



Exploring Social Intelligence Variations among Post-Graduate Students at Manipur University

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the social intelligence levels among post-graduate students at Manipur University. Social intelligence, essential for navigating social interactions and understanding societal norms, plays a crucial role in making individuals feel included and comfortable during interactions. The study examines variations in social intelligence based on gender, rural-urban backgrounds, family structures (joint vs. nuclear), and academic streams (Arts vs. Science). Data were collected from 376 students using the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) through a stratified simple random sampling technique. Hypotheses were tested using t-tests, revealing significant differences in social intelligence between male and female students, and between Arts and Science streams. However, no significant differences were found between students from rural and urban backgrounds or joint and nuclear families.

Keywords: Social Intelligence, Post-Graduate Students, Manipur University, Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS), Gender Differences

Introduction

Humans, as the most extraordinary living beings on Earth, possess mental capacities that far surpass those of other creatures. Intelligence, often regarded as the most valuable quality distinguishing humans from other life forms, plays a pivotal role in guiding behaviour across various situations, whether in daily activities or work-related tasks. Human intelligence is multifaceted, encompassing emotional, social, scientific, cognitive, mental, and physical aspects of behaviour (Smith & Jones, 2021). International standards allow intelligence to be systematically and scientifically categorized into levels such as dull, average, bright, normal, superior, or gifted (Brown, 2020).

As inherently social animals, humans live in societies that require continuous interaction. In this context, social intelligence becomes crucial for peaceful, cordial, and harmonious living. Thorndike (1920) defined social intelligence as the ability to understand and manage people, and to act wisely in human relations. It involves comprehending and perceiving others' intentions and motivations, serving as the foundation for group interactions and behaviours (Anderson & Carter, 2022). Social intelligence is closely related to cognition and emotional intelligence, and is considered the bedrock of human intelligence. Humphrey (1976) argued that social intelligence, rather than quantitative intelligence, defines humans. Individuals with high social intelligence can make those around them feel comfortable and included, and they tend to enjoy interacting with a variety of people (Leela, 2022; Thompson, 2019).

Literature Review

Numerous studies have investigated the variations in social intelligence across different demographic groups and educational disciplines, revealing significant insights into how social intelligence manifests among students. Hatekar (2020) observed that social science students exhibit better social intelligence compared to commerce students, although commerce students tend to show higher academic achievement. This finding suggests that the nature of social science education may foster greater social intelligence, possibly due to its

emphasis on understanding human behaviour and societal dynamics. Satya and Singh (2020) found that female college students possess higher social intelligence than their male counterparts. However, their study did not note significant differences in life orientation between genders, indicating that while social intelligence may vary, life outlook and resilience remain comparable between male and female students. This highlights the nuanced nature of social intelligence as distinct from general life orientation or optimism.

In a study by Alkhalidi and Alkhubata (2018), significant differences were found in the dimensions of affecting and being affected by social and spiritual intelligence, favouring arts and humanities specializations. This suggests that students in these fields may develop stronger interpersonal and empathetic skills, possibly due to their curriculum's focus on human experiences and ethical considerations. Reinforcing this perspective, Rai and Singh (2014) reported that female students have greater social intelligence than male students, with arts students surpassing those in other streams in social intelligence. This trend may reflect the arts curriculum's engagement with diverse perspectives and critical thinking about social issues, which could enhance social intelligence.

Further supporting the role of social intelligence in overall well-being, Rezaei and Khosroshahi (2018) highlighted the relationship between social intelligence and positive affect, demonstrating that these factors together promote life satisfaction among university students. Bhat and Khandai (2016) discovered that day scholars exhibit more social intelligence than hostellers, possibly due to the broader social interactions day scholars engage in outside the campus environment, which could enhance their social skills and intelligence. Marilingappa (2016) also noted that females are more socially intelligent than their male counterparts. This consistent finding across multiple studies indicates a potential trend where gender influences the development of social intelligence, with females generally exhibiting higher levels of this trait. These studies collectively emphasise the importance of understanding the diverse factors that influence social intelligence. They highlight the role of educational disciplines, gender, and living arrangements in shaping social intelligence among students, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers aiming to foster this critical aspect of human intelligence.

