Paradigms Print ISSN 1996-2800,
Online ISSN 2410-0854 2019,
Vol. 13, No. 2 Page 191-194
DOI: 10.24312/19108130225

Residential status, gender and discipline of the study as determinants of emotional intelligence of University students

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Cite this paper: Ali, R. Ranjha, A.N. (2019). Residential status, gender and discipline of the study as determinants of emotional intelligence of University students. *Paradigms, 13*(2), 191-194.

An individual's daily social life depends on his/her emotional state. The attribute that determines how well an individual use and control different emotions in daily life experiences is named as emotional intelligence. For the reasons, students' learning and academic achievements are dependent on their motivation, persistence, and positive emotions. This emotional maturity has economic, social and health benefits for the society, therefore, the concept of emotional intelligence appears as an important factor to explain meaningfulness of academic achievements. As different demographics variables instil different socio-economic and emotional behaviours in students, hence, the current study examines the students' gender, residential status, and discipline of the study to elucidate variance in students' emotional intelligence. University students are the population and the survey has been conducted to gather data from available and volunteer university students at Bahawalnagar campus of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The results indicate that the discipline of the study alone and in combination with gender significantly explains the differences in students' emotional intelligence. The interactions of gender, rural-urban residential status and discipline of the study has produced significant differences in students' emotional intelligence. It is, therefore, recommended that emotional intelligence should be the focus of all disciplines offered at the university level to ensure that passed out students are emotionally intelligent and more productive citizens of the society.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence (EI), Pakistani University Students, Academic Achievements, Rural-urban phenomenon, economic productivity

INTRODUCTION

Emotions are an important aspect of human life. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotions might constitute internal or external responses which might have negative and positive meanings for an individual, although these are short-lived than the mood they are more intense and these severely affect individual's personal and social interactions with others. Typically, emotions arise in response to an event. In this regards, Salovey and Mayer (1990) contributed seminal work on the concept of emotional intelligence (EI). They theorised emotions and emotion-related skills as an adaptive characteristic and considered emotional intelligence as an element of social intelligence which enable an individual to discriminate among different emotional states of oneself and others and finally control their own and other emotions apparent in actions and behaviours. In other words, EI may be labelled as the wisdom of feelings because it attributes intelligent, thoughtful and culturally acceptable response to good and bad emotions in different contexts (Barrett & Salovey, 2002).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) considered EI equally important like other different individual differences such as attention, memory, metacognition in daily human functioning and learning. Therefore, Denham and Bassett (2018) accentuated the role of schools for inculcating EI in children right from the preschool age. They highlighted the need for the presence of higher EI in teachers, and the assessment of children's emotions as well to uplift their emotional competencies.

It is worthwhile to remember that the development of emotional competencies through school base programing, can gain many individual social and economic benefits (Elias *et al.*, 2018). Likewise, Homayouni (2011) found that EI affects differently the learning of different subjects. Homayouni (2011) found that students' learning of English was positively associated with different aspects of EI, whereas students' mathematics learning was not related to students' EI.

However, EI predicts students' accomplishments in different learning settings. The students' EI scores at the initial stage of their studies successfully predicted their cumulative GPA at the end of their studies (Schutte *et al.*, 1998). Similarly, Berenson *et al.* (2008) found EI as the most noteworthy factor that has a direct impact on students' GPA in an online learning setting. They emphasised that soft skills are required to be successful in online learning. Moreover, Afolabi *et al.* (2009) reported that students' interpersonal relationships and students' learned desire for success and achievements depend on their EI. So, EI has motivational as well as social importance for students to be successful in the school environment. However, the relationship between EI and academic achievements improves with increase in years at an educational institution (Malik & Shahid, 2016). It highlights the need to incorporate measures to judge students' EI imparted at schools. Therefore, the importance of EI in explaining students' academic achievements is understandable (Yahaya *et al.*, 2012). However, there also exists a reciprocal relationship between students' EI and their learning outcomes (Mohzan *et al.*, 2013). From the above discussion, the significance of EI in students' learning is fathomable. Hence, the current study is an endeavour to examine the differences in

students' EI because of their gender, residential status, and discipline of study.

