**THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE ON STRESS AND COPING BEHAVIOUR AMONG ENGINEERING STUDENTS**

Dr. Mangilal Banoth**\***, Dr. V. Srikanth Reddy**\*\***

**ABSTRACT**

In this study an attempt was made to find out the influence of Social Intelligence on stress and coping behviour among engineering students of NIT Warangal. The sample consists of 120 1st year engineering students boys and girls who were randomly drawn from various engineering branches of NIT Warangal. The Social Intelligence was measured by using Social Intelligence Scale by Mathur.S.,(2007), the stress was measured by Stress inventory developed by Reddy .C.J. and Reddy. V. S. (2010) and the coping is measured by ways of coping questionnaire developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1988). Suitable statistical analysis was used and results were discussed.

Keywords: Social Intelligence, Stress, Coping and Engineering Students.

**INTURDUCTION**

The present generation is in the competitive world. As Stress is a necessary and unavoidable concomitant of daily living. It is necessary because without some stress we would be listless and apathetic creatures, and unavoidable because it relates to any external event, be it pleasurable or anxiety producing. A person's response towards stress depends on whether an event is appraised as a challenge or a threat (Lazarus & Folkman,1984).

In education system, engineering students are adolescents, in this stage due to fast physical changes and mental development at this stage, engineering students may sometimes experience incompatibility of their mental development with their physical changes or with the social environment and thus suffer from problems arising from inadequate adaptations.

**\*** Dr. Mangilal Banoth, Senior Assistant, Hostel office, National Institute of Technology Warangal.

**\*\*** Dr. V. Srikanth Reddy, Professor, Department of Psychology, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

These problems may further cause psychological troubles and even induce deviant behavior. In modern society, stress has become a part and parcel of the life. Pinel (2003) defines stress as a psychological response to life’s pressures and events (Benson and Stuart, 1992) and can generally be viewed as a set of neurological and physiological reactions that serve an adaptive function (Franken, 1994). Holmes and Rahe (1967) indicated that any life change that requires numerous readjustments can be perceived as stressful.

Teens of today face many challenges that parents and traditional educators may not have had to experience when they were growing up. Due to numerous pressures of the 21st century, engineering students are having difficulty in coping, and are requesting for educational programs in colleges to help teach them how to cope with such stressors (Frydenberg et al., 2004). Many students face stress as they try to mix up busy lives, college, and work; while they are trying also to have time with family and friend. For some student, stress becomes almost a way of living.

However, it is really dangerous to let stress become student’s way of living in engineering students, because some stress levels can lead to a terrible effect that changes completely student’s life and it may result to failure. When the brain is familiar with stress, a physical reaction is triggered and it easily damages the memory, which may lead to further mental reactions or misconduct. A student’s life is subjected to different kinds of stressors, such as the pressure of academics with an obligation of success, uncertain future and difficulties envisaged for integration into the college system.

These students face social, emotional and physical and family problems which may affect their learning ability and academic performance (Fish and Nies, 1996; Chew-Graham et al., 2003). Stress levels among college students are higher than those of people at any other stage of life, a poll has found. In addition, the poll found that college students have a higher predisposition toward experiencing depression sometime during their four years at college (David, 2009).

Coping strategies are known to influence an individuals’ experience of stress. For most engineering students, managing stress during college can be extremely challenging. However, learning how to manage stress may help students cope with every day social and academic pressures, and thus have a better college experience. Effective time management strategies increase academic performance (Campbell and Svenson, 1992) and are frequently suggested by academic assistance personnel as aids to enhance achievement for college students. Although programs emphasize starting large tasks well before due dates, breaking down large tasks into small ones, and doing small tasks on a regular schedule, students regularly ignore these techniques and find themselves in great distress before exams (Brown, 1991).

**Social Intelligence**

[Social intelligence](http://socialintelligencelab.wordpress.com/social-intelligence/) describes the exclusively human capacity to use very large brains to effectively navigate and negotiate complex social relationships and environments. Psychologist and professor at the London School of Economics [Nicholas Humphrey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_Humphrey) believes it is social intelligence or the richness of our qualitative life, rather than our quantitative intelligence, that truly makes humans what they are – for example what it’s like to be a human being living at the center of the conscious present, surrounded by smells and tastes and feels and the sense of being an extraordinary metaphysical entity with properties which hardly seem to belong to the physical world.

Social intelligence has its origins in E.L. Thorndike's (1920) division of intelligence into three facets, pertaining to the ability to understand and manage ideas (abstract intelligence), concrete objects (mechanical intelligence), and people (social intelligence). In his classic formulation: "By social intelligence is meant the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls to act wisely in human relations". Similarly, Moss and Hunt (1927) defined social intelligence as the "ability to get along with others". Vernon (1933), provided the most wide-ranging definition of social intelligence as the person's "ability to get along with people in general, social technique or ease in society, knowledge of social matters, susceptibility to stimuli from other members of a group, as well as insight into the temporary moods or underlying personality traits of strangers".

