Emotional Maturity of Regular Students and Distance Learners of Kashmir Valley: A Comparative Study

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ABSTRACT

The research paper attempted to compare the emotional maturity of regular and Distance Learners of Kashmir Valley. A sample of 200 PG students (100 Regular and 100 Distance Learners) was taken from different Higher Education Institution of Kashmir (J&K) India. Yashvir Singh's and Mahesh Bhargava's Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) (1984) was administered. For analysis, mean, SD and t- test were used. The investigation came to the conclusion that the Regular Students and Distance Learners differ significantly on emotional maturity. It is reflected through this study that Distance Learners are emotionally unbalanced. Distance Learners have emotional instability than Regular Students. They lack capacity to solve daily problems, they have more irritability and needs continuous help for day to day work, they are venerable and have temper tantrum. Distance Learners have more emotional regression than Regular Students. Distance Learners have inferiority complex, aggressiveness and self centeredness of being pursuing education through distance mode. The study also revealed that Regular Students were found with lack of independence than students pursuing their education through distance mode. The study further showed that Regular male students also differ significantly with male Distance Learners on emotional maturity scale in favour of regular male students and the same is the case with female students.

Key Words: *Emotional Maturity, Instability, Emotional Regression, Social Mal-adjustment, Personality Disintegration, Independence.*

Introduction

In psychology, maturity is the ability to respond to the environment in an appropriate manner. This response is generally learned rather than instinctive. Maturity also encompasses being aware of the correct time and place to behave and knowing when to act, according to the circumstances and the culture of the society one lives in. Adult development and maturity theories include the purpose in life concept, in which maturity emphasizes a clear comprehension of life's purpose, directedness, and intentionality, which contributes to the feeling that life is meaningful.

The status of maturity is distinguished by the shift away from reliance on guardianship and the oversight of an adult in decision-making acts. Maturity has different definitions across legal, social, religious, political, emotional, and intellectual contexts. The age or qualities assigned for each of these contexts are tied to culturally-significant indicators of independence that often vary as a result of social sentiments. The concept of psychological maturity has implications across both legal and social contexts, while a combination of political activism and scientific evidence continue to reshape and qualify its definition. Because of these factors, the notion and definition of maturity and immaturity is somewhat subjective. Emotions as we know often fall into what we call defilements *(Keles)*. Anger, irritability, jealousy, anxiety are some of those negative emotions which are important to us as human beings. Emotional maturity includes a constellation of qualities which make our minds more stable and balanced and actually express less defilement and hence make us happier. In the present circumstances, youth as well as children are facing difficulties in life which give rise to many psychosomatic problems such as anxiety, tension, frustration and emotional upsets in day to day life. According to *Skinner*, "An emotionally matured person is the one who is able to keep a lid on his feelings. He can suffer in silence; he can bide his time in spite of present discomfort. He is not subject to swings in mood, he is not volatile. When he does express emotion, he does so with moderation, decency and in good order." According to *Cole*, "The most outstanding make of emotional maturity is the ability to bear tension. Besides, an emotionally matured person persists in the capacity for fun and recreation. He enjoys both play and responsible activities and keeps them in proper balance." According to *Fred Mc. Kinney*, "The characteristics of an emotionally matured person are heterosexuality, appreciation of attitude and behaviour of others, tendency to adopt the attitudes and habits of others and capacity to delay his own responses."

Jerome Bruner proposed the purpose of the period of immaturity as being a time for experimental play without serious consequences, where a young animal can spend a great deal of time observing the actions of skilled others in

coordination with oversight by and activity with its mother. The key to human innovation through the use of symbols and tools, therefore, is re-interpretive imitation that is 'practiced, perfected, and varied in play' through extensive exploration of the limits on one's ability to interact with the world. Evolutionary psychologists have also realised that cognitive immaturity may serve an adaptive purpose as a protective barrier for children against their own under-developed meta-cognition and judgment, a vulnerability that may put them in harm's way. For youth today, the steadily extending period of 'play' and schooling going into the 21st century comes as a result of the increasing complexity of our world and its technologies, which too demand an increasing intricacy of skill as well as a more exhaustive set of pre-requisite abilities. Many of the behavioral and emotional problems associated with adolescence may arise as children cope with the increased demands placed on them, demands which have become increasingly abstracted from the work and expectations of adulthood.

