A Study of Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanism of Graduate Students

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Abstract-

The present study aims to examine the significant differences between male and female graduate students and between students enrolled in Traditional and Professional courses with respect to Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms. In the current academic and social environment, social intelligence plays a vital role in effective interpersonal interaction, emotional understanding, and social adjustment. Defence mechanisms are unconscious psychological strategies used by individuals to cope with stress, anxiety and internal conflicts. Understanding the association between Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms is essential for promoting students' psychological well-being and adaptive behavior. The study adopted a descriptive survey method. The sample consisted of graduate students from Traditional and Professional courses selected from higher education institutions. Data were collected using standardized tools measuring Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms. Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-test were used as statistical techniques for data analysis.

The findings of the study reveal differences in Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms among male and female graduate students and between students of Traditional and Professional courses at different levels of significance. The study concludes that significant differences exist in Social Intelligence with respect to the type of course pursued, with Traditional course students exhibiting higher Social Intelligence than Professional course students at the 0.05 level of significance. However, no significant difference was found in Defence Mechanisms between students of Professional and Traditional courses. Further, the findings reveal that gender does not significantly influence either Social Intelligence or Defence Mechanisms among graduate students.

Overall, the study highlights that while academic stream may have a limited impact on Social Intelligence, Defence Mechanisms appear to be independent of both course type and gender.

Inroduction:-

Education at the graduate level is not only concerned with academic achievement but also with the overall psychological and social development of students. Graduate students face multiple challenges such as academic pressure, career uncertainty, social expectations, and emotional stress. In this context, psychological factors like Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms play a crucial role in determining how students perceive, respond to, and cope with their social and emotional environment.

Social Intelligence refers to an individual's ability to understand social situations, interpret others' emotions and intentions, and respond appropriately in interpersonal interactions. It enables individuals to maintain healthy relationships, communicate effectively, and adjust successfully within social settings. For graduate students, high social intelligence contributes to better peer relationships, effective collaboration, emotional regulation, and overall psychological well-being.

Defence Mechanisms, on the other hand, are unconscious psychological strategies used by individuals to protect themselves from anxiety, stress, and internal conflicts. These mechanisms help individuals manage emotional discomfort arising from academic demands, social pressures, and personal challenges. Defence mechanisms may be adaptive (mature) or maladaptive (immature), depending on how effectively they help individuals cope with stress.

Previous research has independently examined Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms in relation to mental health, adjustment, and academic functioning. Studies suggest that individuals with higher Social Intelligence tend to display better emotional control and adaptive coping strategies, while maladaptive defence mechanisms are often associated with poor adjustment and psychological distress. However, limited research has explored the relationship between Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms together, particularly among graduate students.

Therefore, the present study seeks to investigate the relationship between Social Intelligence and Defence Mechanisms among graduate students. Understanding this relationship can provide valuable insights into students' coping patterns and interpersonal functioning. The findings may help educators, counsellors, and mental

health professionals design appropriate intervention programs aimed at enhancing social skills, promoting adaptive defence mechanisms, and supporting the overall psychological development of graduate students.

Review Highlights: - The following findings were reported in previous studies:

- **Mishra and Oandey (2023)** Students with higher Social Intelligence experience lower academic stress and demonstrate better coping abilities.

- **Singh and Verma (2022)** A positive relationship exists between Social Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence, highlighting its role in emotional regulation and adjustment.

- **Mehta and Joshi (2022)** Professional course students frequently use avoidance and rationalization due to academic pressure.

- **Yadav and Singh (2021)** No significant gender differences were found in Defence Mechanisms.

- **Patel and Trivedi (2021)** No significant gender difference was found in Social Intelligence among graduate students, suggesting similar development in males and females.

- **Sharma and Kaur (2020)** Students from traditional academic streams demonstrated higher levels of Social Intelligence than those from professional courses, indicating the influence of academic environment.

- **Gupta and Sharma (2020)** Higher academic stress leads to increased reliance on neurotic and immature defence mechanisms among university students.

Objectives of the Study:-

1. To study the Social Intelligence of graduate students in Professional and Traditional courses.

2. To study the Defence Mechanisms of graduate students in Professional and Traditional courses.

3. To study the Social Intelligence of male and female graduate students.

4. To study the Defence Mechanisms of male and female graduate students.

Hypotheses of the Study: -

1. There is no significant difference in Social Intelligence between graduate students of Professional and Traditional courses.

2. There is no significant difference in Defence Mechanisms between graduate students of Professional and Traditional courses.

