Examining Emotional Intelligence and Social Skills in a Residential Deaf Population

Melissa Leohr
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EXAMINING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SOCIAL SKILLS IN A
RESIDENTIAL DEAF POPULATION

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Educational Specialist in School Psychology

by
Melissa Lynn Leohr
July 2003
EXAMINING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SOCIAL SKILLS IN A RESIDENTIAL DEAF POPULATION

Date Recommended: July 7, 2003

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Dean, Graduate Studies and Research Date
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my committee for their guidance throughout this process. I would also like to extend a special thanks to the School Psychologists at the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville, Kentucky. Without their efforts, this research project would not have been possible. Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their ongoing encouragement and patience.
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EXAMINING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SOCIAL SKILLS IN A
RESIDENTIAL DEAF POPULATION

Melissa L. Leohr

July 7, 2003

34 Pages

Directed by: Drs. William Pfohl, Joyce Wilder, and Reagan Brown

Department of Psychology Western Kentucky University

Abstract

Mayer and Salovey first defined emotional intelligence in 1990 (Mayer, 1999) and later
revised that definition (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). In 1995, Goleman introduced a different
concept of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995). Bar-On presented a third
conceptualization, as well as the first measure of the concept (Bar-On & Parker, 2000).
Few studies have addressed emotional intelligence in children and adolescents, and no
studies have examined the concept in the deaf population. The purpose of the present
study is to examine emotional intelligence, as well as social skills, in a residential deaf
population. Fourteen students at the Kentucky School for the Deaf completed emotional
intelligence and social skills questionnaires. Teachers also rated each participant’s social
skills. Results indicated that the participants rated themselves similar to the
standardization sample in overall emotional intelligence. In general, participants rated
their emotional intelligence similar to their social skills. The hypothesis that there would
be less than one standard deviation of difference between the overall emotional
intelligence scores of the research sample and the standardization sample was supported.
Suggestions for further research are presented.
Introduction

How does one define emotional intelligence? What makes one individual more emotionally intelligent than another individual? Currently there exist three primary schools of thought that address these types of questions. Mayer and Salovey first described the construct of emotional intelligence in 1990 (Mayer, 1999). Following Mayer and Salovey, Goleman established a second conceptualization of emotional intelligence in 1995 (Goleman, 1995). The third individual to become involved in researching the subject was Bar-On, who presented his idea of emotional intelligence in 1997, along with the first measure of the concept (Bar-On & Parker, 2000).

The theory of emotional intelligence began in 1990 when Mayer and Salovey introduced their conceptualization (Mayer, 1999). The researchers defined emotional intelligence as “the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (Salovey & Mayer, 1989-1990, p. 189). In addition, emotional intelligence involves processing emotional information in order to solve problems and regulate behavior (Salovey & Mayer, 1989-1990).

In 1997, Mayer and Salovey revised their initial definition of emotional intelligence to include four branches and more details. The new definition of emotional intelligence is as follows:
“the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 10).

The second school of emotional intelligence originates with Goleman, who wrote about the concept in 1995. According to Goleman, emotional intelligence is based upon the notion of self-awareness, which he describes as “an ongoing attention to one’s internal states” (Goleman, 1995, p. 46). Goleman also describes emotional intelligence in terms of a core set of characteristics that relate to this notion of self-awareness. These characteristics include abilities such as self-motivation, persistence, impulse control, mood regulation, and displaying empathy.

Following Mayer and Salovey’s revision of their theory of emotional intelligence and Goleman’s work, Bar-On developed his own conceptualization of the construct. Bar-On defined emotional intelligence as “an array of emotional, personal, and interpersonal abilities that influence one’s overall ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures” (Bar-On & Parker, 2000, p. 33). He claimed that emotional intelligence represents one of two categories within a larger category known as general intelligence. He identified the second sub-category as cognitive intelligence. According to Bar-On, emotional intelligence develops and changes over time. In addition, he said that it is possible for individuals to improve their levels of emotional intelligence. Bar-On
developed the first measure of emotional intelligence in 1997 when he published the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory for Adults (Bar-On & Parker, 2000).

