

Evaluation of the Effect of Emotional Intelligence Training on Reducing Aggression in Second Year High School Female Students

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Abstract: The main objective of this study is to evaluate the effect of emotional intelligence training on reducing aggression in second year high school female students of Ahwaz. This is an experimental study with pre-test- post-test control group design. The study population is all second year high school students of Ahwaz. The study was carried out on 60 students of the study population, who were selected by multi-stage randomized sampling method and were divided into the two groups of experiment and study (30 students in each group). Before carrying out the experimental intervention (presentation of the independent variable), the two groups were given the pre-test using aggression questionnaire (AGQ). Then, the students of the experiment group attended ten 90-minutes training sessions of emotional intelligence techniques. One week after the intervention, the two groups were post-tested using AGQ. The data were analyzed using MANCOVA method (multivariate analysis of covariance). Results of the study indicate that training the emotional intelligence skills will lead to reduced aggression and increased individual-social adaptability of female students, compared with the control group.

[Zahra Eftekhari Saadi, Mahnaz Mehrabi zadeh Honarmand, Bahman Najarian, Hasan Ahadi, Parviz Askari. **Evaluation of the Effect of Emotional Intelligence Training on Reducing Aggression in Second Year High School Female Students.** J Am Sci. 2012;8(5):209-212]. (ISSN: 1545-1003). <http://www.americanscience.org>. 26

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Aggression

1. Introduction

More than two decades of research in the field of emotional and cognitive interactions has provided the necessary basis to develop the concept of emotional intelligence (Forgas, 2001).

Thus far, various definitions have been presented for emotional intelligence, including those proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1990), Cupper and Savov (1997, quoted from Schutte et al., 1998), Foot (2001), Salvi, Mayer and Caroso (2002), Bar-On and Parker (2000), Moira and Oliver (2008). Daniel Goleman, the most well-known researcher in this field, defines emotional intelligence as a set of abilities such as self-cognition, empathy, self-regulation, self-motivation and social skills (Goleman, 1999, quoted from Watkin, 2000).

According to findings of many studies, there is a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and many variables such as aggression (Smith et al., 2001, Van Manen, Prins, and Emmelkamp, 2004, Brackett et al., 2004, Gresham, Baovan, and Cook, 2006, Cummings et al., 2007, Eniola, 2007). Most social psychologists consider aggression as a behavior with the aim of injuring oneself or others. Aggression is one of the notable and fairly common problems among juveniles, which can bring about many negative outcomes for them (Rusby, j.c. forrester, k.k., biglan, A., & metzler, A.C.A. 2005).

According to the findings of various studies, if juveniles are not able to properly perceive emotions of themselves or others, or are not provided with effective strategies when facing with daily life pressures, they will show behavioral problems such as aggression and incompatibility (Elgar, Arlett, and Groves, 2003).

Thus, considering the point that emotional intelligence is trainable and by proper training, individuals' cognition about their emotions will increase (Bar-On, 2006, Gresham, Baovan, and Cook, 2006), as well as the above-mentioned reasons, the present study was carried out to evaluate the effect of emotional intelligence training on reducing aggression in this age group.

2. Methods

The study population was all female students at the second year of Ahwaz high schools. The 60 students, who were selected by multi-stage randomized method, were divided into two groups (30 in the experiment group and 30 in the control group). This is an experimental study with pre-test - post-test control group design.

3. Measurement Tools

Ahwaz Aggression Questionnaire (Zahedifar, Najarian, Shokrkon, 1997): The questionnaire

consists of three factors and 30 items; the first factor, anger (14 items), the second factor, aggression and insult (8 items), and the third factor, obstinacy (8 items).

The questionnaire had the four choices of “never, rarely, sometimes, and always.” Reliability coefficient was determined to be 0.70 and 0.87, using re-test and consistency, respectively.

Moreover, the coefficients for the present study obtained 0.97 and 0.90, respectively. Validity coefficient was determined to be 0.69 at the significance level of 0.001 by correlating the questions with the questions defined as the criterion. Moreover, the validity of the questionnaire was reported to be 0.56 and 0.58, according to Buss and Durkee’s Validity Inventory (BDVI) (1975) and Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), respectively.

4. Research Hypothesis

1. Emotional intelligence training leads to a decrease in aggression of second year high school female students.
2. Emotional intelligence training decreases elements of aggression among second year high school female students.

