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Effect Of School Environment On Emotional Intelligence And Social Intelligence Of Indian Students Studying In Kuwait

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Abstract:

This study explores the effect of the school environment on emotional and social intelligence among Indian students studying in Kuwait, with a specific focus on gender differences during adolescence. Adolescence, a critical stage of emotional and social development, is marked by significant changes in cognitive, emotional, and social processing. Emotional intelligence (EI) and social intelligence (SI) are examined in relation to the social, cultural, and educational context in which students are situated. The research highlights how gender influences these forms of intelligence, with females generally showing higher levels of emotional intelligence, particularly in empathy, emotional regulation, and recognition. Social intelligence, which involves understanding social cues and navigating relationships, is also impacted by gender, with females often being more adept in these areas due to societal socialization patterns. The study uses the frameworks of Bar-On (1997) and Salovey and Mayer (1990) for emotional intelligence, and the Social Intelligence Scale developed by N.K. Chadha and Usha Ganeshan (1986) for measuring social intelligence. Key terms such as adolescence, school environment, gender, emotional intelligence, and social intelligence are operationally defined to contextualize the study. The research also considers the influence of cultural factors, suggesting that while gender differences exist, they are shaped by societal and cultural norms. The findings of this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how the school environment influences emotional and social intelligence and how these differences manifest across genders in diverse cultural settings.

Keywords: Adolescence, School Environment, Emotional Intelligence, Social Intelligence, Gender.

According to WHO (2023), gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviors and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with others. Gender is also defined as the social construct that refers to the roles and behaviors that society considers appropriate for individuals based on their perceived or assigned sex at birth. These roles are influenced by social, cultural, historical, and personal factors like in many societies, the expectation might be that women should be nurturing, while men are expected to be providers. Gender is often understood as a psychological construct related to one's personal sense of identity, which may or may not align with societal expectations for their biological sex. At times, gender is experienced in relation to other social categories, such as race, class, sexual orientation, and ability. It suggests that people may experience discrimination or privilege based on the overlap of these identities.

The term gender refers to social, cultural, and personal identities related to masculinity, femininity, or other gender identities, and it is shaped by social expectations and is distinct from sex, which refers to the biological differences between males and females, such as genitalia, chromosomes, and reproductive anatomy.

In the current research, gender refers to male and female students taken for the study.

INTRODUCTION:

During adolescence, commonly termed as a stage of storms and stresses, the brain undergoes significant changes in areas related to emotional and social processing. Some studies indicate that during this period, gender differences in emotional and social intelligence may emerge more strongly as social roles and expectations intensify. According to a study by Bar-On (1997), emotional intelligence can be influenced by various factors, including gender and age. Adolescents often show varying levels of EI depending on the interaction between their cognitive development and environmental influences. Research also suggests that females generally score higher on emotional intelligence (EI) measures compared to males, especially in areas such as empathy, emotional recognition, and emotional regulation. This has been attributed to socialization patterns, where girls are often encouraged to be more expressive and attuned to emotions. A study by Salovey and Mayer (1990) proposed that emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions. Gender differences in EI have been observed in emotional perception and understanding, with females often outperforming males in recognizing and interpreting emotions in facial expressions or social situations.

Social intelligence (SI) refers to the ability to navigate social situations effectively, including understanding social cues, maintaining relationships, and adapting to social contexts. There are also gender differences in social intelligence, with some studies suggesting that adolescent females tend to be more adept at these skills. Social intelligence is often linked with the capacity for social interaction, which is shaped by both innate traits and socialization. Girls are often encouraged to develop their interpersonal skills, while boys may focus more on independent or competitive behavior.

Gender differences in emotional and social intelligence may also be influenced by cultural and environmental factors. In some cultures, emotional expressiveness and social collaboration are more emphasized in females, while other cultures might emphasize emotional restraint in males. This suggests that while gender differences in EI and SI exist, they are also shaped by cultural expectations and societal norms.

In this research, we shall be studying the, “Effect of school environment on emotional and social intelligence of Indian students studying in Kuwait.”

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS:

1) **Adolescence:** Adolescence is a period of human growth from childhood to adulthood. For the present study, we shall be referring to the stages of adolescence as given by Vikaspedia, an Indian government portal (2014) which has categorized the ages of 11-13 years as early adolescence, ages 14-15 as middle adolescence and years 16-18 as late adolescence.

2) **School Environment:** The definition given by Mishra (2000) about school environment will be very aptly used in the current study. Mishra states that the school environment refers to the general socio-psychological climate of school which provides conditions and opportunities to develop.

3) **Gender:** According to WHO (2023), gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviors and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with others. In the current research, gender refers to male and female students taken for the study.

4) **Emotional Intelligence:** Emotional Intelligence refers to the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others. It includes skills such as emotional awareness, harnessing emotions for problem solving, and managing emotions. The present research will use the term Emotional Intelligence as measured by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2002) wherein they refer to Emotional Intelligence as a specific type of intelligence.