Emotional Maturity is said to be the foundation for leading a happy and contented life. If anyone lacks Emotional Maturity the life of the individual will be a sorrowful affair. According to *Crow & Crow (1974),* "An emotion is an affective experience that accompanies generalized inner adjustment and mental and psychologically stirred up states in an individual and that shows itself in his overt behaviour. According to *Alter* (*1976*), emotional maturity is a process in which the personality is continuously striving for greater sense of emotional health, both physical and psychological. Emotional stability is one of the important indicators of mental health. It simply means being grown up so that one may be able to personally manage his/her desires and feelings and may be better able to cope up the adverse life situations in a most benefiting and socially approved manner. The emotionally mature is not one who necessarily has resolved all conditions that aroused anxiety and hospitability but it is continuously in process of seeing himself/herself in clear perspective, continually involved in a struggle to gain healthy integration of feeling and thinking action. *Aleen and Sheema (2005)*, have found that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of male and female students on emotional stability. *Gupta and Ponam (1989)*, has found that the characteristic behaviour of the female is more sober, well-behaved, shy and reserved as compared to boys. Male behave more openly and are more interested in bold activities. *Jan Nuzhat (2012),* also found that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Distance Learners on emotional maturity. Female students are emotionally stable compared to male students. *Jha P.K. (2002*) found that self-confidence and emotional maturity were positively associated with vigilant style of decision making in case of executives. *Lohithakshan, P. M. (2002),* emotional instability is an indication of emotional immaturity, as emotionally unstable response is characterized by the lack of agreement between the emotional response and

the provoking stimulus. *Mangal & Amina Bhevi (2007),* found that the adolescents of employed mothers have greater emotional maturity than that of housewives. *Mankad A. (1999),* observed that personality of emotionally matured and un-matured adolescents differ significantly. *Patil M. (2003),* reports that adolescence is accompanied by some stress, related to school, family and peers, and this stress can at times be difficult to manage. It is also a time when certain kinds of developmental problems might arise. Child psychologists are of the opinion that not all stress is bad; the good kind motivates one to get things done and solve problems or take challenges. When stress lingers, makes child avoid things, or makes normal functioning difficult, then it is a problem. *Sivakumar, R. (2010),* found that the sex, community and the family type they belong to do not play any role in the emotional maturity of the college students. But it is inferred from that the religion the college students belong to shows significant difference in their emotional maturity. *Stephen. S. (2002*), conducted a study related to neuroticism and emotional maturity among college female students and found that the individuals who scored higher neuroticism are having a low level of emotional maturity.

Justification of the Study

If many of us fall short of some basic but noble attributes, it is because we grew up in less than ideal circumstances. No one is born mature. Our emotional development is shaped by our parents and life experiences. Mature parents who recognise, validate, love and accept their children and are fulfilled in their own lives rear mature children. "I think parents who have been able to find and realize their own dreams are the best parents of all, as long as their dream includes understanding and loving their own children," says Stark. A child who successfully struggles with failures, disappointments, and heartaches will develop greater maturity than one who is pampered and indulged. Throughout childhood, there are development tasks to be mastered, like making friends and developing autonomy. By completing most tasks without undue stress, conflict, or difficulty, a child can develop into a mature adult.

