



Disparities In Emotional Intelligence In Relation To Anger Experiences Among Adolescents In Pakistan

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Abstract

The present research aimed to investigate the disparity in emotional intelligence in relation to anger experiences among adolescents in Pakistan. Using cross sectional research design, a sample of 700 participants (350 = boys; 350 = girls) aged 13-19 years were recruited from different government and private schools and colleges of Lahore, Pakistan through purposive sampling. Following questionnaires were administered: Scale for Emotional Intelligence-Adolescent (SEI-Adolescent version) and State Trait Anger Expression Inventory-I (STAXI-I). The data was analyzed through correlation and one way MANOVA. Results revealed a significant negative relationship for both boys and girls between emotional intelligence and state and trait anger. No significant gender differences were observed in emotional intelligence of adolescents; however, girls were more likely to suppress their anger as compared to boys. Deficits in various sub scales of emotional intelligence like self-regulation, self-awareness and motivation emerged as significant predictors of anger in adolescents. Present findings may persuade mental health practitioners to devise counseling programs aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence to lower down the risk of behavioral problems in adolescents.

Keywords: levels of emotional intelligence; anger; adolescents; Pakistan

Introduction

Adolescence is considered as the most critical period as it faces realm of emotions in the progression towards adulthood; thus emotional competence is vital for adolescents and for their effective journey of life (Adeyemo & Adeleye, 2005). Emotions being an important component of personality plays an important role in one's well-being and life satisfaction (Ahmed, Imran, & Mehmood, 2009). According to Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence creates positive feelings that bring general happiness and success in future life because it guides one's thinking and actions through monitoring and appraising one's own and other's feelings and emotions.

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in determining how well a person can manage and deal with upsetting emotions such as anger (Goleman, 1995). Anger refers to an emotional state that consists of feelings that vary in intensity from mild irritation or annoyance to intense fury and rage, with associated activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system (Spielberger et al., 1985). Anger is categorized into two major dimensions by Spielberger et al. (1985) as State and Trait. State anger refers to the psychobiological emotional state or condition marked by suggestive feelings that vary in intensity from mild irritation or annoyance to intense fury and rage i.e. intensity of angry feelings at a particular time, and the extent to which a person feels like expressing anger verbally or physically and Trait anger refers to the individual differences in the disposition to perceive a wide range of situations as annoying or frustrating and by the tendency to respond to such situations with elevations in state anger.

The dimension of anger in adolescents is predominantly social. In adolescent period, there are dramatic changes and emotional ups and downs due to alteration of individual's perception of world (Adams, 1995). Adolescents may express anger whenever they are criticized, embarrassed, underestimated, or ignored (Yazgan-Inanc, Bilgin, & Atici, 2007 as cited in Arsalan, 2009). High emotional intelligence is generally important for anger management. An emotionally intelligent adolescent would be able to challenge thoughts that trigger anger and can manage their emotions well (Arsalan, 2009).

The previous researches investigated gender differences in anger expression and emotional intelligence and boys were found more aggressive than girls during late adolescence (Riaz, Iqbal, & Qureshi, 2006).

From the above mentioned theoretical perspectives and researches, it is clear that it is substantial to discover the relationship between emotional intelligence and anger. Emotional intelligence allows an individual to manage the emotions, to handle frustration such as aggression, to cope up with stress and to resolve the conflict. If an adolescent is able to recognize his/her emotions; he/she will be able to manage them. Further, behavioral problems of youth can be reduced by positive use of emotions. The high emotional intelligence of an individual lets him/her to assume responsibility for his/her own happiness rather than need from the state. In Pakistan, the current study is valuable to consider as the results may help in designing guidance and counseling programs for psychologists so that they can arrange the workshops for adolescent population. The present study aimed at exploring the relationship between emotional intelligence and anger; to see whether girls and boys differ in their emotional intelligence and expression of anger and to determine the predictive role of emotional intelligence for anger. Based on previous literature, the hypotheses of current study are:

Hypotheses

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- There would be a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and anger among adolescents in Pakistan.
- There would be a significant difference between emotional intelligence and anger expression of Pakistani girls and boys.
- Deficits in emotional intelligence will likely to predict for anger expression in Pakistani adolescents.