5) **Social Intelligence:** Social intelligence is the ability to understand your own and others' actions. In the present research, social intelligence is referred to as the specific type of intelligence as measured by 'Social Intelligence Scale' developed by N.K. Chadha and Usha Ganeshan (1986).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- 1) To investigate whether gender differences regarding the perception of school environment exist among students across middle and late adolescence.
- 2) To examine if gender differences exist in the emotional intelligence of students across middle and late adolescence.
- 3) To explore the occurrence of gender differences in social intelligence of students across middle and late adolescence.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

For the above objectives, 2 hypotheses each were stated to arrive at suitable results.

- 1) A significant difference will be observed in the perception of the school environment among boys and girls within different age groups across middle and late adolescence.
- 2) A significant difference will be observed in the perception of the school environment of senior and senior secondary school students.
- 3) There will be a significant difference in the emotional intelligence of boys and girls within different age groups across middle and late adolescence.
- 4) There will be a significant difference in the emotional intelligence of senior and senior secondary school students.
- 5) There will be a significant difference in the social intelligence of boys and girls within different age groups across middle and late adolescence.
- 6) There will be significant differences in the social intelligence of senior and senior secondary school students.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY:

The present study was undertaken to know the effect of the school environment on the social intelligence of secondary and senior secondary school students. A systematic procedure was designed for conducting the investigation, analysis, and interpretation of data. The research methodology adopted for conducting the present study has been discussed under the following sub-headings:

- 1) Locale of the study
- 2) Selection of the sample
- 3) Tools of data collection
- 4) Procedure of data collection
- 5) Statistical Analysis of the data

Locale of the Study:

Kuwait is a cosmopolitan society with people from more than 100 countries living here peacefully. This small middle eastern country has been divided into six governorates which are further divided into areas. The demographic segregation of Kuwait is unique as the expatriates comprise 70 percent of the population and out of this huge percentage, around 1,000,726 are Indian nationals. (Indians in Kuwait,2024). Owing to the widespread distribution of different nationalities, language barriers, and certain other practical problems, it was befitting to take up only Indian students as part of this study.

To cater to the educational needs of such a large population, we have 21 registered Indian schools in Kuwait which are following the CBSE curricula, out of these 4 schools were chosen for the study. Care was taken that the selected schools had a similar fee structure indicating that the respondents belonged to a similar socio-economic background.

Sample: Since in this research, the differences across the age and genders were to be studied, a sample of 400 was taken up for the study.

Sampling techniques: For the current research, the sampling techniques used were:

Purpose Sampling Technique (For the selection of school)

Random Sampling Technique (For the selection of students)

Inclusion- Exclusion Criteria:

- The sample comprised of 400 students in the age group of 14 -17 years.
- The students studying in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th standards were chosen for the study. One hundred students of Indian origin from each school were selected at random; 50 boys and 50 girls studying in all the four grades mentioned above.
- The students who had been in the same school for a minimum of three years, belonged to intact families and had no learning disability were chosen (information about the same was obtained from the respective class teachers)

Sample Distribution:

The researcher gave the forms to 582 students and on analysis of the personal information sheet, the first 100 students from each school who met the criteria of belonging to intact families, having no disability, and having spent at least three years in the same school were taken as samples for the study.

Ethical Consideration:

A letter of consent was given to the principal of each school before gathering information from their students. The collected data was kept confidential but the scores of the tests were shared with a few enthusiastic respondents.

Procedure of Data Collection:

The researcher met the students of different schools on separate days and told them the purpose of the study. They were also informed that their entire data will be kept confidential. Once the rapport was made with the respondents, personal information sheet in shape of google forms was sent to all 582 respondents. Out of the above, the first hundred respondents from each school who met the inclusion-exclusion criteria were selected for the study.

Tools used for Data Collection:

For the assessment of school environment and social intelligence, the following research tools were employed by the researcher to conduct the present study.

- 1) Personal Information Sheet: The data sheet was prepared by the researcher and scrutinized by the Guide.
- 2) Standardized Testing Tools
 - a) School Environment Inventory by Mishra (2000)
 - b) Emotional Intelligence Scale by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002)
 - c) Social Intelligence Scale by Chadha and Ganesan (1986)

ANALYSIS OF DATA:

In the context of the present research, descriptive analysis has helped to arrive at the concise summary of the emotional intelligence and social intelligence scores of students based on various demographics such as age and gender. It also helped to explore the dimensions of the school environment (e.g., creative stimulation, cognitive encouragement) and how these relate to social intelligence. Percentage has also been used to assess the standing of the respondents with regards to their emotional intelligence test scores and social intelligence test scores. Analysis of variance has also been used to study the gender differences with regard to the school environment and social intelligence of the respondents. ANOVA was used to test whether there are significant differences across the two age groups (middle and late adolescence) for the variables named school environment, social intelligence. ANOVA was also used for comparing male and female students to identify whether significant gender differences exist in the perception of the

school environment and social intelligence. SPSS software was run to calculate the Pearson Product correlation between social intelligence and stages of adolescence in students and between school environment and the students across middle and late adolescence. Regression analysis was used to understand the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables.

