

Liaison in Religiosity and Emotional Intelligence with a Perspective on Female High Schoolers and Undergraduates in Influencing Coping

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ABSTRACT

India is a country where in religion, spirituality and faith are great part of one's self and family. It forms the integral part of every one's life directly or in indirectly. The study aims to identify its role in relation to an individual's emotional intelligence. Religiosity is a key factor in how individual beliefs are integrated, developed and also maintained. This is an important aspect in the individual's development of self and his or her place in the social strata. The convenience of coping with daily life also is adjunct factor to that of one's emotional intelligence and faith based guidance. The study was conducted among 30 high school students and 30 Post graduate students studying professional course. They were evaluated on the Idea of religiosity and emotional intelligence and the variations in their coping ability. The sample was taken within Chennai in a singular school and a singular college, the sample consisted for female students. Voluntary consent was given by each participant. The informant consent for the school students was obtained from each parent. The findings have shown that there is indeed variation in how ones regions and spiritual composition shift on graduating from adolescents to young adults. There is also marked changes in ones.

Keywords: *Religiosity, Emotional Intelligence, Coping*

India is a country that pays undue importance to religion; it is an integral part of any household and society. Spirituality has been linked to buffering the adverse effect of stress and improves coping (Kim & Sedlitz 2002). It has also known to be a powerful resource for the human development (Benson 2010). The link between religion and mental health has shown that religious people are happier and satisfied with their life than non-religious people (Myers & Diener 1995).

Adolescence is labelled as a developmental period is occupied with many challenges. Early developmental theorists, particularly Erickson (Erickson, 1959) have defined the period of adolescence as one of identity versus role confusion, in which adolescents must determine

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who they are, combining their self-understanding and social roles into a coherent identity. Religious beliefs become more abstract, more principled, and more independent during the adolescence years. Specifically, adolescents' beliefs become rituals, practices and strict observance of religions customs (Steinberg, 2002).

Young adults are have a shared a perception of "feeling in between" this is due to them struggles of adolescence and the preliminary feeling of being responsible for themselves, but still watchfully tied to their parents and family (Munsey 2006). Several review have concluded that there is a modest beneficial association between various aspects of religious-spirituality and psychological well-being (Hackney & Sanders, 2003; Koenig & Larson, 2001; Sawatzky, Ratner, & Chiu 2005).

Emotional intelligence can be defined as ability to monitor one's own and others emotions to discriminate among them and to use the information to guide ones thinking and actions and considered essential for successful living (Goleman 1995). Mavroveli et al (2007) identified that trait emotional intelligence was associated with increased adaptive coping in adolescence. Research also tend to show good physical empathy which is associated with emotional intelligence, it tends to be higher in females than in males (Austin et al 2005)

The salute genic theoretical approach has sought to explain successful coping with stress and emphasizes the study of coping resources (Antonovsky, 1987). Literature has shown variety of coping resources, such as sense of coherence, family cohesion or social support, moderate distress reactions and increase resilience (Kovacev& Shute, 2004). The strategies include behavioural, emotional, and cognitive attempts to address stressors (Lazarus, 1998). A research by Garnefskiet al, (2002) found that cognitive coping strategies reported by adolescents was significantly lesser than that by adults. (Chapman & Mullis, 1999) studies have shown that adolescents with lower self-esteem utilized more avoidance coping strategies than adolescents with higher self-esteem. They also highlighted that females were found to utilize social and spiritual supports more frequently than males.

Mikolajczak et al (2008) identified that emotional intelligence prompted the use of adaptive strategies to maintain joy, the choice of adaptive strategies to down-regulate various negative emotions and maintain positive ones where by decreasing the experience of negative emotions. Were by the effective coping is based on choice of adaptive strategies.

On evaluation the effect of emotional intelligence on coping in college students noted that coping has an effect on the emotional intelligence where by influencing academic outcome was researched by MacCann et al (2011). Their study also assessed the same in school children the same significance was noted. Hence collectively suggesting that better educational outcomes might be achieved by targeting skills relating to emotion management and coping.

Cotton et al (2006) in their study also identified that spirituality has an important protective factor in adolescents with health concerns. There no direct literature that focuses on exploring the role of faith and spirituality in regular adolescents and young adults.