Method

Research Design

Cross sectional research design was used in current study.

Sample

Using purposive sampling strategy, a total sample of 700 (350 = boys; 350 = girls) adolescents aged 13-19 years were recruited from various government and private schools/colleges of Data GanjBuksh Town, Lahore. The overall mean age of participants was 16 years (SD = 2.00).

Measures

Demographic Data Questionnaire. It was developed according to the requirements of current research and used to measure the following variables such as participant's age, sex, education, birth-order, number of siblings, family system, religion, etc.

The Scale for Emotional Intelligence (SEI) for Adolescents. The SEI is a self-reported questionnaire that has been developed by Dawood Mubashir and Raiha (2011) from an already existing "Scale of Emotional Intelligence for Adults" that had been developed by Dawood, Rahman and Sheikh (2008) in a research project for doctorate thesis. The SEI for Adolescents has five main scales: Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social Skills along with 19 subscales: Feelings, Decision Making, Realistic Self-Appraisal, Realistic Self Confidence, Emotional Regulation, Delaying Gratification, Emotional Recovery, Goal Directed Preferences, Initiative Preferences, Improved Directed Strivings, Perseverance, Being Considerate, Awareness about Other's Perspectives, Generous Rapport Developing, Emotional Regulation in Relationships, Perception of Social Networks, Congenial Relationships, Leadership Abilities and Facilitative Communication. The main scales of tools have been developed by following Goleman's theory of Emotional Intelligence. All the responses are recorded on 5 point Likert Scale.

State Trait Anger Expression Inventory-I (STAXI-I). It was developed by Spielberger (1988), composite of 44 items that attempt to measure an expression and experience of anger on a four point scale. The Urdu translated version of STAXI-I by Lexilion Equivalence Method, was used in current study to measure anger among

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adolescents. It has mainly two components; State Anger and Trait Anger that define the experience of anger. STAXI-I has six scales; State Anger, Trait Anger, Anger-In, Anger-Out, Anger Control and Anger Expression.

Procedure

A pilot study was done on 14 students to assess the practical use of the research instruments, comprehension related to understanding of the items, time and sequence in administration of the questionnaires. Counter Balancing Technique: Random Starting with Rotation Method was used to assign different sequence of questionnaires so as to control confounding due to group effect.

After pilot study, the main study was done on 700 adolescents of 13-19 years that were collected from government and private schools as well as colleges of Data GanjBuksh Town, Lahore. Written permissions were taken from recruited institutes and research participants that explained about the nature, purpose and objectives of the research. Confidentiality of participant's responses and information were maintained. The participants filled the questionnaires in group and were administered by researcher along the respective class teacher. The students who met the inclusion criteria of present study participated in research. At first, the participants were requested to fill the Demographic information. Afterwards, they were asked to fill the SEI following with a ten minutes break so as to control the fatigue factor. Then, participants were asked to fill the STAXI-I questionnaire/ after the break. The researcher was available to participants during this period to attend the queries of participants. Data were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

Table I Psychometric Properties of Major Study Variables

Measure	M	SD	K	a
Emotional Intelligence				
Self-Awareness	149.69	18.91	42	.85
Self-Regulation	117.11	14.27	35	.74
Motivation	128.89	18.01	35	.87
Empathy	89.56	14.41	24	.87
Social Skills	151.62	24.01	41	.92
State Anger	20.91	6.70	10	.84
Trait Anger	22.67	5.41	10	.71
Anger temperament	9.07	2.56	4	.67
Anger reaction	9.65	2.70	4	.55
Anger in	17.59	4.04	8	.56
Anger out	17.83	4.08	8	.59
Anger control	20.50	4.37	8	.62

Anger expression	19.43	7.21	-	-
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Note: n = 700; k = no. of items

The internal consistencies of the items of the scales used in present study were determined by calculating Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients. The reliability value of .50 and above is deemed sufficient as mentioned by Tuckman (1972). Based on this criterion, all scales had reliability values within acceptable range.

