

Associations between emotional intelligence and well-being indicators in adolescents

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Several studies have suggested that trait and ability-based measures of emotional intelligence (EI) contribute to the promotion of well-being in adults ^[1]. However, this relationship has not been sufficiently explored among adolescents. **OBJECTIVE:** As such, the present study aims to: i) investigate the associations between EI dimensions and well-being indicators (self-esteem, life satisfaction and social anxiety) in adolescents; and ii) analyze the effect of gender and age on dimensions of EI. **METHODS:** The sample consisted of 1074 adolescents (57.9% girls and 42.1% boys), aged between 11 and 20 years ($M = 14.40$; $SD = 1.63$), enrolled between the 7th and 12 grades (Study Protocol Registration Nº 0395700001/MIME). Participants completed a sociodemographic questionnaire and the Portuguese versions of the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale ^[2], the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale ^[3], the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents ^[4] and the Satisfaction with Life Scale ^[5]. Statistical procedures included descriptive (mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis), internal consistency, Pearson correlations, and one-way ANOVA analyses. All variables presented acceptable values of skewness and kurtosis (between -1.26 and 1.73) and adequate internal consistency indices (Cronbach's alphas > 0.70). **RESULTS:** Correlation analysis indicated that the EI dimensions (self-emotion appraisal, use of emotions and regulation of emotions) were positively and moderately correlated (r_s between 0.30 and 0.58 , $p < 0.01$) with self-esteem and life satisfaction, whereas the associations among EI and social anxiety dimensions were small and negative (r_s between -0.19 and -0.10 , $p < 0.05$). On the other hand, small and positive correlations ($r_s = 0.08$, $p = 0.01$) were observed between the others' emotional appraisal EI dimension, the satisfaction with life, and fear of negative evaluation by others. Boys reported higher levels of self-emotion appraisal, use of emotions and regulation of emotions ($p < 0.01$), whereas girls showed higher levels of other-emotion appraisal ability ($p < 0.01$). Age was negatively associated with the use of emotions dimension ($r = -0.10$, $p = 0.01$) and positively correlated with the emotional appraisal of others ($r = 0.08$, $p = 0.01$), although both correlation coefficients were small. **CONCLUSIONS:** In conclusion, the present results suggest the need and importance of implementing Emotional Education practices during adolescence.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, well-being, sociodemographic factors, adolescents*

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