

A Correlative Study of Emotional Intelligence, Aggression and Coping Styles Among College Students.

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ABSTRACT

The present study was aimed to establish the relationship of emotional intelligence with aggression and coping style. It was hypothesized that there is a significant correlation of emotional intelligence with aggression and coping style. In order to verify the above hypotheses, 60 college students were selected from a college of Bhiwani. Emotional intelligence scale, Aggression scale and coping style inventory were used to collect the data. The data were analysed by using Pearson's correlation in SPSS 20 software. The result reveals that there is a significant negative correlation of emotional intelligence with aggression while positive significant relationship between emotional Intelligence and problem focused coping and a negative significant relationship between emotional Intelligence and emotion focused coping.

Keywords: Aggression, Emotional intelligence, Coping, College students.

Introduction

Adolescents is a basic transitional period in which people face various social changes, and relationship and accomplishment related stressors (e.g., Compas, Hinden, and Gerhardt, 1995). The dynamic connection between the individual and condition in pressure observation and response is particularly amplified in undergrads, so the issues and circumstances experienced by understudies may contrast from those looked by their nonstudent peers (Hirsch and Ellis, 1996). The condition in which understudies live is very extraordinary. The strain to acquire decent evaluations and to acquire a degree is extremely high (Hirsch and Ellis, 1996). Acquiring high evaluations isn't the main wellspring of worry for understudies. Other potential wellsprings of stress incorporate exorbitant homework, hazy assignments, and awkward homerooms (Kohn and Frazer, 1986). Associations with family and companions, eating what's more, resting propensities, and dejection may influence a few understudies unfavourably (Wright, 1967). We trust that that a considerable lot

of these wellsprings of stress are likewise pertinent in the Indian setting. Aggression recently turned into most important social problem among college students. emotional intelligence factors such as emotions, feelings, emotions management, challenging with problems, problem solving, tolerating psychological pressure, impulse control, self-esteem and interpersonal relations, to affect affect the level of aggression and also the different ways of coping.

Theoretical Background

“Anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not easy.”

Mayer and Salovey (1993) assert that, emotional intelligence is 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 action and promote emotion and intellectual growth.

Caruso and Wolfe (2004) define emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, understand emotions and emotional knowledge and reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth. These days Aggressive behaviour has become a topic of vital importance and a major concern in most societies. The whole world seems to be under the strain of aggressive acts of various forms. Violence is disturbingly common in most parts of the world and it is undoubtedly creating chaos and disturbing the world peace and harmony. Aggression has been defined by various thinkers differently.

Aggression is defined as, “a sequence of behaviour, the goal response of which is the injury to the person toward whom it is directed” (Dollard et al., 1939). Although the term aggression refers to a wide spectrum of behaviours, in the psychological literature, it is defined as any behaviour intended to harm another individual who is motivated to avoid being harmed (Baron and Richardson, 1994; Coie and Dodge, 1998). According to Baron and Byrne (1997), “aggression is behaviour directed toward the goal of harming another living being.

Type of Aggression

Psychologists classify aggression as instrumental and hostile. Instrumental aggression is aggressive behaviour intended to achieve a goal. It is not necessarily intended to hurt another person e.g. a soccer player who knocks a teammate down as they both run to stop the ball from reaching the opposing team’s goalpost is not trying to hurt the teammate. Hostile aggression, on the other hand, is aggressive behaviour whose only purpose is to hurt someone. It includes physical or verbal assault and other antisocial behaviours. Violence is physical aggression at the extremely high end of the aggression continuum, such as

murder and aggravated assault. However, Anderson & Huesman (2003) emphasize that much aggression is not violence but all violence is aggression.

