

Social Intelligence and Social Competence of Higher Secondary Students of Myllem Block in East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya

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Abstract: Human beings always live together in a society and they are dependent on other people for their survival. Social intelligence and social competence enhance the community life of the people. While social intelligence is the ability to adjust in society, social competence is the ability to interact successfully with peers, teachers, family members and adults. Social intelligence and social competence are important aspects of life which every human being has to cultivate. Social intelligence and social competence help in forming and shaping the life of children with the hope of better future for the society. Students who have high social intelligence will react positively to the pressure of life. Research on social intelligence and social competence of the higher secondary students is much relevant in the present day context, because they are in the position to understand the importance of social life as they belong to the age of adolescence with full of energy. Sometimes they may be misguided by some anti-social forces like desire to destroy public property, fighting, stealing, cheating etc. that are detrimental to the society. In order to take corrective measures study on these variables is necessary. This paper is an attempt to find out the measure of social intelligence and social competence and their relationship to each other among higher secondary students.

Index Term – Social Intelligence, Social Competence, Higher Secondary Students

Introduction

It was Edward Thorndike who first used the term social intelligence and defined it as ‘the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls – to act wisely in human relationships’ (Thorndike, 1920). Since then, social intelligence has been defined differently by different sociologists and scholars such as "ability to deal with people" (Hunt, 1928), ability to understand social interactions and deal with them purposefully and effectively (Habib, 2013), and the ability to understand the feelings, thoughts and behaviours of persons in social or interpersonal situations and to act appropriately based on that understanding (Marlowe, 1986). The terms social intelligence, social adaptability and sociability are sometimes used interchangeably (Hsia, 1928). A well adjusted person is the one who moulds himself/herself according to the needs of the society and develops positive attitude towards other fellow members of the society. It is a natural wisdom bestowed on the people in order to be able to live amicably and peacefully. That is the reason why human beings live in a society, nurtured by it and learn to grow in a community. Each human being needs the co-operation of others in order to protect himself/herself and his/her species. So, social intelligence is very important for an individual to lead a successful life in the society which can help to build and maintain cordial relationship with other members of the society.

Social competence is the ability to interact successfully with peers, teachers, family members and adults. It has been defined as an individual’s ability to adapt to his/her environment in an appropriate manner—including the ability to learn, to understand another’s point of view, behavioural difficulties, and the ability to work with adults and other children (Vaughn & Haager, 1994) and as an ‘effectiveness in social interaction’ (Rose-Krasnor, 1997). The desire to learn and adjust plays a very important role in the individual’s progress in social competence. Each individual has his/her own dilemma, problems and difficulties but at the same time, it is highly required that he/she learns to put on the shoes of the other people in the society. Students need to have a lot of social sense in their dealings with other members of our society. The society needs a better tomorrow and it is the duty of every citizen to build it for their country and future generations.

Components of social Intelligence

According to Chadha and Ganeshan (2015) there are eight components/dimensions of social intelligence. They are *patience* – calm endurance under stressful situations; *co-operativeness* – ability to interact with others in a pleasant way to be able to view matters from all angles; *confidence level* – Firm trust in oneself and ones chances; *sensitivity* – to be acutely aware of and responsive to human behaviour; *recognition of social environment* – ability to perceive the nature and atmosphere of the existing situation; *Tactfulness* – delicate perception of the right thing to say or do; *sense of humour* – capacity to feel and cause amusement; to be able to see the lighter side of life and *memory confidence level* – ability to remember all relevant issues, names and faces of people.

Components and factors of social competence

Sharma, Shukla & Shukla (2011) have segregated eighteen components of social competence. They are social sensitivity, social maturity, social skills, social relations, social commitment, social appreciation ability, socio-emotional integrity, social involvement, social respect-ability, social leadership, social cooperation and compliance, social acceptability, social tolerance, social competition, social authority, adult-resource exploitability, social participation and pro-social attitude. Out of these eighteen components they further grouped them into five main factors of social competence. They are pro-social attitude – attitude that benefits the society; social competition – reaction to a competition from other people; social leadership – ability to draw people together for a good cause; social tolerance – ability to respect in spite of social differences; and social maturity – ability to make decision for the good of the society.

