



PSYCHOLOGICAL PREDICTORS OF EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Abstract

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The rationale behind choosing this topic is that the rising problems of adolescents and changes social environment has brought about many stresses which have become because of mental agony among adolescents. Later this can affect their mental state leading to loneliness. The teenagers go all out to get accepted by their peers and most of the time comes under peer pressure. The aim of the present investigation was to assess the psychological predictors of emotional quotient among adolescents. For this purpose assessing emotional scale by Schutte, John and Bhullar (2007), peer pressure inventory (Clasen and Brown, 1985), UCLA loneliness scale (Russel, Peplau and Cutrona, 1996) and resilience scale (Wagnild and Young, 1993) were used. For this study data was collected from 200 school going students (100 females and 100 males) ranging in the age group of 14-18 years. Results revealed that there exist no significant gender differences in emotional quotient, loneliness, peer pressure and resilience. It was also found that there was a negative and significant correlation between loneliness and emotional quotient. There was a positive and significant correlation between resilience and emotional quotient among adolescents. Resilience and loneliness found to be a significant predictor of emotional quotient.

Keywords: Emotional quotient, loneliness, peer pressure, adolescents, resilience

Introduction

People prefer to live in nuclear families and also subscribe to one child norm. Most parents are working and the children are either left with the servants or are being resort to technology-based devices like mobile phones, tabs and laptops. Social media keeps them engaged most of the times. There is hardly any inter-personal interaction between children and their parents. Despite living with the family, they are aloof and start looking for the people of their age group who they feel, will understand their feelings. These problems aggravate when the children are away from their parents in hostels where they need to struggle within themselves for acceptance and social connections. Sometimes, they fail to understand the surroundings; so either they stay secluded or just listen to the peers without giving any forethought, and follow them blindly to get accepted. However, those who are slightly mature and have strong emotions, exhibit great power of resilience and always think before doing anything in handling both, the positive and negative consequences. It is the need of the hour to help these growing adolescents to become emotionally strong so that they understand the situations well before making any decisions as staying away would also

not serve any purpose in the competitive world. This paper is throwing some light on how emotional quotient is being affected by loneliness and peer pressure. It is also going to show how the resilient nature of the given age group will improve their emotional quotient.

Acheaw and Larson (2015) identified that the 13-17 year age group is heavy user of social media and are virtually addicted to it. Twenge (2006) and Greenfield (2014) have also warned that engagement of young people with social media with this extent will lead to impairment both in personal and social development. Kim (2017) also mentions that understanding the impact of social media on adolescents' wellbeing has become priority due to increase in mental health problems. So it is very important to make the right beginning before they step out.

As it is known that adolescent age is a very tricky age, one wrong decision can lead to devastation of whole life. Parents need to not only guide but time to time remind them or if need arises, warn them as per the situations without looking for their attitude towards them. Here safety of these teenagers is the priority. The adolescents prefer to spend less time with their parents and do not want to share their views. They are caught in a situation and pre-conceived notions of their own that parents will not agree to whatever they may say. Hence, they may have a more intimate relationship with their peers where they are of fixed mindset that all age mates are always right and ready to listen.

Castrogiovanni (2002) states a peer group is defined as a small group of same aged people sharing same views. A peer group generally is of 4-5 people. Such a group provides the members of group a sense of belongingness and security. As mentioned by Keisner, Cardinu, Pouline and Bucci (2002) that a sense of group belongingness is a psychological construct. Adolescent peer groups provide support especially to teenagers as they are in a stage where they believe about decreasing their dependence on parents and increasing feeling of self-sufficiency and connecting with a much larger social network. This is a period in which individuals are expanding their perspective beyond the family and learning how to negotiate relationships with others in the social scenario.

Loneliness is a prevalent experience for many individuals. Loneliness has been defined as the unpleasant experience that occurs when a person's network of social relationships is significantly deficient in either quality or quantity (Perlman & Peplau, 1984). Cacioppo et al. (2006) examined loneliness and its relationship to depressive symptomatology through two studies utilizing middle aged and older adult participants. Measures were administered to assess loneliness, depressive symptoms, psychosocial risk factors (such as perceived stress and social support), and hostility. Loneliness may be considered as deficiencies in the systems of interpersonal interactions (Cristina, Minzi, & Sacchi, 2004).