The present study aims at understanding the relationship between religiosity and emotional intelligence and the coping process that is an outcome of their current stage of growth. The study was done on high school studentsand IIIrd year under graduate (UG) students. Female

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sample was taken as literature is suggestive of female population relying on spirituality in their support strategies. It also aims to identify the changes that may arise due to the role change from being an adolescent to young adult.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The study sample was collected from local school and College in the Chennai district (The name of the school and university are kept confidential as per the ethical agreement). Purposive sampling was done in school and also in college by voluntary basis. At school informed consent was given both by the teacher and the parent, in collage they were taken from the participants. Purposive sampling method was used in the study. The sample was restricted to female students, a total of 60 samples were taken; 30 students and 30 undergraduates. The adolescents were in the age range of 14-17 years of age, and the undergraduates from the age range of 19-21 years of age. Individuals who have studied in English medium of education were only invited to the study.

Instruments

Religiosity and Spirituality Scale for youth (Hernandez, 2011) The Religiosity and Spirituality Scale for youth (Hernandez, 2011) is a four point Likert scale with the rating of Never, Sometimes, Mostly and Always respectively. The test consist of 37-item measure with two factors, Faith-based Coping and Religious Social Support/Activities and also composite score for the same. The measure demonstrated strong internal consistency and test-retest reliability data (0.95), as well as good preliminary validity.

Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (Schutte, 1998) The SSEIT includes a 33-item self-report, the questions a reported by using a 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) scale for responses. The sub-test score is graded and added together to give the total score for the participant. The scale reports a reliability rating of 0.90 for their emotional intelligence scale that is fairly reliable for adults and adolescents; however, the utilizing emotions subscale has shown poor reliability (Ciarrochi, Chan & Bajgar, 2001). There has also been a mediocre correlation of the SSRI with such areas as self-estimated Emotional intelligence, the Big Five Emotional Intelligence scale (0.51), and life satisfaction (Petrides and Furnham, 2000). SSRI correlation with well-being criteria showed the worst outcome with less than 0.20.

Ways of Coping Questionnaire (Folkman & Lazarus 1988) Ways of coping questioner is 66 item scale, it consists of identifying coping domains of confrontive coping, distancing, self-controlling, seeking social support, Accepting responsibility, Escape- avoidance, Planful problem solving and Positive reappraisal. Reliability has been assumed to be consistent as an attribute of the test. Typical reliability across subscale scores ranged from .60 to .75 with Positive Reappraisal showing the least variability and Self-Controlling showing the most. Factors related to this variability were age and format of administration.

Procedure

The sample was collected with consent from the institutions as per the ethical guidelines. The informed consent was taken from parents for the adolescents and also from the undergraduate participants. They were introduced to the need of the study on obtaining consent. The study test was administered in one session of 30 minutes, 15 minutes for each assessment.

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Statistical Analysis

The study used a descriptive statistical method of mean and Spearman's correlation was done to compare the difference in the utilization of the above mentioned factors of spirituality, emotional intelligence and coping between adolescents and undergraduates (young adults). Correlation was used to identify the interactive pattern between the considered variables among the selected age group.

RESULTS

The demographic of the study sample has been predetermined for a female population that is purposefully selected to high light differences in religiosity, emotional intelligence and coping. The study identifies the difference between adolescents and young adult, were by sampling is categorized as high scholars and undergraduates. Figure 1 represents the age wise contributors for the study. The adolescents/ high schoolers in the age range of 14 to 15 years (32% and 18%), Young adults/Undergraduates the age variation expands from 17% of 19years, 23% and 10 % of ages 20 and 23 years respectively. The study sample was on voluntary basis the homogeneity of the sample was best preserved through criteria of intake.

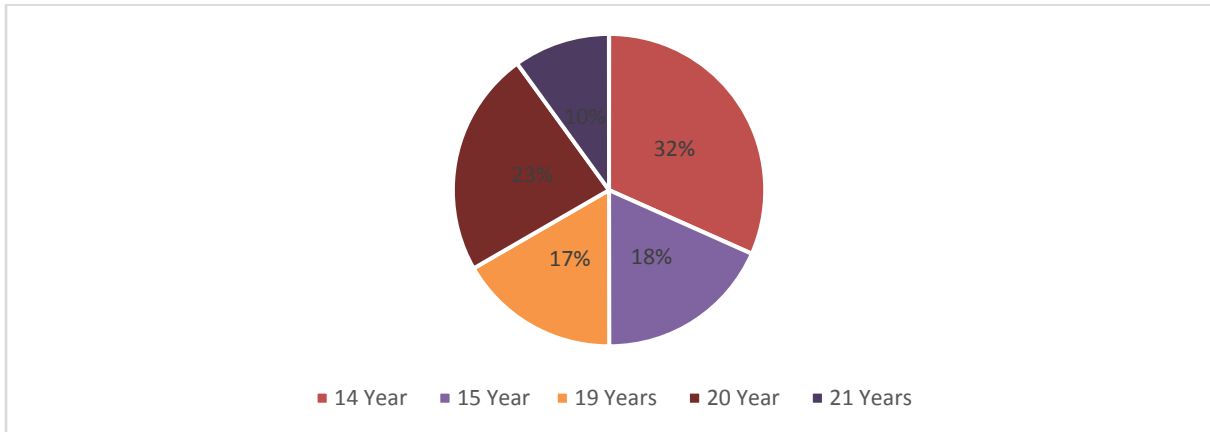


Figure 1 The age distribution of the sample selected for the study, indicative of close proximity in variation of evaluation outcome.