Since the concept of emotional intelligence first emerged in 1990, little research has been conducted on the subject. Some research has been conducted upon adults, but researchers have only recently begun to examine emotional intelligence in youth. Allen (2000) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence in children. She found that there was a small, positive relationship between the two constructs. Children who possessed high levels of emotional intelligence also tended to possess high levels of cognitive intelligence (Allen, 2000). A year later, S. M. Corso (2001) examined emotional intelligence in a gifted population. The results of this study indicated that gifted children possessed a higher overall emotional intelligence than their same age peers (Corso, 2001). L. J. Corso (2002) later examined emotional intelligence and social skills in a gifted population. The results of her study showed that gifted children who were high in emotional intelligence also tended to be high in social skills. Crick (2002) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and success in high school students. She found that students who demonstrated leadership in school tended to have higher levels of emotional intelligence than students who demonstrated less leadership in school. In addition to these studies, research has also been conducted to determine whether or not a relationship exists between emotional intelligence and social skills in a general population of students. The results of Herring’s (2001) research also indicated that there is a positive relationship between the two variables.
An important concept that is related to emotional intelligence is social skills. There are aspects of social skills within the three conceptualizations of emotional intelligence. For example, Mayer and Salovey (1997) refer to perceiving and understanding the emotions of others, as well as regulating one’s own emotions. Self-awareness is key to Goleman’s (1995) description of emotional intelligence. Similarly, Bar-On and Parker (2000) describe the ability to cope with environmental demands. The factors emphasized in each of these models allude to social skills, although they do so indirectly. However, Mayer and Salovey (1997) believe that emotional intelligence and social skills are separate concepts.

The purpose of the present study was to examine emotional intelligence and social skills in a residential deaf population. Until this study, there had been no research conducted on emotional intelligence within this particular population. In addition, although there does exist some research pertaining to social skills in the deaf population, none of it directly relates to emotional intelligence. For example, research suggests that deaf individuals tend to have lower social skills and be less socially accepted than their hearing counterparts (Cartledge & Cochran, 1996; Cappelli, Daniels, Durieux-Smith, McGrath, & Neuss, 1995). Researchers have also examined variables such as social awareness (Maxon, Brackett, & van den Berg, 1991), self-competence (Cappelli, Daniels, Durieux-Smith, McGrath, & Neuss, 1995), (Cartledge & Cochran, 1996), social adjustment, and emotional adjustment in deaf individuals across various settings, including both residential and public schools (Farrugia & Austin, 1980). Although these variables may relate to social skills in some manner, it is important to note that none of them equate to social skills. As a result, the present study was unique in its examination
of both emotional intelligence and social skills in a residential deaf population. The hypotheses of this study were as follows:

- The overall emotional intelligence of the deaf participants will differ by less than one standard deviation from the overall emotional intelligence of the hearing population standardization sample.
- Participants will self-report higher emotional intelligence levels than social skills levels.
Review of the Literature

Emotional Intelligence

In 1990 Salovey and Mayer introduced their initial definition of emotional intelligence. Their model of emotional intelligence included three different types of mental processes. The first process involves appraising and expressing emotion in one’s self and in others. A major component of understanding emotions comes from the ability to speak clearly about them; thus, one way that this type of processing may occur is verbally. However, appraising and expressing emotion may also occur on a nonverbal level, which has often been overlooked. The ability to perceive others’ emotions accurately is significant, because it allows one to perceive and respond to those emotions more appropriately. In addition, doing so allows one to express his or her own emotions to others more effectively (Salovey & Mayer, 1989-90).

The second mental process in their model consists of the ability to regulate emotions, both in one’s self and in others. Individuals possess meta-experiences, which help them learn when certain moods are appropriate and inappropriate. Individuals may also regulate their own moods by choosing their associates. For example, associating with individuals whose successes do not threaten one’s sense of self usually creates a positive mood for an individual. Regulating the emotions of others refers to different kinds of abilities. Regulating other’s emotions involves eliciting certain types of emotional responses from them. In addition, this type of regulation involves the ability to act and
present oneself in such a way as to control the impressions that individuals receive about us (Salovey & Mayer, 1989-90).

