Teachers' Perspectives on Learning Disability Students' Emotional Intelligence in an Inclusive Classroom

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Abstract

The current study titled "Teachers' perspectives on learning disability students' emotional intelligence in an inclusive classroom" is a mixed method research approach to understand learning disability (LD) students' level of emotional intelligence (EI) through quantitative analysis and to explore the teachers' perspectives of LD students' EI using qualitative analysis and to compare it with quantitative results. Phase 1 included LD group (n=15) and non LD group (n=15) in the age group of (12-16 years) and measured the LD and non-LD students on EI and the sub domains of EI. Second phase was to interview 5 teachers using an interview schedule. The purpose of the interview was to analyse the teachers' perspectives of LD students' EI in an inclusive classroom. The results revealed that, LD students are low on EI compared to non-LD students. The integration of quantitative and qualitative analysis was done through convergent mixed method approach. The results of the quantitative analysis converged adequately with the qualitative analysis which gave an in depth understanding regarding the reasons and factors influencing low EI in LD students.

Keywords: Learning disability, Emotional intelligence, Inclusive classroom, Teachers' perspectives

1. Introduction

Emotions play an important role for an individual's success in life. As stated by Goleman (1995) individual's success in life is 80% dependent on emotional quotient (EQ) and only 20% dependent on intelligence quotient (IQ). Thus emotions are vital in academic setting, as it transform every facet of cognition (Shen, Wang, & Shen, 2009). It is evident from various studies that, emotions affects the human cognitive processes including memory, learning (Phelps, 2004; Um, Hayward, & Homer, 2012), attention (Vuilleumier, 2005), reasoning (Jung, Wranke, Hamburger, & Knauff, 2014) and problem solving (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987). However, these studies indicate that, children with learning disability (LD) are affected by emotions and cognitive processes to certain extent.

Learning disability is a neurodevelopmental disorder of biological origin manifested in learning difficulties and problem in acquiring academic skills markedly below age level and manifested in the early school years, lasting for at least 6 months and not attributed to intellectual disabilities, developmental disorders, or neurological or motor disorders according to Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V 315). The main types of learning disability involve impairment in reading (315.0), mathematics (315.1) and impairment in written expression (315.2) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). As research indicates that, 75% of children with LD feel rejected, lonely and isolated (Kavale and Forness 1996). Their inability in perceiving non-verbal emotional expressions results in their lack of social skills (Most & Greenbank, 2000). This shows that, social skills and emotional skills are fundamental to an individual's life. But it is indeed very challenging for LD students with difficulties in social relationship, especially when they are not being accepted by the peer group because of their inability to interact adequately.

Major problems faced by children with learning disability are as follows: ("Learning disability," n.d.)

Being Labeled: Children with LD are labeled as lazy, dull, and stupid. They are also labeled as trouble makers because of their behavioral issues. This makes the child to believe in these labels and tend to act accordingly.

Fail and under achievement: Constant failures will result in having poor self esteem, low-motivation and rejection by the people surrounding the child.

Academic achievement is considered as a stepping stone to succeed in life. Hence, in order to excel in academics, children are put under lot of pressure and parents undergo tremendous stress to see their child secure their place in the world. Teachers are also pressurized to produce good results in exams in some settings.

Emotional growth: The labeling of children with LD as lazy, stupid, trouble maker, dull and constant failures will not only impact their emotional growth. But they also tend to have difficulty in expressing their feelings. This can be caused because of their difficulties in expressive language.

Social Stigma: It is caused more because of the behavioral issues, labeling, under achievement, which are the effects of LD. And certification without giving any awareness will lead to discrimination and not inclusion.

Denial by parents: Parents of children having LD takes time to accept it since it is not a noticeable disability. Usually parents will be in denial state and it is very hard for them to understand when they are called by teachers to inform about the difficulty that the child finds in studies or being inactive and behave roughly in the class.

Emotional intelligence (EI)

The term emotional Intelligence was first coined by Salovey and Mayer in the year (1990) and defined it as a subset of social intelligence that involved one's capacity to observe their own and others' feelings and emotions to distinguish among them and to make use of that information to direct one's thought process and actions.

The effect of emotional intelligence on academic performance

Emotional Intelligence is theorized to help in sequential thinking and to facilitate an individual to manage his/her emotions in an anxiety – provoking situations, such as taking standardized tests. Facts supporting the role of emotional intelligence in academic settings are mixed. The evidences show affirmative associations (Barchard, 2003; Brackett & Myer, 2003), while others show no associations (O' Connor & Little, 2003; Rode et al., 2007). The two studies with college going students, total scores and grades on Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) were interrelated discreetly (Barchard, 2003; Brackett & Mayer, 2003). On the other hand, the relationship in these studies showed insignificance after the verbal intelligence scores were controlled. A study in Spain with the high school students established the gradational validity of emotional intelligence to predict the grades. The MSCEIT was conducted in the beginning of the academic year, interrelated with ultimate grades once personality and academic intelligence were controlled (Márquez, Martín, & Brackett 2006).

One of the latest "buzz words" in education is emotional intelligence. There are researches been carried out regarding the importance of emotional intelligence in the area of education. The main focus of researchers such as Goleman, Salovey and Sluyter, and Gardner was to make an impact on the educators regarding the importance of emotional intelligence (Akers, Fraze, Lockaby, & Miller, n.d.).

According to Wallace, Anderson, Bartholomay, & Hupp, (2002), inclusion of students with disabilities is not enough to reduce difficulties in social relationship. Social relationship is promoted through peer modelling and this is accomplished through constant practice and feedback. Children require skills for constructive social relationship and these skills are crucial for academic, emotional and social learning which in turn create effective interaction in classroom (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004).