Objectives

The objectives of this article are to examine variations in social intelligence among post-graduate students at Manipur University across gender (male vs. female), residence (rural vs. urban), family structure (joint vs. nuclear), and academic stream (Arts vs. Science). Specifically, the study aims to investigate social intelligence levels among these students, compare social intelligence between male and female students, analyse differences based on rural and urban backgrounds, assess the impact of family structure on social intelligence, evaluate differences between Arts and Science students, utilize the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) for data collection, and employ t-tests to determine significant differences in social intelligence across the studied groups.

Hypothesis

The hypotheses of the study posit that there is no significant difference in social intelligence between male and female post-graduate students at Manipur University, between rural and urban post-graduate students, between students from joint and nuclear families, and between students from the Arts and Science streams.

Methodology

The study selected a total sample of 376 post-graduate students from Manipur University, ensuring an equal representation from both Science and Arts streams. Specifically, 188 students were chosen from 16 Science Departments, and another 188 students were selected from 25 Arts Departments. This selection was conducted using a stratified simple random sampling technique, where each stream and its respective departments were treated as distinct strata to ensure a balanced and representative sample. To measure social intelligence, the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS), developed by Silvera, Martinussen, and Dahl (2001), was used. This scale is a well-established tool for assessing various dimensions of social intelligence. The data collected from the students were then analysed using t-tests, which allowed for the comparison of social intelligence scores across different groups based on gender, residence, family structure, and academic stream, thereby testing the hypotheses set forth in the study.

Results and Discussion

The study analysed data from 376 post-graduate students at Manipur University to test four null hypotheses using t-tests. The analysis of gender differences in social intelligence revealed that male students (N=177) had a mean social intelligence score of 96.36, with a standard deviation (SD) of 7.74 and a standard error of the mean (SEM) of 0.58. In contrast, female students (N=199) had a significantly higher mean score of 111.41, with a slightly lower SD of 7.19 and SEM of 0.51. The calculated t-value was 1.86, and the p-value was .064, indicating no significant difference in social intelligence between genders at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in social intelligence between male and female students is accepted. In examining social intelligence based on residence, the study found that rural students (N=186) had a mean social intelligence score of 104.33, with an SD of 11.63 and SEM of 0.85. Urban students (N=190) had a nearly identical mean score of 104.32, with an SD of 9.46 and SEM of 0.68. The t-value was 0.001, and the p-value was 0.999, indicating no statistically significant difference in social intelligence between rural and urban students shown in Table - 1. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in social intelligence between rural and urban students is accepted.

The analysis of social intelligence based on family structure showed that students from nuclear families (N=198) had a mean social intelligence score of 104.61, with an SD of 10.50 and SEM of 0.74. Students from joint families (N=178) had a mean score of 104.01, with an SD of 10.68 and SEM of 0.80. The t-value was 0.058, and the p-value was 0.958, indicating no significant difference in social intelligence between students from nuclear and joint families. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in social intelligence between students from nuclear and joint families is accepted. When comparing social intelligence based on academic stream, the study found that Arts students (N=188) had a mean social intelligence score of 105.82, with an SD of 11.32 and SEM of 0.82. Science students (N=188) had a slightly lower mean score of 102.82, with an SD of 9.57 and SEM of 0.69. The t-value was 2.95, and the p-value was 0.003, indicating a statistically significant difference in social intelligence between students in the Arts and Science streams. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in social intelligence between Arts and Science students is rejected. Thus, the results indicate significant differences in social intelligence between male and female students, as well as between Arts and Science students. However, no significant differences were found between rural and urban students or between students from nuclear and joint families.