The mean evaluation of faith based coping and religious social support with composite score indicative of utilization of faith and spirituality in adolescents and undergraduates (young adults), indicated that undergraduates are more dependent on religious and Spiritual

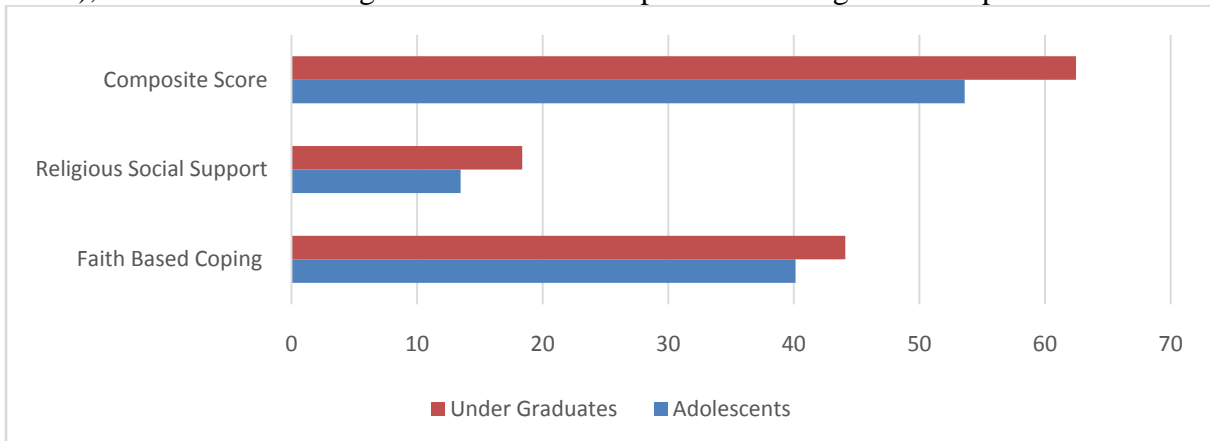


Figure 2 Indicates the graphical representation of the mean difference of religiosity and spirituality between adolescents and Undergraduates (young adults).

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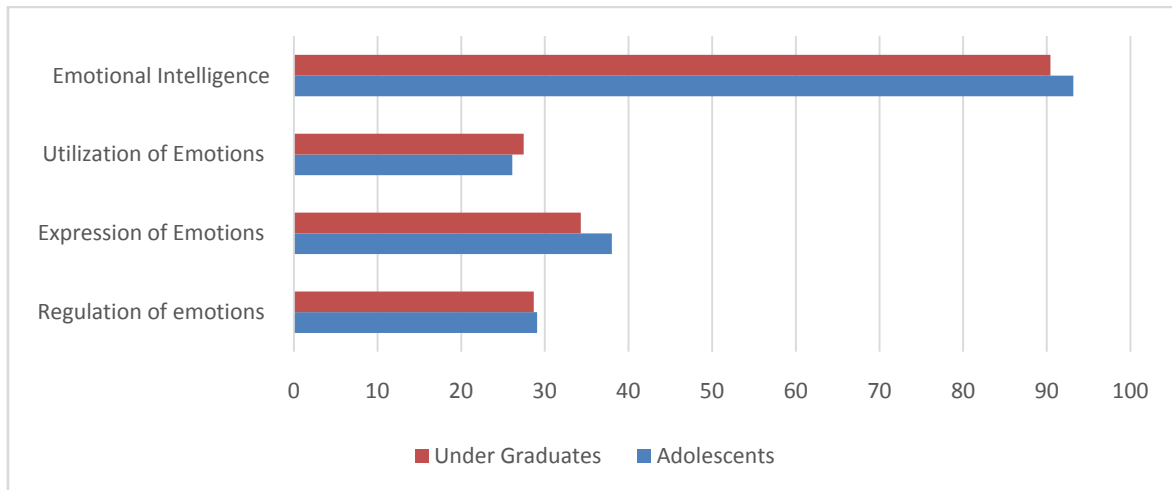


Figure 3 Indicates the Graphical representation of the mean difference of Emotional intelligence between adolescents and Undergraduates (young adults).