Tabulation of the Data: The following table was used to tabulate the collected data and arrive at the results of the study.

Table 1: Analysis of variance for groups and gender differences with reference to school environment, emotional and social intelligence of students.

Variable	Source	DF	MS	F	P
Creative	Groups	1	1027.2	7.35	0.007
	Gender	1	44.2	0.32	0.574
	Groups*Gender	1	6.5	0.05	0.829
	Error	396	139.8		
Cognitive	Groups	1	600.25	16.02	0
	Gender	1	84.64	2.26	0.134
	Groups*Gender	1	26.01	0.69	0.405
	Error	396	37.46		
Permissiveness	Groups	1	468.72	8.98	0.003
	Gender	1	52.56	1.01	0.316
	Groups*Gender	1	0.02	0	0.983
	Error	396	52.2		
Acceptance	Groups	1	50.41	1.66	0.198
	Gender	1	14.44	0.48	0.491
	Groups*Gender	1	5.29	0.17	0.677
	Error	396	30.36		
Rejection	Groups	1	48.3	1.46	0.227
	Gender	1	16.4	0.5	0.482
	Groups*Gender	1	9.92	0.3	0.584
	Error	396	33.05		
Control	Groups	1	13.69	0.53	0.467
	Gender	1	53.29	2.07	0.151
	Groups*Gender	1	0.04	0	0.969
	Error	396	25.77		
EI	Groups	1	6732.2	7.62	0.006
	Gender	1	939.4	1.06	0.303
	Groups*Gender	1	3.4	0	0.95
	Error	396	884		
SIS	Groups	1	6.25	0.07	0.787
	Gender	1	54.76	0.64	0.423
	Groups*Gender	1	46.24	0.54	0.462
	Error	396	85.11		

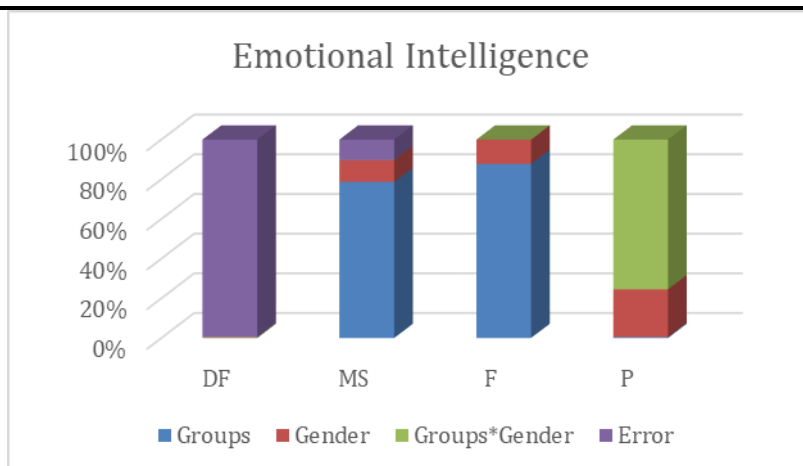


Fig 1: Emotional Intelligence: Analysis of Group and Gender Differences in School Environment

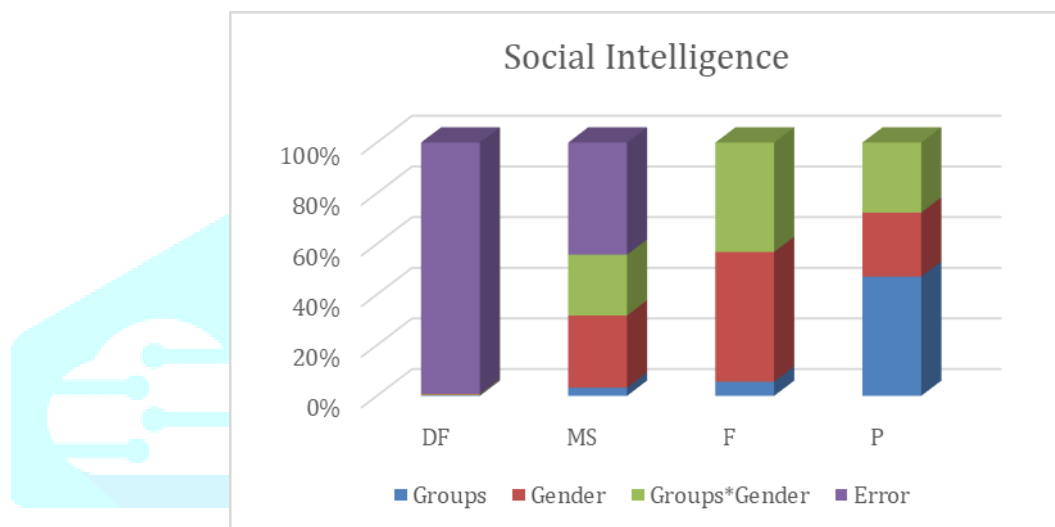


Fig 2: Social Intelligence: Analysis of Group and Gender Differences in School Environment