A high IQ (intelligence quotient), good looks, and robust health- while attractive innate qualities-don't contribute to emotional maturity. There are many people born with fewer advantages who develop into mature, well-adjusted adults. Emotional maturity is, however, closely related to the popular concept of emotional intelligence, in which people are skilful at handling their own and other's feelings. Emotional development is linked with other areas of human development like physical, intellectual and social. Any retardation, undue acceleration or abnormal deviation in these areas would inevitably influence normal emotional development resulting in frustration, conflicts and imbalance in behaviour. Frustration is not only a negative thing, a failure to achieve but it increases emotional tensions

affecting the living of complete individual. Stark defines psychological maturity as 'being able to accept the reality of people and things as they are, without needing them to be other than that.' To paraphrase a Native American adage: 'The art of living in peace with that which we cannot change, the courage to change that which should be changed, no matter what it takes and the wisdom to know the difference.'

Along with this realistic attitude toward life, mature people also possess these healthy character traits:

- Ability to know what he wants and the capacity to make it happen
- Self-control and thinking before he acts
- Self-reliance and the ability to take responsibility for his life and actions
- Patience
- The ability to sustain intimate relationships and establish positive connections with others
- Generosity and the desire to give and be there for others
- Integrity
- A sense of balance and equanimity in dealing with stress
- Perseverance
- Decisiveness
- Humility and the ability to admit when you're wrong

Hence Emotional Maturity is an important aspect in one's life and very less research has been conducted so far in this area especially in the Valley of Kashmir. Therefore, to fill this vacuum the present investigator has found it feasible to work on the unbeaten area and took an initiative to find out the emotional maturity of Regular Students and Distance Learners of Kashmir Valley (India) which is the first modest attempt in this area.

Statement of the Problem

The problem chosen for the present study is stated as under:

'*Emotional Maturity of Regular and Distance Learners of Kashmir Valley- A Comparative Study*'

Objectives of the Study

Following objectives have been formulated for the present study:

1. To study the emotional maturity of Regular Students of Kashmir Valley.
2. To study the emotional maturity of Distance Learners of Kashmir Valley.

3. To compare the emotional maturity of Regular Students with emotional maturity of Distance Learners.

4. To compare the emotional maturity of male Regular Students with the emotional maturity of male Distance Learners.

5. To compare the emotional maturity of female Regular Students with the emotional maturity of female Distance Learners.

Operational Definition of Variables

Emotional Maturity

In the present investigation emotional maturity means, the scores gained by the respondent (sample subject) on *Yashvir Singh's* and *Mahesh Bhargava's EMOTIONAL MATURITY SCALE (1984).* The Emotional maturity inventory comprises of five dimensions viz; *Instability, Emotional Regression, Social Maladjustment, Personality Disintegration and Lack of Independence.*

Regular Students

Regular Students are those students who are on rolls and pursuing higher education (PG) through regular mode in Higher Education Institutions of Kashmir Valley. Students from University of Kashmir and Central University of Kashmir were considered who were pursuing their Post Graduate courses in different disciplines there.

Distance Learners

Distance Learners are those students who are pursuing higher education through distance mode in Kashmir Valley. Learners from MANNU (Srinagar) and Directorate of Distance Education, University of Kashmir were considered who were pursuing their Post graduate courses through distance mode.

Procedure

Sample

A sample of 200 students pursuing higher education in different courses was selected randomly from different higher education institutions of Kashmir division. From University of Kashmir and Central University of Kashmir 100 students were selected randomly from various faculties/schools who were pursuing their PG courses through regular mode among which 50 were female. The sample for the Distance Learners, 100 PG students were selected randomly from MANUU (Srinagar) and Directorate of Distance Education, University of Kashmir (50 each) in which half of the selected sample was comprised of female PG students. The breakup is given below:

Table showing the sample for the study

Category	Male	Female	Total
Regular Students	50	50	100
Distance Learners	50	50	100
Total	**100**	**100**	**200**

Tool

For the measurement of Emotional Maturity, *Yashvir Singh's and Mahesh Bhargava's Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS)* was administered. The scale has five dimensions. The scale consists of 10 items in each dimension except for the last dimension i.e. Lack of Independence which has only 8 items. The responses are scored according to weightage of *very much* to *never* as 05 to 01.

Analysis of the Data

For the analysis of collected but relevant data, appropriate statistical techniques viz; mean, standard deviation and t-test were employed.