In addition to quantitative research methodology, the present study was also aimed to qualitatively analyze the teachers' perception of LD students' emotional intelligence. Earlier researches have quantitatively analyzed the difference between LD and non-LD students on the level of emotional intelligence and found that, LD students are low on EI compared to non-LD students (Hen & Goroshit,

2014). Hence, to understand the level of emotional intelligence among adolescents with LD and to understand LD students' emotional intelligence from teachers' perspective in an inclusive classroom, the current study employed a mixed method approach to integrate the results of quantitative and qualitative data in terms of convergence or divergence.

Review of literature

The review of literature lays a foundation for the currrent study right from methodology to analysis and helps in finding the gaps in research.

Learning disability (dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia) in India affect 5-15% of school going children (Karande, Sholapurwala, & Kulkarni, 2011). Studies show that students with learning disability experience more loneliness, more victimized, less socially satisfied (i.e. Social integration than peers without learning disability). Therefore, they are vulnerable to emotional problems and social problems. Students with learning disabilities have significantly more internal (somatic complaints, isolation, anxiety/depression) and external problems (aggression and delinquency) as well as attention deficits and social problems and are at greater risk for psychosocial adjustment difficulties (Barkauskiene and Bieliauskaite 2002). Studies show that, there is a relationship between emotional recognition and expression and SLDs; a relationship between understanding others' emotions and SLDs and a relationship between emotional management and control and SLDs (McLean and Lana 2016). The importance of teaching emotional intelligence skills to students with learning disabilities may be beneficial to them both academically and socially (Bryant 2007). It helps the students use the appropriate way to express, self-monitor and self-regulate each emotion (Bhan and Farooqui 2013). It is so fortunate that these skills of emotional intelligence- awareness and regulation can be learned, and schools have a significant role in the process. Therefore, providing training in emotional skills may lead to greater academic achievement. Research indicates that social and emotional skills are linked to superior performance in many areas of students' learning, social relationships and academic performance.

Need for the current study

There are studies which has identified and compared the level of emotional intelligence in LD students and non-LD students. But there are no available studies to understand the emotional intelligence of LD students from teachers' perspective. Hence the strength of the current study is aimed to qualitatively analyze the teachers' perspective on LD students' EI in an inclusive classroom. By this, the results of the study can help by providing teachers with an insight about the importance of emotional intelligence and to give awareness about the level of emotional intelligence in students with learning disability

Methodology

The aim of the current study was to compare the emotional intelligence of students with and without LD and to explore teachers' perspectives on the emotional intelligence of LD students in an inclusive classroom.

To analyse the teachers' perspectives on LD students' (students with LD) emotional intelligence in an inclusive classroom. The objective was to have a comparative analysis of the level of emotional intelligence between LD students and non-LD students and to explore teachers' perspectives on LD students' emotional intelligence and to compare it with the quantitative data. The researcher used mixed methods research involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data and integrating them. The researcher conducted Purposive Sampling technique for the selection of sample. The sample consisted of 15 students diagnosed with LD. And five teachers who have experience of 4-10 years handling students with learning disability in an inclusive classroom.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between two groups (LD and non-LD) on understanding emotions, understanding motivation, empathy, handling relations and emotional intelligence total.

Operational definition

Emotional Intelligence: The competence of an individual to be aware of feelings of oneself and others' feelings in order to self-motivate and handle emotions adequately in the societal connections

which is necessary for improved understanding, compassion and agree with other people. (Goleman 1995)

In the current study, the emotional intelligence of students with LD and without LD was assessed using Emotional Intelligence scale: EIS SANS developed by Dr. A K Singh and Dr. Shruti Narain (2014).

Self-awareness: Ability to be conscious about one's own mental state and opinions regarding that mental state (Goleman, 1995)

Self-Regulation: The competence to calm oneself, to remove uncontrolled nervousness and bad temper. (Goleman, 1995)

Empathy: The skill to recognize how others experience, interpret non-verbal cues such as pitch of voice, body language, facial expressions and so on. (Goleman, 1995)

Motivation: Assembling feelings in the process of reaching goal is essential for being attentive, for motivating oneself and proficiency, and for inventiveness. (Goleman, 1995)

Social skills: The skill of affiliation is ability in regulating feelings in others. The capacity that secure fame, interpersonal effectiveness and leadership, people who stand out in these skills and excel at anything that depends on interacting smoothly with others. (Goleman, 1995)

Intelligence Quotient (IQ): A percentage of a predictable intellectual age and definite chronological age. (William Stern 1912)

Learning Disability: A neurodevelopmental disorder having biological base which is evident in learning difficulties and have trouble in getting hold on scholastic skills, which is noticeably lower than age level and visible in the early years of school and lasting for a minimum of 6 months; not ascribed to intellectual disabilities, disorders related to developmental, motor or neurological disorders. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Inclusive Education: Inclusive education is an application that provides special need children to experience the school life being in the similar school and classrooms that they would have attended if they were without any special needs condition. Inclusion is the practice in which children irrespective of their needs and capacity, learn in the same discipline. (Thomas, 1997).

Independent variable:

- 1. Students with learning disability
- 2. Non-learning disability Students
- 3. Age group
- 4. Gender

Dependent variables:

1. Level of Emotional Intelligence in students with learning disability

Extraneous variables:

1. Family background-Socio economic status, Siblings, Education and occupation of parents.

Ethical considerations

- 1. Permission was obtained from the school authority for data collection.
- 2. Assent was sought from the students.

- 3. Informed consent was sought from the respective parents of the participants as well as teachers.
- 4. Participants were assured about the confidentiality of their identity and response.
- 5. Respect for people's rights and dignity was assured.
- 6. Participants were given the option of discontinuing from the study at any point if they wish to and they were assured that they will not face any negative consequences if they do so.

Inclusion criteria:

- 1. Students of age group 12 to 16 years diagnosed as having learning disability.
- 2. Non-learning disability students of age 12-16 years with 80% and above in their previous three academic years' performance.
- 3. Class teachers and few subject teachers having 4-10 years of experience handling students with learning disability.

