

Emotional Intelligence and Sociometric Scores of Elementary School Children

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Abstract: *The present study was undertaken with a view to examine the relation between emotional intelligence and sociometric scores of elementary school children. The study sample consisted of 200 children (101 boys and 99 girls) studying 3rd, 4th, and 5th standards in Government Elementary Schools in Tirupati town. Multi-Stage Stratified Random Sampling Technique was used for data collection. Two questionnaires were used, one is for identifying the social stars and social isolates and other one is to assess the emotional intelligence of children developed by the investigator. Results revealed that age of the children influenced their sociometric scores as well as emotional intelligence scores. A positive relationship was found between emotional intelligence and sociometric scores of children.*

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Sociometric Scores, Elementary School Children

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a relatively new construct that has gathered momentum due to proposals that measures of EI are related to a number of desirable outcomes, including performance and health. Although there are competing definitions of EI, Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined it as "The ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth."

Since 1990, Peter and Mayer have been the leading researchers on emotional intelligence. They proposed a model that identified four different factors of emotional intelligence: the perception of emotion, the ability reason using emotions, the ability to understand emotion and the ability to manage emotions. *Perceiving Emotions* involve understanding nonverbal signals such as body language and facial expressions. *Reasoning with Emotions* involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity. *Understanding Emotions* is another component of emotional intelligence which means understanding a wide variety of meanings behind expression of emotions. The last component which is a key part of emotional intelligence is the ability to manage emotions effectively; regulating emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspect of emotional management.

Engelberg and Sjoberg (2004) found that Emotional Intelligence was related quite strongly to social adjustment. Social adjustment apparently seems to benefit from an ability to monitor one's own moods so as not to be out of sync with the social groups that they interact with. This could be considered the ability to self-regulate emotions. Their findings seem to strengthen the idea that emotional perception is essential for adaptation on a social level and thus developing friendships. In a study Antonio (2004)

focused on the effects of student friendship groups supports a strong case for the importance of friendship groups and change during a student's college years.

To understand the relation between emotional Intelligence and social development among elementary school children the present study was conducted with the following hypotheses.

2. Hypotheses

- 1) Age influences the emotional intelligence of children.
- 2) Age influences the sociometric scores of children
- 3) Emotional intelligence score affects the sociometric scores of children.

3. Methodology

Sample: A sample of 200 children (101 boys and 99 girls) were selected from the students studying 3rd, 4th, and 5th standards in Government elementary schools in Tirupati town using multi stage stratified random sampling technique.

Tools

- 1) To measure the Emotional Intelligence of the sample Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire was developed by the investigator. Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire consisted of 23 questions related to their adjustments at home, school and with the peer group. The responses were rated on a three point scale. Depending on the type of answer scoring was given. The expected minimum score was 23 and maximum 69. Maximum score indicates high emotional intelligence and minimum score indicates low emotional intelligence.
- 2) To measure the social development of sample children, Sociometry method was adopted.

4. Results and Discussion

The data collected was pooled and tabulated and subjected to statistical analysis. The distribution of children according to their age and sex is given in Table – 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Sample Children According to their Age and Sex

Age Group (Years)	Gender			
	Boys		Girls	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
8	7	3.5	12	6.0
9	28	14.0	26	13.0
10	36	18.0	43	21.5
11	27	13.5	14	7.0
12	3	1.5	4	2.0
Total	101	50.5	99	49.5

From Table 1, it is known that the sample children were aged from 8 years to 12 years.. Among the total sample, 101 (51%) were boys and 99 (49%) were girls. Table – 2 shows the distribution of children according to their educational level.

