

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Adolescents' Depression

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at examining the relationships between emotional intelligence and depression among adolescents at Aligarh Muslim University. The study involved a total of 170 adolescents. Subjects were group administered a questionnaire containing the multi dimensional depression scale - Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale (Reynolds, 1987) and Emotional Intelligence test (EIT) develop by Ekta Sharma. Results showed that all the four dimensions of emotional intelligence showed stronger negative correlation with the three depression aspects (emotionality, lack of positive experience, and physiological irritation).

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Adolescents Depression

INTRODUCTION

The concept of adolescence is commonly understood as a period of storms and stress. Erickson in 1975 viewed adolescence as a natural period of up rootedness in human life. Erickson (1975) conceptualized the young person as being in vigorous motion between two landings one representing childhood and the other adulthood, 'who must let go his safe hold on childhood and reach out for a firm grasp on adulthood'. Renschmidt (1992) defined adolescence as, the transition from childhood to adulthood; it is an important developmental phase, marked by a multitude of significant physical, psychological and social changes. Kaplan (2004) postulated that term adolescence is the period of life between childhood and adulthood and this time frame, however, not only describes a very diverse reality, but adolescence varies considerably across cultures, over time, and within individuals. Adolescence is often described as a phase of life that begins in biology and ends in society

(Sharma, 2007). There has been enormous substantial research which asserts that during adolescence an adolescent experiences lot of hormonal rush and sudden transition of development both psychologically and physiologically. Due to this transition and hormonal rush an adolescent becomes vulnerable to various psychological problems, and these problems can turn into cluster of syndrome if these problems are not addressed at the very outset. So it becomes very important for teachers, parents and educationists to identify various stressors which become active during adolescence. As in the period of adolescence, they confront with enormous confusing situations which serve as stressors for them. If these stress creating situations are effectively managed then the healthy growth and development of adolescents is expected otherwise negative impact is obvious and an adolescent can land into severe stress and depression. The healthy and balanced psychological development from an adolescent



can be expected only if his or her psychological adjustment and emotional intelligence are addressed rigorously. In this juncture the present study is devoted to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and depression among adolescents.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Yale psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) proposed the merging of emotion and intelligences as a cognitive ability under the caption of emotional intelligence. In the meantime, emotional intelligence received popularity by the bestselling book, entitled "Emotional Intelligence" by Goleman (1995), the cover article on "Time" by Gibbs (1995) and then some other popular books like 'Executive EQ : Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and Organization' by Cooper and Sawaf (1997), 'The Heart of Parenting : How to raise an Emotionally Intelligent Child' by Gottman (1997). The emotions are themselves a higher order of intelligence (Salovey, Woolery & Mayer, 2001).

DEPRESSION

Depression is characterized as a mood disorder. There are four sets of the symptoms of depression namely emotional, cognitive, motivation and physical. A person need not have all of these to be diagnosed as depressed but the more symptoms he or she has, and the more intense the individual is suffering from depression. Sadness and rejection are the most silent emotional symptoms of depression. The individual feels hopeless and unhappy, he/she often has caring spells and many contemplate suicide. Equally preserve is loss of gratification or pleasure in life. Activities that used to bring satisfaction become dull and joyless; the depressed person gradually loss interest in hobbies, recreation, and family activities. The

depressed person has negative thoughts, low self-esteem, the feeling of the hopelessness about the future, loss of motivation, change in aptitude, sleep disturbance, and loss of energy. According to the International Foundation for Research and Education on Depression (2005), the three main types of depression are major depression, dysthymia, and bipolar disorder. Depression is associated with a constellation of psychological, behavioral and physical symptoms as well (Cassano & Fava, 2002).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Steinberg (1990) asserted that depression and self-concept during adolescents' development period are the two major factors. Depression has been linked to poor psychological adjustment (Berman & Jobes, 1991; Kovacs, 1985). De Lazzari, (2001) looked at the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing among adolescents. Psychological wellbeing in the study was defined as including the ability of having self control, control over events, happiness, social involvement, self-esteem, mental balance and sociability. Results revealed that emotional intelligence was moderately correlated with psychological wellbeing, and emotional intelligence significantly explains some of the variance in psychological wellbeing. Sugarcane (2002) asserted that emotional intelligence is the single most important factor predicting success and happiness in life and leading to good mental health. Brackett and Mayer (2003); Trinidad, Unger, Chou, Chih-ping and Johnson (2004) have shown that lower emotional intelligence is related with many self-destructive behavior such as deviant behavior and cigarette smoking. Swart (1996) ; Parker (2004); Pau, Croucher, Sohanpal, Muirhead & Seymour (2004) found that students