Exclusion criteria:

- 1. Students with any other recorded psychological/medical conditions were excluded.
- 2. Students below age group of 12 years and above 16 years were excluded.
- 3. Students of special schools were excluded.
- 4. Special educators working in the school were excluded.
- 5. Non-learning disability students who have scored less than 80% in their previous three academic years' performance were excluded.

Tools of assessment

Informed Consent form and Socio Demographic detail sheet of the participants was used for the study.

Emotional Intelligence Scale: EIS-SANS established by Dr. A K Singh and Dr. Shruti Narain (2014). The scale was developed for the age group of 12 years and older. Following a widespread literature review, four dimensions were incorporated as the scale was constructed.

- 1. Understanding Emotions (UE): The ability of an individual to recognize the emotions of oneself and that of others in their physical conditions, emotions and opinions.
- 2. Understanding Motivation (UM): A tendency to take initiative and be optimistic along with the drive for high achievements.
- 3. Empathy (E): The capability of an individual to recognize oneself emotionally with another person to know an individual perfectly and interpret other people's feelings, realize their viewpoints, weight multiplicity, interpret the frame of mind of the group, and to take an interest in others' life.
- 4. Handling Relations (HR): The capacity of an individual to be able to manage relations with others in a good way.

Procedure

The study was planned in two phases:

Phase 1: Measuring the level of emotional intelligence in students with learning disability and non-learning disability.

Phase 1 of the study: The researcher obtained permission of the concerned school authority, a consent letter and socio-demographic details was sent to the parents of the selected students along with an assent had been taken by the students. Once the consent and assent were received, a list of students within the age group of 12 to 16 years, who have already been diagnosed as having learning disability using standardized tools had been selected. The students with learning difficulties who have already been diagnosed as having learning disability were reassessed under the guidance of a clinical psychologist using National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences Index for Specific Learning Disability (NIMHANS SLD) Battery, Bender Gestalt Test, Benton Visual Retention Test, WISC IV Indian Edition for (Attention and Working Memory) and Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices to identify their intelligence quotient (IQ)and current level of academic functioning. And the nonlearning disability students of the same age group of 12 to 16 years were selected by tracking their performances in the last three academic years. Students with learning disability and non-learning disability were administered Emotional Intelligence Scale EIS-SANS developed by AK Singh and Shruti Narain (2014), which includes 31 items under 4 dimensions [Understanding Emotions (UE), Understanding Motivation (UM), Empathy(E) and Handling Relations(HR)]

Phase 2: Qualitative analysis through interview with teachers.

An interview schedule was prepared by the researcher based on Dr. Daniel Goleman's five emotional intelligence competencies that include self awareness, self regulation, social skills, empathy and motivation levels in LD students in an inclusive classroom. The respective class teachers and few subject teachers were selected for the interview based on their familiarity and years of experience handling students with learning disability in an inclusive education. Once the informed consent was received from the selected teachers, a face-to-face interview with teachers were carried out in a semistructured environment. The purpose of this interview was to analyse the teachers' perspective of students' emotional intelligence in an inclusive classroom.

Statistical analysis

The data collected was coded and Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS), Version 16.0 was used for data analyses. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Statistical tests, both parametric and non-parametric, were run in SPSS for the data analysis as per the objectives of the study. Test of normality (Shapiro Wilk test) was run to analyze the normal distribution of data. Mann-Whitney 'U' test for independent samples and Chi-square tests were run for the comparison of two groups on sociodemographic variables. Independent t- test was run to determine whether there is a significant difference between the means of two groups (LD and non-LD).

Analysis of qualitative data

The qualitative analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. The data was transcribed and coded. The thematic analysis was carried out by having five emotional intelligence competencies as the main domains. Each of the five domains produced important themes and sub-themes based on the response of the teachers. Thematic analysis is also known as content analysis which consists of indepth analysis of the contents of spoken or printed verbal materials (Kothari, 2004).

Integration of quantitative and qualitative results was done through convergent mixed methods design approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion were organized into sections involving results of descriptive and inferential statistics. Section I includes results and discussion of quantitative analysis. Section II includes the results and discussion of qualitative analysis and section III covers the discussion and integration of quantitative and qualitative results through convergent mixed method approach.

Section I: This section dealt with the statistical analysis using Mann Whitney 'U' test and Chi-square and descriptive statistics for the comparison between the two groups on sociodemographic characteristics and the sub-domains of emotional intelligence. A brief description of the clinical characteristics of the sample was given. Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was used to check whether the data is normally distributed or not. Non-parametric equivalent was used for the sub domains of emotional intelligence as the test of normality has not been met.

Sociodemographic characteristics

Mann-Whitney 'U' test for independent samples and chi-square tests were run for the comparison of two groups on sociodemographic variables.

Table 1: Comparison between the two groups on sociodemographic variables

Variable		LD (n=15)	Non-LD (<i>n</i> =15)	U	Sig
		$M \pm SD$	$M \pm SD$	_ 0	(2-tailed)
Α σο		14.1 ± 0.91	14.7 ± 0.45	60.5	0.03
		n (%)	n (%)	Chi- Square	Sig (2-tailed)
Gender	Male	8 (53)	8 (53)	0.13	1.0
Gender	Female	7(47)	7(47)	0.13	1.0
Student education	Class 7-9 Class 10	12(80) 3(20)	3(20) 12(80)	17.46	0.001
Birth order	Eldest Youngest	1(7) 14(93)	6(40) 9(60)	5.33	0.14
Family Type	Nuclear Joint	6(40) 9(60)	12(80) 3(20)	1.20	0.02
Father's Occupation	Class 10 &12 Graduate Post Graduate	8(53) 6(40) 1(7)	2(13) 9(60) 4(26)	10.40	0.004
Fathers' Occupation	White Collar Jobs	6(40)	9(60)	.001	0.289
Mother's Education	Self Employed Class 10 &12 Graduate Post Graduate	9(60) 7(47) 7(47) 1(7)	6(40) 1(7) 10(67) 4(26)	21.00	0.016
Mothers' Occupation	White Collar Jobs Home Maker	1(7) 14(93)	3(20) 12(80)	16.133	0.299
Living arrangements	With family	14(93) 15(100)	12(80) 15(100)	.001	1.0

The average age of LD group was slightly lower than the non-LD group which could be the reason for having lower EI than the non-LD group.