Riggio RE (2014) said [Intelligence](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/intelligence), or IQ, is largely what you are born with. [Genetics](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/genetics) play a large part. Social intelligence (SI), on the other hand, is mostly learned. SI develops from experience with people and learning from success and failures in social settings. It is more commonly referred to as “tact,” “common sense,” or “street smarts”. The key elements of social intelligence are

**1. Verbal Fluency and Conversational Skills.**

**2. Knowledge of Social Roles, Rules, and Scripts.**

Bottom of Form

**3. Effective Listening Skills.**

**4.** [**Understanding**](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/empathy) **What Makes Other People Tick**

**5. Role Playing and Social Self-Efficacy.**

**6. Impression** [**Management**](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/leadership) **Skills.**

**Social Intelligence and Coping**

Social intelligence is explicitly represented in Sternberg's in triarchic view of intelligence (Sternberg, 1984, 1985, 1988). According to the triarchic theory, intelligence is composed of analytical, creative, and practical abilities. Practical intelligence is defined in terms of problem-solving in everyday contexts, and explicitly includes social intelligence (Sternberg & Wagner, 1986). According to Sternberg, each type of intelligence reflects the operation of three different kinds of component processes: performance components, which solve problems in various domains; executive meta-components, which plan and evaluate problem-solving; and knowledge-acquisition components, by which the first two components are learned.

Thus, in Sternberg's (1985, 1988) triarchic theory, social intelligence is part of a larger repertoire of knowledge by which the person attempts to solve practical problems encountered in the physical and social world. According to Cantor and Kihlstrom (1987), social intelligence is specifically geared to solve the problems of social life, and in particular managing the *life tasks*, *current concerns* (Klinger 1977) or *personal projects* (Little, 1989) which the person selects for him- or herself, or which other people impose on him or her from outside. Put another way, one's social intelligence cannot be evaluated in the abstract, but only with respect to the domains and contexts in which it is exhibited and the life tasks it is designed to serve. And even in this case, "adequacy" cannot be judged from the viewpoint of the external observer, but rather from the point of view of the subject whose life tasks are in play.

**The present study has been taken up with the following objectives.**

* To identify the various sources of stress in engineering students.
* To identify the coping strategies used by engineering students.
* To find out whether social intelligence influence their perception of stress and coping strategies used to overcome.

**To realize the above objectives the following hypotheses are formulated:**

* Engineering Students with low social intelligence face more stress.
* Engineering Students with high social intelligence use more coping strategies.

**Sample and Method**

Engineering Students were randomly selected from various engineering colleges in and around Warangal town. The sample comprised 120 engineering students. These engineering students were met individually and were explained about the relevance of the study and were asked to give their frank opinions about the problems they faced and how they overcome. The Social Intelligence was measured by using Social Intelligence Scale by Mathur.S.,(2007), the stress was measured by Stress inventory developed by Reddy .C.J. and Reddy. V. S. (2010) and the coping is measured by ways of coping questionnaire developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1988).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table: 1 **Showing the means and Standers deviations of stress intensity among engineering students in relation with social intelligence.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **High Social Intelligence** | | **Low Social Intelligence** | | **t-value** |
| **Physiological Problems** | **Mean** | 7.27 | **Mean** | 7.24 | 0.07@ |
| **SD** | 4.21 | **SD** | 4.08 |
| **Psychological Problems** | **Mean** | 7.29 | **Mean** | 6.84 | 0.96@ |
| **SD** | 4.82 | **SD** | 4.21 |
| **Peer Problems** | **Mean** | 5.42 | **Mean** | 4.94 | 1.16@ |
| **SD** | 4.82 | **SD** | 4.12 |
| **Family Problems** | **Mean** | 5.19 | **Mean** | 5.27 | 0.22@ |
| **SD** | 3.93 | **SD** | 3.95 |
| **Problems with self** | **Mean** | 10.29 | **Mean** | 10.41 | 0.27@ |
| **SD** | 4.83 | **SD** | 4.78 |
| **Educational Problems** | **Mean** | 12.43 | **Mean** | 12.85 | 0.96@ |
| **SD** | 4.74 | **SD** | 4.97 |
| **Social Problems** | **Mean** | 8.79 | **Mean** | 8.64 | 0.33@ |
| **SD** | 5.29 | **SD** | 4.71 |

**@**- indicates not significant

**\***- indicates significant at 0.05 level

**\*\***- indicates Significant at 0.01 level**.**

Table: 2 **Showing the means and Standers deviations of coping strategies among engineering students in relation with Internal Locus of Control and External Locus of Control.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **High Social Intelligence** | | **Low Social Intelligence** | | **t-value** |
| **Confrontive**  **Coping** | **Mean** | 8.24 | **Mean** | 8.86 | **2.12\*** |
| **SD** | 3.16 | **SD** | 3.23 |
| **Distancing** | **Mean** | 7.30 | **Mean** | 7.52 | 0.77@ |
| **SD** | 7.30 | **SD** | 7.52 |
| **Self Controlling** | **Mean** | 10.23 | **Mean** | 10.89 | 1.83@ |
| **SD** | 3.59 | **SD** | 4.34 |
| **Seeking Social Support** | **Mean** | 9.04 | **Mean** | 3.78 | 0.84@ |
| **SD** | 9.32 | **SD** | 3.58 |
| **Accepting Responsibility** | **Mean** | 6.79 | **Mean** | 6.90 | 0.45@ |
| **SD** | 2.51 | **SD** | 2.47 |
| **Escape Avoidance** | **Mean** | 9.99 | **Mean** | 10.58 | 1.60@ |
| **SD** | 4.20 | **SD** | 3.89 |
| **Planful Problem Solving** | **Mean** | 9.70 | **Mean** | 9.66 | 0.13@ |
| **SD** | 3.58 | **SD** | 3.36 |
| **Positive Reappraisal** | **Mean** | 11.86 | **Mean** | 4.09 | 0.41@ |
| **SD** | 12.00 | **SD** | 3.38 |

**@**- indicates not significant

**\***- indicates significant at 0.05 level