Table 01 showing significance of mean difference between Regular Students and Distance Learners on Emotional Maturity (Composite Score)

Category	N	Mean	σ	t-value	Level of Sig.
Regular Students	100	89.98	2.44	18.59	0.01
Distance Learners	100	101.82	3.93		

The above table reveals that there is a significant difference between Regular Students and Distance Learners on emotional maturity. The table shows that the mean of Regular Students is 89.98 and for the Distance Learners it is 101.82 where as the SD of Regular Students is 2.44 and it is 3.93 for Distance Learners. The t-value for the same is 18.59 which shows the significant mean difference of two groups at 0.01 level. The perusal of the above table makes it clear that the mean score of Distance Learners is significantly higher than the mean score of Regular Students. The difference between their mean score has been found statistically significant. This justifies that Distance Learners are emotional immature than Regular Students.

Table 02 showing significance of mean difference between Regular Students (N=100) and Distance Learners (N=100) on emotional maturity (factor wise)

Category	Factors	Mean	σ	t-value	Level of Sig.
Regular Students	Emotional Instability	18.00	2.91	2.66	0.01
Distance Learners		20.00	4.16		
Regular Students	Emotional Regression	21.14	2.16	5.06	0.01
Distance Learners		24.18	3.81		
Regular Students	Social Maladjustment	17.10	2.14	4.85	0.01
Distance Learners		20.06	3.98		
Regular Students	Personality Disintegration	16.21	2.67	4.70	0.01
Distance Learners		19.64	4.61		
Regular Students	Lack of Independence	16.71	2.33	2.28	0.05
Distance Learners		17.94	3.11		

The above table shows the significant difference of two groups of students on emotional maturity (factor wise). The table depicts that the two groups differ significantly at 0.01 level on instability, emotional regression, social maladjustment and personality disintegration where as the two groups do not differ in lack of independence. This again justifies that Regular student are emotionally stable, have less emotional regression, are socially adjusted and also have personality integrated than Distance Learners. The table also shows that the two groups do differ significantly on the fifth dimension of the scale that is Lack of Independence where the trend is reverse, Regular Students posses higher score in the dimension of lack of independence. The difference between the two groups is found significant at 0.05 level in favour of Distance Learners.

Table 03 showing significance of mean difference between male Regular Students (N=50) and male Distance Learners (N=50) on emotional maturity (factor wise)

Category	Factors	Mean	σ	t-value	Level of Sig.
Regular Students	Emotional Instability	18.00	2.91	3.00	0.01
Distance Learners		21.00	4.16		
Regular Students	Emotional Regression	18.15	2.14	3.13	0.01
Distance Learners		20.06	2.16		
Regular Students	Social Maladjustment	20.10	3.81	3.70	0.01
Distance Learners		24.18	3.98		
Regular Students	Personality Disintegration	16.21	2.67	3.43	0.01
Distance Learners		19.64	4.61		
Regular Students	Lack of Independence	17.98	3.11	2.55	0.05
Distance Learners		16.02	2.33		

The above table shows that the mean scores of male Distance Learners is higher than the mean score of Regular Students on Emotional Instability of emotional maturity. The mean difference of the two male groups was found significant at 0.01 level. It shows that the Distance Learners have emotional instability than Regular Students. Same is the case with the dimension of emotional regression, it was also found significant at 0.01 level in favour of male Distance Learners. The table depicts that male Distance Learners are socially maladjusted and have personality disintegration than male regular student. The table also reflects that male Distance Learners have lack of capacity to solve simple problems, they have irritability, and needs continuous help for their daily routine of work, they are stubbornness and temper tantrum. Male Distance Learners also feel that they are tired and remain upset whenever they think about their education. But the table also reveals that Regular Students have scored higher on the dimension of Lack of Independence that means they lack independence than Distance Learners and the difference is significant at 0.05 level.