Table II Intercorrelations between emotional intelligence and anger among adolescents

Measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	M	SD
1. Self-awareness	-	.63***	.62***	.63***	.60***	-	-.18**	-	-.09	-.08	-.16**	.06	-.14*	149.6	18.5
						.21***		.21**						0	8
2. Self-regulation	.67***	-	.54***	.55***	.56***	-	-	-.15**	-.11*	-.02	-.12*	.18**	-.08	116.3	14.1
						.23***	.19***							9	1
3. Motivation	.64***	.69***	-	.74***	.75***	-	-	-	-.08	-.07	-	.04	-.15*	128.6	16.6
						.23***	.21***	.20**			.19**			4	4
4. Empathy	.58***	.58***	.72***	-	.79***	-.18**	-	-	-.11*	-.06	-	.05	-.13**	90.23	13.3
							.23***	.22**			.16**				2
5. Social Skills	.61**	.63***	.77***	.79***	-	-	-.17**	-.17**	-.08	-.09	-	.04	-.16**	151.6	22.5
						.22***					.19**			7	5
6. State anger	-	-	-	-.14*	.22***	-	.61***	.43**	.36**	.45**	.56**	-.14*	.57**	20.48	6.40
	.21***	.28***	.22***					*	*	*	*		*		
7. Trait anger	-.15**	-	-	-.12*	-.21***	.62***	-	.75**	.74**	.41**	.49**	-.10	.52**	22.30	5.32
		.26***	.26***					*	*	*	*		*		
8. Anger temperament	-.14*	-	-.15*	-.07	-.15*	.45***	.74***	-	.34**	.31**	.45**	-.04	.43**	8.94	2.53
		.21***							*	*	*		*		
9. Anger reaction	-.09	-	-	-.09	-.14*	.39***	.75***	.35**	-	.23**	.27**	-.00	.28**	9.45	2.69
		.22***	.22***					*		*	*		*		

10. Anger in	-	-	-	-.18**	.-	.42***	.46***	.36**	.30**	-	.55**	.08	.88**	17.96	4.04
	.26***	.19***	.26***		.22***			*	*		*		*		
11. Anger out	-	-	-	-.17**	-.20***	.51***	.56***	.56**	.39**	.63**	-	.04	.88**	17.67	4.10
	.24***	.24***	.22***					*	*	*			*		
12. Anger control	.09	.10	.08	.09	.06	-.13**	-.04	-.04	.18**	.06	.12*	-	.07	20.34	4.03
13. Anger expression	-	-	-	-	-.23***	-	.56***	.52**	.38**	.90**	.90**	.10	-	19.63	7.16
	.28***	.24***	.27***	.19***		.52***		*	*	*	*				
M	149.7	117.8	129.1	88.81	151.5	23.05	26.93	9.20	9.84	17.23	17.99	20.65	19.22		
	9	3	3		8										
SD	19.26	14.42	19.30	15.39	25.42	5.49	8.35	2.59	2.70	4.01	4.05	4.68	7.26		

Note: Intercorrelations for boys (n = 350) are presented below the diagonal; Intercorrelations for girls (n = 350) are presented above the diagonal; M and SD for boys are presented in horizontal rows; M and SD for girls are presented in vertical columns.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001 (two tailed)

The results given in table II showed highly significant inverse relationship between all the sub-scales of Scale for Emotional Intelligence for Adolescents (SEI-Adolescents) and the sub-scales of Scale Trait Anger Expression Inventory-I (STAXI-I) except for the subscale of Anger Control of STAXI-I. The results held true for both boys and girl suggesting that adolescents with high emotional intelligence were less likely to have angry dispositions as well as experienced less angry feelings at the moment . .