The study has been designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To measure differences in students EI because of their rural-urban residential status.
2. To measure the differences in students EI because of their discipline of study.
3. To measure differences in students EI because of their gender.
4. To measure the differences in students EI because of their rural-urban residential status and their discipline of study.
5. To measure the differences in students EI because of their rural-urban residential status and their gender.
6. To measure the differences in students EI because of their gender and discipline of study.
7. To measure the differences in students EI because of their rural-urban residential status, the discipline of study and gender.

The current study tests the following hypothesis:

1. There will be no significant differences in students' EI because of their rural-urban residential status.
2. There will be no significant differences in students' EI because of their discipline of study.
3. There will be no significant differences in students' EI because of their gender
4. There will be no significant differences in students' EI because of the interaction of both rural-urban residential status and their discipline of study.
5. There will be no significant differences in students' EI because of the interaction of both rural-urban residential status and their gender.
6. There will be no significant differences in students' EI because of the interaction of both of their gender and discipline of study.
7. There will be no significant differences in students' EI because of the interaction of their rural-urban residential status, discipline of study and gender.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A survey has been conducted to gain evidence from students to compute their EI and demographic data. The population of the study were university students of different disciplines studying in Bahawalnagar campus of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. Five hundred questionnaires were distributed among students selected conveniently. Four hundred and forty-five questionnaires were returned. However, four hundred and twenty-five questionnaires were entered in SPSS after screening. The students' participation was voluntary in this survey.

Using a survey method, data has been collected about student's demographic characteristics and EI. Schutte *et al.* (1998)'s EI measure has been employed to collect information about students' EI levels. The used measure is the uni-factor instrument which consists of 33 items. The respondents scored their responses by choosing from five scale answer of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agreed. This measure has sufficient validity and reliability to screen potential at-risk EI deficient individuals (Schutte *et al.*, 1998).

As the independent variables are measured on a nominal scale, therefore simple regression analysis is not an appropriate method to find the contribution of gender, rural-urban residential status, and discipline of study in students' EI. Hence, the current study has employed Analysis of Variance to identify the differences in students' EI and students' groups concerning their rural-urban residential status, the discipline of the study and gender. The differences in means with raged to possible groups and EI have been calculated and ANOVA helps to test generalisability of these groups' means.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Table 1 shows the mean EI of students from different groups in the sample. The students about rural-urban residential status, gender and discipline of study have differences in their EI. It seems not too much difference concerning gender and rural-urban residential status of students. However, the variable of the discipline of the study seems to impart some considerable differences in students' EI.

Table 1: Dependent Variable: EI Score

	Rural			Urban	
Groups		Mean	Groups		Mean
Applied Psychology	Female	119.3	Applied Psychology	Female	121.5
	Male	122.0		Male	109.0
	Total	120.5		Total	120.8
Education	Female	110.4	Education	Female	109.0
	Male	109.0		Male	108.5
	Total	110.2		Total	108.8
English	Female	116.3	English	Female	124.2
	Male	127.2		Male	123.5
	Total	120.4		Total	124.0
Islamic Studies	Female	127.5	Islamic Studies	Female	107.1
	Male	126.1		Male	155.8
	Total	126.9		Total	123.3
Mathematics	Female	116.3	Mathematics	Female	117.2
	Male	121.0		Male	99.0
	Total	117.5		Total	112.0
Management Sciences	Female	121.5	Management Sciences	Female	125.2
	Male	103.4		Male	120.6
	Total	109.4		Total	121.6
Botany	Female	123.4	Botany	Female	123.0
	Male	118.9		Male	128.3
	Total	122.8		Total	123.4
Physical Education	Female	117.8	Physical Education	Female	123.1
	Male	115.6		Male	113.0
	Total	117.0		Total	119.7
Computer Sciences	Female	121.5	Computer Sciences	Female	115.9
	Male	122.9		Male	119.1
	Total	122.4		Total	117.1
Total	Female	120.1	Total	Female	121.3
	Male	121.1		Male	121.8
	Total	120.5		Total	121.4

Table 2 displays the results of Levene' test. The error of variance of this test should be almost the same in all groups for appropriate use of ANOVA. The results indicate an insignificant p-value. It means that variance across different groups about the dependent variable does not vary too much. Therefore, ANOVA can be applied to this data set.