Finally, the third mental process involves using emotion adaptively. This concept refers to the ability to gain control over one’s emotions in order to solve problems. More specifically, using emotion adaptively involves making flexible plans, thinking creatively, redirecting attention, and being motivated. In other words, individuals who possess emotional intelligence are at an advantage for finding solutions to various problems because they possess a higher level of understanding of emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1989-1990).

Salovey and Mayer also believe that people differ as regards to their levels of emotional intelligence. No two people address their emotions and the emotions of others in exactly the same manner. However, the researchers do believe that there is a common set of skills included in emotional intelligence that are necessary to maintain at least a minimal level of competency and functioning in every day life (Salovey & Mayer, 1989-1990).

Mayer and Salovey also describe emotional intelligence in terms of development. One’s level of emotional intelligence develops from learning acquired about emotion and information related to emotion. An individual achieves emotional competence after having reached a required level of achievement in this area. Various factors can influence this achievement, including family environment, lessons taught by parents, and other life experiences (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

In 1997 Mayer and Salovey slightly altered their definition of emotional intelligence to account for the ability to think about emotions, in addition to the ability to
perceive and regulate emotions. The new conceptualization of emotional intelligence included four separate branches of increasing complexity. The lowest branch in the revised model involves the perception, appraisal, and expression of emotion. This branch includes the ability to identify emotion in oneself and in others, as well as the ability to accurately express one’s own emotions. In addition, this branch includes the ability to recognize when others are expressing emotion insincerely.

The next branch in the model involves emotional facilitation of thinking. At this branch, individuals can prioritize their thinking, generate emotions when necessary, and consider multiple points of view. Also, at this branch, individuals are able to consider multiple points of view, which may facilitate problem solving.

The third branch in the model consists of understanding and analyzing emotions in oneself and others. This branch includes the ability to label and interpret emotions correctly. Also in this branch is the ability to understand complex feelings and recognize emotional transitions.

The fourth and highest branch involves reflective regulation of emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. People at this branch are tolerant of others’ feelings and are able to refrain from expressing emotions when necessary. In addition, individuals monitor the emotions of themselves and others, including negative emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Another individual who became involved in the study of emotional intelligence is Goleman. Goleman (1995) described emotional intelligence in terms of a variety of different abilities. One such ability is being able to motivate oneself and persist when frustrated. Emotional intelligence also includes the ability to regulate one’s moods,
including controlling one’s impulses and delaying gratification. Finally, emotional intelligence consists of the ability to demonstrate empathy and hope. In other words, Goleman’s concept of emotional intelligence includes the basic abilities to recognize and manage emotion, as well as display empathy. In addition, Goleman believes that individuals can be taught to be more emotionally intelligent. Emotional intelligence is a learned concept and can be improved upon (Goleman, 1995).

Similar to Mayer and Salovey’s model, Bar-On established his own theory of emotional intelligence involving various factors. According to Bar-On, emotional intelligence concerns the emotional, personal, and social aspects of intelligence. These factors involve the ability to understand oneself and others, relate to others, adapt to environmental demands, and manage emotions.

Bar-On theorized that there are five major dimensions to emotional intelligence. The first dimension is Intrapersonal, which consists of emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, and independence. The second dimension is Interpersonal, consisting of empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal relationships. The third dimension is Adaptability, which includes three abilities, reality testing, flexibility, and problem solving. The fourth dimension is Stress Management, which consists of the ability to tolerate stress and impulse control. The fifth and final dimension in this model is General Mood, which includes optimism and happiness (Bar-On & Parker, 2000).

One can identify traces of emotional intelligence within other theories of general intelligence. For example, Sternberg (1988) views intelligence in terms of self-management. Sternberg’s conceptualization of intelligence involves a set of
interdependent components used to solve different kinds of problems. These components are universal; however, people use them in different ways and across different situations.