The mean value of emotional intelligence indicated that young adults use their emotional intelligence less than that of adolescents. Which is noted across the aspects of Expression of emotions and Regulations of emotions. Though when it comes to utilization of emotions young adults were noted to utilize more in compared to adolescents.

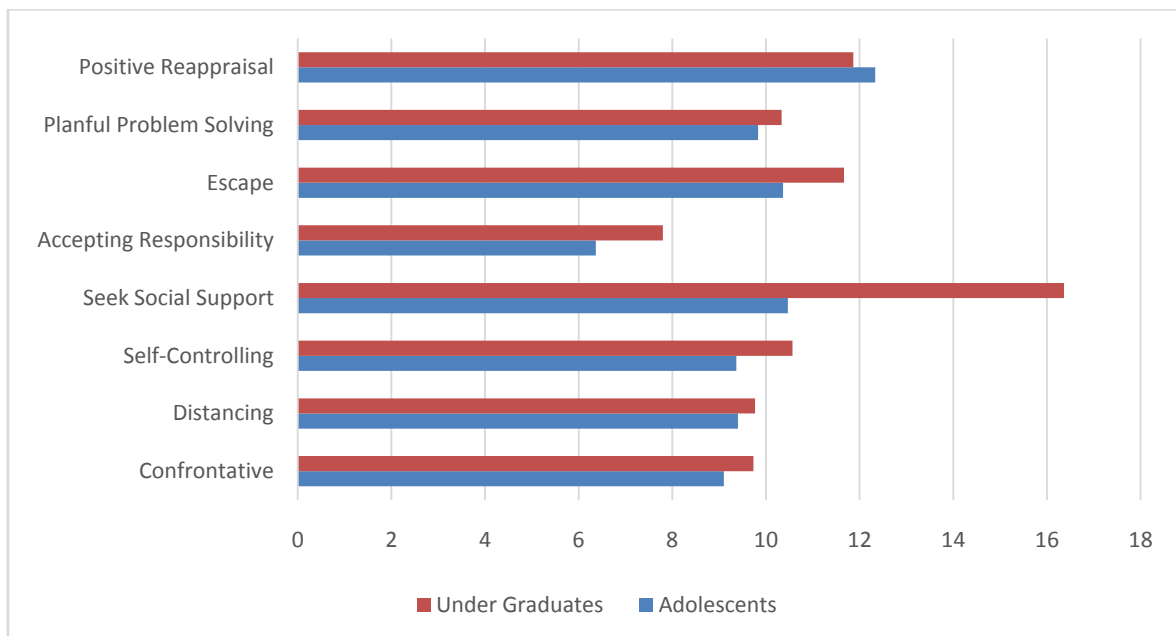


Figure 3 Indicates the Graphical representation of the mean difference of Ways of Coping between adolescents and Undergraduates (young adults).

The mean difference in the coping variation of coping process among adolescents and young adults, indicate that Positive Reappraisal is noted to be one of the extensively used method of coping next to Seeking social support, this coping method was noted to be the only method that is used by adolescents more than young adults. In contrast the young adults tend to use Planful problem solving, Escape, Self-controlling, Distancing and Confrontative. The coping

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mechanism less used is accepting responsibility, with young adults using it more than adolescents. Seeking social support has been noted to occupy the most used method of coping especially among young adults to a larger extent.

The correlation was attempted to understand the role of faith and religiosity on influencing the emotional intelligence and coping process among adolescents and undergraduates (young adults). The findings showed only significant correlation among adolescents.

Adolescents' dependence on religious social support was noted to be correlated with both the utilization of emotions as well as emotional intelligence as a whole. It was already noted that adolescents tend to utilize emotions more than young adults though the support for the same tends to come from the religious social support that they utilize. This is noted to be related to their Emotional Intelligence as a whole.

On evaluating the correlation between religiosity and spirituality with the ways of coping among adolescents and young adults, it is noted that adolescents utilize their faith in coping. It is noted that faith is often associated in self-control and positive reappraisal. Whereas religious social support is associated with confrontative, self-controlling, accepting responsibility and planful problem solving. Composite score indicated high significant association in self-controlling, accepting responsibility, planful problem solving and positive reappraisal. Tough men coping among young adults were noted they were no way correlated with their religiosity.

Table 1: Shows the correlation between Religiosity and spirituality with Emotional intelligence among adolescents and Undergraduates (young adults).