Table 2: Levene's Test

F-value	Degree of Freedom 1	Degree of Freedom 2	Significance
1.260	35	389	.153

Table 3 shows the results of tests of different null-hypotheses. According to the results, mean differences in students' EI

because of their rural-urban residence has F values of 0.363 with the significance level of 0.547. It means that the null hypothesis that there are no significant differences in students' EI because of their rural-urban residential status cannot be rejected. While the mean difference in students' EI because of their discipline of the study has F values of 1.973 with the significance level of 0.049. The null hypothesis that there are no significant differences in students' EI because of the discipline of study is rejected. However, the mean difference in students' EI because of their gender has F values of 1.550 with the significance of 0.214. It means that the null hypothesis of no significant differences in students' EI because of their gender cannot be rejected.

The difference in students' EI because of the interaction of variables rural-urban residential status and their discipline of study is insignificant (p=0.386. F=1.068). The researchers also have failed to reject the related stated null hypothesis. Similarly, the researchers have failed to reject related interaction null-hypothesis that difference in students' EI is because of the interaction of variables rural-urban residential status and their gender. It has insignificant (p=0.905. F=0.014).

However, the differences in students' EI because of the combinations or interactions of rural-urban residential status, discipline of the study and gender has significant (p=0.002, F=3.069. It means researchers successfully reject the null hypothesis that there will be no significant differences in students' EI because of the interaction of their rural-urban residential status, discipline of study and gender. Likewise, the difference in students' EI because of the interaction of variables gender and discipline of the study has significant (p=0.041. F=2.040). The researchers, therefore, successfully rejected the related interaction null hypothesis.

Table 3: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	16243.130[a]	35	464.089	1.918	.002
Intercept	6216618.355	1	6216618.355	25693.551	.000
Rural-urban Residence Status	87.754	1	87.754	.363	.547
Discipline of study	3819.194	8	477.399	1.973	.049
Gender	375.078	1	375.078	1.550	.214
Rural-urban Residence Status* Discipline of the study	2067.680	8	258.460	1.068	.385
Rural-urban Residence Status* Gender	3.486	1	3.486	.014	.905
Discipline of the study * Gender	3949.310	8	493.664	2.040	.041
Rural-urban Residence Status* Discipline of the study * Gender	5940.629	8	742.579	3.069	.002
Error	94119.515	389	241.952		
Total	6326981.000	425			
Corrected Total	110362.645	424			

a. R Squared = .147 (Adjusted R Squared = .070)

CONCLUSION

According to the results of the current investigation, students' rural-urban residential status and gender do not significantly contribute to students' scores of EI. However, the students' discipline of the study contributes more obviously to students' EI. Although gender alone fails to impart any significant difference in EI, however, in combination with the discipline of study, it significantly contributes to EI. The combinations of rural-urban residential status, the discipline of the study and gender also contribute significant dissimilarities in students' EI as well.

From the above results, it is obvious that students' discipline of the study and subjects' content they learn at university over the years contribute significantly to their EI. These findings are in line with the findings of Homayouni (2011) and Denham and Bassett (2018).

The study results highlight that certain disciplines of the study more effectively inculcate the positive development of EI in students. Because the emotionally intelligent individuals are more productive, and contribute more to a prosperous and peaceful society, it is recommended that the educational institutions should consider the development of EI as an important outcome of the educational process. It should be given due place in curricula of all disciplines taught at the university level. Further, in view to study's finding of the significant interaction effect of gender, the discipline of the study, and residential status, it is recommended that effect of socioeconomic class on students' EI should be studied in future studies.

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