Exploring Emotional Intelligence and Anxiety among Technical and Non-Technical Students

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ABSTRACT

Courses related to technical education play an important role in the human resource development of the country by creating skilled manpower, enhancing industrial productivity and improving the quality of life. Technical Education as a branch of Vocational Education practically deals with different fields like trade, commerce, agriculture, medicine & Engineering etc. in the modern era we are surrounded by technology in every small aspect which makes life so brain-friendly and simple; and instrumental in providing ease and comfort. In spite of all these advantages, technical education brings mental health challenges for students. The study intends to show the presence of emotional intelligence & anxiety among technical & non-technical undergraduate students of Kolkata. The college years are a developmentally crucial period when students transfer from the previous age, i.e., late adolescence to emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Research findings supported that mental disorders in the early stage of adulthood are related to long-term adverse outcomes in later adulthood, including persistent emotional and physical health problems (Scott et al., 2016), relationship dysfunction (Kerr & Capaldi, 2011), and labour market marginalization (Niederkrotenthaler et al., 2014; Goldman-Mellor et al., 2014). The sample of this study was 280 students (140 technical students and 140 non-technical students) of both sexes and age between 18-22 years. The technique of simple random sampling was used in the study to make the proper representation of the population. Statistical findings reveal the t-test to be significant among the two groups (technical and non-technical) in regard to state anxiety. Under emotional intelligence, managing emotions, motivating oneself and social skills are found to be significant. Thus, it may be said that the students have to deal with situational (state) anxiety and emotion management and social skills are compromised, which help them to adapt to the current social environment that needs to be pondered upon.

Keywords: Technical education; anxiety; emotional intelligence

INTRODUCTION

India's substantial growth in recent years has resulted in a drastic increase in demand for technical education. The significance of specialized training is widely recognized. It improves the nature of expectation for everyday comforts by delivering prepared and experienced labor. Though college life has various activities for the students, but pressure of assignments, projects, term papers as well as meeting deadlines also exist. There are innumerable studies which confirm this fact. For instance, D'Zurilla and Sheedy (1991) reported that college students, especially fresher, are vulnerable to stress due to their transfiguration from home to college life. The finding by Ross et al (1999) also states that mostly the students are stressed because of such change, like being away from their comfort zone for the first time, maintaining high academic achievement and to adjust to a new social environment. Besides these, earning good grades is also a grave matter of concern (Bunn et al., 2007). Thus, such transition is a crucial issue as it is also followed by the demands of adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Psychological problems like depression and anxiety among these students often stem from stressful circumstances. Enormous homework, unclear assignments,

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uncomfortable classrooms (Frazer and Kohn, 1986), deadlines for assessment (Misra and Mckean, 2000), relations with faculty members, time pressures (Sgan-Cohen and Lowental, 1988), financial pressures, relationship with friends, family & others (Wright, 1967), new eating & sleeping patterns, loneliness and unclear career prospects are significant stressors identified by different theorists.

Research discoveries likewise bolstered that psychological issue in early adulthood are related with long haul unfavorable results in later adulthood, including diligent enthusiastic and physical medical issues (Scott et al., 2016), relationship dysfunction (Kerr &Capaldi, 2011), and labor market marginalization (Niederkrotenthaler et al., 2014; Goldman-Mellor et al., 2014).These long haul unfavorable results might be interceded by psychological well-being issues that exist during the school years, as these years establish a pinnacle period for the primary beginning of a wide scope of mental issue (Ibrahim et al., 2013). Kamran W & Fatima I (2013) had studied the relationship among emotional intelligence, anxiety and procrastination of intermediate science students. Positive relationship was found between procrastination and trait anxiety. Another study was designed by Ullah Jan S et al (2018) explored the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI), library anxiety (LA), and academic achievement among undergraduate university students. A negative and significant correlation has been found between emotional intelligence and library anxiety in the present study. The presence of perceiving and understanding of emotions, emotional regulation of self and others, and the abilities of utilization of emotions reduces library anxiety. And it is also evident that low emotional intelligence may lead to have library anxiety among students.

Thus, avoiding or eliminating the psychological barriers among students from different psychological problems to improve physical and mental health wellbeing and helping them to adapt themselves to the current social environment needs to be addressed. Therefore, it is of great significance to develop new ideas of mental health education, which would delve in solving the problems (Wang, 2005).

This paper aims to reflect Emotional Intelligence & Anxiety among Technical &Non-Technical undergraduate students of a north 24 Pargana in Kolkata.

