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A STUDY ON SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE OF STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT LEARNING DISABILITY

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Abstract

The present study investigates the social intelligence of students with and without learning disability. The total sample consisted of 40 subjects, which include 20 students diagnosed with learning disability (LD) and 20 normal students. The descriptive survey method was used for the present study. Purposive sampling method was used for sample selection. The Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) was used to measure Social Intelligence (SI) and its three components such as social information processing, social skill and social awareness. Results revealed that students with learning disability have significantly lower level of social information processing than normal students. There were no significance differences in the components of social intelligence of students with and without learning disability with respect to gender. There is a significant difference in social skills and social awareness components of social intelligence with respect to age. Social skills and social awareness increase when age increases.

Intelligence is one of the main characteristics that make individuals unique. Intelligence is one of the most highly valued of human characteristics. Researchers have been defined the term intelligence in different ways which include the ability to understand complex ideas, capacity for logical and abstract thinking, planning, creativity, spatial understanding, memory tasks, and understanding of verbal reasoning etc.. Human intelligence is a controversial subject matter among psychologists and non-psychologists alike from many years ago (Cianciolo & Sternberg, 2004). Since last few decades, several definitions and theories had been put forwarded by many psychologists. According to Howard Gardner (1983) "Intelligence is the ability to resolve problems or to create products that is valued within one or more cultural settings". Gardner proposed multiple intelligence theory in 1983. In his theory, social intelligence is one of the behaviours of "intelligence,"(interpersonal and intrapersonal) which help to understand the behaviour, feelings and motives of other people and knowledge of one's own strengths and limitations and using this knowledge to effectively relate to other people.

Social Intelligence is not a recent discovery. For the past three decades, social scientists have studied social intelligence and recently have increasing attention especially in psychology and

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neuropsychological fields. Early learning theorist Thorndike (1920) began research on the concept of social intelligence and he separated social intelligence into three separate dimensions. These dimensions are social, mechanical and abstract intelligence. Thorndike alludes social intelligence as the ability to act sensibly in social relationships. Individuals who are socially intelligent become visible to experience a rich, meaningful life (Marlowe 1986).Vernon (1933) explained social intelligence as knowledge of social matters, fabricating a "susceptibility to stimuli from other members of a group as well as insight into the temporary moods or fundamental personality traits of strangers". According to Markopoulos, (2009) defined social intelligence is the ability to engage in social interaction through awareness that is entrenched through learning or instinct in a way that one understands the comprehensive expressions and needs of others. Daniel Goleman (2006) defined social intelligence as being receptive to another person's thoughts, feelings, and intentions, and more attuned to the influence of social interaction. Zirkel (2000) described that social intelligence is linked to personality and individual behaviour. People with social intelligence are much aware of themselves and understand their environment, which helps them to put control over their emotions, encourage to make decisions on their life goals.

Learning disabilities are neurologically-based processing problems which mainly affect academic performance. Individuals with learning disability exhibit and experience difficulties in spoken or written language, and imperfect ability to listen, think, write, spell, speak, read, or do mathematical calculations. These problems interfere with academic achievement or day to day activities of life . According to DSM-5 learning, disorders are classified into three types: Impairment in Reading, Impairment in written expression, and impairment in mathematics. Studies found that Children with learning difficulties (LD) tend to have problems of their social relations. According to Vallance et al (1998), learning disabled children has limited social skills, and they tend to show less assertive behaviour than their peers. They have also been found to have the lack of control over their emotion and they are more impulsive than their non-disabled age mates.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The descriptive survey method was used for the present study. The investigator adopted purposive sampling technique to select the samples for the present study. The sample was drawn from Active Minds: Mind clinic for children and adults, Kottayam, Kerala. The sample includes 20 students were diagnosed with learning disability and 20 were normal , which consists of 22 males and 18 female, between 8 to 15 age range. Individuals with mental retardation, visual and hearing impairment, psychiatric illness /neurological diseases, were excluded from the convenience of the study.

