



Emotional Intelligence and Aggression among Young Adults: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the relation between emotional intelligence and aggression among adults, focusing on how these two factors influence each other and impact relationships, personal growth, and well-being. The interplay between emotional intelligence and aggression provides insights after comprehensive review of ten studies articles. This study seeks to develop effective strategies for young adults to manage their emotions, reduce aggression, and enhance conflict resolution skills. This review examined the research designs employed, the methods utilized to quantify the construct of emotional intelligence and aggression among young adults, and the key conclusions that can be made from these studies among young adults. Developing emotional intelligence and managing aggression in young adults is crucial for their overall well-being, social connections, and personal growth. Emotional intelligence helps young adults cultivate essential skills like effective communication, self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy, enabling them to navigate relationships, conflicts, and challenges more successfully. By being emotionally intelligent, young adults can better understand and manage their own emotions, as well as respond appropriately to the emotions of others, leading to more harmonious relationships, improved mental health, and a more positive outlook on life. This review will help adults, their parents and policy makers to induce emotionally intelligent overlook and less aggressiveness.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Aggression, Systematic Review, Young Adults

1. Introduction

The ability to monitor one's own emotions as well as those of others, distinguish between them, and utilize this knowledge to shape decisions and behaviors that foster both intellectual and emotional development is known as emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1993). Mental health issues are a substantial obstacle for Pakistani university students. According to earlier research, Pakistani students experience higher rates of mental health disorders, bullying, and suicide than students in other nations. These findings may be attributed to a variety of difficult circumstances, including relationship and academic stress, financial difficulties, political unrest, and unclear career aspirations.

Aggressive conduct is one of the major experiential issues that university students face among the various psychological difficulties they encounter (Bibi et al., 2019). Any conduct that is intended to cause harm or injury is considered aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Furthermore, it could be indirect or direct. Physical and verbal forms of direct violence are both intended to directly harm other people. Spreading rumors and gossip, as well as unfriending the target on social media, are examples of indirect violence that subtly hurts other people (Björkqvist, 2001).

It was looked into whether violence among university students is predicted by gender, age, education, and emotional intelligence (EI). The findings showed that whereas demographic factors like age, gender, and education did not substantially predict aggressiveness, EI did. It demonstrates how much emotional intelligence (EI) affects aggressiveness, although hostility is experienced by students in all age groups, genders, and educational levels, suggesting that aggression is experienced equally by all of these groups. In keeping with our findings, Abdoli, Rezaie, and Sani (2008) Several scholars have examined the variables influencing human violence throughout the previous fifty years. While healthy forms of aggressiveness help people succeed in competitive games, be successful in daily difficulties, and be socially assertive, aggressive behavior that is perpetrated is linked to issues in relationships, the workplace, the economy, and the law (Scarpa, 2003).

Given the various academic, psychological, and sport-specific advantages it offers, physical activity is crucial in encouraging students to lead active and healthy lifestyles (Cuervo et al., 2017; Meljanovas et al., 2017). Numerous advantages come from moderate physical exercise, including a decrease in cardiovascular illnesses (Mushtaq et al., (2021); Garn et al., 2020; Meisel et al., 2019) and a steady reduction in the rates of obesity and overweight people (Lutz et al., 2019). Furthermore, active lifestyles have been shown to dramatically lower stress and anxiety levels in the cognitive domain, which enhances mood and fosters socio-affective and emotional self-regulation, self-esteem, and overall well-being (Hakun & Findeison, 2019; Tweed et al., 2020). Participating in sports is a means of promoting moral principles, demonstrating respect for others, and adhering to regulations (Bermejo et al., 2019). Apart from the previously mentioned athletic advantages, research by Zurita-Ortega et al. has demonstrated the role that physical exercise plays in the management of aggressiveness in teenagers (Zurita-Ortega et al., 2018).