The data depicted in Table 1 explained the analysis of variance for groups and gender differences with reference to school environment, emotional and social intelligence of students. In the case of school environment for the variable- 'creative', significant p value (0.007) and F value (7.35) of were obtained only among groups at 5% level of significance while gender (0.574) and groups*gender (0.829) did not show any significant p values as the readings were higher than $p=0.05$ having 0.32 and 0.05 as F values respectively. Likewise, for another variable called cognitive, the p value (0.00) and F value (16.02) among groups gave significant results at 5% level of significance. Contrastingly, gender and the combination of gender and groups showed higher p values i.e. 0.134 and 0.405 respectively than $p=0.05$, thereby suggesting non-significance in outcomes having F values of 2.26 and 0.69 respectively. In parallel to the above results, only the groups of students were distinguished as significant for the variable, 'permissiveness' with p value as 0.003 and F value as 8.98, on the other hand, non-significant values were seen in gender (0.316) and groups*gender (0.983) for permissiveness with F-values as 1.01 and 0 respectively. All the sources called groups (0.198), gender (0.491) and groups*gender (0.677) demonstrated no significant differences for the variable, 'acceptance' at $p=0.05$ as the readings obtained from all of sources were higher than the p values (Groups: P value-1.66 and F value-0.198; Gender: P value-0.48 and F value-0.491; Groups*Gender: P value-0.17 and F value-0.677). Similar outcomes were obtained in the case of variable, 'rejection' and 'control', wherein no significant results were observed for either of the sources; groups ($p=0.227$; $p=0.467$), gender ($p=0.482$; $p=0.151$) and groups*gender ($p=0.584$; $p=0.969$) wherein the first p value in the bracket denoted for rejection while the second value is denoted for control. Other values concerned included F values as Groups-1.46; Gender-0.5; Groups*Gender-0.3 for rejection and Groups-0.53; Gender-2.07; Groups*Gender-0 for control.

Observations on emotional intelligence depicted a significant p value (0.006) for groups with F value as 7.62 while non-significant for rest of the other characteristics (Gender, p value as 0.303 and F value as 1.06; Groups*Gender, p value as 0.95 and F value as 0) at 5% significance level. The data on social

intelligence of students showed no significant results as the p values in the table (groups-0.787; gender-0.423; groups*gender-0.462 were below than the $p=0.05$.

In essence, group differences significantly affect certain aspects of the school environment and EI, but gender does not appear to have a notable impact on any of these dimensions. The interaction between group and gender is not significant in most cases, indicating that the effects of group differences are not moderated by gender.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics (mean & SE of mean) based on EI Category for all variables among female and male students across middle and late adolescence.

Variable	EI Category	Middle				Late			
		Female		Male		Female		Male	
		Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
EI	Low	149.30	3.90	151.04	4.12	146.24	3.85	149.37	4.09
	Average	170.82	3.85	174.94	4.20	156.14	5.34	163.73	3.96
	High	187.33	6.20	185.71	7.31	182.69	5.49	172.06	7.59
Creative	Low	45.32	1.48	44.41	1.52	43.76	1.58	44.53	1.73
	Average	53.18	1.53	55.21	1.62	47.28	2.18	49.94	1.77
	High	58.92	2.46	57.95	2.63	57.31	2.30	53.17	3.24
Cognitive	Low	28.27	0.91	28.57	0.99	26.00	0.84	27.14	0.87
	Average	31.07	0.75	32.00	0.88	26.79	1.14	29.12	0.89
	High	33.75	1.42	32.71	1.37	32.06	1.51	31.78	1.32
Permissiveness	Low	22.55	1.05	23.57	1.03	20.76	0.99	21.86	1.01
	Average	26.32	0.97	26.97	1.13	23.31	1.34	24.76	0.98
	High	30.50	1.59	29.33	1.44	30.19	1.75	26.89	1.62
Acceptance	Low	19.23	0.72	19.48	0.79	19.64	0.75	19.33	0.65
	Average	22.57	0.73	22.58	0.80	21.17	1.09	21.27	0.90
	High	26.25	1.49	23.71	1.44	25.75	1.18	22.00	1.44
Rejection	Low	11.09	0.65	11.83	0.74	12.80	0.69	12.94	0.90
	Average	12.14	0.92	12.45	1.23	13.07	0.92	12.58	0.99
	High	9.92	1.53	12.29	1.87	9.94	1.29	11.22	1.31
Control	Low	22.84	0.73	23.20	0.89	23.27	0.51	23.57	0.69
	Average	25.55	0.79	25.73	0.78	24.52	0.79	26.06	0.71
	High	28.00	1.21	29.71	1.09	27.44	0.89	27.00	1.40

