



Research Article

MEASURING THE DIVIDE: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF RURAL AND URBAN ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present research was to study the Emotional Intelligence of rural and urban, school going adolescents. Four schools comprising of rural and urban children were chosen and 200 adolescents, 100 from two rural schools (Jatt village, Sangli, Maharashtra) and 100 from two urban schools (Pune, Maharashtra) formed the sample. They were Class 9 students. The Emotional Quotient Inventory by Bar-On was administered. Findings of the study revealed that rural students were high on Total Emotional Intelligence than their urban counterparts.

Key words:

Emotional Intelligence, Adolescents

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of turbulence characterised by cognitive, emotional, social and physical changes. It is a period of unpredictable behaviour. Adolescents are curious and want to explore everything and this curiosity can sometimes lead them to take risks which can result in problematic behaviour. There is also a search of identity & many of the behavioural and psychological factors in adulthood have their origin in adolescence and hence the study of adolescent period is gaining a lot of importance. Adolescents account for about 1/5th of India's population. The Indian Council of Medical Research reported that about 12.8 per cent of children suffer from mental health problems. Adolescents in disadvantaged communities face multiple stressors, indicating high rates of crime, family poverty, family conflict and increased prevalence of deviant peers. (Gonzales *et al.*, 2001 & Seidman *et al.*, 1994).

The transition into secondary school marks the end of childhood and the beginning of adolescence. This transition as Goleman (1995) indicated is a difficult challenge in the realm of emotion. As the young adolescent proceeds and progresses on this journey, being emotionally intelligent is not only crucial, but a necessary condition for a being a successful student. The period of high school coincides with onset of puberty and the problems associated with it. Richardson (2002) opined, the ability of adolescents to cope, to develop their emotional autonomy and to behave in socially appropriate

way enables them to more easily accept the social challenges of transition. He therefore suggested the application of emotional intelligence to address the problems associated with transition.

Rural adolescents face a lot of problems and are devoid of the many facilities that their urban counterparts easily get. Due to lack of awareness they are subjected to adjustment and emotional problems and also delinquency, alcohol addiction etc. Thus it is extremely important to focus on this group and provide them awareness sessions about the changes taking place in the adolescent period which can help them build emotional competency. This research tries to throw light on some of the differences which can be seen in rural & urban adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

For the present study 200 school going adolescent boys and girls from rural & urban schools formed the sample. Four schools, two from rural background & two from urban background were chosen. 100 students from 2 rural schools (25 boys and 25 girls) and 100 students from 2 urban schools (25 boys & 25 girls) were selected. For the present study Purposive Sampling Design (Non-Probability Sampling) was used.

Instruments

Emotional Quotient Inventory by Bar-On EQ-I: YV (S): The student form consisting of 30 items was used for the present research and takes around 15 minutes to complete.

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It includes four scales

Intrapersonal (Self-Regard, Emotional Self-Awareness, Assertiveness, Independence, and Self-Actualization)
 Interpersonal (Empathy, Social Responsibility, and Interpersonal Relationship)
 Stress Management (Stress Tolerance and Impulse Control)
 Adaptability (Reality Testing, Flexibility, and Problem Solving)

Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference on the Intrapersonal scale between rural and urban adolescents.
2. There will be no significant difference on the Interpersonal scale between rural and urban adolescents.
3. There will be no significant difference on the Stress Management scale between rural and urban adolescents.
4. There will be no significant difference on the Adaptability scale between rural and urban adolescents.
5. There will be no significant difference on the Total Emotional Intelligence between the rural and urban adolescents.

RESULTS

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of the total sample on Emotional Intelligence

	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Stress Management	Adaptability	Total EI
N	199	199	199	199	199
Mean	16.25	18.9	17.29	16.94	69.39
Median	17	20	17	17	70
Mode	17	20a	16	18	72
Std. Deviation	3.146	3.181	2.792	2.788	6.874
Skewness	-0.166	-0.616	-0.062	-0.265	-0.242
Std. Error of Skewness	0.172	0.172	0.172	0.172	0.172
Kurtosis	-0.364	-0.058	-0.185	-0.36	-0.157
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.343	0.343	0.343	0.343	0.343