Anderson and Bushman (2002) suggested that the development of aggression-related knowledge structures can shape an individual's personality and, thus, influence the likelihood that the individual will engage in aggressive behavior. In their theoretical model, Dodge and colleagues (e.g., Coie & Dodge, 1998; Crick & Dodge, 1994) have articulated the role that on-going social-information processing plays in directing aggressive behavior. According to Dodge (2002), social-information processing not only includes cognitive processing (e.g., attention, perception, and mental representation) and affective experiences but also involves “the setting of goals for responding within the social situation, accessing of one or more possible behavioural responses, evaluating the accessed behavioural responses, and selecting one for enactment, and then translating a desire to perform an action into behavior” (p. 225).

In general, coping means dealing with a situation. When individuals' experiences stress, they adopt ways of dealing with it, as they cannot remain in a continual state of tension. This is coping. The word coping has been used mainly with two meanings ways of dealing with stress and the effort to master condition of harm, threat or challenge.

According to Folkman & Lazarus (1985), “coping is the cognitive and the behavioral attempts to manage stress.” Folkman and Lazarus (1980, 1985) differentiate problem focused from emotion-focused coping. Problem Focused Coping is aimed to problem solving or doing something to alter the source of stress. Emotion Focused Coping is aimed at reducing or managing emotional distress that is associated with the situation. Problem focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that something constructive can be done, whereas emotion focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that stressor is something that must be endured.

- (1) **Problem focused coping:** It involves trying to understand the problem situation better and taking action to deal with it. This trend of coping includes various forms of stress management.
 - a) Confrontive-aggressive efforts to change the situation.
 - b) Planful problem solving - deliberate problem focused efforts to solve the situation.
- (2) **Emotion focused coping:** It involves an attempt to reduce the disturbing emotions, which invariably accompany the experience of stress.
 - a) Seeking social support —efforts to obtain emotional comfort and information from others.
 - b) Self-control - effort to regulate one's feeling
 - c) Distancing- Efforts to detach oneself from stressful situation.
 - d) Positive reappraisal - efforts to find positive meaning in the experience by focusing on personal growth.

- e) Accepting responsibility - acknowledging one's role in the problem
- f) Escape avoidance- wishful thinking (1 wished the situation would go away).

Review of Literature

Kimiaei *et al* (2011), who indicated there was negative significant correlation between emotional intelligence and aggression in adolescents of Mashhad-Iran ($r = - 0.562$).

A study done by Eskay (2011) revealed that individuals those who possess high emotional intelligence use more normal coping strategies than those with low emotional intelligence and the latter category use more avoidant coping strategies. Mavroveli, *et al.*, (2007) found that adolescents who perceive themselves as being able to regulate their own emotions tend to report less depression and lower levels of antisocial behaviour and delinquency.

In the other study by Brejard *et al* (2006), there was a meaningful disagreement between teen's' emotional capacity and their problem behaviours, such as verbal and behavioural aggression. It seems that people struck with aggression are very weak in emotional intelligence. Lopes *et al.* (2004) concluded that people with lower ability to manage their emotions, are unable to get social support in stressful situations.

A study done by Engleberg & Sjoberg (2003) revealed that the individuals with less ability to realise their emotions, have lower level of social adaptation than those who have high realisation of their emotions.

Another study showed that individuals with high emotional intelligence use more normal coping strategies and those with low emotional intelligence use more avoidance-oriented coping strategies (Furnham *et al.* 2002).

Parker *et al.* (2001) study which suggested that high emotional intelligence might be a protective factor for mental and physical health and low emotional intelligence, related to highly problem behaviour individuals.

Objectives:-

The present study was aimed

1. To study the relationship between emotional intelligence and aggression level.
2. To study the relationship between emotional intelligence and coping style.

Hypotheses:-

1. There would be a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and aggression.
2. There would be a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping style.

Method

Sample –

The sample of this study consisted of 60 college students with age ranging from 17-22 years. Purposive sampling technique is used to select the sample. All respondents were students of B.A. from Govt. College Bhiwani, Haryana.

Measures –

The following tools were used in the present study for different purposes –

1. Emotional Intelligence Scale-

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) was developed by Anukool Hyde and Sanjyot Pethe. This scale has 34 statements each with 5 probable answers strongly disagrees to strongly agree. It measures emotional intelligence in 10 dimensions: Self- Awareness, Empathy, Self-Motivation, Emotional Stability, Managing Relations, Integrity, Self- Development, Value-Orientation, Commitment, and Altruistic Behaviour. The scale has a split half reliability value of 0.88 and test indicated high validity on account of being 0.93.