Teens that are aggressive are unable to accurately anticipate the effects of their actions, exhibit social aggression in a variety of hostile behaviors, lack a clear comprehension of their own hostility, rely heavily on verbal cues to

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establish their authority in social situations, and utilize more forceful remedies (Graham, 2002). Emotional intelligence is defined by Caruso and Wolfe (2004) as the capacity to recognize emotions, access and produce emotions to support cognition, comprehend emotions and emotional knowledge, and reflectively control emotions to foster both intellectual and emotional development. These days, most communities consider aggressive behavior to be very important and cause for great worry. Aggressive behaviors of all kinds appear to be straining the entire planet. The majority of the globe is sadly rife with violence, which is surely causing confusion and upsetting global peace and harmony. Different thinkers have characterized aggression in different ways. Aggression is described as "a series of behaviors whose intended outcome is harm to the person it is intended for (Dollard et al., 1939). While there is a broad range of behaviors that fall under the umbrella of aggressiveness, aggression is described in the psychological literature as any behavior that is meant to cause harm to another person who is motivated to prevent harm from occurring (Baron & Richardson, 1994; Coie & Dodge, 1998). "Aggression is behavior directed toward the goal of harming another living being," according to Baron and Byrne (1997)

"If your emotional abilities aren't in hand, if you don't have self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your distressing emotions, if you can't have empathy and have effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get so far" -Daniel Goleman

1.1. Research Objectives

To find out relationship between emotional intelligence and aggression.

To study correlates used with emotional intelligence and aggression.

To analyze methodologies employed in literature.

2. Method

This article uses a systematic review. To find out the relation between emotional intelligence and aggression this study designed among young adults. The scholarly literature was sourced from Goggle Scholar, J Store, and Research Gate. comprehensive assessment of all research done on young people' emotional intelligence and hostility. Thirty research articles were obtained during the initial phase. Ten research publications were selected for review based on the objectives of the current investigation.

2.1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In order to be included in the review, the current study used certain criteria to identify the relevant studies on a given variable, i.e., emotional intelligence and aggression among young adults. This study looked at the range of variables that influence the emotional intelligence and aggression of young people. The factors that influence emotional intelligence and aggression in young adults are early childhood experiences, peer relationships, stress and trauma, as well as societal and cultural standards.

3. Systematic Review

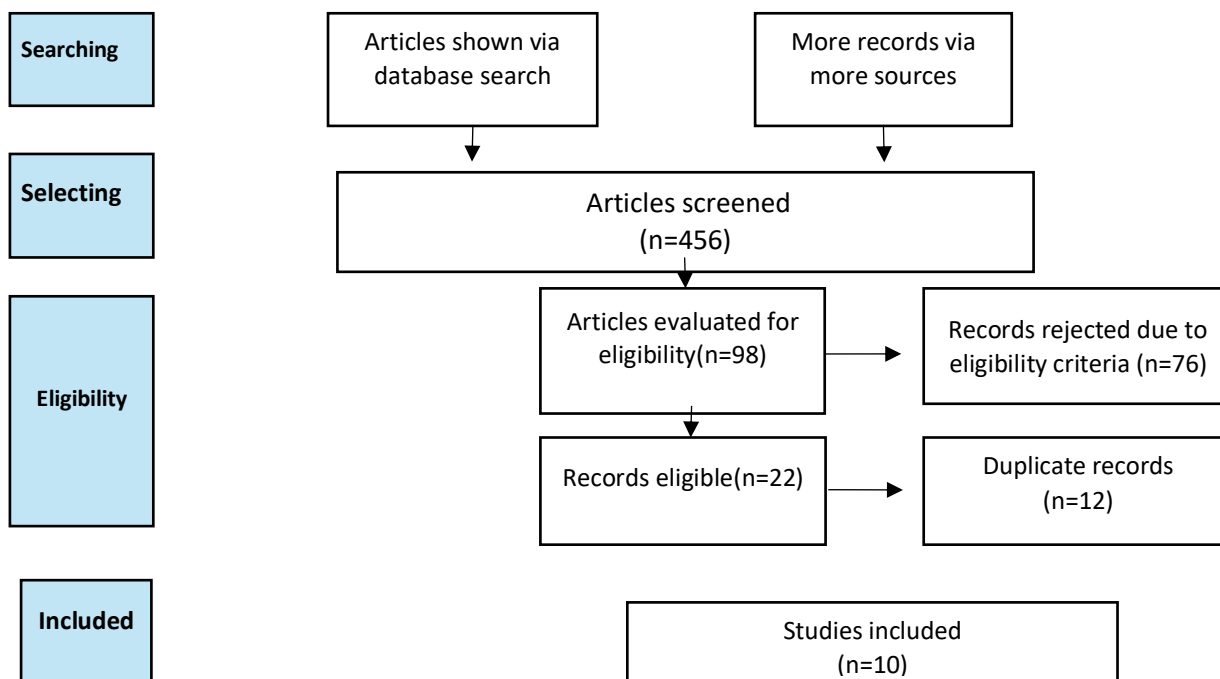


Figure 1: Flowchart following PRISMA guidelines

Systematic reviews aim to answer research questions in a repeatable and explicit way by aggregating, assessing, and presenting the combined results of primary research studies on a particular topic. A systematic literature review offers a way to assess the volume and quality of information that is currently accessible on a specific topic or interesting question. In contrast to a traditional literary study, it provides a more precise and thorough level of understanding.