Table III Independent Sample t test Showing Gender Differences on Scales of Emotional Intelligence and State Trait Anger Expression Inventory (N = 700)

Variables	<u>Boys^a</u>		<u>Girls</u>		t	p	<u>95% CI</u>		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Self-awareness	149.79	19.26	149.60	18.58	.14	.89	-2.61	3.00	.01
Self-regulation	117.83	14.42	116.39	14.11	1.34	.18	-.68	3.56	.10
Motivation	129.14	19.30	128.64	16.64	.37	.71	-2.17	3.18	.03
Empathy	88.81	15.39	90.32	13.32	-1.39	.17	-3.65	.62	-.10
Social Skills	151.58	25.42	151.67	22.55	-.05	.96	-3.65	3.48	-.00
State Anger	21.34	6.97	20.48	6.40	1.70	.09	-.13	1.85	.13
Trait Anger	23.05	5.49	22.30	5.32	1.84	.07	-.05	1.55	.14
Anger Temperament	9.20	2.59	8.93	2.53	1.36	.18	-.12	.64	.11
Anger Reaction	9.84	2.70	9.45	2.69	1.91	.06	-.01	.79	.14
Anger-In	17.23	4.01	17.96	4.04	-2.42	.02	-1.33	-.14	-.18
Anger-Out	17.99	4.05	17.67	4.10	1.06	.29	-.28	.93	.08
Anger Control	20.65	4.68	20.34	7.03	.93	.36	-.34	.95	.05
Anger Express	19.22	7.26	19.63	7.16	-.76	.45	-1.48	.66	-.06

Note. (Boys = 350; Girls = 350); SEI = scale of emotional intelligence; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; LL = lower limit; df = 698

^a Coding (Boys = 1; Girls = 2)

The results mentioned in Table III indicate that Pakistani boys and girls didn't differ in terms of their anger expression and emotional intelligence. However, gender difference was observed only on one subscale of STAXI-I, i. e., anger in suggesting that girls were more likely to suppress their anger than boys.

Table IV Multiple Hierarchal Regression Analysis Predicting Anger among Adolescents

Predictor	Anger															
	State Anger		Trait Anger		Anger Temperament		Anger Reaction		Anger In		Anger Out		Anger Control		Anger Expression	
	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	B	ΔR^2	B	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	.00		.01		.00		.01		.01*		.00		.00		.00	
Gender		-.06		-.07		-.05		-.07		.09*		-.04		-.04		.03
Step 2	.08***		.07***		.04***		.04***		.04***		.06***		.02*		.06***	
SEI-1		-.05		.03		-.07		.06		-.13*		-.10		-.01		-.13*
SEI-2		-.16**		-.14*		-.09		-.15*		.06		-.03		.17*		.01
SEI-3		-.09		-.18*		-.07		-.14*		-.11		-.10		-.03		-.12
SEI-4		.12		.04		.04		.03		.06		.06		.05		.07
SEI-5		-.11		-.01		-.04		.03		-.08		-.09		-.07		-.09

Total	.08***	.07***	.04***	.04***	.05***	.06***	.02*	.06***
R ²								

Note: N = 700; Coding for gender (1 = boys; 2 = girls) SEI-1 = self-awareness; SEI-2 = self-regulation; SEI-3 = motivation; SEI-4 = empathy; SEI-5 = social skills

*p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001

Results in table IV showed eight separate hierarchical regression analyses to determine predictors of anger among adolescents. In all analyses, gender as a control variable was entered in step 1, whereas, scales of emotional intelligence as predictors were entered in step 2. The purpose was to observe whether variability in adolescent's anger can significantly be accounted for by their lack of emotional intelligence while controlling for the effect of gender. Overall, gender did not significantly predict for anger among adolescents except one STAXI-I subscale (anger in) reflecting that girls suppressed more anger than boys. However, when the effect of gender was controlled, emotional intelligence significantly predicted for all subscales of STAXI-I. Deficits in self-regulation skills emerged as significant negative predictor of state anger. Adolescents with decreased sense of self-regulation skills and motivation were more likely to have angry dispositions and aggressive responses. All scales of emotional intelligence together predicted significantly for anger temperament and anger out, however, no single predictor emerged significant. Adolescents who suppressed their anger were more likely to be lacking in their self-awareness skills, whereas, adolescents who exerted control over their anger were more likely to have self-regulation skills. Last, anger expression was predicted significantly by deficits in self-awareness among adolescents.