The current education of students depicted that, 80% of students were in class 10 in non-LD compared to LD group which had only 20%. However, 80% of students were from class 7-9 and only 20% in non-LD group. This indicated that, there were more number of participants from class 10 in non-LD group which could be one of the reason for LD students' low on EI.

The birth order of the students were based on eldest and youngest born and the results revealed that, highest percentage of students in LD group (93%) and non-LD group (60%) being the youngest born.

The family type of the students had two types: joint family and nuclear family. The results showed that, 80% of non-LD students were from nuclear family whereas 60% of LD students were from joint family.

The education of father indicated that highest percentage of (53%) fathers have studied up to class 10 and 12 in LD group and lowest percentage of (7%) fathers have completed their post-graduation. Whereas in the non-LD group had highest percentage of (60%) graduates and lowest being (13%), who had completed class 10 & 12.

The occupation of father was based on the white-collar worker and self-employed. The white collar workers are those who work in an office or any other administrative settings and the LD population comprised of 40% of fathers who were in white collar jobs and 60% being self-employed

which is higher. The non-LD group comprised of higher percentage of (60%) fathers being in white-collar jobs and 40% being self-employed.

The education of mothers in the LD group had highest percentage of 47% each who had passed 10th &12 and graduates and lowest percentage of (7%) having post graduate degree. The education of mothers in non-LD group indicated that highest percentage of (67%) mothers were graduate and lowest percentage of 7% mothers who had completed class 10 and 12. This indicated that, the education of both the parents may have an impact on the level of EI on students.

The occupation of mothers was based on the white-collar workers and home makers. The table shows that, lowest percentage of (7%) mothers in LD group were in white collar jobs and highest percentage of (20%) mothers in white collar jobs were found in the non-LD group.

The living arrangements of the students didn't show any difference since all the students lived with their family.

Table 2: Clinical characteristics of LD students

SI	Class	SPM	BGT	BVRT	CA	AM	DS	R	\mathbf{W}	S	M	
NO Class		IQ	БОТ	DVKI	CA	AM	D _S	Le	Level of functioning			
1	9	Average	Impaired	Impaired	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	6	4	4	4	
2	8	Average	Impaired	Impaired	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	5	5	4	4	
3	8	Average	Impaired	Impaired	Intact	Intact	Intact	5	5	5	4	
4	9	Average	Intact	Intact	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	6	5	5	6	
5	10	Average	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	7	6	7	7	
6	9	Average	Impaired	Impaired	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	6	7	5	6	
7	8	Average	Impaired	<u>Impai</u> red	Impaired	Intact	Intact	5	5	6	4	
8	9	Average	Slightly Impaired	Impaired	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	4	5	3	4	
9	9	Average	Slightly impaired	Impaired	Impaired	Intact	Intact	7	Intact	5	5	
10	7	Average	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	Intact	Impaired	4	3	2	3	
Medic Condi	tion	No medical	conditions									
Under remed progra	lial	3										

SPM= Standard Progressive Matrices, BGT=Bender Gestalt Test, BVRT- Benton Visual Retention Test, CA=Cancellation, AM=Auditory Memory, DS=Digit Span, R=Reading, W=Writing, S=Spelling, M=Math, Level of functioning is the academic level of functioning.

Clinical characteristics of LD students.

The clinical characteristics of 10 LD students who were assessed on National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences Index for Specific Learning Disability (NIMHANS SLD) Battery, Bender Gestalt Test, Benton Visual Retention Test, WISC-IV Indian Edition for (Attention and Working Memory) and Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices to identify their Intelligence quotient and current level of academic functioning indicated that, all the students fall into the criteria for being diagnosed as having learning disability with impaired attention and working memory. It was also evident that other 5 students with LD were assessed outside the school and were diagnosed as having LD by a certified psychologist.

Results based on the comparison between the two groups on the variables of emotional intelligence EI and sub-domains of EI using descriptive statistics and t test.

The comparison between the two groups on EI indicated that, the LD group have lower mean of 17.00 compared to non-LD group with 24.93 and t value of -6.71 *** p < .001 indicating significant difference.

The mean of LD group on the variable understanding emotions (UE) was 2.40 in comparison to non-LD group with 3.67 and the t value of -4.46 (***p < .001) indicating LD group was lower on UE than non-LD-group.

On the variable understanding motivation (UM) the mean score of LD group is 3.40 and Non-LD group is **5.80** with t value of **4.28** which showed ***p < .001 indicating LD group had lower UM than non-LD group.

The LD group on the variable empathy (E) had a mean score of 6.13 and the mean score of LD group is with 8 and a t value of -4 indicating *** p < .001 which shows significant difference and LD group was low on empathy compared to non-LD group.

The LD group had lower mean of **5.07**than the non-LD group which had **7.47** on the variable: handling relations (HR) and the t value of -4.88 (***p < .001) showing significant difference between the two groups. The results indicating LD group was low on HR.

The mean rank comparison between the two groups on the sub domains of EI showed that LD group was significantly lower than the non-LD group on UE, UM, E, HR and EI.

Table 3: Comparison between the two groups on total emotional intelligence (EI).

Variable	LD (n=15) M ± SD	Non-LD (n=15)	Sig	t	Sig (2-tailed)
EI	17.00±2.97	24.93 ± 3.47	0.095	-6.71	0.001

**p < .001; EI = Emotional Intelligence

Table 3 showed the comparison between the two groups on emotional intelligence. Results of between group comparison on El indicated that there was a significant difference between LD and non-LD group suggesting that EI of LD group was lower than that of non-LD group

Table 4: Comparison between the two groups on the sub domains of emotional intelligence.

