

Research Paper

Role of the level of Emotional Intelligence in aggression and crime and the remedies.

Dr Kranti C .Gawali

Head, Dept. Psychology,
Bhavan's College, Andheri-W Mumbai.

ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the role of the level of Emotional intelligence (EI) in aggression and crimes and also suggests the remedial measures to curb aggression and crime rate by helping people to enhance their EI. Emotional intelligence (EI) is one of the recent developments in the area of intelligence. The merging of emotion and intelligence as a cognitive ability under the caption of EI was proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). They defined it as "ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions". Several competing definitions of the term have been proposed by various researchers

JOHN MAYER & PETER SALOVEY (1990) proposed that it includes Self awareness, Managing emotions, Motivating oneself, Empathy, and Handling relationships.

REUVEN BAR-ON (1997) explained EI by dividing it into 5 areas or realms. The intrapersonal realm, the interpersonal realm, the adaptability realm, the stress management realm, and the General mood realm.

JOHN MAYER & PETER SALOVEY (1997) Proposed a four-branch model of EI

- (i) Emotional perception and expression
- (ii) Emotional facilitation of thought (using EI).
- (iii) Emotional understanding of the relationship between various emotions their causes and consequences
- (iv) Emotional management ability to manage emotions in self and others.

SIMMONS, S. & SIMMONS, J. (1997) Proposed that EI is not made up of 5 domains but in fact includes 13 major facets of character which are related to success in life. They also developed a highly valid and reliable way to measure them. The 13 aspects that make up EI are, Emotional energy, Emotional Stress, Optimism, Self-esteem, Commitment to work, Attention to detail measures, Desire for change, Courage, Self-direction, Assertiveness, Tolerance, Consideration for others, and Sociability.

ROISER (1994-95) Information from various other sources was put together to develop the emotional competence framework, which proposed that EI was made up of personal competence, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence, self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, innovativeness, achievement drive, commitment, initiative, optimism, social competence, service orientation, developing others, leveraging diversity, political awareness, influence, communication, leadership, change catalyst, conflict management, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities.

PETRIDES & FURNHAM (2001) Proposed the concept of Trait emotional intelligence, and stated that (emotional self efficiency) is a constellation of emotion related self perceived abilities and dispositions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchy. The people having a high trait EI are in touch with their emotions and that they can regulate them in a way that promotes well being.

This review of the different models suggests that the understanding about EI and its nature has been changing over the years, with some researchers proposing that EI is predominantly a cognitive ability, while others believing it to be a purely emotional capacity.

Each of the models of EI includes the ability to manage emotions and cope effectively with stressful situations in life as an important component of EI.

Goleman (1995) proposed the serious consequences of a lack of EI which include: expulsion or dropping out of school, clinical depression; eating disorders; alcohol and drug abuse or addiction; and violent acts leading to arrest. High EI results in an effective management of one's emotions and impulse. He proposed that the emotionally illiterate individuals are undependable, and untrustworthy, frequently aggressive, and defiant of social norms.

Mayer, Carlsmith, & Chabot (1998) developed measures of individual's life space-a person's description of his or her activities, behaviour and surrounding and found that higher scores on the MEIS were associated with lower self reports of violence and trouble prone behaviour.

Rubin (1999) found substantial negative correlation between scores on MEIS and peer rating of aggressiveness among adolescence.

Therefore low EI individuals tend to be aggressive in various setting in life.

They tend to be aggressive due to a variety of reasons such as inability to express their feelings effectively, lack of empathy, poor impulse control, and poor ability to relate to others.

Dulewicz and Higgs (2004) found that Emotional Intelligence scores change after training and other experiences. Though there is an overlap found between the components of EI and factors of personality the research evidence proving that EI can be taught and learnt points to the idea that it must be an ability that can be acquired by the individual if willing and by putting in efforts.

Sheehan, (1999) Development of people's emotional intelligence skills is suggested as one way to help address the problem of bullying and aggression at work place within such a framework.

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Hence to help people manage the aggression and withstand engaging in violence several remedial measures may be taken up.

Undertaking EI development programmes at schools or workplaces.

Several such programmes for EI enhancement have shown positive results like

- Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, Linda Lantieri, National Center for Resolving conflict creatively Program, New York City.

- Child development project, Eric Schaps, development studies center, California.

- Paths, Mark Greenberg, Fast track project, University of Washington.

- Seattle Social Development Project, David Hawkins, Social Development Research Group, University of Washington.

- Yale-New Haven social competence promotion program, Roger Weissberg, University of Illinois, Chicago.

- The Improving Social Awareness-Social Problem Solving project, Maurice Elias, Rutgers University.

Have found positive results in terms of

- Less violence in class
- Fewer verbal putdowns in class
- More caring atmosphere
- More willingness to cooperate
- More empathy
- Improved communication skills
- Less delinquent behaviour better impulse control
- More Prosocial behaviour
- Less antisocial, self destructive, and socially disorderd behaviour

Programme to develop EI should be aimed at enhancing the following in the individuals.

DEVELOPING HIGH SELF AWARENESS

- Able to monitor yourself
- Observe yourself in action
- Influence actions so that they work to your benefit e.g becoming aware that your voice is getting louder and you are becoming increasingly angry on the other person.

MANAGING EMOTIONS

- Understanding the emotions
- Using this understanding to deal with situations productively e.g when frustrated due to others behaviour not as per own expectation, learning to use problem solving to come up with the best course of action in the situation rather than getting bogged down

MOTIVATING SELF

- To begin a task
- Stick with it
- Move ahead to completion
- Deal with setbacks

Building resources that keep us motivated-supportive friends, family, and colleagues

Having an emotional mentor (an inspirational figure, real or fictitious)

Environment (air, lights, sounds in your surrounding)

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication helps to establish connections

Connections preserves relationships

e.g trying to resolve conflict in a relationship, speaking to others about their insensitivity listening to criticism from others.

Learning to take care of wrong words, ill-advised

gestures, and misunderstood meanings

LEARN-self disclosure, assertiveness, dynamic listening, criticism and team communication.

DEVELOPING INTERPERSONAL EXPERTISE

To exchange information meaningfully and appropriately

Knowing what constitutes a relationship-meeting each others needs; relating to each other over time; sharing feelings and thoughts.

Two abilities need to be developed

1. ability to analyze a relationship so that one can navigate a productive course through it

2. ability to communicate at appropriate levels so that information is exchanged effectively.

HELPING OTHERS HELP THEMSELVES

To help others manage their emotions

Communicate effectively

Solve their problems

Resolve their conflicts

Become motivated

How to do it?

By keeping your emotional perspective

Knowing how to calm a out of control individual

Being a supportive listener

Helping goal planning and goal reaching.

What is achieved with the training?

An individual will be better able to manage ones anger and aggression. And if this kind of a training is carried out at schools and college levels we shall have a larger section of the youth and children equipped with skills to manage their aggression

. Thereby curbing the rate of violence and crime

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