Discussion

The aim of current study was to investigate the relationship and gender differences between emotional intelligence and anger among Pakistani adolescents.

The results of Table II indicated highly significant inverse relation between all the sub-scales of Scale of Emotional Intelligence for Adolescents (SEI-Adolescents) and all the sub-scales of the State Trait Anger Expression Inventory-I (STAXI-I) except for the Anger Control subscale. The present results correlate well with previous literature as Quebbeman and Rozell (2002) proposed a model of emotional intelligence and dispositional affectivity as moderators of workplace aggression. The model examined the degree of emotional intelligence and the impact of components of emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills on the type of behavior exhibited after the perception of injustice. It is recommended that specific behavior choice can lead to adaptive or maladaptive behavior like workplace aggression. Several researchers (Brackett, Mayer & Warner, 2004; Davis & Humphrey, 2012) have concluded through their research findings that emotional intelligence is negatively associated with disruptive behavior in youth and adolescent students who are better able to perceive, understand and manage their emotions are less likely to engage in aggressive behaviors. Thus high emotional intelligence allows an individual to have a positive attitude in general that leads to lower levels of anger.

The results mentioned in Table III suggested no significant gender difference in adolescents' anger and emotional intelligence except one thing that girls significantly suppressed more anger than boys. Riaz, Iqbal and Imran (2007) found no significant

gender differences in emotional intelligence of boys and girls, whereas, Yousouf and Chaughtai (2009) also did not report significant differences in expression of anger among boys and girls. The present finding that girls suppress more anger can be well explained by keeping in mind the sociocultural background of Pakistani adolescents. Masculine and feminine differences in anger behavior/expression may be attributed to specific predefined gender roles and cultural norms set for them such as in eastern Asian countries, men are supposed to be courageous, dominating, and act as authority figure, whereas, women are expected to be submissive, dependent, passive, calm and emotionally naïve. These cultural and societal expectations might make women respond less to stressors and frustrations with outward expression of anger (Simmons, 2002; Thomas, 1993). Chesney-Lind (2001) as well as Stapley and Haviland (1989) also reported that girls are more likely to direct their anger inwardly.

Results showed that deficits in emotional intelligence significantly predicted for subscales of STAXI-I. Previous researchers (Ciarrochi, Chan, & Bajgar, 2001; Custrini & Feldman, 1989) have also confirmed with the present finding that people low in emotional intelligence may have decreased sense of social competence and engagement in mood regulation behavior. Petrides, Sangareau, Furnham and Frederickson (2006) also found that low emotional intelligence facilitates antisocial behavior. Peled and Moretti (2007) explained that adolescents who frequently engage in different forms of aggressive behaviors may lack the ability to identify and regulate negative emotions i.e., lack in emotional intelligence.

Conclusion and Future Implications

In a nutshell, findings suggest that there is strong negative correlation between emotional intelligence and anger for both boys and girls and that emotional intelligence predicts anger in adolescents as well. Furthermore, there are no significant gender differences on emotional intelligence and anger except girls are more likely to inhibit their anger than boys. The findings of current study can be used to create awareness about the importance of healthily developed emotional intelligence that is associated with feelings of general happiness. Parental training programs and self-awareness programs for adolescents can be conducted in order to get adaptive ways to express the feelings and resolve the conflicts. Additionally, counseling program can be arranged for parents and teachers as how to raise students with high emotional intelligence with preventing disruptive behaviors, misconducts and psychological disorders. However, there is possible shortcoming of present research such as merely correlation nature of study does not make any causal connections. In future research; sample size can be increased and recruited from several cities of Pakistan. Future research is needed to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and other emotions like depression, fear, anxiety, grief, disappointment etc. because many researchers have shown increases in these disorders over a period of time. Moreover, happiness, success and personality traits can be explored in relation to emotional intelligence.

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