Variable	$\frac{\text{LD}}{(n=15)}$ $M \pm SD$	Non-LD (n=15)	_ Sig	Т	Sig (2-tailed)
UE	2.40 ± 0.98	3.67 ± 0.48	0.001	-4.46	0.001
\mathbf{UM}	3.40 ± 1.68	5.80 ± 1.37	0.19	-4.28	0.001
${f E}$	6.13 ± 0.91	8 ± 1.55	0.06	-4	0.001
HR	5.07 ± 1.28	7.47 ± 1.40	0.47	-4.88	0.001

*** p < .001 UE = Understanding Emotions, UM = Understanding Motivation, E = Empathy, HR = **Handling Relations**

Table 4 depicted the comparison between the two groups on the sub-domains of emotional intelligence. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the two groups on the sub-domains of EI suggesting that LD group was lower on UE, UM, E and HR than the non-LD group.

Table 5: Comparison between the two groups on sub domains of emotional intelligence

Variable	Mean Rank LD (<i>n=15</i>)	Non-LD (<i>n</i> =15)	U	Sig (2-tailed)
UE	10	21	30	0.001
UM	10.10	20.90	31.50	0.001
E	10.53	20.47	38	0.001
HR	9.63	21.37	24.50	0.001

*p<.001 UE = Understanding Emotions, UM = Understanding Motivation, E = Empathy, HR = Handling Relations, EI=Emotional Intelligence

Table 5 presented the mean rank comparison between the two groups on sub domains of El. The results showed that LD group was significantly lower than the non-LD group on UE, UM, E, and HR.

On a whole, the comparative study between the two groups indicated that LD students were low on emotional intelligence on the sub-domains of EI than the non-LD group. A comparative study by Hen and Goroshit (2014) revealed that, students with LD had low scores on EI than the non -LD students. It also revealed that, LD students had lower level of regulating self, higher level of stress and anxiety. In comparison with non-LD group, LD students showed negative emotions, lack of persistence and learned helplessness. A meta analysis of 152 studies conducted by Kavale and Forness (1996) indicated that, 75% of LD students have lack of social skills, exhibit feelings of being rejected and isolated. They tend to have difficulty in making friends and feel lonely. The results also indicated that, their lack of social skills could be due to their lack of perceiving non-verbal expressions of others.

Section II: Qualitative analysis of teachers' perspectives

The current section presented the thematic analysis carried out as phase 2 of the study. The objective for this phase was to have a comparative analysis of LD students' level of emotional intelligence and teachers' perception of LD students' emotional intelligence.

The thematic analysis was carried out by having five emotional intelligence competencies as main domains. Each of the five domains had a theme and sub-themes with extracts to reflect them.

Domain 1- Self-awareness

Factors influencing the level of self-awareness in students with LD

Poor insight

For the theme insight, four sub-themes were drawn based on the teachers' perspective of factors that influence LD students' level of self-awareness. The factors involved age, severity of LD, frustration and victim of bullying.

According to the respondent, age played an important factor for LD students to be aware of their actions. As they grow older and by the age of 14 or 15, they will be able to understand and be aware of their actions and behavior. Respondents believed that, students with severe learning disability are not aware of their actions due to limited knowledge and comprehension. Hence, they continue to be aggressive physically and verbally which leads to poor insight. However, students with mild form of LD are aware of the consequences of their actions.

Frustration also plays an important factor for having poor insight. According to the respondent, frustration makes them lose control over the situation and they tend to become aggressive verbally as well as physically. According to the respondent, since students with severe LD have lack of knowledge and understanding that they have been bullied. In turn they tend to reflect the same behavior what they have received.

LD students' reaction to new information

Reaction to new information

On the theme of reaction to new information, the sub-themes were presented based on the teachers' view on LD students' reaction to new information as well as realization about their strengths and weaknesses.

Extrinsic motivation

As mentioned by the respondent, students with LD are not aware of their strengths and weaknesses and feel hesitant to open up in a group activity. Hence they always need extrinsic motivation from the teachers to come out of their hesitation and perform the activity adequately.

Initial excitement

Most of the respondents reported that, students with LD show over-excitement in the beginning of the project based learning. But that over-excitement will be subjected to fluctuation, if the activity is time consuming and when they must work in collaboration.

External factors responsible for having fluctuations in confidence level

Fluctuations in confidence level

The above theme was based on the external factors responsible for the fluctuations in confidence level.

Teachers' pressure and peer pressure:

According to respondents, LD students are most of the time low on confidence due to teachers' constant reminders and expectations which pressurize them. Along with teachers' pressure, they also feel pressure from their peer group, especially with whom they are not comfortable with.

De-motivation:

The confidence level of students with LD depends on the teachers and fellow classmates, they are quite confident if they are surrounded by people who motivate them. If people de-motivate them, then their confidence level tend to go down.

Domain 2- Self-regulation

Difficulties faced by LD students in regulating themselves

Inattentive and hyperactivity

The theme inattentive and hyperactivity was based on the difficulties faced by LD students in regulating themselves.

Restlessness:

Most of the students according to respondents, are restless, does not take teachers' instructions, can't keep quiet during class hours and keep wandering.

Distractibility:

According to teachers, LD students tend to distract and deviate others to seek the attention of teachers.

Inattentive:

As compared to other student in the class, teachers reported that, LD students are inattentive and does not pay attention to instructions. As a result of which they tend to miss out on certain important instructions which leads to incompletion of work.

Strategies used by LD students in self-regulation

Defense mechanism

For the theme defense mechanism, two sub-themes were drawn based on the strategies used by LD students to regulate themselves.

Suppression and displacement:

According to respondents, LD students suppress their aggression and frustration in front of teachers and use displacement as their defense mechanism by showing their aggression on their friends and keep on drawing or writing something without paying attention. They also have a tendency to distract themselves from their feelings by disrupting the class.