Some people try to adapt well in the given circumstances and do not allow the situation to overpower them. This way of adapting to the changed situation and come out as a winner is power of one's resilience. Southwick et al. (2014) also mention that resilience promotes balance in life of a person and after facing or struggling with stresses, one can bounce back and adapt to the stresses.

For success in life the young adults are generally guided by elders to work hard. In present scenario as it is the world of competition, everyone is looking for good job and opportunities. To get the best option generally the children are told by the parents to secure good percentage. Each parent wants to see their child succeeding with high scores. To obtain high scores high intelligent quotient is required. As it is considered that high Quotient is directly correlated to the high academic achievement. Study by Berking et. al (2008) has found that individuals who perceive greater emotional clarity and ability to repair their own emotional states have reported better emotional adjustment.

Research indicates that most students drop out of school because they feel an extreme sense of alienation or disengagement (National High School Center, 2007). Typically, students express this alienation through absenteeism, behavior problems, and failing grades (Sinclair, et al., 1998). Students who have difficulty interpreting the expectations of others, and who have difficulty with interpersonal skills, often leave high school without graduating (Sinclair, et al., 1998). Wagner et al. (1991) found that nearly one third of students with learning disabilities and approximately half of students with an emotional disturbances drop out of high school.

Research indicates that as emotional intelligence increases, student concern decreases. Increased student concern correlates with low emotional intelligence scores, and high emotional intelligence scores contribute to easing transition trauma for females and males. Moreover, females display higher levels of emotional intelligence and are better able to adapt to academic changes in middle school than males. Similar research conducted with middle school males correlated high student emotional intelligence scores, as rated from teachers and counselors, with high self report emotional intelligence (McLin, 2003). In this research there was a significant difference between students who were rated low by themselves, a teacher or counsellor and those rated as high, with a positive correlation between self reported and teacher reported emotional intelligence scores (McLin, 2003).

Thus in the present research peer pressure, loneliness, resilience and emotional quotient are being studied along with predictors of the emotional quotient.

Rationale of the Study

The rationale behind choosing this topic is that the rising problems of adolescents and changes in social environment has brought about many stresses which have become because of mental agony among adolescents. Later this can affect their mental state leading to loneliness. The teenagers go all out to get accepted by their peers and most of the time comes under peer pressure. However, strong emotional quotient and high resilience in an individual can help one to come out of such situations. Establishing an association between various factors that affect a person's behaviour is very difficult; still more difficult is developing a standardized procedure which is applicable in all cases. Various affective factors like loneliness, anger, rebelliousness, inferiority etc. are common among the adolescents these days.

The other variable is loneliness which can be situational that is due to some specific circumstances like broken up relationship, non-acceptance in the peer group or when one themselves does not want to mix up and stay aloof or it can be due to some internal thoughts or hormonal changes going on especially when one steps into puberty. To deal with this problem emotional quotient provides healthy support to adolescents as loneliness and emotional functioning is associated to each other.

The significance of the peer group is that they develop a close connection and also help each other by giving a true feedback about various actions or behaviours portrayed by each member of the group. It can also act as motivators and demotivators towards academic stress. Hence, it is important to understand that peer pressure is a common issue for adolescents to deal with. Hence, it is necessary to find out some measures to help them.

From such research studies, it has been also been observed that, how under peer influence, adolescents can sometimes put themselves into risks or get lonely if they do not conform. There is utmost need of the study in this field in India. It is very important to understand the adolescents here and they need to be taught, to handle the situations in a mature manner upholding their resilience without conforming to peer-pressure and enabling them to fight loneliness.

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the present research:

1. To study the relationship between emotional quotient, peer pressure, loneliness, and resilience among adolescents.
2. To study the role of peer pressure, loneliness and resilience in determining emotional quotient among adolescents.