Sternberg proposed in his Triarchic Theory of Intelligence that intelligence is composed of three information-processing components (or mental processes). The metacomponents carry out the necessary planning, monitoring, and evaluating that are included in problem solving. The performance components implement the commands determined by the metacomponents. Finally, the knowledge-acquisition components are used to determine how to solve the problem (Sternberg, 1988). One might note the similarity between Sternberg’s theory and the concept of emotional intelligence; both ideas revolve around the concept of social problem solving.

Another theory of intelligence that is suggestive of emotional intelligence is Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Gardner (1999) views intelligence as “a biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture” (p.26). In addition, Gardner originally proposed that intelligence is a multifaceted concept, consisting of seven different separate intelligences; however, he has since added three additional intelligences to the list. The ten intelligences include linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, naturalist, spiritual, and existential (Gardner, 1999).

Gardner’s categories of intelligence known as interpersonal and intrapersonal are highly comparable to the concept of emotional intelligence. Gardner notes that these categories should be thought of in terms of one larger group—personal intelligence. This type of intelligence involves emotional factors, affective factors, and what Gardner refers
to as “emotional life” (p. 43). The emotional nature of such category is clearly similar to
the notion of emotional intelligence.

Since its first introduction in 1990, emotional intelligence has been addressed in
various ways. Mayer and Salovey (1997) describe it in terms of four branches, which
encompass many aspects of emotions, including perceiving, appraising, expressing,
thinking about, understanding, analyzing, and reflectively regulating emotions. Goleman
(1995) describes emotional intelligence in terms of abilities, such as self-motivation,
emotional regulation, and the display of empathy. Bar-On (2000) focuses upon the
emotional, personal, and social aspects of intelligence and describes five dimensions of
emotional intelligence, including Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Adaptability, Stress
Management, and General Mood. Aside from these three theories, Sternberg and
Gardner also present cognitive theories that include components similar to the concept of
emotional intelligence.

Researchers have examined the concept of emotional intelligence as it relates to
cognitive intelligence, giftedness, social skills, and success. Allen (2000) examined the
relationship between emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence by administering
the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Third Edition (WISC-III) and the Bar-On
EQ-i:YV to sixty children between the ages of nine and twelve years old. Her results
indicated that the instruments assessed two separate concepts, although they appeared
somewhat similar to one another. Later, S. M. Corso (2001) investigated emotional
intelligence in a gifted population by administering the Bar-On EQ-i:YV to one hundred
adolescents, age twelve through sixteen. He found that students identified as gifted
possessed higher overall emotional intelligence scores than their non-gifted counterparts
L. J. Corso (2002) also examined emotional intelligence in a gifted population, along with the variable of social skills. She administered the Bar-On EQ-i:YV and the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) to one hundred gifted students, along with a parent version of the SSRS to parents/guardians of each participating student. Results of her research found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and social skills in the gifted population. In a similar study, Herring (2001) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and social skills in a general population. She also administered the EQ-i:YV and SSRS to a group of fifty-nine students, age nine to twelve years old. A parent version of the SSRS was also administered to parents of each student. Results of her study indicated that there was a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and social skills. The most recent research was conducted by Crick (2002), in an effort to examine how emotional intelligence related to success in high school students. One hundred twenty high school students, age fourteen to seventeen, completed the Bar-On EQ-i:YV and the SSRS. Results found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and success in school. Students who exhibited high levels of leadership also tended to possess high emotional intelligence scores.

**Deaf Culture**

There exists a unique culture of deaf individuals in our society. This culture has developed both through personal similarities and common experiences held by deaf individuals in society (Higgins & Nash, 1987). Society tends to view deaf individuals as abnormal or defective in some way. In addition, individuals often make false assumptions about people who are deaf. Historically, many individuals believed that deaf persons could not think or speak. Finally, many individuals refer to people in the deaf
community as simply “the deaf”; however, this terminology is both incorrect and insensitive. Individuals who are deaf should not be referred to in this manner. Instead, individuals who are deaf should be identified as people who also happen to be deaf (Higgins & Nash, 1987).