3. There is no significant difference in Social Intelligence between male and female graduate students.

4. There is no significant difference in Defence Mechanisms between male and female graduate students.

Delimitations of the Study:-

The study is confined to the following boundaries:

a) The study is limited to Saharanpur District of Uttar Pradesh.

b) The sample includes only graduate-level students.

c) The study applies only to students enrolled in Professional and Traditional courses.

Methodology: - In the present study Descriptive Survey Method was used.

Population: Graduate students of colleges in Saharanpur District.

Sample Size: 120 students

- 60 from Traditional courses
- 60 from Professional courses
- Equal representation of boys and girls

Sampling Technique: Simple Random Sampling. Colleges were selected randomly, and a fixed number of students were chosen from each institution.

Variables:

- Independent Variable: Social Intelligence
- Dependent Variable: Defence Mechanisms

Tools Used

- Social Intelligence Scale by Dr. N. K. Chadha and Usha Ganesan
- Defence Mechanism Inventory by Dr. N. R. Mrinal and Dr. Uma Singhal

Statistical Techniques Used: -

1. Mean
2. Standard Deviation
3. t-test

Result/Interpretation: -

Objective-1. To study the Social Intelligence of graduate students in Professional and Traditional courses.

Table 1. Calculation of t-value for the study of Social Intelligence of graduate students in Professional and Traditional courses.

Course	No. of students	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Significance
Professional	60	82.42	11.32	2.19	118	Non-Significant at 0.01 level Significant at 0.05 level
Traditional	60	86.83	10.67			

The obtained *t*-value is significant at the 0.05 level but not significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates that a statistically significant difference exists in the social intelligence of graduate students enrolled in professional and traditional courses at the 0.05 level of significance. Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected at the 0.05 level but retained at the 0.01 level. The findings further suggest that students pursuing traditional courses demonstrate comparatively higher social intelligence than those enrolled in professional courses.

Objective-2. To study the Defence Mechanism of graduate students in Professional and Traditional courses.

Table 2. Calculation of t-value for the study of Defence Mechanism of graduate students in Professional and Traditional courses.

Course	No. of students	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Significance
Professional	60	170.53	17.98	0.41	118	Not significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level

The obtained *t*-value is not significant at either the 0.05 or the 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that no statistically significant difference exists in the defence mechanisms of graduate students with respect to the type of course pursued. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. It may be concluded that enrollment in professional or traditional courses does not significantly influence the defence mechanisms of graduate students.

Objective-3. To study the Social Intelligence of Male and Female graduate students.

Table 3. Calculation of t-value for the study of Social Intelligence of Male and Female graduate students.

Category	No. of students	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Significance
Male	60	85.36	11.05	0.73	118	Non- significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level
Female	60	83.88	11.01			

The obtained *t*-value is not significant at either the 0.05 or the 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that no statistically significant difference exists in the social intelligence of male and female graduate students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. The findings suggest that gender does not play a significant role in determining social intelligence among graduate students.

Objective-4. To study the Defence Mechanism of Male and Female graduate students.

Table 4. Calculation of t-value for the study of Defence Mechanism of Male and Female graduate students.

Category	No. of students	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Level of Significance
Male	60	169.80	18.01	0.85	118	Non-Significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level
Female	60	172.67	19.15			

The calculated *t*-value is not significant at either the 0.05 or the 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that no statistically significant difference exists in the defence mechanisms of male and female graduate students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. The findings suggest that defence mechanisms among graduate students are not influenced by gender.

Conclusion and Generalization: -

The study concludes that Social Intelligence differs significantly based on the type of course pursued, with Traditional course students showing higher levels than Professional course students. However, Defence Mechanisms are not significantly influenced by course type. Gender does not significantly affect either Social Intelligence or Defence Mechanisms. Overall, Defence Mechanisms appear to be independent of both academic stream and gender among graduate students.

Suggestions for Future Research: -

1. Use larger and more diverse samples to improve generalizability.
2. Conduct studies at different educational levels.
3. Compare different disciplines and institutions.
4. Undertake longitudinal studies to observe developmental changes.
5. Examine relationships with variables such as emotional intelligence, stress, self-esteem, and academic achievement.
6. Use qualitative or mixed-method approaches for deeper insights.
7. Evaluate intervention programs aimed at improving Social Intelligence and adaptive Defence Mechanisms.
8. Conduct gender-specific and culture-based studies.
9. Include moderating variables such as socio-economic status and personality.
10. Perform cross-cultural comparisons.

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