with a high level of emotional intelligence were more likely to adopt reflection and appraisal, social and interpersonal, organization and time management skills whereas, low emotionally intelligent students were more likely to engage in health damaging behavior. In conjuncture of present literature review there was a dearth of studies of showing direct link between depression and emotional intelligence.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The sample of subjects in this study was selected through stratified random sampling; sample was selected from (9th to 13TH) class male students across various schools and departments from Aligarh Muslim University.

MEASURES

On the measure of depression, the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale (RADS; Reynolds, 1987) was used. The RADS originally gives five scores: overall depression, demoralization, worry and despondency, somatic, and anhedonia. Based on the results of factor analysis in the pilot and main study, three factors were found instead - they tended to measure emotionality, lack of positive experience, and physiological irritation and stress and were thus labeled accordingly. In the present study, scores based on these factors as well as overall depression were used to indicate different aspects of depression in adolescents from AMU as measured by RADS. It had been indicated that these factors corresponded quite

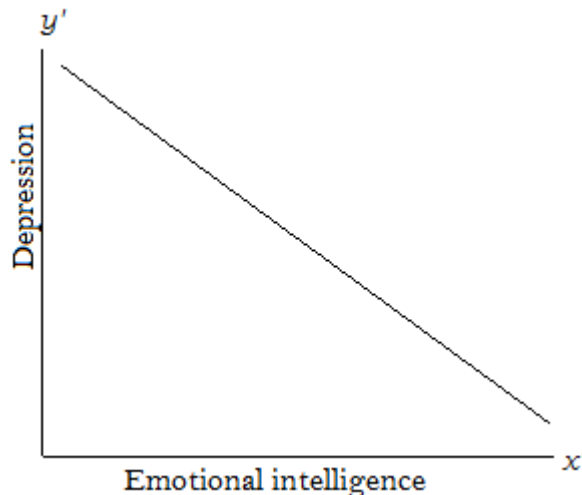
closely to the content of the original factors (e.g., emotionality tended to include items from the original demoralization and worry dependency factors).

Emotional Intelligence test (EIT) developed by Ekta Sharma has been used. This test is comprised of 60 items of Likert type in the form of five point rating scale ranging from always, most often, occasional, rarely to never. The scoring procedure is, a numerical value 5 is given to the response 'Always' and in descending order a numerical value 1 is given to response 'Never'. There are seven negative items viz item numbers: 4, 9, 12, 14, 16, 17 and 22 where reverse score is applicable. This test covers five dimensions i.e. self awareness, and managing emotions, motivating self, empathy and handling relationships. In terms of reliability it was found that the highly significant coefficient of correlation indicating the internal consistency between the different domains of EIT and also between the two administrations with a time gap of one month was considered to be satisfactory. Thus this test was found highly reliable. In regard with validity, the construct validity was ascertained by obtaining the interrelationship between all the five domains. The interrelationship coefficient between total EI and all five dimensions are viz, self awareness, managing emotions, motivating self, empathy and handling relationships (0.66, 0.64, 0.83, 0.64 & 0.83) respectively.

RESULTS

	Self awareness	Managing emotions	Motivating self	Empathy	Handling relationships
Emotionality,	-.50	-.53	-.76	-.63	-.59
Lack of positive experience	-.66	-.65	-.47	-.56	-.77
Physiological irritation	-.57	-.54	-.53	-.56	-.56

The scatter plot for the given negative correlation.



DISCUSSION

So far as the present results are concerned, adolescents were having fairly high emotional intelligence and the must have a sense of control for emotional regulation. They had a great deal of command over their skills needed for self- control, self-awareness, cooperation and empathy which are necessary for sound decision-making and allows them to carry their social relations with harmony. Consequently all these attributes can serve as keystone for keeping adolescents at bay from depression. Studies carried in the same context which showed similar results to the present study, the study was carried

out on a dimension of emotional intelligence- skills showed college students with high levels of emotional intelligence show greater empathy, a higher satisfaction with life and better quality in their social relations, pertinently it can be concluded they had low depression (Ciarrochi, Chan and Caputi, 2000) consequently these individuals will be low on depression.

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