Response to change

The theme was based on the teachers' view on LD students' response to change in a more aggressive way.

Disobedience:

According to the respondent, the adaptability and flexibility to change is difficult for LD students. They never welcome change immediately and take a long time to adapt to it. As a response to even a small change of place, they tend to refuse and rebel initially since they have built some kind of attachment and comfort towards it.

Responding to others' emotions

The theme was based on mixed response by the LD students as observed by teachers.

Mixed response-compassionate and apathy

According to the respondents, LD students have mixed response towards others' emotions. Few students respond to positive emotions like happiness of others very well but fail to reciprocate and show apathy if others are hurt. In addition to the above statement, a respondent also stated that, most of the LD students are quite compassionate towards their friends/peer group or classmate when they are hurt or sad and also try to console them.

Domain 3-Social skills

Taking responsibilities for their actions

Lack of ownership

The above theme was drawn based on a sub-theme of blaming others for their actions.

Blame others:

According to most of the respondents, LD students never take responsibility for their actions and never accepts their mistakes. They tend to portrait themselves as right and blame others.

Factors that influence interaction and communication

Interaction and communication

The theme focused on the factors that influence interaction and communication in LD students. There were several sub-themes being drawn from the main theme.

Fear:

It is stated by the respondent that, LD students tend to have a small friends circle and do not interact with other group of classmates and teachers out of fear.

Reluctance:

According to the respondent, students with LD are reluctant to speak to teachers while having a formal talk especially when they are low on confidence and hesitant.

Nonverbal communication:

According to respondents, students with LD are more effective in their nonverbal communication than verbal. The ineffective verbal communication is the result of their minimal vocabulary and their emotional state most of the times make them ineffective verbally. It is also evident by the respondents that, teachers who understand them will be able to understand their facial expressions and gestures.

Submissive and aggressive:

In addition to the above sub-theme, respondent also stated two kinds of extreme behavior, where there are students who exhibit verbal aggression in spite of lack of vocabulary and the other extreme is students who are submissive by being quiet and not showing any reactions at all.

Lack of leadership responsibility:

Teachers believed that, students with LD lacks leadership responsibility due to their inability to interact adequately with their peer group and convince others.

Domain 4-Empathy

Teachers' perception of LD students' empathetic capacity.

Response to others' emotions

The theme tried to answer the level the empathy displayed by LD students. As discussed in the social skills domain, they are quite compassionate towards the emotions of friends. But the theme also focused on 'lack of empathetic skills'.

Belongingness need:

According to the respondents, students with LD exhibit belongingness need by being compassionate towards their friends. There is lack of empathetic skills which could be due to their willingness to help but their 'low confidence level, hesitation' and moreover their failure to reason out will prohibit them from being empathetic. But they are definitely 'sympathetic'.

Domain 5-Motivation

Factors that influence the motivation in LD students

Motivation

The above theme focused on the factors that influenced the level of motivation in LD students.

According to the respondents, following were the factors that influence the level of motivation in students with LD.

Lack of self-motivation:

As stated by the respondent, they lack self-motivation and the reason for this is their hesitation and requires lot of extrinsic motivation along with repeated instructions.

Extrinsic motivation:

It is reported that, LD students will find it difficult to work independently. They want to do it but can't do it independently and don't take initiative to do the task because of their low on confidence level. Hence, they need extrinsic motivation to complete the given task. Above all their level of motivation also depends on the interest level of the task.

Lack of intrinsic motivation:

Since there is lack of intrinsic motivation, they are not goal oriented.

Lack of commitment:

According to the respondent, they are committed in the beginning but the commitment is for very short span of time. They tend to lose interest and patience if the task is being dragged for a long duration. This is due to their difficulty in 'sustaining attention and interest level'. This results in 'lack of perseverance'.

Section III: Integration of quantitative and qualitative results through convergent mixed method approach. The section also includes the extracts supporting the findings.

The aim of the study was to have a comparative analysis of LD students' level of emotional intelligence and teachers' perception of LD students' level of emotional intelligence. The comparative analysis was carried out through converging the results of quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the extent to which both the results converge or diverge. The quantitative results were analyzed through descriptive statistics and qualitative results were analyzed through thematic analysis. The subdomains of emotional intelligence that included understanding emotions, understanding motivation, empathy and handling relations presented highly significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence between the two groups. The results revealed that, LD group had lower level of emotional intelligence compared to non-LD group who had higher level of emotional intelligence. However, to get a better understanding about the important factors influencing LD students' level of emotional intelligence from the teachers' perspective on the main domains of emotional intelligence that included self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy and motivation will be converged with the sub domains of emotional intelligence scale used for quantitative data collection.

Self-awareness

The quantitative results of LD students' average on the sub scale of understanding emotions was 2.40 ($SD\pm0.98$) compared to non-LD group 3.67 ($SD\pm0.48$) that indicated LD students have low self-awareness. However, qualitative analysis elicited important themes and sub-themes as factors influencing lack of self-awareness from the perspective of teachers on LD students. The theme 'poor insight' was based on the sub-themes of 'age, severity of LD, frustration and victim of bullying' acted as important factors influencing LD students' lack of self-awareness. According to the teachers, students with mild form of LD are aware of their actions by the time they reach high school. Whereas, students with severe LD are not aware of it due to lack of knowledge and understanding ability. It is observed that, most of the LD students in the selected sample have undergone remedial program at resource centre at school which focused on the special education to improve their academic functioning but not the neuro-cognitive skills and emotional intelligence skills which is also equally important. This suggested that, students with severe LD have to be trained on all the above skills for holistic development of the student at a very young age. The other two sub-themes 'frustration and victim of bullying', according to teachers it is also interrelated to the home environment of the student and the way they are treated by peer group and at home. This suggested that, there is a need for teaching students strategies to handle their frustration and create awareness among the students and parents in the presence of teachers regarding the adverse effect of bullying and its impact on students' development. An instructional program-Me developed by Cantley, (2011) aimed at developing curriculum which included lessons on self-awareness and self-advocacy to aid the training and learning of self awareness skill and knowledge in students with disabilities. The purpose was to make students a self-aware adults to cater their academic needs and employment in future. The results revealed that, ME! lessons that included role play, video clips, presentations, case studies and instructions directed by teachers, enhanced self awareness and they believed that, the content in lessons were useful and realistic.