One aspect of deaf culture that distinguishes itself from other groups is communication. Deaf persons tend to rely heavily upon visual communication and often use nonverbal signs. Such signs may include moving into another person’s line of vision, tapping someone on the shoulder, or motioning to gain another person’s attention. Such nonverbal signals differ highly from the sound-dependent signals utilized by most hearing persons. Thus, deaf persons may feel socially isolated in a hearing world that is accustomed to using these types of signals. For this reason, many deaf persons turn to residential schools, where the accommodations are tailored more appropriately to their communication needs (McKee, 2001).

Research has indicated that society has placed deaf individuals into their own category or culture for many years (Arnold, 1993; Lane, 1988; Maxon, Brackett, & van den Berg, 1991). Society has tended to perceive deaf individuals as being different from the rest of the world. This perception may be broken down into a variety of stereotypical characteristics; however, the common thread that runs throughout these characteristics is a negative tone (Lane, 1988). Given this perception of deaf individuals, one must wonder whether or not they are truly different from the rest of society on a social or emotional level.

Social Skills in the Deaf Population

Very little research has been conducted on social skills in the deaf population.
Although many researchers have examined topics which relate to social skills, few studies have examined social skills alone. Cartledge and Cochran (1996) administered the Social Skills Rating Scale–Self-Report to seventy-four deaf youth between the ages of twelve and twenty-one years of age. Thirty-five of the participants lived in a residential school for the deaf, while the remaining thirty-nine were mainstreamed in public school. Overall, the mainstreamed students rated themselves higher than the residential students did on social skills (Cartledge & Cochran, 1996). Other researchers have examined topics such as self-competence, social maturity, self-esteem, social/emotional adjustment, and social acceptance in an attempt to compare deaf youth to hearing youth.

In an effort to determine whether or not there are differences between deaf and hearing individuals, research has examined the area of self-competence. Researchers Cappelli, Daniels, Durieux-Smith, McGrath, and Neuss (1995) studied the subject of self-competence in deaf children who were mainstreamed in school. These researchers worked with twenty-three hearing-impaired children and twenty-three hearing children, in first through sixth grade. They examined the notion of self-competence using the Self-Perception Profile for Children. The results of the study indicated that the two groups of children did not differ on their levels of perceived self-competence. However, the hearing-impaired students perceived themselves to be less socially accepted than their hearing counterparts did (Cappelli, Daniels, Durieux-Smith, McGrath, & Neuss, 1995).

Farrugia and Austin (1980) conducted research that compared residential deaf students to mainstreamed deaf students in terms of maturity, self-esteem, social adjustment, and emotional adjustment. Participants were two hundred deaf students, between the ages of ten and fifteen years old. The students were assigned to one of four
groups, deaf public school students, hard-of-hearing public school students, hearing public school students, or deaf residential school students. Teachers rated each student on the Meadow/Kendall Social-Emotional Assessment Inventory for Deaf Students (Farrugia & Austin, 1980). The results indicated that the deaf students in public schools ranked the lowest on scales of maturity, self-esteem, social adjustment, and emotional adjustment, compared to other students. In addition, teachers rated hearing students higher in self-esteem than the deaf students (Farrugia & Austin, 1980).

Researchers have examined factors that might affect the self-competence of deaf children. Warren and Hasenstab (1986) worked with fifty-eight deaf students to investigate this question further. The students were between the ages of five and eleven years old, and all students were mainstreamed in a public school. The researchers considered the effects of numerous variables, including demographic variables, variables relevant to the hearing loss, and parental child-rearing attitudes. Children were asked to rate various home, play, and school situations on a picture scale depicting happy and sad faces. Their results indicated that the children were most affected by parental attitudes and practices, as measured by the Maryland Parent Attitude Survey (Warren & Hasenstab, 1986).