4. Findings And Discussion

In Pakistan, societal expectations dictate that girls should be more courteous, empathetic, and reserved (Bibi et al., 2018), while boys are encouraged to be more assertive and aggressive to conform to traditional masculine norms. However, interestingly, both genders exhibit similar levels of verbal aggression. The current study's findings must be considered in the context of Pakistan's cultural landscape. The theory of emotional intelligence (EI) suggests that individuals with higher EI tend to have better social relationships, adapt more effectively to their environment, and are less likely to engage in aggressive behavior (Brackett et al., 2011; Mayer et al., 2008). Research has consistently shown that emotional regulation plays a crucial role in aggression across cultures (Bibi et al., 2018). This study builds on existing knowledge by highlighting gender and regional differences in aggression and EI among Pakistani students. The results indicate that EI and aggression are negatively correlated, meaning higher EI is associated with lower aggression. Female students tend to have higher EI, while male students exhibit more aggression. Urban students generally have higher EI than rural students, who tend to be more aggressive (Brackett et al., 2011; Mayer et al., 2008). The study's findings suggest that EI is a significant predictor of aggression, with individuals having lower EI being more likely to engage in aggressive behavior. Individuals with higher EI tend to use more constructive coping mechanisms, while those with lower EI use avoidance-oriented strategies. Overall, young adults with higher EI tend to exhibit less aggression than those with lower EI, who tend to engage in more aggressive behaviour (Furnham et al., 2002). Pakistani girls are expected to be politer, compassionate and unreceptive in comparison to male gender (Bibi et al., 2018). On the other hand, boys are encouraged to be more aggressive as considered necessary for their masculine image. However, both genders equally express their aggression verbally. The findings of the current study discussed in the light of the cultural background of Pakistan; therefore these results should be interpreted with caution. The Theory of EI argue that people with higher EI have positive social interaction and can adjust in environment successfully (Brackett et al., 2011; Mayer et al., 2008).

Most of the studies used correlational design and non-probability sampling technique for drawing sample. These methodological concerns shed light on need of use for probability sampling technique for more accuracy. Furthermore, longitudinal and experimental designs should also be used for conducting research with efficient results.

The results of the research are discussed in detail here. Further research provides important conclusions that may be drawn from the studies that are part of the systematic analysis. Aggression and emotional intelligence in young adults are influenced by various factors.

Table 1: Systemic Review of Studies on Emotional intelligence and Aggression among Young Adults

| Sr | Author | Population | Age Rang e | Countr y | Scale measures | Sampling technique | Research design | Variable Type | Key Findings |
|----|--------------|---------------------|-------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Kumar (2019) | 60 college students | 17-22 years | Haryana | Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) by Anukool Hyde and Sanjyot Pethe Aggression scale (Srivastava, 1986) | Purposive sampling technique | A Correlatio nal Study | Problem Focused Coping, Emotion focused coping, Aggression | Low emotional intelligence refers to higher aggression. |

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|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | Bibi, et al. (2019) | 100 University students | 18 to 35 years | Germany | Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998) Aggression Scale (Buss & Perry, 1992) | Non probability | Correlational study | Emotional Intelligence Physical Aggression Verbal Aggression Anger | Pakistani girls are expected to be politer, compassionate and unreceptive in comparison to male gender |
| 3 | Peláez-Fernández (2015) | 338 participants | 14 to 69 year old | Australia | The Trait Meta-Mood Scale and the Aggressive Provocation Questionnaire | Non probability | Correlational study | adults, aggression, gender, moderation, perceived emotional intelligence | Mood change relates to aggression. |
| 4 | Ubago-Jiménez, et al. (2021) | 932 undergraduate | 18 to 28 year old | Spain | The Trait Meta-Mood Scale-24 (TMMS-24), by Fernández-Berrocal et al | Random sampling Stratified sampling | Descriptive study | relation between physical activity and emotional intelligence is stronger in all its dimensions. | The findings highlight how emotional intelligence and physical activity practice decrease violent behaviour in university students. |
| 5 | Ganie, et al. (2023) | 200 university students | 15 - 16 years old | India | Mangal Emotional Intelligence Inventory (Mangal & Mangal, 2004) Aggression Scale by Pal and Naqvi (1986) | Random sampling Stratified sampling: | Descriptive study | Demographic (gender, location) Cognitive (emotional intelligence), Affective (aggression) | - 60% of university students have average emotional intelligence, while 64% have an average level of aggression. Female students have more emotional intelligence |

