



Journal of Social Sciences, Literature and Languages

Journal of Social Sciences, Literature and Languages

Available online at jssll.blue-ap.org

©2017 JSSLL Journal. Vol. 2(3), pp. 35-41, 31 May, 2017

A Comparison on Meta Emotion in Gifted and Normal Students

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Received: 17 April, 2017

Accepted: 8 May, 2017

Published: 31 May, 2017

ABSTRACT

The objective in this research is to compare metaemotion in gifted and normal students. The research method in this study is ex post facto and of casual-comparative type. The statistical population in this research includes all male and female junior high school students of NODET and normal schools of Ardabil County during 2011-2012 school year. The research sample included 40 gifted students who were chosen through systematic random sampling, since the list of all gifted students was available to the researcher and also, 40 normal students who were chosen through matching method. Metaemotion questionnaire is used to collect data in this research. To analyze the data, MANOVA method is used. Research results suggested that there is a significant difference between gifted and normal student based on metaemotion.

Keywords: metaemotion, gifted students, normal students.

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INTRODUCTION

Students are the most significant human capitals in any society, for they can develop a country through blending youth power, science and taught skills. There is a great deal of national income dedicated to education in all countries. However, a large amount of the dedicated budget is wasted. One of the cases which has been emphasized by the teachers and parents of students is the educational achievements of the learners. One of the most significant factors in students' educational achievement is the psychological factors. Among the important personality characteristics which seem to impact the performance in stressful situations such as international scientific competitions and prevent the impact of interfering factors. On the other hand, one of the main objectives of modern education systems is to train individuals who are able to overcome their problems in their daily lives and in social environments. (Selcuk, Caliska, and Erol, 2007) Since students are the main elements of the education system, they have a special position in education system goals. Considering this great class of the society in regards with their education, leads to the flourish of education system in the society. It is clear that identification of various psychological aspects of students could be highly useful in educational planning. Since gifted students are considered as a valuable capital for the society, considering the differences between gifted and normal students based on their psychological aspects, and also considering the special characteristics of gifted students, it seems that the society has the duty to provide a condition so that the factors effective in prosperity of these individuals are identified and considered like metaemotion and other aspects of mental health in them.

Emotion is a complex system which has developed during human evolution and equips organisms with environmental stimuli and challenges. (Cringe and Moran, 2008) Emotions present internal data which impact motivation and behavior. In fact, emotion could be prior to cognition and empirical data shows that it is controlled through subcortical structures. Emotions could impact a range of cognitive processes such as attentional bias and judgments and decision-makings memory. (Clever and Parratt, 1994)

Metaemotion could be considered as a subcategory of secondary emotions. A secondary emotion is defined as an anxiety which follows a primary motion such as anger. (Greenberg, 2002) Also, metaemotion implies the fact that primary emotions could be the target of secondary emotions, e.g. anxiety about its anger. Hence, emotions such as anxiety, anger or sympathy are metaemotion, if their target is emotional itself. Like emotions, metaemotion is beyond metacognition (Wales and Cartwright-Hatton, 2004) and it could create a vicious cycle and reflect the impacts.

Negative metaemotion, such as meta-anger and meta-anxiety, reflect lack of acceptability. Positive metaemotions, such as meta-sympathy and meta-interest, support acceptability of personal emotions with positive impact possible in individual's well-being. (Neff, 2003) Metaemotion quality provides evidence for regularity operational processes related to target emotions. For instance, being nervous about one's anxiety affects the experience of anxiety and this process is different from the experience of sympathy about being anxious. Meta-anxiety about one's emotions expresses threat and uncertainty with a tendency towards AMAL ZAMIME. (Lazarus, 1991) While the meta-anger of targeted cognition is blocked and includes motivation towards attack, perceived control in emotional manipulations of meta-anxiety is different from meta-anger. Apart from meta-anxiety, there is a little empirical data available on the phenomenon of emotion about emotion.

In his research, Neff (2003) showed that negative metaemotions, such as meta-anger and meta-anxiety, are related to the lack of emotions acceptability, and positive metaemotion, such as meta-sympathy and meta-interest, is related to acceptability of personal emotions with positive impact in the individual's well-being. Lehi (2005) concluded that individuals who expect much of the others (set their expectations too high) are more likely to be affected by emotions which lead to anxiety. If individuals have correct expectations, they experience lesser sense of guilt and shame about their emotions.

There are several researches indicating the relationship between assertiveness, self-esteem and education achievement. For instance, in their studies, Lee, Corbin and Daniklo (1998), Chen, Wang and Chen (2001), and Sock, Ewang and Watkins (2001) came to this conclusion that there is a positive relationship between the three aforementioned variables. On the other hand, some of the researches studied the rate of assertiveness, self-esteem and educational achievement in gifted students, comparing to normal students. Researches indicate a high rate of assertiveness in gifted students. (Haunt and Randaw, 1980; Carnes and Wary, 1981; Carnes, Chawin and Truant, 1985; Hum and Shagency, 1992) Also, various studies have proved the high self-esteem in gifted students.