Another area of research is the social world of deaf individuals. Researchers have found that when comparing deaf children and hearing children, deaf children perceive themselves as less socially accepted than their hearing counterparts do (Cappelli, Daniels, Durieux-Smith, McGrath, & Neuss, 1995). Research conducted in the 1960’s demonstrated that deaf children and adolescents had lower scores on the Vineland Social Maturity Scale than same age hearing peers did. In addition, other research indicated that
deaf children spend half as much time interacting with their peers as hearing children do (Vandell & George, 1981).

Possible Explanations

Various attempts have been made to explain some of the differences between deaf children and hearing children. Levine and Myklebust (1956) hypothesized that deaf children’s linguistic limitations hinder their social interaction and self-identity development. To address this possible explanation, Levine evaluated interpretations of deaf students’ Rorschach assessments. He compared these interpretations to a standardized sample of hearing students and found that the results were indicative of a lowered understanding of self. Levine concluded that the results might have been affected by the deaf students’ limited linguistic ability; thus, his initial hypothesis was confirmed (Levine, 1956).

Past research relating to social skills in the deaf population is scarce and inconsistent. Some studies have found that there is no difference between the self-competence of deaf and hearing students (Cappelli, Daniels, Durieux-Smith, McGrath, & Neuss, 1995). However, other research indicated that hearing students rate their social skills higher than deaf students (Cartledge & Cochran, 1996), and that teachers rate deaf students lower than hearing students on maturity, self-esteem, and social/emotional adjustment (Farrugia & Austin, 1980). Other research is vaguely explained or lacks significant conclusions. Additionally, there is no current research on emotional intelligence within the deaf population.
Method

Participants

Participants were residential students at the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville, Kentucky. Students at this school are considered either deaf or hard of hearing, depending upon their level of hearing loss. However, in the present study all participants will be referred to as deaf students. All students who attended registration day on August 11, 2002 were given the opportunity to participate, and nine students chose to participate. Following registration day, letters were mailed to students’ parents/guardians in an attempt to obtain additional participants. However, only five more parents/guardians gave their consent for their children to participate. Ultimately, 14 students participated in the study, ranging in age from 9 to 16 years of age. The group consisted of 7 males and 7 females (see Table 1). It should be noted that this sample represents a convenience sample rather than a random sample, due to the manner in which participants were obtained.

Instruments

The Bar-On Emotional Quotient Youth Inventory: Youth Version (EQ-i:YV) was used to measure emotional intelligence in the participants (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). It is a paper and pencil assessment designed for children between the ages of 7 and 18 years. Participants ranked each of sixty statements on a four point Likert scale, ranging from “Not True of Me” to “Very Much True of Me.” Examples of statements
are: "It is easy to tell people how I feel" and "I have a temper." Each participant’s responses were compiled into an overall emotional intelligence score. In addition to the overall score, four factor scores (Intrapersonal, Adaptability, Stress Management, and Interpersonal) were also reported. The mean overall standard score for each factor is 100, with a standard deviation of 15.

The sample on which the EQ-i: YV was normed included 9,172 hearing children, age 7 to 18 years. There were 4,625 males and 4,547 females in the norm sample who were from regular education classes. The three-week test-retest reliability of the measure was estimated at .89 for the total emotional intelligence score.

Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) forms were also used to assess participants’ social skills. The SSRS assesses individuals’ social skills based upon ratings, ranging from “Never” to “Very Often,” of specific behaviors. Examples of behaviors are: “Volunteers to help peers in classroom” (teacher rating form) and “I make friends easily” (student rating form). This assessment is designed for individuals age 3 to 18 and takes approximately 10 to 25 minutes to complete. An Elementary version of the SSRS was used for students in first through sixth grade. A Secondary version was used for students in seventh through twelfth grade. Both the Teacher Form and Self-Report Form were used in this research. Like the EQ-I:YV, the SSRS provides an overall score with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. The overall score may be broken down into several subscales, including Cooperation, Assertion, Empathy, and Self-Control.