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|---|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | than male students. |
| 6 | Mohammedi & Pour (2021) | Teen Elite Wrestlers (50) | 14 - 17 years old | Iran | King's Intelligence Scale (2008): An Autoregressive Scale, the main form of which is 83 items. Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992) | Purposive sampling | Descriptive study Correlational study | Demographic (age), Cognitive (intelligence), Affective (aggression) | Negative relationship between intelligence and aggression: The study found a significant negative correlation between intelligence and aggression, indicating that as intelligence increases, aggression decreases. |
| 7 | Ralte, et al.(2023) | - Youths (individuals in their early life stages, likely teenagers or young adults) | 18 - 22 years | India | Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ), Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) | None (since it's a literature review, no new data was collected) | - Literature review: A research design that aims to summarize and synthesize existing knowledge on a topic. | Demographic (age, family background), Cognitive (emotional intelligence), Affective (emotional states, emotional maturity) | Low emotional intelligence is linked to unpredictable emotional states and suppressed emotional maturity in youths. |
| 8 | Abdul Jaleel Kuzhiyengal Mambra (2023) | 32 adolescents | 18 to 24 years | India | The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) by Anukool Hyde, Sanjyoi Pathe and Upinder Dhar in 1971 | Convenience sampling | Descriptive study | Demographic (gender), Cognitive (emotional intelligence), Affective (aggression) | There is a significant difference in emotional intelligence and aggression between adolescent girls and boys. |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | | the aggression scale by Buss and Perry in 1992 was used | | | | Boys are more aggressive, while girls are more emotionally intelligence. |
| 9 | Mohammad et al. (2020) | Young adults in Pakistan | 18 - 22 years | Pakistan | Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) and Aggression Questionnaire (AQ) | Purposive sampling | Correlational study | Emotional Intelligence Aggression and Intelligence Quotient Conflict Resolution Strategies | Negative correlation between EI and aggression predict lower aggression in young adults |
| 10 | Abdulleel Kuzhiyengal Mambra (2023) | Young adults in Pakistan | 18-22 years | Pakistan | Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) and Conflict Resolution Inventory (CRI) | Purposive sampling | Correlational study | Emotional Intelligence Conflict Resolution Strategies | Negative correlation between EI and aggression (r = -0.40, p < 0.01), Higher EI associated with better conflict resolution strategies (r = 0.35, p < |

The current study set out to evaluate the emotional intelligence and aggressiveness levels of college students as well as the importance of the relationship between the two variables. Testing the relevance of differences in emotional intelligence amongst university students in relation to other demographic characteristics (such as gender and place of residence) was another goal. Using the same demographic characteristics, the study also sought to determine the relevance of differences in aggressiveness. According to the current study's findings, aggressiveness and emotional intelligence in college students are significantly correlated negatively. This result is in line with earlier research by Moskat and Sorensen (2012), Tintorives and Limor (2011), Nest (2010), Leonard (2005), Johnston (2003), and Shahzad, et al. (2013) and Poulou (2010), where a strong negative association between these two factors was also discovered. In terms of how gender affects emotional intelligence, the current study found that there are notable differences in the emotional intelligence levels of male and female adolescents, with females having higher emotional intelligence than male university students. This result is consistent with the outcomes of earlier research by Davis (2012), Naghavi and Redzuan (2011), Leonard (2005), Sanchez-Nunez et al. (2008), and Chuttia (2013). However, some of the earlier research—such as Shin (2011) and Shah and Thingujam (2008)—was not in line with this specific discovery. According to these investigations, emotional intelligence was similar for males and girls. In relation to the influence of gender