Hypotheses

On the basis of review of literature following hypotheses have been formulated

1. It is assumed that there is a negative correlation between emotional quotient and loneliness among adolescents.
2. It is assumed that there is a negative correlation between emotional quotient and peer pressure among adolescents.
3. It is assumed that there is a positive correlation between emotional quotient and resilience among adolescents.
4. It is assumed that there exist gender differences in emotional quotient, peer pressure, loneliness and resilience among adolescents.
5. It is assumed that peer pressure, loneliness and resilience play an important role in determining emotional quotient among adolescents.

Methodology

Sample

For this study data was collected from 200 school going students (100 females and 100 males) ranging in the age group of 14-18 years. Data for the present study was collected from students of Schools of Himachal Pradesh.

Tools Used

1. Assessing Emotional Scale by Schutte, John and Bhullar (2007)

To assess the emotional quotient of the participants in this study Assessing Emotional Scale by Schutte, John and Bhullar (2007) was used. It is based on Salovey and Mayer's (1990) original model of emotional quotient. This scale has been used cross culturally to measure the level of emotional quotient of the participants and it consists of 33 items based on five-point scale.

2. Peer Pressure Inventory (Clasen and Brown, 1985)

Peer pressure inventory (PPI) developed by Clasen and Brown (1985) is used to assess the peer pressure of the adolescents in the present investigation. The scale consists of 53 items and had reliability of .72. The validity index was found to be above 0.70.

3. UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russel, Peplau and Cutrona, 1996)

To assess loneliness of the adolescents UCLA loneliness scale is used which was developed by Russel, Peplau and Cutrona (1996). This scale was developed to assess the subjective feelings of loneliness or social isolation. It consists of 20 items and described on a four point scale that ranged from "not at all" to "almost

always". Split half reliability in Indian context was 0.71. The reliability of this scale is 0.94 and concurrent validity was found to be good.

4. Resilience Scale (Wagnild and Young, 1993)

The Resilience Scale by Wagnild and Young (1993) is used to measure the resilience among adolescents. It contains 25 items. These items measure the degree of individual resilience. It is based on seven-point likert type scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Cronbach's alpha coefficient was consistently acceptable and moderately high (.73 to .91). Validity of the Scale was too found significant.

Procedure

Data for the present study was collected from students of schools of Himachal Pradesh. The age group taken was between 14-18 years. Participants were from class 9th to 12th. Before proceeding for data collection proper permission was taken from the school authorities. They were also given detail information about research work. Students of different age groups were called in different batches. Before administering the tests student were made to sit comfortably. They were told that their responses will be kept confident. A brief review was given to the students with respect to all the tests. After completion, the tests were collected and scoring was done according to the respective manuals of all measured variables. Further statistical techniques were applied on the raw scores and analysis was done.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Mean, SD and t ratio of all the measured variables among adolescents

Sr. No	Variables	Gender	Mean	SD	t ratio
1	Emotional Quotient	Male	125.97	15.44	0.501
		Female	127.01	13.84	
2	Loneliness	Male	41.15	8.36	0.791
		Female	40.22	8.27	
3	Peer Pressure	Male	31.71	23.72	.052
		Female	31.88	22.56	
4	Resilience	Male	133.02	14.64	0.652
		Female	131.51	17.95	

The mean of the female sample for the variable of emotional quotient was found to be 127.01 and SD was 13.84. For the male sample the mean score for the emotional quotient variable was 125.97 and SD was 15.44. The t-ratio for emotional quotient ($t = 0.501$; $p > 0.05$) was found insignificant which implies that there exists no gender differences on emotional health or emotional quotient. The level of emotional quotient among males and females were same. The reason may be that in the present scenario's both girls and boys are treated equally and providing them all sorts of opportunities as per their ability, eligibility and interest. Girls are giving their contribution in all parts of society from teaching a student in the school to leading the team in all fronts of world of work. Many of the previous studies also found the same results. Meshkat and Nejati (2017) conducted a study to determine the gender differences on emotional quotient and results found that there were no significant gender differences on emotional quotient. Another study carried out in the United Kingdom by Arteche, Chamorro-Premuzic, Furnham, and Crump (2008) could not find a significant relationship between overall EI and gender.