Mirin (1999) expressed that individuals with high intelligence have better adaptability. He has also expressed that according to various studies, gifted individuals have better adaptability, comparing to individuals with average intelligence and this could be due to their higher capability in problem-solving. In a study entitled "A Developmental Study on Self-Concept, Self-Esteem, Anxiety and Depression in Gifted and Normal Teenagers, Ashtiyani (1995) came to this conclusion that anxiety is higher in normal teenagers, comparing to the gifted teenagers. Through comparing gifted and normal students, Ashtiyani (1995) concluded that prevalence of depression is lower in gifted students, comparing to normal students. Baker's (1996) study on the comparison of depression and suicide rate in gifted and normal children indicates that there is a significant difference in depression and suicide rate in gifted and normal students. Also, in another study, Neff (2003) showed that negative metaemotions, such as meta-anger and meta-anxiety, are related to the lack of emotions acceptability, and positive metaemotion, such as meta-sympathy and meta-interest, is related to acceptability of personal emotions with positive impact in the individual's well-being. In their study, Wolton and Greenberg (2005) came to this conclusion that self-humiliation is related to depression symptoms.

Lehi (2005) concluded that individuals who expect much of the others (set their expectations too high) are more likely to be affected by emotions which lead to anxiety. If individuals have correct expectations, they experience lesser sense of guilt and shame about their emotions. Hence, the main question in this research is that if there is a difference between gifted and normal students in metaemotion.

Methodology

The research method in this study is ex post facto and of casual-comparative type. In this method, the researcher tries to study the relationship between special factors and conditions or behavior type which was present or occurred before, through studying the results derived from them. (Delavar, 2001) Two groups of students (gifted and normal) were compared based on the metaemotion variable. In this research, the variables of being gifted and normal in students was considered as the independent variable and the variable of metaemotion was considered as the dependent variable.

Statistical Population

The statistical population in this research included all female and male students of NODET and normal schools of Ardabil County during 2011-2012 school year. Based on the rough estimations, 11,000 female students and around 12,000 male students are studying in junior high schools in Ardabil County and in both female and male NODET junior high school, around 360 students are studying.

Sample Size and Sampling Method

The sample in this research included 40 gifted students who were chosen through systematic random sampling, since the list of all gifted students was available to the researcher and also, 40 normal students were chosen through matching method. In estimating the sample size, Delavar (2005) research method is used and for causal-comparative studies, 15 individuals in each group is enough, but in order to increase the external validity of the study, 40 individuals were chosen.

Data Collection Method

Questionnaire was used to collect the data in this study. After preparing the list of the names normal and gifted students and choosing them, initially the research objective was presented to them and research tests were presented to them, subsequently. They were asked to express their ideas accurately. The data was collected in groups and in the classrooms and the data was analyzed via SPSS.

Data Collection Instrument

1. Metaemotion Questionnaire: Metaemotion questionnaire (Harris and Megardy, 2004) was used to assess metaemotion components. This questionnaire includes 27 items and each participant answers these items in the form of six choices (from completely wrong to completely right). The Metaemotion scale includes six components: 1. Compassionate Concern 2. Meta-anger 3. Meta Interest 4. Meta Humiliation/Shame 5. Thought Meta Control 6. Meta Inhibition. The Cronbach’s alpha for this questionnaire was reported to be 0.7 to 0.8. the correlation coefficient of this scale is reported to be significant along with NEO, positive and negative emotions scale, Beck’s Depression Scale, and Metacognition questionnaire.
- 2.

Data Analysis Method

In order to analyze the data in this research, MANOVA was used and to test the research questions, step-by-step Regression was used.

Research Findings

- a. Descriptive Findings:

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Metaemotion Components among Gifted and Normal Students

Variables	Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation
Anger	Normal Students	12.40	2.66
	Gifted Students	4.80	1.87
Compassionate Concern	Normal Students	16.95	2.94
	Gifted Students	26.82	3.57
Interest	Normal Students	12.95	2.97
	Gifted Students	20.22	3.06
Shame	Normal Students	20.95	1.73
	Gifted Students	13.15	2.51
Hardship Control	Normal Students	13.27	2.53
	Gifted Students	8.60	1.97
Suppression	Normal Students	2.42	0.87
	Gifted Students	6.70	1.66

As it could be observed in Table 1, in all components of metaemotion, gifted students are higher than normal students.

