



A study of impact of emotional intelligence and psychological well being on life satisfaction among adolescents

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Abstract

Adolescent girls in low and middle income countries are particularly more prone to various psychological problems as they have to face greater adversity than their male peers (Rafferty, 2013). Indian adolescent girls unfortunately, fall under this category (World Bank classification). This research investigates the impact of emotional intelligence, psychological wellbeing on life satisfaction among adolescent girls. The sample for the current study consisted of 100 participants in the age group of 16-18 years of tricity of Panchkula, Mohali and Chandigarh. Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper & Golden, 1998), Psychological well-being Scale (Ryff, 1989) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) were administered to the sample. Inter- correlational analysis and step wise regression analysis were used for statistical analysis. Emotional intelligence and psychological well being are found to be positively related with life satisfaction. It has been found that emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing predict life satisfaction. Results will be discussed in terms of its implications.

Keywords: adolescents, emotional intelligence, life satisfaction, psychological well being

Introduction

Adolescents are the backbone of any society, future of the nation depends on them. This makes it imperative to keep their psychological health intact. Adolescence is a period of development marked with changes in the person's cognitive, physical, psychological, and social aspects (Goldbech *et al.*, 2007) ^[13]. Due to such significant changes developmental problems can also occur, especially those dealing with self-perceptions, feelings about the self, negative emotions in general, and identity versus role confusion (Lerner & Galambos, 1998). Coupled with these problems are the multifarious needs (biogenic, physiogenic, and sociogenic) that adolescents have to satisfy. The focus on problems faced by adolescents is of utmost importance, but in recent times, there is a change in the ways health and well-being is viewed. The focus has shifted towards positive indicators of well-being in order to promote optimal levels of adolescent health (Peterson, 2006). During this period of turmoil, adolescents should have a sense of satisfaction in order to keep the state of well-being and development alive. Lower levels of life satisfaction in adolescence are linked with externalizing and internalizing behaviors in the future (Martin, Huebner, & Valois, 2008) ^[20].

Life-satisfaction is the degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as-a-whole. In other words, how much the person likes the life he/she leads. It reflects both the extent to which basic needs are met and the extent to which a variety of other goals are viewed as attainable (Bradley & Corwyn 2004). Life satisfaction can be defined as the cognitive component of subjective well-being (Martikainen, 2008) ^[20]. It is important to ensure life satisfaction among adolescents as adolescents who are not satisfied with their lives are prone to all sorts of problem

behaviors (Valois *et al.*, 2002) ^[38].

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Goleman (1995) put forward five aspects of emotional intelligence knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others and handling relationships. For a sound holistic development, it is important that adolescents have a sound emotional health. Emotional problems in adolescence is associated with heightened risk for psychiatric disorders in adult life (Fergusson, Horwood, & Boden, 2006; Clark, *et al.*, 2007) ^[11, 7].

The problems of growing up usually culminate in heightened emotionality among adolescents. When these emotional tensions are not minimized, adolescents may engage in activities that threaten their psychological well-being (Morris & Maisto, 2008). It is important to infuse a sense of emotional intelligence during this age as it can affect an individual throughout life.

Psychological well-being is the combination of feeling good and functioning effectively. Sustainable well-being does not require individuals to feel good all the time; the experience of painful emotions (e.g. disappointment, failure, grief) is a normal part of life, and being able to manage these negative or painful emotions is essential for long-term well-being. Psychological well-being is, however, compromised when negative emotions are extreme or very long lasting and interfere with a person's ability to function in his or her daily life. Adolescence is such a period in one's life which can be described as time of disorientation presenting potential risks to well-being (Kleinert, 2007) ^[18]. Viewing health from

psychological well-being perspective is a helpful way of understanding adolescent well-being as this view focuses on ideas that surround the self-realization of individual potential, which is important developmental consideration of adolescent period (Ryan & Deci, 2001) [31].

This study is carried out on female adolescents as they have higher prevalence of psychological disorder such as depression, anxiety and stress (Mundy *et al.*, 2013) [25]. Adolescent girls in low and middle income countries (India is one of them, World Bank classification, 2014) are particularly more prone to such problems as they have to face greater adversity than their male peers (Rafferty, 2013) [29]. Girls at adolescence show higher signs of internalizing problems such as depression and suicidal attempts as compared to boys (Rabbani *et al.*, 2012) [28]. Studies have found that stress increases during the teenage years and affect girls more than boys (Liu & Alloy, 2010; Wani *et al.*, 2016) [19, 39]. Overall boys have reported to be mentally healthy as compared to girls (Surapuramath, 2016) [35].

The study focuses on three important aspects of good psychological health viz. emotional intelligence, psychological well being and life satisfaction. The review of literature highlights that problems in adolescence brings higher risk of developing psychological ill health in adulthood. Therefore, it becomes important to understand various aspects of adolescence wellbeing and to find ways to enhance it.

The study focuses on important aspects of adolescence psychological health, and discusses the implications of providing ways to achieve it.

Hypotheses

1. Life satisfaction will be positively related to emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among adolescents.
2. Emotional intelligence and psychological well-being will predict life satisfaction adolescents.

Method

Purposive sampling technique was used for this study. 100 participants (16-18 years), who met the inclusion criteria, were taken for the analysis. The data for the study was

Results

Table 1: Shows the inter-correlation matrix between emotional intelligence, psychological well being and life satisfaction.

	Life satisfaction	Psychological well being	Emotional intelligence
Life satisfaction	—	0.67 **	0.55**
Psychological well being		—	0.63**
Emotional intelligence			—

** Significant at 0.01 level

Table 2: Shows the regression analysis between emotional intelligence, psychological well being and life satisfaction.