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The Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) was used to measure Social Intelligence (SI). The TSIS has three components in Social Intelligence. These are social information processing, social skills and social awareness. The social information processing (SIP) measures the way a person understands human relations. Dogan and Cetin (2009) included empathy, ability to read or understand hidden meaning, and ability to understand explicit messages in the definition of SIP. Social skills (SS) are defined as the level of comfort one has with others and also the ability to connect socially with others. Social Awareness (SA) is one's capacity to act appropriately in a given social situation, particularly an awareness of the behaviours of others.

The TSIS has demonstrated high reliability and validity. Silvera et al.(2001), reported test-retest and split reliability coefficients of .81, .86, and .79 for the three subscales of the TSIS, and reliability coefficients were reported as .83, .80, and .75 for the three subscales respectively by Dogan and Cetin (2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Mean, Standard Deviation of Total Sample Scores of the Components of Social Intelligence

Components of social intelligence	Leaning disabled (N=20) Mean ± SD	Normal (N=20) Mean ±SD	't'	*p*
Social information processing	25.4000±2.62378	27.5500±3.13679	2.351	.024*
Social skills	28.1500±3.29713	27.1000±3.33877	-1.001	.323
Social awareness	27.8500±2.68083	28.3500±3.52846	.505	.617

* (*p*.0.05 level significance)

Table 1 indicates the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of total sample scores of the components of social intelligence. The obtained *p* value 0.05* in social information processing component, which is statistically significant. Students with learning disability are different from normal students to the way to understand the social relationship. Individual with learning disability has expressed difficulties in processing sensory stimulus. Thus they are lower in social information processing component.

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Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviation of Total Sample Scores of the Components of Social Intelligence with respect to Gender

Components of social intelligence	Male (N=22) Mean ± SD	Female (N=18) Mean ± SD	't'	*p*
Social information processing	26.0909±2.24476	26.9444±3.84206	-.876	-.412
Social skills	27.0455±3.25836	28.3333±3.84312	-1.226	.228
Social awareness	27.6818±3.19801	28.6111±2.99291	-.947	.350

From the table 2, it is seen that the obtained *p* values for social information processing, social skills and social awareness are .976, .228 and .350 respectively. This is not statistically significant. So it can be concluded that the major components of social intelligence does not differ with respect to gender.

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation of Total Sample Scores of the Components of Social Intelligence with respect to Age

Components of social intelligence	Age 8-11 (N=24) Mean ± SD	Age 12-15 (N=16) Mean ± SD	't'	*p*
Social information processing	26.2500±2.47158	26.8125±3.83351	-.519	.199
Social skills	25.7500±2.40018	30.4375±2.39357	-6.061	.000**
Social awareness	26.4583±2.32153	30.5625±2.44864	-5.302	.000**

** (*p*.0.01 level significance)

Table 3 indicates the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of total sample scores of the components of social intelligence with respect to age. The obtained *p* value is 0.000** for social skills and social awareness components, which is statistically significant. The social skills and social awareness increase when age increases.

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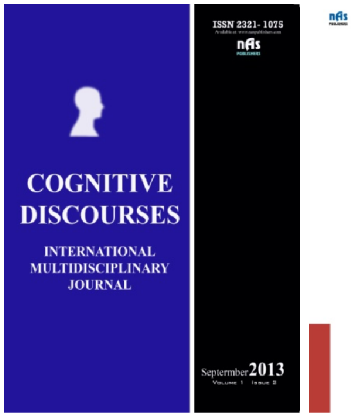

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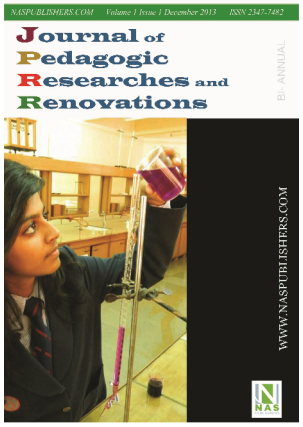

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