2. Aggression Scale-

Aggression scale was developed by Km Roma Pal and Dr. (Smt.) Tasneem Naqvi (1986). The test consists of 30 statements related to the personality of an individual which they answered by marking a Tick (√) mark corresponding to very much; much; ordinary; 'Less' very less', 'not at all', Thus, each item had five alternative answers graded on five point scale on the positive dimension and a zero point on the negative dimension. The reliability of aggression scale has been calculated by test – retest method on a sample of 200 subjects. The reliability coefficient was .78. The validity coefficient was also found to be .78.

3. Coping Style-

This tool was developed by A.K. Srivastava (1986). It comprised of 50 items describing varieties of coping behaviour underlying 2 major categories, Problem-focused coping and Emotion-focused coping. Each of these items was rated on a five point scale varying from “Never” to ‘Almost Always’ on the degree of agreement with the statement. These items were scored as following: ‘Never’: 0; ‘Always’: 4. The negatively-worded items of the scale were scored reversely The Test-Retest reliability of scale was found to be .92 and validity was also found high.

Procedure –

To conduct the study first consent was taken from the respective college from where volunteers were taken for data collection and rapport were established. They were given a briefing about the aim of

present investigation. Instructions were given according to the used questionnaire. They were assured that their information would be kept confidential and used only for research purpose, so they are requested to be open and honest in their responding. After that scales were administered and data were collected.

Statistical Analysis –

The data were analysed by using Pearson product moment method in SPSS to find the relationship of emotional intelligence with aggression level and coping style.

Results & Discussion

Table 1 shows that there is a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and aggression. Hence our hypothesis “There would be a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and aggression” has been proved.

Table 1: Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Aggression

Variable	Emotional Intelligence		
	N	Pearson' Correlation	Level of significance
Aggression	60	-.255*	.05

Results show that there is a significant negative correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Aggression (significant at .05 level). It means that higher the emotional intelligence, lower the aggression and vice-versa. Emotional intelligence is 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 action and promotes emotion and intellectual growth. The person who has higher emotional intelligence doesn't show behaviour that is directed towards harm others or self. The results are supported by Kimiaei *et al* (2011), who indicated there was negative significant correlation between emotional intelligence and aggression in adolescents.

Table 2 shows that there is positive significant correlation between emotional intelligence and Problem Focused Coping style and negative significant correlation between emotional intelligence and Emotion Focused Coping style. Hence our hypothesis “There would be a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping style” has been proved.

Table 2: Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping style

Variable	Emotional Intelligence		
	N	Pearson' Correlation	Level of significance
Problem Focused Coping	60	.258*	.05
Emotion Focused Coping	60	-.302*	.05

The findings contradict the (Furnham et al. 2002) showed that individuals with high emotional intelligence use more active/approach coping strategies (problem focused coping) and those with low emotional intelligence use more avoidance-oriented coping strategies (Emotion Focused Coping).

Results also show that there is a positive significant relationship between emotional Intelligence and problem focused coping. It means higher the emotional intelligence, higher the problem focused coping and vice-versa and there is a negative significant relationship between emotional Intelligence and emotion focused coping. It means lower the emotional intelligence, higher the emotion focused coping and vice-versa.

Conclusion

From the above findings, it can be concluded that-

1. From the above findings, it can be concluded that low emotional intelligence tends to more aggression.
2. From the above findings, it can be concluded that low emotional intelligence tends to more emotion focused coping and vice versa. High emotional intelligence tends to more problem focused coping and vice versa.

Implications of the study

Results of this study have important implications for adolescent for management of aggression by help of knowing and improving emotional intelligence and coping strategies. As adolescents are the future of society so there is need to manage their aggression which is essential for their overall development for making them good citizen.

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