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of Metaemotion Components among Gifted Male and Female Students

Variables	Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation
Anger	Male	6.40	1.84
	Female	4.20	1.73
Compassionate Concern	Male	24.00	2.34
	Female	26.65	3.96
Interest	Male	19.85	3.58
	Female	20.60	2.47
Shame	Male	13.30	2.71
	Female	13.00	2.36
Hardship Control	Male	7.75	1.74
	Female	9.45	1.84
Suppression	Male	6.40	2.06
	Female	7.00	1.12

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of Metaemotion Components among Normal Male and Female Students

Variables	Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Metaemotion	Anger	Male	12.15	2.45
		Female	12.65	2.90
	Compassionate Concern	Male	16.50	2.68
		Female	17.40	3.18
	Interest	Male	10.85	2.41
		Female	15.05	1.76
	Shame	Male	20.75	1.83
		Female	21.15	1.66
	Hardship Control	Male	13.30	2.71
		Female	13.25	2.40
	Suppression	Male	2.35	0.87
		Female	2.50	0.88

b. Findings Related to the Hypotheses

Hypotheses:

- There is a significant difference between gifted and normal students in metaemotion.

Table 4. Levene's Test to Assess the Equality of Variances of Metaemotion Components in Two Groups of Gifted and Normal Students

Variables	F	Degrees of Freedom 1	Degrees of Freedom 2	Sig. Level
Anger	6.14	1	78	0.13
Compassionate Concern	1.68	1	78	0.19
Interest	0.01	1	78	0.91
Shame	3.19	1	78	0.07
Hardship Control	1.33	1	78	0.25
Suppression	4.58	1	78	0.35

As it could be seen in Table 4, F static error level is not significant for variables of anger, compassionate concern, interest, shame, hardship control and suppression, and this indicates that error variance of these variables is not different between participants (gifted and normal students) and variances are equal.

Table 5. Data Related to Validity Indices of Metaemotion Components Variance Test

Effect	Value	F	Degrees of Freedom	Degrees of Freedom of Error	Sig. Level
Pylayy Effect	0.99	685.20	10	69	0.01≤P
Wilks Lambda	0.01	685.20	10	69	0.01≤P
Hotelling Effect	99.30	685.20	10	69	0.01≤P
Ray's Largest Root	99.30	685.20	10	69	0.01≤P

As it could be observed from Table 5, Wilks Lambda value is equal to 0.01 which is significant at $p \leq 0.01$; that is, there is a significant difference between gifted and normal students based on anger, compassionate concern, interest, shame, hardship control and suppression.

Table 6. MANOVA of Metaemotion Components among Gifted and Normal Students

Source	Scales	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean of Squares	F	Sig. Level
Group	Anger	1155.20	1	879.33	217.64	0.00
	Compassionate Concern	1950.31	1	456.31	181.60	0.00
	Interest	1058.31	1	789.31	115.81	0.00
	Shame	1216.80	1	321.80	260.02	0.00
	Hardship Control	437.11	1	231.15	84.90	0.00
	Suppression	365.51	1	266.11	206.33	0.00

Also, this hypothesis that “there is a significant difference between gifted and normal students in metaemotion” is approved at $p \leq 0.01$ and that shows that hypothesis zero is refuted and the counter hypothesis is approved; that is, there is a significant difference between gifted and normal students in metaemotion components.

- There is a significant difference between gifted female and male students in metaemotion.

Table 7. Levene's Test to Assess the Equality of Variances of Metaemotion Components in Gifted Female and Male Students

Variables	F	Degrees of Freedom 1	Degrees of Freedom 2	Sig. Level
Anger	0.16	1	38	0.69
Compassionate Concern	2.45	1	38	0.12
Interest	4.19	1	38	0.47
Shame	0.36	1	38	0.54
Hardship Control	0.004	1	38	0.95
Suppression	4.66	1	38	0.37

As it could be seen in Table 7, F static error level is not significant for variables of anger, compassionate concern, interest, shame, hardship control and suppression, and this indicates that error variance of these variables is not different between gifted female and male students and variances are equal.

Table 8. Data Related to Validity Indices of Metaemotion Components Variance Test for Gifted Female and Male Students

Effect	Value	F	Degrees of Freedom	Degrees of Freedom of Error	Sig. Level
Pylayy Effect	0.52	3.22	10	29	0.01≤P
Wilks Lambda	0.47	3.22	10	29	0.01≤P
Hotelling Effect	1.11	3.22	10	29	0.01≤P
Ray's Largest Root	1.11	3.22	10	29	0.01≤P

As it could be observed from Table 8, Wilks Lambda value is equal to 0.47 which is significant at $p \leq 0.01$; that is, there is a significant difference between gifted female and male students based on anger, compassionate concern, interest, shame, hardship control and suppression.

