Perceived Social Support and Emotional Intelligence as predictors of Mental Health among University Students

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Abstract:

This study purpose is to investigate the link between perceived social support, emotional intelligence and mental health among university students as well to explore the predictors of mental health of university students. A sample consists of 200 students. Out of 200, 99 males, 101 females were selected as sample. Results reveals significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social support($r = .154$, $P < .05$). There is significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and mental health($r = -.137$, $P < .01$). It has also been found that social support is negatively correlated with mental health ($r = -.160$, $P < .05$). Emotional intelligence differs among different genders and Social support and mental health does not differ among different genders. Furthermore ANOVA were calculated to compare means between groups. It has also been found that hostlers are significantly different from day scholar on social support.

Keywords: Perceived Social Support, Emotional Intelligence, Mental Health, University Students, Gender difference

INTRODUCTION

Social support comprises of support and assistance provided by family, friends, coworkers and neighbors to help us in stage of need or crisis. Social support increases aspect of life and provide us strength to fight across negative life situations. Maintaining social support network requires ongoing effort over time and hard work. People with high quality or quantity of social support have a lower risk of mortality in comparison to the ones who lack quality and quantity of social relationship. Social support has been recognized as a protective factor against life stress and poor health. A study was conducted among the employees in a market setting and results showed that the employees who received social support and empathy showed better decision making activities regarding their day to day informal tasks and got back to their normal life quickly after a death grief (Gentry, J.W et.al 1995). A person feelings and thoughts are the ones which cannot be observed directly by others but we get to know it from his spoken wordings of his introspection, as nobody can suspect the feelings as conscious experience. When we have to produce an emotion, we relate a boost situation to the past experiences and see it as having implications in the future. When an employee in an organization feels occurrence of a difficult or threatening situation, he may handle it by two ways. He may see it as a opportunity to proof himself and may handle the situation confidently or experience some kind of fear and dread. Thus our assessment of state and upcoming emotions is firmly effected by our own evaluation of abilities or capabilities. In a study by Lopes and Paulo (2003) explored that there exist link between emotional intelligence, perceived quality of social relationship, and personality it was found out the individuals scoring high on test have positive relations with others and also high parental

support, and less negative interactions with others. Mental health is an intricate form that involves finest skill and functioning. It is a positive idea identified with the social and passionate prosperity of people.. The present research on mental health is derived from the two universal perspectives; Hedonic approach and multilevel approach. The Hedonic approach of mental health mainly concentrates on happiness; it explains mental health in terms of the intensity, to which an individual is completely functioning. While as the multilevel model allows researchers to go further among the individuals ". Mental health   is a topic in a society which is not discussed openly because of stigma attach to it. There is dire need of an hour to realize the importance of emotional intelligence and its correlation with mental health. Lack of social support, guidance and care has an impact on today's youth. Social relationship is an unavoidable factor in one's life. But the social relationship really exists to the level? Emotional intelligence motivates individual to understand his emotions and express them, and monitor others emotions to differentiate between them, and use this data to counsel ones actions.

Method

Objectives
- To analyze the relationship between perceived social support, emotional intelligence and mental health
- To examine the mean difference on mental health, social support and emotional intelligence with respect to Gender.
- To analyze the difference across three residential condition i.e., hostlers, paying guests and day scholars among University students.

Hypotheses

- There exists relationship between social support, emotional intelligence and mental health among university students.
- There exists mean difference on mental health, social support, and intelligence with regard to gender.
- There exists difference across three residential conditions i.e., hostlers, paying guests and day scholars among University students.

Sample

 In the present study, the total number of sample taken was 200 students with the help of Purposive   sampling method. The Sample further has been divided on the basis of gender (male=99) and (female =101).

Tools

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

 The scale was given by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet and Farley (1988). It contains twelve items (1 to 7- point scale). It's a Likert- type scale which ranges between 1(very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree). This scale assesses the extent to which the person experiences the social support from friends, family, and significant other. This test will take less than 10 minutes and there is no such time limit. The reliability was .88 and the reliability coefficient was found .0.85 by test- retest method.

Emotional Intelligence Scale

This scale was invented by Anukool Hyde, Sanjyot Pethe and Upinder Dhar (1971). The scale consists of 34 items with five point Likert scale. Through reliability coefficient the reliability of the scale was checked. Split half- reliability coefficient found to be 0.88. The scale has high content validity of .93.