The sample on which the SSRS was normed included 259 teachers who rated a total of 1,335 children. The teacher sample included 88% females and 80% elementary school teachers. The student sample included 4,170 students; 50% were female, and 50%
were male. Students were from both regular education and special education classes. The test-retest reliability estimate of the measure is .85 for the total social skills score on the Teacher Form, Elementary level and 0.68 on the Self-Report Form, Elementary level. However, no information is available in the manual on test-retest reliability on the Secondary level.

Procedure

Permission was obtained from students’ parents/guardians prior to participation in the study. Additionally, each student signed a Child Assent Form prior to beginning participation in the study (see Appendix B). All participants were given the Bar-On EQ-i:YV to complete independently. Next, all participants were given a Social Skills Rating System Self-Report form to complete independently. In addition, one adult (teacher or counselor) completed a Social Skills Rating System form on each participant. Some of the adults were deaf, while others were hearing. Interpreters were available to assist all students with the completion of these measures. All forms were kept confidential.
Results

Due to a limited sample size, only means and standard deviations will be reported on the data collected. First, it should be noted that 1 of the 14 participants failed to fully complete the Bar-On EQ-i:YV; thus, results reported on this instrument will include data from only 13 participants. As shown in Table 2, the mean emotional intelligence score of the 13 participants is 99.92, with a standard deviation of 15.56. This score is within 0.007 standard deviation of the mean of the norm sample, which Table 3 illustrates. Next, as also shown in Table 2, the mean student rating on the SSRS of all 14 participants is 99.71, with a standard deviation of 15.55. This score is 0.02 standard deviation away from the mean emotional intelligence score, as shown in Table 3. The mean teacher rating on the SSRS is 91.36, with a standard deviation of 14.79. Table 4 illustrates the subscale scores for both instruments. On the EQ-i:YV students scored highest on the Intrapersonal subscale and lowest on the Interpersonal subscale. On the SSRS, students rated themselves highest on Empathy and lowest on Self-Control. Teachers rated the students highest on Cooperation and lowest on Assertion.
Table 1

Summary of Participant Gender and Grade Level

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(Mean age = 13.5)
Table 2

Standard Scores for SSRS and EQ-i:YV

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<td>93</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>91</td>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>91.36</td>
<td>99.71</td>
<td>99.92</td>
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SD

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<td>14.79</td>
<td>15.55</td>
<td>15.56</td>
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M = 100; SD = 15

* Incomplete form
Table 3

Comparison of Norm Group and Sample Means and Standard Deviations

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<td>99.92</td>
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<td>SD</td>
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<td>15.56</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SSRS Teacher</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
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<td>14.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SSRS Student</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>$\bar{X}$</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>99.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
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## Table 4

**Summary of Subscale Scores**

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<td><strong>Standard Score</strong></td>
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<td>Intrapersonal</td>
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<td>Interpersonal</td>
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<td>Stress Management</td>
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<td>Adaptability</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
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<th><strong>SSRS (Student Rating)</strong></th>
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<td>Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assertion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
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<td>Self-Control</td>
<td>10.14</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>SSRS (Teacher Rating)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertion</td>
<td>10.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Control</td>
<td>12.21</td>
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Discussion and Summary

While the results of this study clearly support the researcher’s first hypothesis, there is a lack of support for the second hypothesis. The first hypothesis stated that the difference between the overall emotional intelligence of the participants and the hearing population standardization sample would be less than one standard deviation. The results support this hypothesis, since the mean group EQ score falls within 0.007 standard deviation of the norm sample.

The second hypothesis stated that participants would self-report higher emotional intelligence levels than social skills levels. Out of the 13 participants who completed the EQ-i: YV, six students rated their emotional intelligence higher than their social skills. Fewer than 50% of the participants had higher overall emotional intelligence scores than social skills scores.