Table 9. MANOVA of Metaemotion Components among Gifted Female and Male Students

Source	Scales	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean of Squares	F	Sig. Level
Group	Anger	14.40	1	14.40	4.48	0.04
	Compassionate Concern	1.22	1	1.22	0.09	0.03
	Interest	5.62	1	5.62	0.59	0.44
	Shame	0.90	1	0.90	0.13	0.71
	Hardship Control	28.90	1	28.90	8.95	0.01
	Suppression	3.60	1	3.60	1.30	0.26

As it could be observed from Table 9, hypothesis number 3 “there is a significant difference between gifted female and male students in metaemotion” is approved at $p \leq 0.05$ based on anger, compassionate concern, and hardship control and that shows that there is a significant difference between gifted female and male students in components of anger, compassionate concern, and hardship control.

- There is a significant difference between normal female and male students in metaemotion.

Table 10. Levene's Test to Assess the Equality of Variances of Metaemotion Components in Normal Female and Male Students

Variables	F	Degrees of Freedom 1	Degrees of Freedom 2	Sig. Level
Anger	1.21	1	38	0.27
Compassionate Concern	2.49	1	38	0.12
Interest	1.31	1	38	0.25
Shame	0.40	1	38	0.53
Hardship Control	0.21	1	38	0.64
Suppression	0.04	1	38	0.83

As it could be seen in Table 10, F static error level is not significant for variables of anger, compassionate concern, interest, shame, hardship control and suppression, and this indicates that error variance of these variables is not different between normal female and male students and variances are equal.

Table 11. Data Related to Validity Indices of Metaemotion Components Variance Test for Normal Female and Male Students

Effect	Value	F	Degrees of Freedom	Degrees of Freedom of Error	Sig. Level
Pylayy Effect	0.70	6.81	10	29	0.01≤P
Wilks Lambda	0.29	6.81	10	29	0.01≤P
Hotelling Effect	2.35	6.81	10	29	0.01≤P
Ray's Largest Root	2.35	6.81	10	29	0.01≤P

As it could be observed from Table 11, Wilks Lambda value is equal to 0.29 which is significant at $p \leq 0.01$; that is, there is a significant difference between normal female and male students based on anger, compassionate concern, interest, shame, hardship control and suppression.

As it could be observed from Table 12, hypothesis number 6 “there is a significant difference between normal female and male students in metaemotion” is approved at $p \leq 0.05$ based on interest and that shows that there is a significant difference between normal female and male students in component of interest.

Table 12. MANOVA of Metaemotion Components among Normal Female and Male Students

Source	Scales	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean of Squares	F	Sig. Level
Group	Anger	2.50	1	2.50	0.34	0.56
	Compassionate Concern	8.10	1	8.10	0.93	0.34
	Interest	176.40	1	176.40	39.54	0.00
	Shame	1.60	1	1.60	0.52	0.47
	Hardship Control	0.02	1	0.02	0.004	0.95
	Suppression	0.22	1	0.22	0.28	0.59

Discussion and Conclusion

Based on derived research results, hypothesis of “there is a significant difference between gifted and normal students in metaemotion” was approved which is in accordance with Qolamrezaii, Purshafe’i and Dastjerdi (2009), Rottmann and Christine (2003), Antoneli and Kokoni (1998), Marcus et al. (2004), Mirin (1999), Ashtiyani (1995), Neff (2003), and there is a significant difference between gifted and normal students based on components of metaemotion. To explain this, it could be said that gifted students have a more compassionate concern comparing to the normal students, due to their concern about themselves, their future and also the great importance, and in fact, due to their intelligence, they highly value themselves and others. Also, these students, due to their capacity and flexibility in difficult issues of life, can control the hardships easier and as a result, they show lesser anger in difficult situations and even failures due to their high capacity of tolerance of ambiguity. Also, due to their high intelligence, gifted students have a special interest in studying and education and they are highly successful in this regard. This success helps them to have lesser failures in life, comparing to the normal students and have lesser sense of humiliation and shame. Also, gifted students use suppression of the factors which prevent their progress and in general, gifted students have better performance in metaemotion components, comparing to the normal students.

Also, based on derived results, hypothesis of “there is a significant difference between gifted female and male students in metaemotion” was approved which is in accordance with the studies of Marcus et al. (2004), Mirin (1999), Ashtiyani (1995) and Neff (2003) and there is a significant difference between gifted female and male students in metaemotion and this could be explained by the interest of males to be independent and not relaying on others and these lead them to have a higher control over the problems and have a higher tolerance. Hence, males have a higher hardship control. Also, based on derived results, hypothesis of “there is a significant difference between normal female and male students in metaemotion” was approved which is in accordance with the studies of Marcus et al. (2004), Mirin (1999), Ashtiyani (1995) and Neff (2003) and there is a significant difference between normal female and male students in compassionate concern and hardship control. This could be explained by the interest of females in their concerns about themselves and their issues in emotional issues and since they have an emotional view of the issues, they have a more compassionate concern. However, males have a better performance in hardship control, since they are less delicate and have a more realistic view of the issues.

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