The current study on aggressiveness found that there are substantial differences between male and female adolescents' levels of hostility, with men exhibiting higher levels of aggression than female university students. This result is consistent with other research by Ahmad and Hague (2007), Ivanovo and Monika (2008), Vandana and Sandhu (2006), and Leonard (2005), which discovered that teenage guys exhibit a noticeably greater rate of aggressiveness than teenage girls. However, several of the research on emotional intelligence and aggression among university students that have been published before, such as Archer (2012), did not support this particular

conclusion. among these research, the levels of hostility among boys and girls were equal. In the current investigation

Adolescents from rural and urban areas differed significantly in their levels of aggressiveness and emotional intelligence. Research on emotional intelligence by Harrod and Scheer (2005) and Katoch (2013) yielded contradictory results. On the other hand, urban adolescents outperformed rural adolescents in a prior study conducted by Punia and Sangwan (2011). Furthermore, our results on aggressiveness differ from those of a 2013 study by Quadri, which discovered that school athletes from rural areas exhibit noticeably higher levels of hostility than those from urban areas. In general, men have been shown to exhibit greater values in all dimensions of aggressive behavior than women, according to the data collected.

In terms of both their relationship and visible manifestations, men exhibit higher degrees of aggression than women. The majority of research investigations on sex differences and aggressive behavior (Zurita-Ortega et al., 2018; López-Castedo et al., 2019; Zychet et al., 2019) have similar results. These results, however, are at odds with those of the study conducted by Blasco and Orgilés (Blasco et al., 2014), which discovered that among a population of football players aged 7 to 17, women had a higher propensity for physical aggressiveness than did males. Therapies aimed at improving young people's emotional intelligence (EI) have demonstrated encouraging real-world applications in lowering animosity and aggressiveness. Usually, the goal of these therapies is to enhance social competence, emotional awareness, control, and empathy (Schutte et al., 2009).

Studies reveal that proficient emotional intelligence (EI) instruction can result in notable reductions in aggressive tendencies by fostering more positive emotional expression and social interactions. Research has indicated that the integration of emotional intelligence (EI) components into cognitive-behavioral techniques can successfully improve thought patterns and emotional reactions, which in turn can contribute to a decrease in hostility among young adults and adolescents (Wupperman et al., 2008). Another systematic review on emotional intelligence relates performance to self-concept (Javaid et al., 2024). In order to ensure greater accessibility and long-lasting benefits for youth well-being, it is crucial to incorporate emotional intelligence (EI) training into educational curricula and community programs. The long-term effectiveness of these therapies depends on the consistent practice and reinforcement of emotional skills in real-world settings

Many important factors need to be taken into account in order to understand the link between emotional intelligence (EI) and violence in young people. First, characteristics like self-awareness, empathy, and emotion control are measured in order to determine the EI levels within a certain demographic group (Schutte et al., 2009). These elements are essential because they affect how people see and control their emotions, which may have an effect on their inclination toward aggressiveness. Studies indicate that improved emotional intelligence and empathy are linked to increased levels of emotional intelligence (EI), which may lessen violent behavior (Jones et al., 2011).

It is crucial to comprehend the real-world applications of EI-enhancing treatments in lowering youth antagonism. Research has demonstrated that enhancing emotional intelligence (EI) abilities through interventions can successfully reduce aggressive tendencies by promoting improved emotion control and interpersonal comprehension (Brackett et al., 2011). These treatments frequently involve cognitive-behavioral methods designed to teach adaptive coping mechanisms and improve emotional self-awareness, enabling people to react to stresses in a more positive way.

Moreover, stress and coping strategies have an impact on the relationship between aggressiveness and emotional intelligence. When presented with stresses, those with higher EI levels typically use more adaptive coping mechanisms, which acts as a buffer against aggressive responses (Zeidner et al., 2013). On the other hand, low emotional intelligence (EI), especially in the areas of emotion control and empathy, can increase the effects of stress and lead to elevated

It's also critical to assess how well programs work to stop hostile online behaviors like cyberbullying. Interventions centered on emotional intelligence (EI) that impart social skills like empathy and problem-solving have demonstrated potential in reducing aggressive behaviors in online and offline contexts (Durlak et al., 2011). These programs seek to improve young people's digital connections by strengthening emotional competences and encouraging prosocial behaviors.

In summary, programs designed to raise young people' emotional intelligence have the potential to lower aggressiveness by fostering emotional control, empathy, and useful coping mechanisms. In addition to addressing the immediate behavioral consequences, these initiatives help to raise a generation that is more socially conscious and sympathetic and is able to handle interpersonal difficulties in both online and offline settings.

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