Predictor Variables	Standardized Coefficients	T-Value	R Square	F-Value
	Beta			
Emotional Intelligence	0.22	2.4**	0.33	50.1**
Psychological Well-Being	0.54	5.8**	0.47	

** Significant at 0.01 level

collected from the tricity of Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali. Participants were given the standardized questionnaire along with semi schedule questionnaires regarding sex, education, socio-economic status and age. Participants were from middle socio economic group and staying in nuclear family in urban areas.

Measures

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)

The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS; Schutte *et al.*, 1998) consists of 33 self-referencing statements in which participants are asked to rate the extent to which they agree/disagree with each statement, options ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Reliability and validity of test are satisfactory.

Psychological well being scale (PWBS)

Psychological Well-Being is an 18 item scale (Ryff *et al.*, 1995). It has six subscales namely Autonomy, Environmental mastery, personal growth, Positive relation with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. All responses are made on 7-point scale ranging from 1(strongly agree) to 7 (strongly disagree). Scale scores are computed as the sum of relevant items, reversing items where appropriate. These measures have adequate reliability of .70 (Ryff *et al.*, 2007) [32].

Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS)

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) [9] is a 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one’s life. Participants indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the 5 items using a 7-point scale that ranges from 7 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics viz, mean and standard deviation was performed. Correlation was used to find the correlations between variables and another objective of the present study was to investigate the significant predictors for life satisfaction among adolescents for which step wise regression analysis was used.

In the regression analysis for Life Satisfaction as the criterion, the following variables were entered as predictors' viz. emotional intelligence and psychological well being.

Table 2 shows the findings of regression analysis. For the given sample, emotional intelligence (= 0.22) and psychological well-being (=0.22) are found to be relevant and were retained as predictors. They explained 50% (R=.50) of the variance in criterion variable. However, psychological wellbeing emerged as strong predictor of life satisfaction among adolescent girls as compared to emotional intelligence.

Discussion

The current study primarily aimed to investigate the associations between emotional intelligence, psychological well-being and life satisfaction and also found that whether emotional intelligence and psychological well-being predicts life satisfaction in adolescents. Emotional Intelligence has positive relationship with psychological well being and life satisfaction. The findings of this study are consistent with various previous findings (Constantine & Gainor, 2001; Acar, 2002; Palmer *et al.*, 2002; Murphy, 2006; Thingujam, 2011; Rey, Extremera & Pena, 2011; Cazan & Nastasa, 2015)^[27, 26, 36, 6]. Emotionally intelligent people evaluate situations as less stressful which results in a higher satisfaction with life and happiness. (Araïanda *et al.*, 2013)^[1]. Adolescents when able to understand and express emotions have greater satisfaction within themselves (Runcan & Iovu, 2013)^[30].

Carmeli *et al.*, (2009) through four hierarchical regression models found positive association between emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing components – self-esteem, life satisfaction, and self-acceptance. Adolescents who perceive themselves as being in touch with their emotions and able to regulate them tend to report less depression and physical pain (Mavroveli *et al.*, 2007). Adolescents with high trait EI seem to be less vulnerable to psychological disorders compared to their low trait EI peers. This finding is especially significant given that approximately 28% of adolescents have suffered an episode of major depressive disorder by the time they reach 19 years (Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Seeley, 1998).

Psychological well being is also positively related to life satisfaction. The findings are in line with various other researches (Carmeli *et al.*, 2009; Sun *et al.*, 2011; Guney, 2009; Burrus *et al.*, 2012; Mehmood & Gulzar, 2014)^[5, 14, 23]. Kimmeler *et al.*, (1997)^[17] found that psychological well-being which included self-esteem and affective state as well as psychopathology was found to be more closely associated with general life satisfaction than almost all life domains considered by them. Psychological well being and general life satisfaction are clearly related however while psychological well being has been thought to be primarily related to self-esteem and affective state, general life satisfaction has been suggested to be founded more on social relations and health (Hutchinson *et al.*, 2004)^[16]. Well being whether physical or psychological directly influences the quality of life an individual is leading and thus in the process adds up to their life satisfaction (Demirbatir *et al.*, 2013)^[8].

Emotional intelligence and psychological well being act as predictors for life satisfaction. Psychological well being has emerged as stronger predictor than emotional intelligence. Emotional clarity and positive and negative affect are two

important indicators of emotional intelligence that predicts life satisfaction (Augusto *et al.*, 2006)^[3]. Perceived emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of life satisfaction when mood states and personality characteristics are not taken into account (Extremera & Fernandez-Berrocal, 2005)^[10]. Emotional intelligence was found to be a predictor of life satisfaction but not independent of affective states (Thingujam, 2011)^[36].

Psychological well being predicts life satisfaction in terms of its two essential measures of depression and self-esteem (Mehmood & Shaukat, 2014)^[24]. Proactive coping and optimism are two aspects of well being that are predictors of life satisfaction (Uskul & Greenglass, 2005)^[37]. Adolescents with poor mental health cannot have satisfaction from their life.

The factors that influence psychological well being and the degree to which they influence it may vary from person to person. As the need, desires and wishes of individuals are different from one another so are the factors that might affect their psychological health.

Conclusion

In the present study, we have ascertained that emotional intelligence, psychological well being and life satisfaction are positively related to each other and emotional intelligence and psychological well being does predict life satisfaction among adolescents. An important implication of the study is the possibility to develop intervention programs aiming to enhance wellbeing and satisfaction among adolescents. Students' ability to manage their emotions and impulses, to be more flexible, and to express their emotions in an assertive manner represent an important resource against stress and ill health whether physical or psychological.

As a result, our research supports the opportunity of implementing a program focused on the development of emotional intelligence which can facilitate psychological well being and life satisfaction.

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