The mean score of the loneliness was 40.22 in females and for males it was 41.15 and the SD were 8.27 and 8.36 respectively. Mean scores depicts that male adolescents were high on loneliness as compared to the female adolescents. As per nature males generally do not share their views with everyone in comparison to their female counterparts. They keep the things in mind and try to cope up at their own. t-ratio ($t = 0.791$; $p > 0.05$) implying that there exists no difference in male and female adolescents in terms of loneliness. No gender differences exist among school going adolescents and it may be due to lack of exposure. Gender differences in loneliness may occur during higher studies as the college going students go through many emotional phases and go away from home too for higher studies.

The mean value of the peer pressure for females was 31.88 and for males it was 31.71. The respective standard deviations for these indices were 22.56 and 23.72. Gender differences among adolescents does not exist in terms of peer pressure as the t-ratio ($t = 0.052$; $p > 0.05$) was insignificant. No gender differences exist in peer pressure and it is possible that they have similar susceptibility to deviant pressure to engage in such behavior as well. Specifically, males and females may experience peer pressure at same level for different types of risky behaviors. For the variable of resilience, the obtained t value = 0.652; $p > 0.05$ was not significant which implies that males and females does not differ from each other in context of resilience too. They are used to cope up with the things in a similar manner. According to the previous studies mixed results were found on gender differences. In the present study on resilience too there was no gender differences may be because of lack of exposure among adolescents, providing similar environment and treating both the genders equally by parents and teachers.

Table 2
Correlation Coefficient of Emotional Quotient, Loneliness, Peer Pressure and Resilience

S.No	Variables	Emotional Quotient	Loneliness	Peer pressure	Resilience
1.	Emotional Quotient	1	-.175*	.097	.473**
2.	Loneliness		1	-.261**	-.122
3.	Peer Pressure			1	.121
4.	Resilience				1

Note: **Significant at 0.01 level
*Significant at 0.05 level

Tabular values depict the correlation coefficient of emotional quotient, loneliness, peer pressure and resilience. There exist negative correlation between emotional quotient and loneliness as the r value found to be -0.175 , $p < 0.05$. As the loneliness increases emotional intelligence decreases. The results also showed that there is significant negative association between emotional quotient and loneliness.

Thus hypothesis no. 1 was upheld.

Loneliness may occur as a consequence of parental divorce among children. It is the disturbing experience which emerges when insufficiencies in quality and quantity are perceived in an individual's social relationships. Study done by Wols, Scholte & Qualter (2015) observed relationship between adolescents aged 11-13 years in England. It supported the view that not only poor emotional skills increase loneliness, but loneliness impairs emotional regulation. Another study by Cacioppo & Hawkey (2009) revealed the relationship between loneliness and emotional functioning in young adolescents. The whole research concluded that loneliness and emotional functioning were associated, supporting the fact that the poor emotional skills increase loneliness and vice versa.

Kaur & Joshi (2015) also study loneliness on emotional quotient among rural and urban adolescents. The conclusion of the study was that loneliness is damaging the emotional quotient of the young adults, as when they feel lonely it affects their emotional stability and self- management, self-commitment and self-development. In such a situation there is a possibility that they may fall prey to certain vices.

Results also showed that there is positive and significant relationship between emotional quotient and resilience as the r value found to be $r = .473$, $p < 0.01$. As the adolescent's ability to cope up with the adverse situations enlarges the emotional quotient also expands. Common challenges that teenagers face are failure in exams, bullying, relationship break ups, conflicts in the family or between friends, poor self esteem and low confidence, failure to achieve their goals and may be some other adverse situations. Thus those who are resilient are able to manage the stress and challenges associated with the adverse situations.

Thus hypothesis no 3 is upheld in the present research.