Review of related Literature

Whiten and Van Schaik (2007) found that there is a highly significant relationship between the prevalence of reports of social learning and executive brain ratio. It was revealed that social behaviour did not distinguish significantly between boys and girls (Pal & Mishra, 1991; Prabu, 2015). Conversely, other studies found that female students have more level of social intelligence than the male students (Sembiyan and Visvanathan, 2012; Lekshmi, 2012).

Prabu (2015) found that rural and urban area students differ significantly in their social intelligence scores. While Sembiyan and Visvanathan (2012) found that rural students have more level of social intelligence than the urban students, Lekshmi (2012) found it otherwise that students from schools located in urban area are having higher level of social intelligence than students from schools located in rural area. Prabu (2015) found that government and private school students do not differ significantly in their social intelligence scores. Sembiyan and Visvanathan (2012) found that government students have more level of social intelligence than the private students while Lekshmi (2012) found that government aided school students are having higher level of social intelligence than government school students.

The adolescents have been found to be below average in all the dimensional of social intelligence – patience, co-operativeness, confidence, recognition of social environment, tactfulness, sense of humor and memory, except in one dimension i.e. sensitivity (Pinky, 2010). Walker, Stieber, & Eisert (1991) rated younger students with Learning Disabilities (LD) and Low Achieving (LA) students as having significantly lower social competence and school adjustment than their Average Achieving (AA) peers.

Both male and female secondary school teachers expressed equal level of social intelligence (Karanam & Vardhini, 2016) and female teachers were found better in comparison to male teachers in respect of D-sensibility, F- tactfulness, G- sense of humour, and H-memory dimensions of social intelligence. Sex difference does not exist in relation to A- Patience, B- cooperativeness and C- confidence level dimensions of social intelligence (Agrawal, 2003). While some studies found that there is no significant difference between male and female students with regards to social competence (Syiem & Nongrum, 2014; Rymbai & Kharluni, 2017), other studies found that there are gender differences in social competence; in comparison to boys, girls are on average more assertive (Luthar, 1995) and more socially competent than boys (Vahedi, Farrokhi & Farajian, 2012). It has been suggested that girls have better skills to demonstrate social competence, such as the comprehension of conversations as well as the use of phonological and semantic information (Halpern, 1997).

While some studies found that majority of the students have average social competence (Syiem & Nongrum, 2014; Rymbai & Kharluni, 2017), Annamalai (2015) found that majority of students have low level of social competence. It was found that social competence programmes show positive effects on adolescents' problem solving skills, social relations with peers, school adjustment, and reductions in high risk behaviours (Weisberg, Barton, & Shriver, 1997; Vahedi, Farrokhi & Farajian, 2012).

Verissimo, de Lemos, Lopes, & Rodrigues (2010) reinforce the relations between social competence and academic competence and the results confirm the impact of academic competence on the social competence. Boys as well as girls from the urban areas scored the highest Mean whereas both the sexes from the rural sample scored the lowest Means on social competence and both male as well as female students from high socio-economic status scored relatively higher than boys and girls from low socio-economic status (Thakur, 1991). Parental authority, peer interaction and socio- economic status have a significant effect on the social competence of children but parental acceptability and sex main effects were not significant (Shukla, 1992). De Souza & Paul (2013) in a study on Perceived Paternal Parenting Style and Social Competence found that Perceived Paternal Parenting Style has a significant influence on social competence.