A: Emotional intelligence training reduces aggression in terms of anger among second year high school female students.

B: Emotional intelligence training leads to a reduction in aggression in terms of insult among second year high school female students.

C: Emotional intelligence training reduces aggression in terms of obstinacy among second year high school female students.

5. Methodology

After performing the pre-test for the two groups, the students of experiment group attended ten 90-minutes training sessions of emotional intelligence techniques. Meanwhile, the control group participants had their usual daily life. One week after the intervention, the two groups were evaluated by the post-test.

6. Statistical Methods

Pearson’s correlation coefficient, to evaluate the validity, b) Cronbach’s alpha and split - half methods to determine the reliability coefficients, c) MANCOVA analysis (multivariate covariance), and d) univariate analysis of covariance (*ANCOVA*) to evaluate the research hypothesis.

7. Results and Discussion

Considering the objectives of the study, our findings demonstrated that emotional intelligence training led to a decrease in aggression and an increase in the individual- social adaptability in the experiment group.

During the emotional intelligence training sessions, the participants acquired some skills including ability to regulate the emotions and considering the one’s evoked emotional level, having efficient rather than inefficient thoughts in analysis of daily affairs as well as irritant situation, the skill of thinking before reacting, and delaying the impulsive responses against others threats. Thus, they learned how to control expression of anger and aggression. Moreover, during the program they probably learned to have appropriate and constructive responses instead of impulsive behaviors, without physically or psychologically hurting themselves or others.

By learning some skills such as cognitive re-evaluation of environment, the one can change his/her analysis of negative and irritant situations into positive and constructive status. On the other hand, since the individual probably learns to look at the issues from others’ viewpoint (i.e., the individual can assume what others think or feel);

This can be an effective factor in preventing the presentation of anger. Moreover, by forgiving others, the individual plays a significant role in decreasing one’s and others’ anger (Kamla, 2007, Cikanek, 2007, Sukhodolosky, Kassinove, and Gorman, 2004, Animasahyn, 2007, Groves, Mc Enrue, and Shen, 2008, farah ali, inessousa Amorim,tomas chamo premuzic.2009).

8. Recommendation

1. *It is suggested to work on other groups such as children, old people, and couples.*
2. *Some studies must be carried out on special groups such as criminals, and employees of hard and stressful jobs.*

Table 1: Results of univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of the mean students' aggression scores in the experiment and control groups at the post-test with the pre-test control

Variable	SOV	SS	df	Mean square	F	Significance level (P)	Eta square	Statistical power
aggression	Pre-test	1104.30	1	1104.30	27.55	<0.001	0.33	1.00
	Group	22939.90	1	22939.90	572.45	<0.001	0.91	1.00
	error	2244.08	56	40.07				

Table 2: Results of multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) on the mean scores of students' aggression elements in the experiment and control groups at the post-test with the pre-test control

Test	value	Hypothesis df	Error df	F	Significance level (p)	Eta square	Statistical power
Pillai's trace test	0.949	3	53	327.12	<0.001	0.95	1.00
Lambda-Wilkins' test	0.051	3	53	327.12	<0.001	0.95	1.00
Hotelling's trace test	18.51	3	53	327.12	<0.001	0.95	1.00
Roy's greatest root test	18.51	3	53	327.12	<0.001	0.95	1.00

Table 3: Results of univariate analysis of covariance in MANCOVA context on the mean scores of students' aggression elements in the experiment and control groups at the post-test with the pre-test control

Variable	SOV	SS	df	Mean square	F	Significance value (P)	Eta square	Statistical power
Anger	Pre-test	91.12	1	91.12	10.11	<0.001	0.15	0.878
	Group	8400.67	1	8400.67	932.34	<0.001	0.94	1.00
	Error	495.56	55	9.01				
insult	Pre-test	153.03	1	153.01	18.20	<0.001	0.25	0.987
	Group	368.21	1	368.21	43.81	<0.001	0.44	1.00
	Error	462.26	55	8.40				
obstinacy	Pre-test	187.27	1	187.27	23.34	<0.001	0.30	0.997
	Group	1015.60	1	1015.60	126.59	<0.001	0.70	1.00
	Error	441.24	55	8.02				

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4/4/2012