Main Analysis

Table 2 Kruscal Wallis Test: Emotional Intelligence - Gender & Locality

	Gender and Locality	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.
Intrapersonal	boy rural	50	104.32	14.412	0.002
	girls rural	49	105.11		
	boy urban	50	74.62		
	girls urban	50	116.05		
	Total	199			
Interpersonal	boy rural	50	91.82	1.949	0.583
	girls rural	49	106.64		
	boy urban	50	97.98		
	girls urban	50	103.69		
	Total	199			
Stress Management	boy rural	50	113.68	4.002	0.261
	girls rural	49	93.36		
	boy urban	50	94.64		
	girls urban	50	98.19		
	Total	199			
Adaptability	boy rural	50	117.1	8.563	0.036
	girls rural	49	105.02		
	boy urban	50	88.28		
	girls urban	50	89.7		
	Total	199			

Total EI	boy rural	50	112.33	8.416	0.038
	girls rural	49	105.63		
	boy urban	50	80.72		
	girls urban	50	101.43		
	Total	199			

Table 3 Total Emotional Intelligence: Gender & Locality

	Gender and Locality	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.
Total EI	boy rural	50	112.33	8.416	0.038
	girls rural	49	105.63		
	boy urban	50	80.72		
	girls urban	50	101.43		
	Total	199			

DISCUSSION

According to the descriptive statistics it was observed that the data was not distributed normally and based on the level of skewness and kurtosis it was decided to use the non-parametric test Kruscal Wallis to analyse the data.

1. According to Table no.2, it can be seen that there was a significant difference on the Intrapersonal scale and thus the first hypothesis stating that there will be no significant difference on the intrapersonal scale among the rural and urban adolescents was rejected. It can be observed that rural boys scored higher than their urban counterparts. As the intrapersonal scale of the EQ inventory measures several skills such as independence, emotional self awareness etc., we can say that children living in rural areas face a lot of difficulties on day to day basis like poverty, lack of resources etc. and thus the boys living in rural areas learn to be self reliant from a very young age. They learn to find solutions for problems on their own and are not dependent on anyone. In many cases the support of a father figure is also missing and the adolescent boys become more responsible. They learn to set and achieve goals as they have to support their family. On the other hand urban girls scored higher. This may be because rural girls are seen to be less independent and are also subjected to gender inequality and thus may have less self regard. Also there are a lot of biases in rural areas regarding how much freedom should be given to girls. They are expected to get married at a very young age and their opinions are not valued. They live like a shadow of the husband. Thus it can be said that they lack assertiveness and self regard which can lead to emotional difficulties. This finding has been replicated in a study conducted by Naim Fanaz *et al* (2014).
2. According to Table no. 2, it can be seen that the second hypothesis stating that there will be no significant difference on the Interpersonal scale between the rural and urban adolescents was accepted. This can be due to the reason that adolescents living in both the areas have a sense of empathy and social responsibility. This finding has been replicated in a study done by Siti Nikmah (2018).
3. It can be observed that the third hypothesis stating that there will be no significant difference on Stress Management scale between the rural and urban adolescents was accepted. This can be due to the fact that the rural and urban adolescents, both go through different kind of stressors and thus have their own individual coping strategies.

4. The fourth hypothesis stating that there will be no significant difference on the Adaptability scale between the rural and urban adolescents was rejected as the rural adolescents scored higher than their urban counterparts. It can be said that the problem solving capacity of the rural adolescents is more or they are more flexible as they face a number of diverse issues compared to the urban adolescents. They can adjust more effectively to new situations.
5. According to Table 3, it can be seen that the fifth hypothesis stating that there will be no significant difference on the Total Emotional Intelligence between the rural and urban adolescents was rejected as rural boys and girls scored higher. Considering the nature and nurture factors it is observed that the type of area plays a very crucial role in connection with emotional intelligence. Urban students may have more exposure about the modern world and techniques in comparison to rural students but may lack emotional awareness or the proper regulation of emotions. Also understanding emotions plays an important role. Rural adolescents are grown up in a collectivistic culture and thus may have more connection to the emotional aspects of life. This finding has been replicated in a demographic study conducted by Shanwal *et al* (2006).

CONCLUSION

From the results & interpretation of the data it can be concluded that-

- On the Intrapersonal scale of emotional intelligence, the rural boys and urban girls scored higher.
- On the Interpersonal and Stress Management scales, there was no significant difference between the rural and urban adolescents.
- On the Adaptability factor, the scores of rural girls & boys was found to be higher than their urban counterparts.
- On Total Emotional Intelligence, the rural students scored higher than the urban students.

Implications of the study

- To create awareness about emotional intelligence and its importance in life.
- Program for parents and teachers on strategies to improve the emotional intelligence of children especially in economically poor class may be developed and implemented.
- The inclusion of emotional intelligence as a part of the curriculum could lead to a variety of positive personal, social and societal outcomes. Also emotional intelligence promoting workshops can be conducted to foster overall EI of the students both in urban and rural areas.

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