Previous studies also revealed that there is positive association between emotional quotient and resilience. Adolescents with strong resilience perform better in emotional environment and take their decisions healthier. They perceived the situations in a positive way and cannot take the adverse situation as a stressful circumstance.

Sarrionandia & Diaz (2018) also explained that the students with higher score of emotional quotient and resilience perceived lesser stress. Mestre & Nunez (2017) explored the relationship between emotional regulation, abilities and strategies and resilience among the adolescents. The study helped in examining how the strategies of emotional regulation may help in the development of resilience level. The results obtained showed that the emotional regulation ability is a significant predictor of adolescent's resilience.

Tabled values revealed that there is positive and insignificant association between emotional quotient and peer pressure. The value of r found to be .097 which is not significant as the p value found to be greater than 0.05.

Thus Hypotheses no. 2 is not accepted.

Previous studies also found the mixed results regarding the relationship between emotional quotient and peer pressure. Nirmala et al. (2014) conducted a study to examine the relation in academic stress, mindfulness, emotional quotient, and peer pressure among adolescents. The findings indicated that there was significant relation in academic stress and emotional quotient, mindfulness and peer pressure among students. There was no relation found between emotional quotient and peer pressure. Muite et al. (2015) conducted a study to examine the effect of family emotional Quotient and peer influence on academic performance of the students. The results indicated that peer influence had negative effect on the performance whereas other factors showed positive effect.

Table 3

Multiple Regression Analysis of Emotional Quotient as Criterion Variable and Loneliness, Peer Pressure and Resilience as Predictors

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R Square Change	Standardized Coefficients Beta	F Change	P Value
1	.175	.031	.026	.031	-.175	6.234* (1, 198)	.013
2	.183	.033	.024	.003	.055	.569 (1, 197)	.452
3	.488	.238	.226	.204	.457	52.558** (1, 196)	.000
<i>a. Predictors: (Constant), Loneliness</i>							
<i>b. Predictors: (Constant), Loneliness, Peer Pressure</i>							
<i>c. Predictors: (Constant), Loneliness, Peer Pressure, Resilience</i>							
*Significant at 0.05							
**Significant at 0.01							

A perusal of the Table 3 reveals that R-square for loneliness (.031, peer pressure $R^2 = .033$), and resilience ($R^2 = .238$) account for an increasing variance in the emotional quotient among adolescents. R² change for loneliness (.031), peer pressure (.024), and resilience (.204) depict the contribution in emotional quotient as 1.3%, 0.3%, and 20.4 respectively. The beta values for peer pressure ($\beta = .055$) and resilience ($\beta = .457$) show that these variables positively contributes to the emotional quotient among adolescents whereas beta coefficients for loneliness ($\beta = -.175$), reveals a negative contribution in the emotional quotient of adolescents. The F-value for resilience ($F=52.558$, $p<0.001$), and loneliness ($F=6234$, $p<0.05$) are significant except for peer pressure ($F=0.569$, $p=NS$).

Hence, it can be said that emotional health can be predicted by both resilience and loneliness. Resilience was found the good predictor of emotional quotient as it contributes 20.4%. Researches done by Schneider et al., (2013) found that emotional quotient facilitates stress resilience. Study carried out by Magnano et al., (2016); Armstrong et al., (2011) & Cejudo et al., (2016) also revealed that people with high level of emotional intelligence show a high degree of resilience. According to the authors emotional intelligence was related with psychological resilience.

Conclusion of the Study

- There exist no significant gender differences in emotional quotient
- There exist no significant gender differences in loneliness
- There exist no significant gender differences in peer pressure
- There exist no significant gender differences in resilience
- There is a negative and significant correlation between loneliness and emotional quotient.
- There is a positive and significant correlation between resilience and emotional quotient
- Resilience and loneliness found to be a significant predictor of emotional quotient.

Hence, it can be said that emotional health can be predicted by both resilience and loneliness. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that peer pressure, loneliness and resilience play an important role in determining emotional quotient among adolescents was partially supported by the findings of this study.

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