Table 2 provides a descriptive statistical breakdown (mean & standard error of the mean) for emotional intelligence (EI) categories across various dimensions for male and female students in middle and late adolescence. The dimensions include EI, Creativity, Cognitive Stimulation, Permissiveness, Acceptance, Rejection, and Control, showing how these variables fluctuate based on gender and developmental stage. Below is in the dimension-wise interpretation of the table:

Emotional Intelligence (EI):

In the EI dimension, higher scores are observed among female students in both middle (High: 187.33) and late adolescence (High: 182.69), compared to their male counterparts (Middle: 185.71, Late: 172.06). This indicates that females demonstrate higher emotional intelligence across adolescence, with middle adolescents displaying more elevated scores compared to late adolescents in both genders. Interestingly, males tend to have a slightly higher mean in the low EI category during middle adolescence (151.04) and late adolescence (149.37) than females, which suggests that gender differences may diminish in lower emotional intelligence groups.

Creative Stimulation:

For creative stimulation, the highest scores are found among middle adolescents, with females (58.92) surpassing males (57.95). In late adolescence, females continue to outperform males (Females: 57.31, Males: 53.17), suggesting that creativity remains higher in females throughout adolescence. However, in the low creative stimulation category, both males (44.41) and females (43.76) in late adolescence exhibit lower mean values, indicating that lower creativity tends to persist as adolescents grow older, but more so in females.

Cognitive Stimulation:

Cognitive stimulation shows relatively comparable scores between males and females, with slight advantages seen in males across both developmental stages. In middle adolescence, high EI males (32.71) slightly outperform females (33.75). In late adolescence, females and males show a marginal difference, with females (32.06) edging out males (31.78). These results suggest minimal gender differences, with a more pronounced drop in cognitive stimulation from middle to late adolescence.

Permissiveness:

Permissiveness presents a mixed pattern across genders and stages. In middle adolescence, males (29.33) score slightly lower than females (30.50) in the high EI category, indicating that females may be more open to permissiveness during this stage. In late adolescence, females still hold higher permissiveness scores (30.19) compared to males (26.89). However, the gap widens in the low EI category, where females (20.76) score lower than males (21.86) in late adolescence, indicating that permissiveness decreases more sharply in females as they grow older.

Acceptance:

In the acceptance dimension, females show consistently higher scores than males in both stages of adolescence, particularly in the high EI category (Middle: 26.25, Late: 25.75). Males, on the other hand, show a gradual decline, with the lowest scores observed in late adolescence (High: 22.00). This suggests that females may experience greater acceptance in their social environments, which is also reflective of their higher EI scores. Acceptance remains relatively stable for both genders in the low EI category.

Rejection:

Rejection, as expected, is higher in males across both stages of adolescence. Males in middle adolescence score higher in the high rejection category (12.29) compared to females (9.92), and a similar trend is seen in late adolescence (Males: 11.22, Females: 9.94). This suggests that male adolescents are more likely to experience or perceive rejection compared to females, especially those with lower EI scores. The standard errors are also higher in males, indicating greater variability in how males experience rejection.

Control:

In terms of control, male adolescents score higher in middle adolescence in the high EI category (29.71) compared to females (28.00), indicating that males may experience or impose more control during this developmental stage. However, in late adolescence, the gender difference diminishes, with females (27.44) slightly surpassing males (27.00). Both genders show similar scores in the low control category across middle and late adolescence, indicating that the sense of control may stabilize as they grow older.

Summary:

The descriptive statistics reveal important gender and age-related differences across various dimensions of emotional intelligence. Females tend to score higher in creative stimulation, permissiveness, and acceptance, particularly in middle adolescence, while males experience higher levels of rejection and control. Cognitive stimulation shows minor gender differences, but it declines from middle to late adolescence for both genders. The findings suggest that emotional intelligence and its related variables evolve differently across genders and stages of adolescence, with notable differences in how males and females navigate these dimensions.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics (mean & SE of mean) based on SI Level for all variables among female and male students across middle and late adolescence.