Need of the study

With the fast growth of modernization, the influence of globalization, individualism and materialism had crept into the society. More people are prone to commit social evils and some became anti-social due to the influence of mass media, peer pressure, unhealthy competitions etc. People are becoming more and more individualistic in their dealing with their fellow human beings. They tend to think only about themselves and their family. They feel that they have no moral responsibility for the larger society.

But human beings could not live isolated from one another; hence social responsibility is the obligation of each and every human being. It is the duty of each citizen to work for the betterment of the community and the country as a whole. The social atmosphere in our country could be improved if we do something commendable to social life. In order that students could help the society, social intelligence and social competence have to be measured and improved. Therefore, the study needs to be conducted so that the parents, teachers and students could cultivate and increase social intelligence and social competence.

Objectives of the Study

The study has some objectives to be fulfilled. They are the following:

1. To find out the levels of social intelligence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block.

2. To find out the levels of social competence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block.
3. To compare social intelligence between male and female higher secondary students and between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllem Block.
4. To compare the social competence between male and female higher secondary students and between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllem Block.
5. To find out the relationship between social intelligence and social competence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block.

Hypotheses

Null Hypotheses are used to investigate social intelligence and social competence. They are given below:-

1. There is no significant difference in social intelligence between male and female higher secondary students and between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllem Block.
2. There is no significant difference in social competence between male and female higher secondary students and between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllem Block.
3. There is no significant relationship between social intelligence and social competence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block.

Methodology

In the present study, descriptive method is used. There are 22 (9 government aided and 13 private) higher secondary schools in Myllem Block. The population consists of 3423 students (1533 male and 1890 female students). The sample includes 216 higher secondary students (108 boys and 108 girls) taken from 12 schools. The tools used are 'Social Intelligence Scale (SIS-CG)' prepared by N. K. Chadha and Usha Ganesan (2015) and Social Competence Scale (SCS) developed by V.P. Sharma, Prabha Shukhla and Kiran Shukhla (2011). Statistical techniques such as percentage, mean, standard deviation (SD), 't' test to find out the significant mean differences and Pearson 'r' to find the relationship between the variables are also used.

Social Intelligence Scale (SIS): This tool is a scale which consists of 66 items. It consists of eight dimensions viz., patience, cooperativeness, confidence, sensitivity, recognition of social environment, tactfulness, sense of humour and memory. It is a mixed point rating scale where the rating starts from 0 to 3. The techniques of validity used to validate the scale were empirical validity and cross validation. For establishing the reliability of the tool, test-retest method was used and all the results are significant at .01 level.

Social Competence Scale (SCS): This tool is a five point rating scale where the rating starts from 1 to 5. It consists of 50 statements. The tool has been validated against Kohn's Social Competence Scale and a predictive validity to the extent of $r = .72$ was obtained and it has also been validated against Teacher's Rating on a Five Point Scale of the normative pupils of grade VIII and a coefficient of correlation to the extent of $r = .79$ was obtained between Teacher's Rating and pupils' score on social competence scale. For establishing the reliability of the tool, test-retest method has been applied with an interval of 20 day and has been estimated to be $r_{tt} = .56$ whereas the coefficient of inter-rater reliability has been found to be $r_{tt} = .67$.

Analysis and interpretation

Social Intelligence of Higher Secondary Students of Myllem Block: The scores of all the students under investigation, in the test on social intelligence have been calculated. The mean and SD are given below.

Table 1. mean and SD in social intelligence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Intelligence	216	104.49	7.16

From the above table it is cleared that the mean of the higher secondary students in Myllem Block is 104.49 and SD is 7.16. The levels of social intelligence of the higher secondary students of Myllem Block are illustrated in table 2.