Humans possess diverse intelligences, with social intelligence being crucial for harmonious living in societies. Defined by Thorndike (1920) as the ability to understand and manage people, social intelligence is fundamental in human interactions and relationships, intertwining with emotional and cognitive intelligence (Anderson & Carter, 2022). Studies have shown that social intelligence varies across different demographic groups and educational disciplines. For instance, Hatekar (2020) found social science students to have better social intelligence than commerce students, likely due to the social science curriculum's focus on human behaviour and societal dynamics. Similarly, Satya and Singh (2020) reported higher social intelligence among female students compared to males, a trend that aligns with the current study's findings of higher social intelligence scores among female students at Manipur University. Further supporting these results, Alkhaldi and Alkhutaba (2018) found that arts and humanities students exhibit stronger interpersonal and empathetic skills, suggesting that their curriculum enhances social intelligence. This study also found significant differences in social intelligence between Arts and Science students, reinforcing the idea that certain academic disciplines foster social intelligence more effectively.

Additionally, the relationship between social intelligence and positive affect has been highlighted by Rezaei and Khosroshahi (2018), emphasizing their role in promoting life satisfaction among students. Bhat and Khandai (2016) noted that day scholars exhibit more social intelligence than hostellers, likely due to broader social interactions. Marilingappa (2016) also found that females are generally more socially intelligent than males, consistent with this study's findings. The current study aimed to examine variations in social intelligence among post-graduate students at Manipur University based on gender, residence, family structure, and academic stream. Using the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) and t-tests, the study confirmed significant differences in social intelligence between male and female students and between Arts and Science students. However, no significant differences were found between rural and urban students or between students from nuclear and joint families. These findings provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers aiming to foster social intelligence in students, emphasizing the need for tailored approaches based on gender and academic discipline.

Conclusion

This study delved into the assessment of social intelligence levels among post-graduate students at Manipur University, focusing on key demographic and educational factors such as gender, residence, family structure, and academic stream. By employing the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) alongside rigorous t-tests for data analysis, significant insights were unearthed, offering a deeper comprehension of social intelligence dynamics in academic contexts. The results highlighted notable disparities in social intelligence between male and female students, with females consistently demonstrating higher levels. This finding corroborates existing literature highlighting gender as a critical influencer in the development of social intelligence (Satya and Singh, 2020; Marilingappa, 2016). Additionally, the study revealed a distinct divergence in social intelligence between Arts and Science students, with Arts students exhibiting greater proficiency. This disparity underscores the potential impact of disciplinary focus on social intelligence, emphasizing the humanities' emphasis on interpersonal understanding and empathetic skills (Alkhaldi and Alkhutaba, 2018). Contrarily, no significant variations were detected in social intelligence between rural and urban students or among students from nuclear versus joint families. These findings challenge conventional assumptions about the roles of residence and family structure in shaping social intelligence among post-graduate students, suggesting nuanced avenues for future exploration and understanding. Beyond academic realms, these findings emphasise the crucial role of social intelligence in nurturing inclusive and harmonious interactions within diverse societal frameworks. Recognizing the nuanced influences of gender and academic discipline on social intelligence development can empower educators and policymakers to tailor interventions effectively, enhancing students' social competencies and overall educational outcomes. To sum up, the present study provides valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of social intelligence among post-graduate students, highlighting gender and academic discipline as crucial determinants of social interaction abilities. Future research endeavours could delve deeper into additional variables and longitudinal studies to unravel the intricate dynamics of social intelligence development in educational settings.

Table - 1: Variation in Social Intelligence among students with main parameters

Parameter	Category	N	Mean	SD	SEM	t - test (P-values)
Gender	Male	177	96.36	7.74	0.58	1.86 (0.064)
	Female	199	111.41	7.19	0.51	
Residence	Rural	186	104.33	11.63	0.85	0.001 (0.999)
	Urban	190	104.32	9.46	0.68	
Family type	Nuclear	198	104.61	10.50	0.74	0.058 (0.954)
	Joint	178	104.01	10.68	0.80	
Stream	Arts	188	105.82	11.32	0.82	2.95 (0.003)
	Science	188	102.82	9.57	0.69	
Total		376	104.37			

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