Variable	SIS Level	Middle		Late					
		Female		Male		Female		Male	
		Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
SI	Average	91.78	1.94	92.29	0.99	93.38	1.45	93.57	0.85
	Above Average	104.89	0.44	104.28	0.60	104.27	0.58	103.64	0.56
	High	113.77	0.41	113.85	0.48	113.41	0.38	114.44	0.55
	Extremely High	122.55	0.68	122.70	0.51	123.63	0.66	122.24	0.47
Creative	Average	47.56	4.41	45.93	2.82	43.13	3.40	40.64	3.15
	Above Average	47.25	2.02	49.16	2.83	45.77	2.17	48.12	2.19
	High	51.35	1.53	51.05	1.69	47.61	1.80	48.67	2.01
	Extremely High	56.36	1.37	55.85	2.42	49.19	3.57	51.65	2.60
Cognitive	Average	28.22	1.34	29.14	1.56	23.88	1.23	26.29	1.71
	Above Average	28.43	1.06	29.40	1.57	25.57	1.14	29.55	1.07
	High	30.81	0.83	30.49	0.94	28.26	1.07	28.06	1.00
	Extremely High	33.09	1.28	33.20	1.05	28.88	1.19	30.00	1.04
Permissiveness	Average	23.11	1.92	23.14	1.66	17.75	2.40	19.71	2.07
	Above Average	23.32	1.29	23.88	1.89	20.80	1.33	23.73	1.29
	High	25.65	0.99	25.85	0.86	24.50	1.10	23.69	0.91
	Extremely High	29.18	2.05	30.45	1.10	25.50	2.31	27.06	1.50
Acceptance	Average	19.67	1.86	20.57	1.41	17.75	1.36	18.14	1.54
	Above Average	19.82	1.00	21.08	1.45	20.63	1.06	21.06	0.72
	High	22.69	0.74	21.39	0.70	21.52	0.84	20.06	0.88
	Extremely High	22.00	1.31	22.35	1.36	22.19	1.80	22.00	1.38
Rejection	Average	14.22	1.55	13.50	1.99	14.88	2.59	14.21	1.57
	Above Average	11.50	0.92	12.64	1.37	13.50	0.90	13.58	1.05
	High	11.25	0.78	11.51	0.80	12.26	0.65	11.33	0.95
	Extremely High	9.64	1.48	11.80	1.80	9.63	1.36	11.53	1.52
Control	Average	21.89	1.54	20.43	1.57	23.88	1.22	22.57	1.26
	Above Average	23.54	1.07	25.08	1.36	23.03	0.78	25.15	0.82
	High	25.27	0.71	25.78	0.77	24.91	0.57	23.86	0.76
	Extremely High	26.82	1.01	28.50	0.89	25.13	1.17	29.18	1.06

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics (mean and standard error of mean) for various dimensions of the school environment (Creative Stimulation, Cognitive Encouragement, Permissiveness, Acceptance, Rejection, and Control) and their association with Social Intelligence (SIS) levels (Average, Above Average, High, and Extremely High) among female and male students across middle and late adolescence. The interpretation is as follows:

Social Intelligence (SI):

The data reveals nuanced trends in social intelligence across genders and developmental stages among students. In middle adolescence, female students exhibit a mean score of 91.78 (SE = 1.94) for average social intelligence, slightly lower than males at 92.29 (SE = 0.99). As students transition to late adolescence, both genders show increased mean scores, with females at 93.38 (SE = 1.45) and males at 93.57 (SE = 0.85), indicating an overall upward trend in social intelligence as they mature. In the above-average category, females score marginally higher (104.89, SE = 0.44) than males (104.28, SE = 0.60) during middle adolescence, but in late adolescence, both genders experience a slight decline, with females at 104.27 (SE = 0.58) and males at 103.64 (SE = 0.56). For high social intelligence, both genders maintain similar scores across both stages, with females scoring 113.77 (SE = 0.41) and males at 113.85 (SE = 0.48) in middle adolescence, and females slightly lower at 113.41 (SE = 0.38) compared to males (114.44, SE = 0.55) in late adolescence. The extremely high category shows that females score 122.55 (SE = 0.68) in middle adolescence and 123.63 (SE = 0.66) in late adolescence, while males score

similarly (122.70, SE = 0.51 in middle and 122.24, SE = 0.47 in late adolescence). Overall, these results suggest that both male and female students exhibit high social intelligence, with slight variations across age and gender, indicating a general trend of increased social intelligence as adolescents mature.

Creative Stimulation:

In the creative stimulation dimension, the scores for both male and female students across middle and late adolescence increase as the SIS levels move from "Average" to "Extremely High." However, middle adolescence shows higher mean scores in the "Extremely High" category compared to late adolescence. For instance, female students in middle adolescence have a mean of 56.36 (SE = 1.37) in the "Extremely High" SIS category, while in late adolescence, it drops to 49.19 (SE = 3.57). Male students also follow a similar trend, with a slightly lower mean score for late adolescence.

Cognitive Encouragement:

For cognitive encouragement, there is an increase in the mean scores as SIS levels rise. However, middle adolescence tends to have higher means than late adolescence. For example, in the "Extremely High" SIS category, middle adolescence female students have a mean of 33.09 (SE = 1.28), which is higher than late adolescence at 28.88 (SE = 1.19). Similarly, male students in middle adolescence also display higher means compared to their late adolescence counterparts.

