

Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence in a Middle Eastern Population

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Abstract : This study examines gender differences in emotional intelligence levels in the Sultanate of Oman, an Arabic country in the Middle East. As a collective culture, the Omani culture rears children differently based on the Islamic beliefs and the Arabic culture. Gender differences across the different dimensions of emotional intelligence are possible within this collective culture. Emotional intelligences reflect the ability to understand and act upon one's and others' emotions. The sample of the study consisted of 338 (50.6% were females) adults from different regions in Oman. The participants completed a 25-item emotional intelligence scale, using 5-point Likert type responses. The results showed that the total scores of the scale as well as the scores from the five dimensions (self management, self motivation, social skills, empathy, and self-awareness) all have good reliability coefficients. Using independent sample t-tests, the findings show that female adults scored higher than male adults. The differences were all statistically significant across the five dimensions of emotional intelligence. The findings are discussed from a cultural perspective and applications for the development of emotional intelligence skills are outlined.

Keywords : emotional intelligence, gender, Arab, Oman

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