Table 04 showing significance of mean difference between female Regular Students (N=50) and female Distance Learners (N=50) on emotional maturity (factor wise)

Category	Factors	Mean	σ	t-value	Level of Sig.
Regular Students	Instability	21.04	3.09	2.22	0.05
Distance Learners		18.91	3.70		
Regular Students	Emotional Regression	18.17	1.97	4.74	0.01
Distance Learners		20.87	2.01		
Regular Students	Social Maladjustment	21.03	3.30	2.55	0.05
Distance Learners		23.45	3.42		
Regular Students	Personality Disintegration	16.34	2.81	3.34	0.01
Distance Learners		19.51	3.88		
Regular Students	Lack of Independence	16.91	2.97	1.20	Insig.
Distance Learners		16.05	2.13		

The above table shows that the mean scores of female Regular Students is lower than the mean score of female Distance Learners on factors Emotional instability and emotional regression of emotional maturity. The mean difference on emotional instability was found significant at 0.05 level and on emotional regression the difference is significant at 0.05 level. The table reveals that female Distance Learners have more emotional regression than female Regular Students. Same is the case with social maladjustment, female distance learners showed greater mean than the regular female students and the mean difference is significant at 0.05 level. It means the female distance learners are more maladjusted in the society. They have reported that they have inferiority complex as they pursue their education through Distance Mode. They feel restlessness and sometimes feel to discontinue their course but looking no other option ahead they stick with it which sometimes make them aggressive and hostile. They also reported that due to the mode of education they are not sharing their education life which in turn made them self centred. On other factor also viz; Personality disintegration, female Distance Learners differ significantly

with female Regular Students at 0.01 level and possess higher score. On factor 'Lack of Independence', there is no significant difference between the two groups.

Discussion of the Results

The research methodology provides the guidelines for the investigators about the way for the study has to be conducted. It is imperative to adopt a suitable methodology thereby for generalizing the findings. This research found out certain factors which are affecting the emotional maturity such as hereditary factors, maturation, education, training, health, goals, family relationship, social environment, social participation, control over emotions, age, appearance, gender, culture, socio-economical status, environment, and parental education and most importantly peaceful society. A balanced and emotionally mature personality is one of the essential components of a successful life. The Emotional maturity has now become an important and unavoidable area in the behaviour of an individual which needed to be explored through new research projects. It is also essential for the progress of the society. So the present study intends to measure the Emotional Maturity of Regular and Distance mode PG students of Kashmir Valley. The present research highlighted a number of things which are correlated with emotional maturity and these areas need to be explored for the balanced personality. This investigation found out that Distance Learners have experienced a sense of discomfort and lack peace of mind. Distance Learners think themselves more aggressive than their friends who are pursing post graduation through regular mode. They further reported that they are dissatisfied with the distance mode of learning. Female Distance Learners do not blame others for their lapses but their male counterparts blame others for their lapses.

Conclusions

The present study through the different stages of investigation reached to the following conclusions, which were the result of systematic statistical methods and qualitative analysis of the data.

1. Regular Students and Distance Learners differ significantly on emotional maturity. Regular Students are emotionally mature than Distance Learners.

2. Regular Students are emotionally stable than Distance Learners. Regular Students possess more capacity to solve day to day problems where as Distance Learners have irritability and they lack problem solving attitude.

3. Distance Learners possess more emotional regression than Regular Students and they are more aggressive, vulnerable and temper tantrum.

4. Distance Learners are socially maladjusted than Regular Students. They

have inferiority complex and self centeredness of being pursuing education through distance mode.

5. Distance Learners have personality disintegration than Regular Students. They feel tired, laziness and no enthusiasm to study more. They have witnessed their moods swings very often and are unstable to rely on.

6. Regular Students lack independence than Distance Learners.

7. Regular male students are more emotionally mature than male Distance Learners on all first four dimensions of emotional maturity. But on the fifth dimension, Distance Learner scored lower that means they possess low lack of Independence.

8. Regular female students are more emotionally mature than female Distance Learners on all first four dimensions of emotional maturity. But again on the fifth dimension, both female Regular Students and female Distance Learners showed insignificant difference. Both groups lack independence.

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