Permissiveness:

The permissiveness dimension shows a similar pattern, where middle adolescence scores tend to be higher than late adolescence across both genders. For example, in the "Extremely High" category, female students in middle adolescence have a mean of 29.18 (SE = 2.05) while late adolescence students have a lower mean of 25.50 (SE = 2.31). Male students follow a similar trend, with lower means in late adolescence compared to middle adolescence.

Acceptance:

In the acceptance dimension, middle adolescence students also show higher scores across SIS levels, especially in the "High" and "Extremely High" categories. Female students in middle adolescence have a mean of 22.69 (SE = 0.74) in the "High" SIS category, which is higher than late adolescence students who score 21.52 (SE = 0.84). The trend is consistent among male students, where middle adolescence scores are slightly higher than late adolescence.

Rejection:

Rejection scores are generally lower across both adolescence stages, reflecting its negative impact on social intelligence. Middle adolescence female students score higher rejection means than late adolescence, with 14.22 (SE = 1.55) in the "Average" SIS category compared to 14.88 (SE = 2.59) for late adolescence. Male students show similar trends, with slightly lower rejection means for late adolescence than middle adolescence.

Control:

The control dimension shows higher mean scores for late adolescence students compared to middle adolescence, particularly for male students. In the "Extremely High" SIS category, late adolescence male students score 29.18 (SE = 1.06) compared to 28.50 (SE = 0.89) in middle adolescence. Female students follow the same trend, with slightly higher scores in late adolescence compared to middle adolescence, especially in the higher SIS categories.

Overall, the analysis reveals that middle adolescent students, in general, tend to score higher in positive dimensions like creative stimulation, cognitive encouragement, permissiveness, and acceptance, while late adolescence students show slightly lower means. Conversely, the negative dimension of rejection shows relatively lower scores, reflecting its undesirable influence on social intelligence. The control dimension, however, indicates a stronger influence in late adolescence compared to middle adolescence.

The key findings are that across all SIS levels, the social intelligence scores are generally higher in late adolescence compared to middle adolescence, for both genders as similar performance between males and females in terms of overall social intelligence scores, regardless of age group was seen.

Detailed breakdowns of the means and standard errors of various school environment factors based on emotional intelligence and social intelligence levels show how these factors vary across middle and late adolescence, as well as between genders. The data indicates that while some variables show gender differences, others are more consistent across genders, particularly in SIS levels and acceptance.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS:

On the study of the related results, hypotheses (H1) did not fall in line with the assumption that gender differences will be seen among the respondents as the analysis did not support a significant difference in the perception of the school environment between boys and girls. The data show that while there are significant differences in perceptions based on different age groups for certain aspects of the school environment, these differences are not significant when considering gender. Hence, the hypothesis that a significant difference will be observed in the perception of the school environment among boys and girls within different age groups across middle and late adolescence is rejected. Boys and girls did not perceive the school environment very differently due to the homogenizing effect of the school culture, which could explain why no significant gender differences were observed.

While analyzing the data for H2, significant differences in the perception of the school environment for aspects such as creative stimulation, cognitive encouragement, and permissiveness based on the school grade or age group were seen. However, no significant differences were found for acceptance, rejection, and control. Hence, the hypothesis that a significant difference will be observed in the perception of the school environment between senior and senior secondary school students is partially accepted.

There could be many other possible reasons for the H1 getting rejected and H2 getting partially accepted. One of them being the uniform policies of the school and the influence of teachers on the respondents. The school environment might have consistent policies and practices that apply equally across gender and age groups, minimizing differences in perceptions among students. Teachers' consistent behavior towards students, regardless of gender or age, could lead to similar perceptions across these demographics. For instance, the lack of significant differences in "Rejection" and "Control" might reflect uniform discipline practices across the school. Adolescents, regardless of gender or age, are heavily influenced by their peer groups. This shared influence could lead to similar perceptions of school environment factors, diminishing differences based on gender or age group. Since the students came from similar socioeconomic backgrounds, their experiences and perceptions of the school environment might have been more homogeneous, leading to fewer observed differences.

On analyzing the results for H 3 where gender differences in the emotional intelligence of boy and girl respondents were expected, the results did not align with the assumption.

The "Gender" variable across all categories (SEI, Creative, Cognitive, etc.) showed non-significant p-values (all p-values are greater than 0.05), indicating that there was no significant difference in emotional intelligence between boys and girls.