Mental Health Check- List

This scale was developed by Pramod Kumar in 1992. The scale consists of eleven items, which is in a four point rating format. The age range for this scale is 18-28 years. The split-half reliability was used by using spearman-Brown formula which was found to be .70. The test–retest reliability was found to be .65 and the face validity appears to be fairly high and content validity is adequately assured.

Procedure

After the selection of appropriate data collection tools, students from different blocks of Lovely Professional University were approached and given data collection sheets along with the personal data sheet. After the collection of all the distributed data collection sheets, the scoring has been done while using the scoring norms of every questionnaire.

Statistical Techniques

Statistical analysis like Pearson product Correlation, t-test and ANOVA has been utilized respectively in order to find out relationship and mean difference among groups.

Results and discussions

Table 1: Shows significant difference between emotional intelligence and social support. As well as with mental health

Variables	Emotional intelligence	Social support	Mental health
Emotional intelligence	1	.154*	-.317**
Social support		1	-.160*
Mental health			1

$P \leq .05, * P \leq .01**$

Table 1 reveals that there is a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social support ($r = .154$, $P < .05$). There is a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and mental health ($r = -.137$, $P < .01$). It has also been found that social support is negatively correlated with mental health ($r = -.160$, $P < .05$)

Table 2: Showing difference between male and female on emotional intelligence among university students

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	*df*	t-value	*p*
Emotional intelligence	Male	99	138.99	11.589	198	2.586	.01**
	Female	101	134.14	14.721			

$p \le .01**, p \le .05*$

Table 2 reveals that there is a significant difference between male and female on emotional intelligence (t= 2.586, p = .01). It means that male and female differed significantly in using emotional intelligence. The Sixth hypotheses state a significant difference between male and female on emotional intelligence, and the results supported the hypotheses.

Table 3: Showing difference between male and female on social support among university students.

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	*df*	t-value	*P*
Social Support	Male	99	58.30	14.603	198	-.646	.519
	Female	101	59.76	17.192			

Table 4: Showing difference between male and female on mental health among university students.

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	*df*	t-value	*P*
Mental Health	Male	99	21.68	6.408	198	-.916	.361
	Female	101	22.47	5.753			

Table 4 reveals that there is a significant difference between male and female on mental health (t= -.916, p= .361) it means that male and female do not differed significantly in using mental health. The fourth hypotheses states that there exist difference between male and female on mental health. A result indicates that there is no difference between male and female on mental health so our results do not support the said hypotheses.

Table 5: Comparison of means of university students with respect to gender on social support

Living area	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Hostel	66	63.79	14.774	5.618	.007
Paying guest	54	58.30	15.861		

| Day scholar | 80 | 55.63 | 16.144 | | |
| Total | 200 | 59.04 | 15.940 | | |

(I)Residential area	(J) Residential	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Hostel	Paying guest	5.492	2.867	.137
	Day scholar	8.163	2.599	**.005**
Paying guest	Hostel	-5.492	2.867	.137
	Day scholar	2.671	2.752	.596
Day scholar	Hostel	-8.163	2.599	**.005**
	Paying guest	-2.671	2.752	.596

A one way ANOVA was conducted to compared the effect of residential condition on social support among university students. Residential condition has been grouped into three conditions viz. hostel, paying guest and day scholar. The table indicates that all three groups differs significantly on social support (F = 5.618, p<.01). Additionally post-hoc test comparison using tukey HSD was utilized to confirm where the differences occurred between groups. Post hoc comparison indicated that the mean score for University students living in hostels (M= 5.492 SD= 2.867) differed significantly than the mean score of university students who are day scholar (M= 8.163 SD= 2.599) and no significant difference has been found between rest of the comparisons.

Conclusion

The present study focuses on the relationship between emotional intelligence, social support and mental health among university students. Furthermore, this study also purports to find out the difference among university students on emotional intelligence, their social support and the mental health. For this purpose a sample of 200 university students were selected randomly from the target population. After the completion of data collection procedure, the data has been analyzed while using appropriate statistical analysis.

Following are the findings of the study:

- There is significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social support.
- There is significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and mental health.
- It has also been found that social support is negatively correlated with mental health.
- There is a significant difference between Male and Female on emotional intelligence.
- Social support does not differ among different genders.
- Mental health does not differ among different genders.
  Suggestions
- The current study can also be conducted while taking students from different universities.
- A large sample can be taken into consideration for further research.