Table 2. levels of social intelligence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block

Range of z scores	Frequency	Percentage	Level
+2.01 and above	4	1.9	Extremely High
+1.26 to +2.00	21	9.7	High
+0.51 to +1.25	35	16.2	Above Average
- 0.50 to + 0.50	90	41.7	Average
- 1.25 to - 0.51	47	21.8	Below Average
- 2.00 to - 1.26	14	6.5	Low
- 2.01 and below	5	2.3	Extremely Low
Total	216	100.0	

From table 2, it is found that 41.7% of the students are on the average level in social intelligence. 21.8% scored below average and 16.2% are in above average level. 9.7% and 6.5% are in high and low levels respectively. It is also found that 2.3% are in extremely low level and 1.9% is in extremely high level. This means that the highest number of students of higher secondary students in Myllem Block has an average social intelligence. A great number of them have either below average or above average. Some of them have either high or low social intelligence. Very few of them have extremely high or extremely low social intelligence.

Social Competence of Higher Secondary Students of Myllem Block: The Mean and SD of social competence of higher secondary students of Myllem block is given in table 3.

Table 3: mean and SD in social competence of higher secondary students of Myllichem Block

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Social Competence	216	168.51	16.55

From table 3, it is cleared that the mean of higher secondary students of Myllichem Block regarding social competence is 168.51 and SD is 16.55.

The score of students in social competence is calculated and presented below in table 4.

Table 4. social competence of higher secondary students of Myllichem Block

Range of Raw Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
209 & above	3	1.4	Very High
193-208	15	6.9	High
162-192	124	57.4	Average
146-160	58	26.9	Low
145 & below	16	7.4	Very Low
Total	216	100	

From Table 4, it is observed that 57.4% of the higher secondary students of Myllichem Block have an average score in the scale of social competence. 26.9% score low, 6.9% score high, 7.4% score very low and 1.4% score very high in the scale of social competence. This indicates that majority of the students (57.4%) have an average level of social competence. About a quarter (26.9%) has low social intelligence, some have high and some have very low social intelligence and very few (1.4%) have very high social intelligence.

Mean Difference in Social Intelligence (SI): The difference in social intelligence between male and female and between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllichem Block is shown in the table below.

Table 5: mean difference in SI between male and female, government aided and private higher secondary students

Variable	Category	Frequency	Mean	SD	't'	df	Table Value at 0.05 Level	Interpretation
Social Intelligence	Male	108	104.52	7.04	1.22	214	1.97	Not significant
	Female	108	104.46	7.31				
	Govt. Aided	108	104.31	6.26	1.41	214		
	Private	108	104.67	7.99				

The above table shows that the mean difference between male and female students is not significant because the calculated t-value (1.22) is less than the table value (1.97). Again, the mean difference between government aided and private school students is not significant since the calculated t-value (1.41) is less than the table value (1.97). Hence, with regards to social intelligence there is no significant mean difference between male and female higher secondary students and between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllichem Block. However, the mean of male students is slightly higher than that of female students and the mean of private school students is slightly higher than the mean of government aided students.

Mean Difference in Social Competence: The mean difference in social competence between male and female and between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllichem Block is given in the table below.

Table 6: mean difference in social competence between male and female, government aided and private school students

Variable	Category	Frequency	Mean	SD	't'	Table Value at .05 level	Interpretation	
Social Competence	Male	108	166.19	16.32	2.08	1.97	Significant	
	Female	108	170.83	16.53				
	Govt. Aided	108	169.00	17.29	0.43			1.97
	Private	108	168.02	15.84				

The above table shows that the calculated t-value of male students is 2.08 with 214 df and it is higher than the table value of 1.97. Hence, the mean difference between male and female is significant at 05 level. Therefore, there is significant difference in social competence between male and female higher secondary students of Myllichem Block and the difference is in favour of female students. But, it is also observed that the mean difference between government aided and private students is not significant since the computed value (0.43) is less than the table value (1.97). Therefore, the mean difference between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllichem Block in social competence is not significant. However government aided higher secondary students have slightly higher mean than private higher secondary students with regards to social competence.

Relationship between the Social Intelligence and Social Competence of Higher Secondary Students of Myllichem Block: The study tries to find out the relationship between social intelligence and social competence and it is presented in the table below.