Operational Definitions

- Emotional Intelligence: The ability of understanding and managing one's own emotions and those of others appropriately, it would have a positive impact on one's everyday life activities. This capability was named emotional intelligence (EI) which has five components, namely self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy & social skill

- Anxiety: Anxiety is a psychophysiological phenomenon experienced as a foretold fear or threat to human being whether the threat is generated by internal, real or imagined danger which has again having the state anxiety (A-state) and trait anxiety (A-trait).

- Technical student: A student who does the course that needs special training, and essentially vocational in nature. In this study, technical student refers to the engineering students of few under graduate colleges in North 24 Parganas.

- Non-Technical student: A student who does the course that does not need vocational special training. In this study, non-technical student refers to the General course (mainly social science) students to the same under-graduate colleges in North 24 Parganas.

Objectives of the study:

- To assess the emotional intelligence of technical students
- To assess state & trait anxiety of technical students
- To assess the emotional intelligence of non - technical students
- To assess state & trait anxiety of non- technical students
- To compare the emotional intelligence between technical and non-technical students
- To compare between state & trait anxiety between technical and non-technical students
- To assess relationship between the emotional intelligence & anxiety of technical and non-technical students

METHODOLOGY

The present study aims to explore difference in emotional intelligence and anxiety among students pursuing technical and non-technical education.

Sample

In the study 120 students from different streams of technical education (mainly engineering) & 120 students of non-technical courses (mainly social science) of both sexes & age between 18-22 years were included for the study. Simple Random sampling technique was used for the present study. Students' between 18-22 year of age; either sex with their consent were included in the study. Students undergoing treatment for any mental illness. The post graduate students will not be included. Students those are not willing to participate but not available at the day of data collection were excluded from the study.

Tools Used

- Socio demographic data sheet: It assessed the demographic variables such as age, gender, faculty, regular or hostel students
- Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (Chiriboga and Franco,2001)-This self-assessment questionnaire is designed to gauge the various competences of emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman first brought 'emotional intelligence' to a wide audience with his 1995 found that while the qualities traditionally associated with leadership such as intelligence, toughness, determination and vision are required for success, they are insufficient. Truly effective leaders are also distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence, which includes self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy and social skill.
- State Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielbeger, 1970)- It measures trait and state anxiety. Internal consistency coefficients for the scale have ranged from .86 to .95.

Procedure: At the very beginning colleges from North 24 Pargana providing engineering & social science subjects were selected randomly. Then they were approached, and informed consent was taken and confidentiality of the information sought from them were briefed. Depending on the inclusion criteria male & female students were selected randomly from different years of engineering and arts subjects. During data collection at first rapport was built up with the students & sociodemographic data sheet was filled up. Then the sheet & booklet containing emotional intelligence test was distributed to them & necessary instructions were made clear to them. After that State- Trait Anxiety Inventory was given & instructions were made clear to them. They were told not to spend much time on each statement & work as quickly as they can. They were also told not to leave any statement & report wherever they face any difficulty.

Statistical Analysis: Scoring was done for EQ & STAI using appropriate scoring procedure. An excel sheet was prepared & score for each factor of the said tests were plotted. Then obtained score was compared between technical & non-technical students using appropriate statistical procedure.

RESULTS

The study aims to explore the effect of emotional intelligence and anxiety among technical and non-technical students.

Table 1A: Socio-demographic details of subjects

	Students in technical course (Group 1)				Students in non-technical course (Group 2)			
Gender	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	70	50	70	50	70	50	70	50

Table 1B: Socio-demographic details of subjects

Age (in years)	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value
	19.71	0.83	18.42	1.11	0.93
Year of Education	14.18	0.04	14.15	0.31	0.60

From the above tables, it is seen that 50% of male and 50% of females are studying in technical stream and rest in non-technical course in the present study. Mean age and average year of education of young adults in the technical course are 19.71 and 14.18 respectively and that of young adults in non-technical education are 18.42 and 14.15 respectively. The t test value for age and average year of education are not seem to be significant.

Table 2- State and trait anxiety in technical & non-technical students

Group	Trait anxiety Mean ± SD	t	State anxiety Mean ± SD	t
Group 1	42.09±14.36	2.17	46.94±13.46	**4.08***
Group 2	22.14±12.24		25.70±12.25	

From the above table, it can be said that the t value is significant for students for the two groups in State anxiety at 0.05 level.