"In a very young age, probably children may not be aware of this. But by the time they are 14 or 15 years old, they are capable to understand that."

"Out of their frustration they will not have control on whatever they speak or most of the times they lift their hands first as their actions."

"Children with LD, those who have severe kind of problems not aware. But there are children with very mild kind of a problem, they know the effects."

"In cases of severe LD they do not understand that, they are being teased or they are being aggressive or they have been abused, they do not understand. They also try to be more aggressive and they use same kinds of words what they are been getting."

Self-regulation

The quantitative analysis on the sub-scale of understanding emotions as discussed above had items related to self-regulation as well. The qualitative analysis brought out important themes and subthemes on the difficulties faced by LD students to regulate themselves and the ways they use to regulate themselves in the perspective of teachers handling them in an inclusive classroom. The theme 'inattention and hyperactivity' was drawn based on the difficulties faced by LD students which had three sub-themes-restlessness, distractibility and inattentive. According to the teachers, most of the LD students show restlessness by moving around and not paying attention or listening to teachers' instruction. They get easily distracted and distract the class by talking during class hours. The difficulty faced by LD students indicate that, there is a relationship between learning disability and self-regulation. Students with severe learning disability placed in a heterogeneous group of 35-40 in a class will be overwhelming for them. Hence to regulate themselves, students with LD have to be taught self-regulation strategies. According to Harris, Reid, & Graham, (2004) children having LD and ADHD demonstrate problematic behavior in the classroom in the form of inadequate verbalization or behaviour, impulsive and excessive motor activity. There are numerous self-regulation strategies that can be taught to students with difficulties. The strategies include monitoring, evaluating, instructing oneself, setting goals and reinforcing oneself. The study also showed that, efficient learners are tend to be oriented toward goals and setting goals which are considered to be vital part of self-regulation.

"Most of the cases they are restless, they won't keep quiet, won't take all the instructions given by the teacher. Restless, they keep moving they want a break. It is like they want complete attention on them. When a set of 40 children are there that attention on one particular child may not happen during the class hours. So to distract...not actually distract, to get that attention they start deviating, distracting, distracting others like that they grab the attention of the teacher. "

"Most of them they don't pay attention to what is being said, like the other children pay attention to each and every word and they are clear with what is being instructed. But these students, they are not able to, it is not they don't, they are not able to pay attention. So they miss out certain important instructions. So because of that they don't complete. So they miss a few words, important instructions."

Social skills

The quantitative results of LD students' average on the sub-scale of handling relations is 5.07 $(SD \pm 1.28)$ as compared to non-LD students 7.47 $(SD \pm 1.40)$ which indicates LD students have difficulties on handling relations. However the qualitative analysis extracts important theme and subtheme on the LD students' ability to take responsibilities for their actions. The theme: 'lack of ownership for their actions' is based on the sub-theme of 'blaming others' for their actions which shows that, they are not ready to take responsibility for their actions initially which could be the result of their fear of the consequences that, they need to face for their actions, fear of punishment and fear of parents being called by the teachers.

"Usually, they don't do it. They don't take the responsibility. They say it was not me, it was the other person."

The social skills domain has another important theme 'interaction and communication' which is based on the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of interaction and communication. The factors influencing poor interaction and communication has sub-themes of 'fear, reluctance, low confidence and hesitation'. Students with LD have difficulty with language which makes them low on confidence and hesitate to share experiences. Even though they may have knowledge about the concept, fear makes them reluctant to be part of the interaction. Hence their inability to express verbally makes them effective in non-verbal communication especially when they find difficulty to find the right words to justify their behavior, makes them aggressive or submissive. Both the extremes are not a healthy way of expression. According to respondents, LD students are filled with ideas but they fail in convincing their peer group due to their lack of communication and interaction skills. They may also find it

difficult to manage the large group who may not give value to their words which in turn makes them aggressive and hesitation, low on confidence because of their difficulties. This leads to lack of leadership responsibility. Hence there is a need to create opportunities and workshops to train the students to have an effective verbal as well as non verbal communication and interaction at schools which results in boosting their confidence and become a good leader. A review paper focused on the factors contributing to the LD students' deficit in social skills. The contributing factors for deficit in social skills included verbal communication, problem solving skills, behavioural problems and social perception. It was also evident through studies that, due to visual perceptual deficits children exhibit deficits in reading non-verbal cues leading to difficulty in social skills (Harnadek & Rourke, 1994; Rourke, 1989). The paper also reviewed research on the efficiency of methods adopted to enhance children's social skills (Cermak, & Aberson, 1998). Group activities used by occupational therapist facilitate children with LD practice social skills in and out of class Brown, 1993 (as cited by Cermak,& Aberson, 1998). As a result of which children feel more secured, confident and enhance social skills Olson's 1993 study (as cited by Cermak, & Aberson, 1998). According to Feign and Meisgeier (1987), occupational therapists play a crucial role in the holistic development of the child since they have expertise in the group activities of the therapeutic approach and a strong hold in both physical and psychological problems with disabilities. Hence equal importance must be given with regard to child's social, emotional and academic requirements.

"They will have a very small circle with whom they are comfortable and with them the interaction is good and no problem." "With others out of fear they will not." "When it comes to something formal or talking to a teacher, some might feel a little reluctant to speak while the other type of students they might be quite confident and comfortable. Those who are little active type, those who are confident, those who are not confident will definitely not speak at all."