The hypothesis (H4) that there will be a significant difference in the emotional intelligence of senior and senior secondary school students falls in line with our assumption and is hence accepted. It is a known fact that adolescents undergo significant emotional development between middle and late adolescence. This period is marked by increased emotional regulation, understanding of social dynamics, and self-awareness, which can contribute to the observed differences in emotional intelligence between age groups. Also, as students move from middle to late adolescence, they typically experience cognitive growth, which can impact their emotional and social intelligence. These cognitive advancements might explain the significant differences between groups (senior and senior secondary students). Their school environment changes as students' progress through various levels. Senior secondary students might face more academic pressure, different peer dynamics, and varying levels of support from teachers, all of which can influence their emotional intelligence. Besides the school environment, the nature of peer interactions and social expectations evolves with age, which could impact how students perceive and manage their emotions, leading to differences in emotional intelligence. Middle adolescence is also often characterized by the struggle for independence, identity formation, and increased peer influence, while

late adolescence may involve more focus on future goals and self-regulation. These psychological transitions too tend to impact emotional intelligence differently across age groups.

These factors together contribute to the observed significant differences between age groups (senior vs. senior secondary students) and the lack of significant differences between genders in emotional intelligence thus helping us to reject H 3 and accept H 4.

Since the data did not show significant gender differences in social intelligence within different age groups across middle and late adolescence, the proposed hypotheses (H5) were rejected. The data also did not provide evidence of significant differences in social intelligence between senior and senior secondary school students, hence the proposed hypotheses (H6) were rejected. We can say that the set hypotheses got rejected possibly due to sample population (students across middle and late adolescence) being relatively homogeneous in terms of social intelligence, leading to minimal variation across gender and age groups. If the students share similar environments, educational backgrounds, and social experiences, this could result in comparable social intelligence levels. Besides this, middle and late adolescence are both stages where cognitive and social development is rapidly evolving. The overlap in developmental milestones during these periods might obscure any potential differences in social intelligence across the groups. Cultural norms and social expectations might influence how social intelligence is expressed and perceived across genders. In our study, boys and girls were socialized similarly, leading to fewer observable differences in social intelligence. The age difference between middle and late adolescence was not large enough to show a significant impact on social intelligence. More pronounced differences might have been observed if the study included a broader age range, such as early adolescence or young adulthood. Plus, if the school environment and curriculum emphasize similar social skills development for all students, regardless of age or gender, this could result in similar social intelligence levels. A common assumption states that boys and girls are socialized differently, but in practice, the differences may be less pronounced than expected, especially in modern educational settings in our schools where efforts are made to promote equality and similar opportunities for all students. These factors could contribute to the lack of significant differences observed in the study, leading to the rejection of the stated hypotheses.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

1. No Significant Gender Differences in the Perception of School Environment: Across all dimensions of the school environment, including creative stimulation, cognitive encouragement, permissiveness, acceptance, rejection, and control, there are no significant gender differences observed. This means that both boys and girls, regardless of their age group, perceive the school environment in a similar way.
2. Group Differences, Not Gender Differences, are Significant: While the perception of certain school environment dimensions (creative stimulation, cognitive encouragement, and permissiveness) shows significant differences between groups (i.e., between middle and late adolescence), gender does not have a statistically significant effect.
3. Similar Perception in Acceptance, Rejection, and Control: Both boys and girls, across middle and late adolescence, have similar perceptions of the school environment regarding acceptance, rejection, and control, as these dimensions show no significant differences between genders or age groups.
4. Gender does not significantly impact overall emotional intelligence, as specific components of emotional intelligence show nuanced gender-based differences. Males tend to have higher scores in low and average EI categories, while females often score higher in high EI categories, particularly for social and emotional intelligence aspects like EI and Acceptance. Age plays a more prominent role in influencing EI than gender across both middle and late adolescence.
5. The findings suggest no significant gender differences in social intelligence across middle and late adolescence. While there are minor differences in specific SIS levels (such as more females in the "High" category during middle adolescence and more males in the "Above Average" category during late adolescence), these variations are not statistically significant. Age does not have a major impact on gender-related differences in social intelligence, and both genders show comparable performance across the developmental stages.

CONCLUSION:

The findings of this study suggest that gender does not play a significant role in shaping the perception of the school environment, emotional intelligence (EI), or social intelligence (SI) across middle and late adolescence. Both boys and girls perceive the school environment similarly, with no notable gender differences in key dimensions such as acceptance, rejection, control, creative stimulation, and cognitive encouragement. While age differences exist in the perception of certain school environment factors and EI components, these differences are not influenced by gender, indicating that age-related changes are consistent across both sexes.

Furthermore, while small gender-based differences are observed in emotional intelligence and social intelligence levels, these variations are not statistically significant. Gender does not appear to significantly impact overall emotional or social intelligence, with age playing a more prominent role in shaping these abilities. Additionally, as emotional and social intelligence scores increase, students tend to report more favorable perceptions of the school environment, especially in terms of creativity and cognitive encouragement, with a slight trend of higher scores among male students in certain areas.

Overall, the study highlights that while there are group differences based on age in the school environment, EI, and SI, gender is not a determining factor in these differences. These findings suggest that both boys and girls, regardless of their developmental stage, navigate their school environments and exhibit emotional and social intelligence in similar ways, with age being the primary factor influencing their perceptions and abilities.

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