Patterns within the subscales of the EQ-i: YV and the SSRS may also be examined. On the EQ-i: YV, participants scored highest on the Intrapersonal dimension and lowest on the Interpersonal dimension. This information indicates that the participants in this study tended to rate their ability to understand their own emotions better than their ability to empathize with and have relationships with others. On the SSRS Self-Report, students rated themselves highest in the categories of Assertion and Empathy; their lowest rating was in Self-Control. On the SSRS Teacher Form, teachers rated the participants highest on Cooperation and lowest on Assertion.
An additional pattern that is evident in the results of this study lies in the standard deviations calculated for the sample. The norm sample standard deviation for the overall scores on both the EQ-i: YV and the SSRS is 15. One may compare this number to the sample standard deviations, which range from 14.00 to 15.85. This information indicates that the scores of the participants in the present study are similar to those in the norm standardization sample.

Due to the limited sample size of the present study, results may not be generalized to a larger population; however, certain trends appear within the research sample. Participants in this study tend to be highly similar to the norm population as regards overall emotional intelligence. Fewer than 50% of the participants have higher emotional intelligence scores than self-reported social skills scores. Additionally, some data in this study lend support to the positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social skills, while other data stand in clear opposition to this relationship. On the SSRS, participants rated themselves highest in Assertion and Empathy; teacher ratings were highest in Cooperation. Finally, participants in this study appear to be just as varied in emotional intelligence and social skills as the norm population.

Due to the limited sample size of the present study, no significant conclusions may be drawn from the results. A larger sample size is necessary to make any conclusive statements or to address the hypotheses of the present study. A larger number of participants would provide researchers with the opportunity to examine the results more closely and with more detailed statistics. For example, the SSRS is normed according to grade and gender, and the EQ-i:YV is normed based upon age and gender. Given a larger number of participants, researchers would be able to consider the data in terms of these
variables. Additionally, a larger participant pool would allow researchers to consider numerous variables, such as gender, age, or grade level when evaluating the results. Future studies in this area may also include participants from more than one school or institution.
References


Corso, L. J. (2002). *Social intelligence: Social skills competence and emotional intelligence in gifted adolescents*. Unpublished Educational Specialist Project, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky.


Appendixes
Appendix A

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child is being invited to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University, in cooperation with the Kentucky School for the Deaf. This project is part of a graduate student’s thesis and will be supervised by a university faculty member. You may contact Melissa Leohr (graduate student) at 270-686-8504 or Bill Pfohl (university supervisor) at 270-745-4419 with any questions that you have about the project.

The researchers are interested in understanding how children manage emotions and how social skills relate to this ability. Researchers will provide a paper and pencil test to each child, who will complete the measure independently. This inventory will assess your child’s awareness of his/her own emotions and the emotions of others. The children will then be provided a ten minute break. Next, the researchers will provide each child with a Social Skills Rating form to complete independently. The researchers will also examine teachers’ social skills ratings of each child. An interpreter will be available during this time if your child has any questions. Your child may choose not to participate at any time and may refuse to answer any or all questions.

Your child’s individual data will not have his or her name on it. Individual children will not be identified at any time. Only group results will be used. Upon completion of this research, the researchers will provide group data to the Kentucky School for the Deaf.

Yours or your child’s refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

We hope that you will allow your child to take part in our study. We promise to make it a pleasant experience. Please fill in your child’s name on the attached page. To indicate your consent, sign your name and fill in the date on the attached page. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Melissa Leohr, Researcher  
Department of Psychology, 270-686-8504

Dr. William Pfohl, University Supervisor  
Department of Psychology, 270-745-4419
Yes. I have read the information provided about this study and give my consent for my child to participate.

No. I do not give my consent for my child to participate in this study.

_________________________________________  __________________________________________
Name of Child (Print)                             Child’s Date of Birth and Age

_________________________________________  __________________________________________
Signature of Parent or Guardian                   Date

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATED THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW BOARD
Appendix B

CHILD ASSENT FORM

I, ________________________________, understand that my parents have given permission for me to take part in a project under the direction of Melissa Leohr and William Pfohl of Western Kentucky University. I understand that I am going to answer questions about how I might think, feel, or act in some situations. I understand that there are no right or wrong answers, and I will answer all questions honestly.

I am taking part because I want to. I have been told that I can stop at any time I want to, and nothing will happen to me if I want to stop.

Signature ___________________________ Date _____________