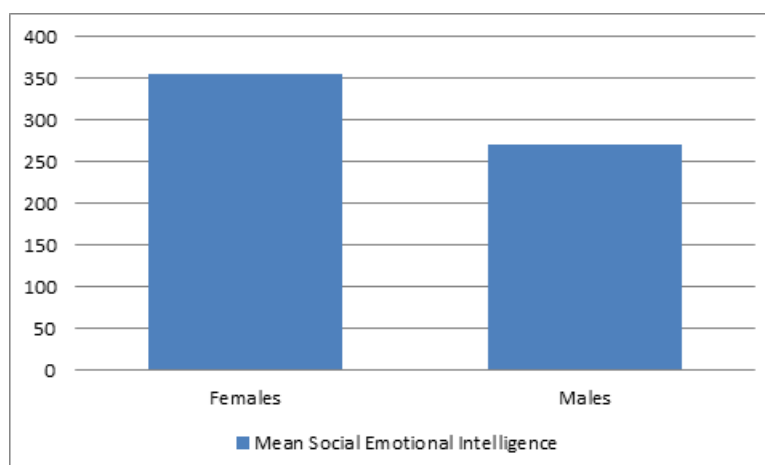


Figure 2: Bar diagram showing mean female and male emotional intelligence issues

Table 3: School-Aged Children's Emotional Intelligence and Their Social Adjustment Problems (n=100)

Variables	AP	EQ
SAP	1	-.84**
EQ	-.84**	1

Note:

- SAP = Adjustment Problems
- EQ = Emotional Intelligence
- $p < 0.01$, indicating the correlation is statistically significant.

According to the data shown in the table, there exists a noteworthy negative correlation ($r = -0.84$, $p < 0.01$) between emotional intelligence and social adjustment concerns. It would seem that children who score higher on the emotional intelligence exam are less likely to suffer with social adjustment problems, while children who score lower on the test are more likely to experience difficulties.

Table 2: Females' Emotional Intelligence and Social Adjustment Problems (n=50): A Correlation Analysis

Variables	AP	EQ
SAP	1	-.50**
EQ	-.50**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$, correlation is statistically significant.

When it comes to female students, there is a marginally inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and difficulties in social integration. There is a correlation between greater levels of emotional intelligence and less difficulties with adjustment.

Table 3: Males' Emotional Intelligence and Social Adjustment Problems (n=50): A Correlation Analysis

Variables	AP	EQ
SAP	1	-.28**

EQ	-.28**	1
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Note: $p < 0.01$, correlation is statistically significant.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and difficulties in social integration is very slightly associated among male students. Higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with less difficulties in adjusting to new situations.

Table 4: Distinct Patterns of Social Adjustment Difficulties Experiencing Male and Female Students

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Females	50	22.64	5.17	0.73	26.02**	0.000
Males	50	57.32	7.84	1.11		

The social adjustment problems that are encountered by males are significantly more severe than those that are experienced by females ($t = 26.02$, p below 0.01).

Table 5: Disparities in Emotional Intelligence between Males and Females in Higher Education

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Females	50	359.94	32.30	4.56	14.50**	0.000
Males	50	266.78	31.90	4.51		

The amount of emotional intelligence varies substantially across the sexes, with females exhibiting higher levels of emotional intelligence in comparison to men ($t = 14.50$, $p < 0.01$).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the ways in which gender affects the social adjustment and emotional intelligence (EQ) of students. The findings of the research provided evidence that contradicted the null hypothesis (H1), which stated that the social adjustment of students is not connected to their emotional intelligence. The results of the study indicated that there was a significant negative association between the two variables, which indicated that students with greater emotional intelligence (EQ) had less difficulty adapting to social situations, while students with lower EQ had more difficulty. This substantiates the findings of earlier research that shown that those with higher EQ are better equipped to deal with the stresses that they face in both their academic and interpersonal lives. Tripathi (2016) came to a similar conclusion, stating that those adolescents who had higher emotional intelligence had better social adjustment and coping skills. This finding suggests that there is an inverse relationship between the two.

Furthermore, Gabel, Dolan, and Cerdin (2005) discovered that the interpersonal component of emotional intelligence has a significant influence on both social functioning and performance.

Due to the fact that the study discovered a connection between emotional intelligence (EQ) and social adjustment in female students, the authors concluded that the null hypothesis (H2) was incorrect. When it came to women, the unfavorable connection between emotional intelligence and adjustment problems was more evident. It is possible that this is due to the fact that, as part of their socialization process, young girls are trained to be patient, tolerant, and empathic before they ever reach adulthood. When it comes to their personal lives and jobs, women in collectivistic societies like India are often urged to balance the traditional gender roles that they are expected to fulfill with the more modern demands that are placed on them. They have a strong emotional awareness, which enables them to swiftly adjust to new circumstances and maintain their resilience in the face of changes. According to Meshkat and Nejati (2017), these results provide credence to the findings of prior research that discovered women to possess higher levels of emotional intelligence and self-awareness than males. Whether or not they were working professionals, Sharma (2019) and Murugesan (2013) discovered that women's emotional intelligence had a negative correlation with their capacity to adjust to new surroundings. This was the case regardless of whether or not the women were working professionals.

A further finding of the study was that there was no link between emotional intelligence (EQ) and social adjustment for male students. This indicates that the null hypothesis (H3) was not supported. Even while the negative association was weaker in males than it was in girls, more emotional intelligence was still related with better adjustment. There is a possibility that this is due to the fact that males are more prone to be self-sufficient and to approach difficulties with reasoning. Men have a tendency to think things out rationally rather than emotionally when they are confronted with hardship, which enables them to more successfully regulate their responses. The findings of past studies provide credence to this viewpoint. These studies discovered that the levels of stress experienced by boys are negatively connected with their emotional intelligence.

Furthermore, Chaplin et al. (2008) discovered that men generally cope with stress by using reward motivation and goal-oriented strategies. In addition, males are more able to self-regulate and adapt to new circumstances because they are more assertive, autonomous, and learning focused. This is another reason why men are better able to adapt to new settings. In addition, the study contradicted the null hypothesis (H4) about gender differences in emotional intelligence and social adjustment by demonstrating that female students had higher levels of emotional intelligence and less problems with social adjustment than male students.

The fact that women are better equipped to manage social circumstances and sustain good relationships is further supported by this research. The findings of this study provide credence to the findings of earlier research, which have shown that there are gender differences in emotional intelligence and social adjustment among adolescents. Furthermore, Yadav (2018) underlined the fact that high emotional intelligence significantly enhances social adjustment in both boys and girls, demonstrating that EQ is significantly important in reducing the difficulties associated with adjustment. Studies have shown that emotional intelligence (EQ) is a powerful indicator of social adjustment in children of school age, and that

there are notable gender disparities in their social adjustment. Because girls often have a greater emotional intelligence (EQ) and are better able to adapt than boys, it is essential to design therapies that are based on EQ in order to assist children of both sexes in developing emotionally and socially.

CONCLUSION

According to the results of the present research, which demonstrate a significant negative link between emotional intelligence and social adjustment concerns, students who had higher levels of emotional intelligence had less difficulty adapting to the life of a school student. A further observation was made on gender differences, which revealed that women exhibited higher levels of social adjustment and emotional intelligence in comparison to males. According to these findings, it would seem that the emotional intelligence of students is of utmost significance for their capacity to deal with issues that arise in their interpersonal and social relationships. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that both male and female students might gain advantages from individualized therapies that are constructed with the purpose of enhancing emotional intelligence. This could potentially result in improved social adjustment and overall health.

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