"Most of the times they try express it through gestures only - hand movement. Words very less, they can't express it, they will not express. Non-verbal is more effective than Verbal."

"I have got 2 kinds of extremes, one is very verbal they justify all their actions very aggressively but it is not that they will use very good English or something but they are able to communicate themselves. Otherwise they are very submissive or they don't react to it. Whatever you do, whatever you ask, they just keep quiet, they smile, they nod and keep quiet."

"Leadership probably will be difficult for them. Because you know a leader must have very many good qualities to take the leadership. Of course he must be able to have a good interaction with many and he must be clear with his own thoughts and he must be able to express it to all and he must be able to also convince everyone in the group. These things I don't think are very easy for the people with LD."

Empathy

The quantitative analysis of LD students' average on the sub-scale of empathy showed 6.13 ($SD\pm0.91$) compared to non-LD group 8 ($SD\pm1.55$) indicates low on empathy. However qualitative analysis based on the theme 'response to others' emotions' showed converging as well as diverging sub-themes such as 'compassionate towards their friends, lack of empathy more of sympathy, fail in reasoning, low on confidence, hesitation'. This indicated that they are compassionate but only with close friend not with others and they tend to have empathetic skill but due to their failure in reasoning which is part of their difficulty, they may not know how to approach the problem which makes them low on confidence and hesitate to respond to others' emotions. But the qualitative analysis ensured that, they are sympathetic if not empathetic. This gives a hope that, they can be empathetic if they are trained on cognitive skills which improves their reasoning ability and boost their confidence. A study on cognitive and emotional empathy is typical in impaired readers and its relationship to reading competence revealed that, students with dyslexia have low scores on empathy and cognitive empathy. Results revealed a strong relationship between reading skills and empathic abilities (Gabay, Shamay-Tsoory, & Goldfarb, 2016). However, the qualitative data of the present study indicated that, LD students also exhibit empathy towards friends indicating divergence.

"It depends who the person is with them, okay, if the person is somebody with whom they are very comfortable with whom they have very good interaction, and then they openly talk. They openly discuss many things with such children but if it is not that group then they are just quiet."

"They will have that sympathy, they will feel definitely sorry and they feel sad but getting into their shoes and trying to realize what mistake it is, why this happened? And all they fail in understanding that but definitely they sympathize. But empathizing will not happen."

"As I have seen, they know if somebody is sad they can do something but they always have the hesitation."

"They do have qualities of empathizing with others. Maybe they are low on their confidence in expressing."

Motivation

The quantitative results of LD students' average on the sub scale of understanding motivation was 3.40 ($SD \pm 1.68$) compared to non-LD group 5.80 ($SD \pm 1.37$) indicating low on motivation. However, qualitative analysis elicited important theme and sub-themes as factors influencing 'lack of self motivation' from the perspective of teachers on LD students. The theme factors influencing lack of motivation was based on the sub-themes of 'Lack of self motivation, Hesitation, Repeated instruction, need for extrinsic motivation, Interest level, Lack of intrinsic motivation, Lack of commitment, Difficulty in sustaining attention and interest and lack of perseverance' acted as important factors influencing LD students' lack of motivation. Studies showed that, students with learning disability lack intrinsic motivation compared to non-LD students. Research findings revealed that, LD students want to be motivated by teachers (Grolnick & Ryan, 1990). It is also important to include motivational component while designing intervention program for LD students (Adelman, MacDonald, Nelson, Smith, & Taylor, 1990). A series of experiments conducted by Deci, (1971) which has been given to students as an external reward, the students lose intrinsic motivation, whereas students' intrinsic motivation increases with verbal reinforcement and positive feedback. Even though external rewards have been used by teachers in the classroom for the good work of students, which may work in the younger classes but with the higher classes, there is a need for positive feedback and verbal reinforcement.

"Self-motivation lacks, they hesitate. First thing is they hesitate, with the help of the teacher and with the help of his own friends he may better do that task. Try to complete the given task. Otherwise that self-motivation is not there."

"Motivation, I think they need extra motivation as I told you. Because just telling them once or twice may not help them. They need repeated instructions."

"They are quite motivated, first of all it depends what is a task, is it of their interest."

"Coming back, you know it differs from time to time. Initially they will be very much committed and if it is not done in a very short span and it goes on dragging they will lose the interest and the commitment comes down and probably the level of patience also will be also little less in them. If they have started now and they have to finish it now. So we cannot expect commitment for a long time, even interest also. But initially yes, they will be dedicated, they will be happy to get a topic, want to do something. All these things are very much seen in the initial stages. If it goes on dragging, they lose their interest and they don't mind even to stop it at half. The earlier you know what interest has been seen will not be seen in the later if it goes on for long period."

Conclusions

Conclusions drawn from the results included-

- LD students were low on emotional intelligence and on the sub domains of EI compared to non-LD students.
- Teachers' perspectives on LD students' emotional intelligence provides with an in-depth understanding about the reasons and factors responsible for low emotional intelligence in LD students.
- Low on confidence, hesitation, lack of intrinsic motivation, poor verbal communication and interaction leading to lack of leadership skills, victim of bullying, peer pressure, teachers' pressure, constant need for extrinsic motivation, negative way of regulating emotions and lack of empathy were some of the important themes and sub-themes resulting in lack of self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy and motivation in LD students.

Overall, the hypothesis stated for the current study- 'There is no significant difference between two groups (LD and non-LD) on understanding emotions, understanding motivation, empathy, handling relations and emotional intelligence total' was rejected. As there was a statistically significant difference found between the two groups and the LD group was found to be lower on the emotional intelligence and sub-domains of EI compared to non-LD group.

The teachers' perspectives on LD students' emotional intelligence in an inclusive classroom indicated that, emotional intelligence plays an important role in the holistic development of an individual's life and more emphasis has to be given on the development of intervention programs for LD students and training programs and workshops for teachers to enhance emotional intelligence.

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