Table 2: Distribution of Sample Children According to their Standard

Standard	Number	Percentage
III	48	24
IV	77	38.5
V	75	37.5
Total	200	100

From Table 2, it is evident that the majority of the children (38.5%) were studying 4th standard. To test the first hypothesis i.e. “Age influences the Emotional Intelligence of Children”, correlation analysis was conducted. The results are presented in table – 3.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient of Age with Emotional Intelligence of Sample Children

Mean	'r' value Age	Inference
8.71	0.04	Not Significant
9.45	0.13	Not Significant
10 years	0.95	Significant at 0.05%

It is evident from table 3, that there was a positive correlation between age and emotional intelligence of all age groups children. The relationship was highly significant for the children of 10 years old. The results revealed that as age increased the emotional intelligence of children also increased. This may be explained in terms of increasing socialization experiences, the training they receive at school and peer group. As the age advanced the children attained emotional stability, which increased their emotional intelligence. Goleman (1996) also mentioned that as the age advances children can understand and accept other's emotions and feelings.

In order to test the second hypothesis, i.e. “Age influences the Sociometric Scores of Children”, correlation analysis was conducted and the results are presented in table – 4.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficient of Age with Sociometric Scores of Sample Children

Mean	'r' value Age vs.	Inference
8.71	-0.11	Not Significant
9.45	-0.014	Not Significant
10 years	0.35	Significant at 0.05%

From table 4 it is clear that there was a negative correlation between the age and sociometric scores of lower age children (3rd and 4th Standard) and positive correlation between age and sociometric scores of higher age children (5th Standard). The reason may be that during the ages of eight and nine mostly children might be getting adjusted to academic subjects and peer groups. However, as the age increased there was a positive correlation and it is significant at 0.05% level.

The third hypothesis was “Emotional Intelligence Score affects the Sociometric Scores of Children”. To test this hypothesis correlation analysis was conducted and the results are depicted in table 5 and 6.

Table 5: Correlation Coefficient of Emotional Intelligence with Sociometric Scores of Social Stars of Sample Children

Standard	'r' value EI vs.	Inference
III	0.04	Not Significant
IV	0.27	Not Significant
V	0.17	Not Significant

Table 5 shows the correlation coefficient values of emotional intelligence with sociometric scores of *social stars* of all the three standards children. There was positive correlation between emotional intelligence and sociometric scores of social stars of all the three standards children. But that relationship was not significant as the 'r' values were low. However the results indicated that emotional intelligence score increased as sociometric scores increased. The reason may be that the children with high emotional intelligence have the ability to interact well with other children. Mayer and Salovey (1990) described emotional intelligence is a form of social intelligence that involves 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 thinking and action.

Table 6: Correlation Coefficient of Emotional Intelligence with Sociometric Scores of Social Isolates of Sample Children

Standard	'r' value EI vs.	Inference
III	-0.42 **	Significant at 0.05%
IV	0.33	Not Significant
V	0.02	Not Significant

Table – 6 shows the correlation coefficient values of emotional intelligence with sociometric scores of *social isolates* of three standards children. There was negative correlation between emotional intelligence score and sociometric scores of social isolates of third standard children. That relationship was statistically significant at 0.05% level. However, positive relationship was seen between emotional intelligence score and sociometric scores of social isolates of 4th and 5th standard children, but the 'r' values revealed that relationship was not statistically significant. From the results it is clear that as sociometric

scores decreased the emotional intelligence scores increased, especially for third standard children. This may be due to their lower age interfering them to actively interact with others.

Thus, from the above results the following conclusions can be drawn.

- Age influences the emotional intelligence of children. As *Age increased Emotional Intelligence also increased.*
- Age influences the sociometric scores of the children. As *Age increased Sociometric Scores also increased.*
- There was positive relationship between emotional intelligence and sociometric scores of social stars of children belonged to 3rd, 4th and 5th standards.
- There was negative relationship between emotional intelligence and sociometric scores of social isolates of third standard children. Whereas, positive relationship was found between emotional intelligence and sociometric scores of social isolates of 4th and 5th standard children.
- There was a positive correlation between age and emotional intelligence of children.
- There was a negative correlation between age and sociometric scores of children.

However, the results are confined to the children studying in Government schools and studies on longer group of children are required for generalization of results.

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