Table 3: Showing different components of emotional intelligence

Group	Group 1 Mean± SD	Group 2 Mean± SD	t
Self-awareness	39.03± 5.62	38.22± 5.74	0.019
Managing emotions	33.03± 5.90	29.29± 4.34	**6.03****
Motivating oneself	34.37± 6.10	31.41 ± 6.51	**3.94****
Empathy	38.65 ± 5.41	37.09 ± 6.19	0.02
Social skills	4.83 ± 6.12	31.07 ± 6.38	**5.08****

** indicates significant at 0.01 level

The above table shows that under emotional intelligence, managing emotions, motivating oneself and social skill are found to be significant at o.o1 level.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to explore anxiety and emotional intelligence among students doing technical and non-technical education. The relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological adjustment variable, such as anxiety has been well documented (Berrocal et al, 2005). For instance, individuals who are more engrossed with their own emotions, lower score in emotional clarity, and difficulty in the regulation of their own emotional states and also show poor emotional adjustment on various measures (Salovey, 2001). Conversely, individuals having greater emotional clarity and a greater ability to repair their own emotional states, report high self-esteem which is also an important mark of mental wellbeing (Salovey et al., 2002).

It is found from the present study that the state anxiety is significantly different in the two groups. Anxiety causes individuals to experience the feeling of apprehension and concern towards various situations or events. Orientation, interpretation and evaluation of events by each individual is an essential contributing as well as maintaining factor towards anxiety. As per Arslan Dılmaç, & Hamarta (2009), same physical and social environment make some people tense, and others happy. In college, some students are found to be more anxious than others. It might be because of fear and anxiety situations caused by various stressful and exciting situations (exam experience, stage performance etc.) in university environment (Yılmaz & Ocakçı, 2010). Another study by Aydın (2009) investigated the relationship between automatic opinions and state anxiety levels of university students and found significant relationship between negative or dysfunctional opinions and situational anxiety (state anxiety) and reported that situational anxiety (state anxiety) levels of students affected negative opinions at the level of 39% or reverse. As per Yanik et al (2016), engineering students often lack self-confidence, which may result in loss of motivation and diminished cognitive functions, which may be because of uncertainty in future regarding their placement. Youth today are faced with numerous problems in academic and nonacademic tasks, and peer pressure essentially looming over their heads. The consequences of such pressure encompass difficulty in their emotional stability, giving up easily and often engaging in destructive behavior. Thus, Emotional Intelligence and its implementation play a pivotal role in addressing the various challenges. The study conducted by Yahaya and others (2011) investigated difference in the identified 5 aspects of EI (Emotional Intelligence), associated with academic performance, namely self-awareness, emotional management, self-motivation, empathy, interpersonal skills and academic performance. The results also showed significant difference between emotional management and self-motivation. Another study conducted by Bai (2011) intended to examine anxiety proneness and EI (Emotional Intelligence) in respect to academic achievement of pre-university students from different streams like arts, science and commerce. The present research also indicated students of Arts, Science and Commerce have significant difference in the domains like academic achievement, anxiety proneness & EI (Emotional Intelligence). In the present study, it is seen that the 'motivating oneself' is found to be significantly different among the two groups. It may be corroborated with the finding by Ates (2015) where it was shown that that regulation of the mood is the best indicator of emotional intelligence and intrinsic motivation is the utmost important indicator of motivation. Another study indicated relationship between EI, motivation and commitment and that EI have significant contribution to increase motivation and commitment. Thus, effect of EI & motivation is noticeable on personal, social and professional aspects (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, 2011). Moreover, emotional intelligence plays a huge part in obtaining social skills, which, in turn, enable them to deal with social situations (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Elias (1997) opined that social skills help to grow in a healthy way and consequently succeed at personal and occupational levels in the future. Some studies show that better social

skills in the classroom lead to improvement in students' academic level (Gottman, 2001), reduce behavioral problems, and improve the students-classmates relationship (Maite, 2006).

Thus, the present study would help to devise suitable management program for reducing the anxiety, by proposing appropriate changes in pedagogy and method of teaching in technical and non-technical courses. It also helps to design appropriate intervention program for enhancing emotional intelligence among young adults.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be said that the college going students at the beginning of their academic journey experience load from different sources, like parents, teachers, and also self-pressure to do well in classes. This pressure may result in high anxiety and poor performance in academics. And such level of tension or anxiety often led to experience cognitive interference in the form of preoccupying and concerning ideas. It is applicable for both technical and non-technical education. The present study shows that the students have to deal with the situational or state anxiety and the emotion management and social skills are thereby compromised. Strengthening their mental health education, avoid or eliminate the psychological barriers from different psychological pressures to increase physical and psychological wellbeing and adapting themselves to the current social environment need to be pondered upon. Thus, importance of emotion regulation well-being needs to be addressed.

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