Adolescents				
	Regulation of Emotions	Expression of Emotions	Utilization of Emotions	Emotional Intelligence
Faith	-0.057	0.018	0.237	0.172
Religious Social Support	-0.014	0.284	0.425*	0.439*
Composite Score	-0.047	0.137	0.35	0.311
Under graduates-UG (Young Adults)				
	UG Regulation of Emotions	UG Expression of Emotions	UG Utilization of Emotions	UG Emotional Intelligence
UG Faith	-0.108	0.243	0.009	0.124
UG Religious Social Support	0.096	-0.198	-0.038	-0.106
UG Composite Score	0.022	0.059	-0.013	0.028

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

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Table 2 show the correlation between religiosity and spirituality and ways of coping

Adolescents								
	Confrontative	Distancing	Self - Controlling	Seek Social Support	Accepting Responsibility	Escape	Planful Problem-solving	Positive Reappraisal
Faith	0.263	0.332	0.420*	0.242	0.359	0.227	0.308	0.435*
Religious Social Support	0.377*	0.123	0.277	0.052	0.538**	0.174	0.410*	0.21
Composite Score	0.348	0.287	0.416*	0.193	0.485**	0.236	0.394*	0.397*
Undergraduates-UG (Yung Adults)								
	UG Confrontative	UG Distancing	UG Self Controlling	UG Seek Social Support	UG Accepting Responsibility	UG Escape	UG Planful Problem-solving	UG Positive Reappraisal
UG Faith	-0.074	-0.196	0.216	0.184	-0.12	-0.044	-0.114	0.278
UG Religious Social Support	-0.148	-0.095	0.328	0.057	0.145	0.069	-0.041	0.143
UG Composite Score	-0.122	-0.174	0.303	0.148	-0.006	0.006	-0.095	0.251

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

DISCUSSION

The study looks to explore the use of spirituality and religiosity in our daily life, more specific to the variation of the same from a developmental perspective of adolescent to young adults the change in their perspective of emotional dependence. The current study involves the use of female students to address the current research exploration as they tend to use social and spiritual support more than that of male counterparts (Chapman & Mullis, 1999).

Past known research have shown differences in adolescence and young adults difference on emotional intelligence and coping, studies have also worked on addressing religiosity with that of emotional intelligence and coping in separate approaches though is this less known. It has been noted that adolescents tend to use less cognitive coping strategies than that of adults (Garnefski, 2002) this may be why in the current study it is noted that they are more dependent on their faith and religious social support for their coping. Emotional intelligence has been noted to be influenced by religiosity noted to provide good well-being among adolescents (Adeyemo & Adeleya, 2008), this may explain the current study's nature to depend on religiosity for their emotional intelligence. There has been some disparity from the current research with a study by Van Dyke & Elias (2008) where it indicated that religiosity

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and spirituality has no role in Emotional intelligence, though in contrast the study was conducted among 5th graders. This can also indicate that the comprehension of using faith and religious social support is highly used in the adolescent's phase of a child's life and significantly reduces as they emerge young adulthood.

A review research by Wong, Rew & Slaiker (2006) have identified that higher religiosity and spirituality was indicative of better mental health. Further literature review of Koewing (2009) in his review identified that religiosity and spirituality can be represented as a powerful source of comfort, hope and a means of high psychological and social resource for coping with stress.

The most prominent study by Yonker, Schnabelranch & DaHaan (2012), which a meta-analysis study that has attempted to identify the benefits of religiosity and spirituality and its effect on adolescents follow through to emerging adults. The study identified even personality parameters and indicated that religiosity and spirituality has appositive effect on both adolescents and emerging adults.

Given the above understanding in literature it can be concluded that Adolescents use their religiosity and spirituality, specific to faith and religious social support. This enables one in developing their emotional intelligence and ways of coping that enables them to progress through to young adulthood where they tend to depend less on the same. Thus emphasising the importance of religiosity and spirituality in providing a good construct on psychological well-being, being weather it's their emotional development or adaptability to life.

The current study is a minor act a vast field of learning to understand the role of religiosity and more specific spirituality and its effect on the development of a stable mental health in adolescents following through to young adults graduating to adulthood. Given in a community with diverse religious and cultural implication exploring its influence can be of great empirical value. Though its role is evident the study lacks few research backings and can also form basis for further research in understanding the emotional coping aspects of Indian youth were by shaping their personality and resilience of the future. Limitation of the study, focus on more detailed evaluation of one spirituality and religiosity along with the personality make up and also with concept of coping and locus of control etc. The study sample can be improved with more efficient method of sampling and extensive sample size and can also look in to longitudinal studies.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

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