Table 7. relationship between social intelligence and social competence of higher secondary students of Myllichem Block

Variable	'r'	Sig.	Interpretation
Social Intelligence	.046	.502	Not Significant
Social Competence			

From table 7, it is observed that the calculated value of coefficient of correlation (r) for social intelligence and social competence of higher secondary students is 0.046 and p-value is .502 which is not significant. Though the relationship is positive, it is negligible. Hence, it can be interpreted that there is no significant relationship between social intelligence and social competence higher secondary students of Myllem Block.

Major Findings and Discussion

1. Social intelligence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block is in the average level. More than half (69.5%) of the students score average and above average in the scale administered. Only 36.5% of the students score below average in the scale. The investigator observed that most of the students could easily mix with their peer groups. They were comfortable in the classrooms and participated in school social activities. Hence, the highest number of the students has average level of social intelligence.

2. Majority (65.7%) of the higher secondary students of Myllem Block has average, high and very high social competence. Only 34.3 % are low and very low social competence. The probable observed reason for the average score is because students of higher secondary schools of Myllem Block are socially competent in their dealing with one another. They mix well with others, share their ideas and ready to help one another. Hence, they have an average level of social competence.

3. There is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students of Myllem Block regarding social intelligence. The possible reason is because male and female students are given equal opportunity to learn and to grow side by side in the schools. Boys and girls co-operate, work together and mingle responsibly with one another.

4. There is no significant difference between government aided and private higher secondary students of Myllem Block regarding social intelligence. The possible reason is because schools whether government aided or private gave equal opportunity to students to grow socially through social activities and work experience.

5. There is significant difference between male and female students regarding social competence. The difference is in favour of female students. The reason may be because the Khasi Tribe follows a matrilineal system where girls are more sociable than boys and have more social responsibilities too. Besides, female students love to work together and talk to one another in groups. They care for their groups and want to excel in their own group at the same time respecting others too. This thinking together and working together is reflected in their social competence as well. They are significantly different from their male counterpart.

6. The difference between government aided and private students is not significant in social competence. The possible reason for this is that there is not much difference between government aided and private schools regarding competition in various aspects of education like teaching staff, school buildings and other social activities in Myllem Block. Even private schools are making a lot of progress in social awareness and activities.

7. There is no significant relationship between social intelligence and social competence of higher secondary students of Myllem Block. There is a positive relationship between them but it is insignificant and negligible.

Implications of the study

1. The students should be well educated in social life. They should feel the sense of belongingness towards society. They have to be taught to understand that the future of the society and the community in which they live will depend on their actions. So they have to cultivate habits that are building the society and the community in which they live. They need to be taught social value like love, respect for one another and sharing with one another.

2. The students who score very low in social intelligence as well as in social competence are probably students who come from a very poor economic and social background and they may be the ones who are excluded from social life. The situation should be talked carefully by the school, parents, community and government.

3. Students have to be specially helped in order to improve social intelligence as well as social competence. Training and awareness could be done through co-curricular activities, team works, social programmes, seminars, field works, group studies and discussion etc. By attending these programmes, the teachers and students could benefit to a great extent and would be able to cultivate social intelligence and social competence.

4. Reward system is to be introduced to encourage social activities. Students who do some social works will be recognised in front of the other students in the form of gift, prize, or some other forms of encouragement that will move others to follow the same.

Conclusion

Social intelligence and social competence are being discussed throughout this study and certain facts are observed. The most important fact is that the higher number of students is in the average level in both the scales i.e., social intelligence and social competence scales. Social intelligence and social competence are important aspects of life to be examined carefully in the present time. In order to spread social intelligence and social competence among students and citizens investments and resources are necessary. Therefore, various programmes and courses related to social life should be made available to the students and awareness programmes on social co-operation and social belongingness should be conducted in society in general and in the higher secondary schools in particular.

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