

A Study of Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence in Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The present paper seeks to investigate the Machiavellianism in relation with Emotional Intelligence among Adolescents. It was hypothesized that Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence would be negatively correlated and Emotional Intelligence would be a significant contributor in predicting variance in Machiavellianism. In order to test the hypothesis 240 adolescents (120 females and 120 males) in the age range of 13 to 18 years were selected through random sampling. The measures used were Machiavellianism Scale (Mach IV Scale) and Modified Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte 1998). The correlation coefficient and regression analysis were used to assess the data. The results revealed significant and negative relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence. Emotional Intelligence emerged as a significant predictor of Machiavellianism. Thus, considering the possibility that individuals might have a dispositional tendency to emotionally manipulative behaviour immediately brings to mind the trait of Machiavellianism.

Keywords: *Machiavellianism, Emotional Intelligence, Adolescents*

The key driver of human nature from a Machiavellian perspective is the ability to skillfully manipulate people and resources to accomplish goals. To get the productive outcome of the opportunity Machiavellians are more likely to modulate things according to themselves and for the same they use manipulative tactics. Going with the Darwin's concept, "Survival for the Fittest One", this line itself suggest that manipulation is very important for human survival and those who are equipped with the manipulative skills can deal with situations in a better way.

The concept of Machiavellianism is derived from the writings of sixteenth century Italian author Niccolo Machiavelli. In the psychological literature, Machiavellianism, in context to psychology, was first mentioned by Christie and Geis (1970). Machiavellianism, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is the employment of cunning duplicity in strategies or in general conduct,

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deceiving from the Italian Renaissance, diplomat and writer. Machiavellianism is defined by *Wilson et al. (1996)*, as a strategy of social conduct that involves manipulating others for personal gain, often against the other's self interest. According to Gies (1970), Machiavellianism term is dependent on the usage of the tactics by the people. If these skills are used to meet the personal goals then it may be termed as manipulation but if same skills are used to achieve the group goals and company goals these skills are termed as leadership skills. People, who score high on Machiavellianism, use deception and manipulation as tactics for their personal gains (Jackobwitz & Egan, 2006).

Adolescence is a significant period in the individual's life. It is the age when individual becomes integrated into the society of the adults. Variables like Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence seem to be the key factors in the development of the adolescents, fostering positive outcome and achievement in various spheres of life, enhancing their social interaction and social competencies with family, friends, school and community as a whole.

The historical roots of Emotional Intelligence can actually be traced back to nineteenth century. The publications related to Emotional Intelligence started appearing in the twentieth century with the work of Edward Thorndike on Social Intelligence in 1920. Goleman (1998) defined Emotional Intelligence "as the ability of recognizing our own feelings, others feelings and managing emotions in oneself and others. Solovey and Mayer (1990) considered Emotional Intelligence as the capacity of the Individual to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among various emotions and to use this information as a guide to ones thinking and actions. Emotional Intelligence consists of the interactions between emotions and cognitions that lead to adaptive functioning. Emotional intelligence is vital to healthy psychosocial development of children and adolescents.

Researchers suggest that Machiavellian lacks empathy. Machiavellian betrays emotions or effects of others, they are found to be high on affective coolness. Because of the affective coolness, Machiavellians are able to engage in the manipulation and exploitation. Machiavellians do not show the moral emotions of sympathy, remorse and so on. They lack empathy & feelings and do not share emotions with the person who is being manipulated. Wastell and Booth (2003), in their research, also investigated that Machiavellians are unable to connect with others' emotions; in fact, they are disconnected with their own emotions, just like Alexithymics. Machiavellians due to the emotional deficiency, treat people as an object or means to ends. Machiavellianism was positively associated with an inability to identify feelings.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence and to assess the relative contribution of emotional Intelligence in predicting variance in Machiavellianism. It was hypothesized that Machiavellianism and emotional intelligence

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would be negatively correlated and Emotional Intelligence would be the significant contributor in predicting variance in Machiavellianism.

METHOD

Participants

The sample for the present study comprised 240 adolescents (120 females and 120 males) in the age range of 13-18 years. The participants were selected from various public schools in Ambala and Kurukshetra districts of Haryana state. Demographic data sheet was used to obtain information about personal details and socio-economic variables.

Instruments

1. A Scale of Machiavellianism (Mach IV Scale) (Rai & Gupta, 1987) The Machiavellianism scale is a Hindi adaptation of Mach IV scale of Christie and Gies (1970). It is a 20-item, 7-point scale varying from 'strong agreement' to neither 'strong disagreement' in the middle. The reliability coefficient was found to be .92 indicating a highly significant value, thus, possessing a fair amount of stability in measuring the degree of Machiavellianism.

2. Modified Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (Austin et al, 2004) Modified Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale is a revised version of the 33-item Emotional Intelligence Scale of Schutte et al., which was devised by Austin et al. The measure relies on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale is based on the original model of Mayer and Salovey (1990). The test-retest coefficient for the scale was .75.

Procedure

All the participants were administered the above mentioned scales in the two sessions. A good rapport was established with the participants before starting the administration process. The participants were fully assured that the information provided by them during the study would be kept confidential. Before administration of the tests, the instructions were made clear to the participants. Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficients was computed to see the correlations between the variables in the study and further Multiple Regression analysis was applied to assess the relative contribution of Emotional Intelligence in predicting variance in Machiavellianism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present research aimed at finding the relation of Machiavellianism with Emotional Intelligence along with contribution of Emotional Intelligence showing variance in Machiavellianism. Results (Table 1) depicted that Machiavellianism was found to be significantly and negatively related with Emotional intelligence ($r = -0.36; p < 0.01$), revealing the results in line with hypothesis. It can be discussed within the framework of previous researches.

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Table 1 – Summary Table showing Correlation Matrix of Variables viz. Machiavellianism (MACH) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) (N = 240)

Variables	Machiavellianism	Emotional Intelligence
Machiavellianism	1.00	-0.36**
Emotional Intelligence		1.00

Repacholi et al. (2003) investigated whether the high Mach children showed any impairment in empathy and found the negative correlation between Mach Scores and empathy scores. According to Repacholi and colleagues, Machiavellian might not be impaired but might be ignoring the feelings and emotions of others especially personal goals. Empathetic personal distress might be offset by the positive emotions feelings associated with a personal goal. Moral emotions such as sympathy, guilt or remorse might be absent not because of impaired sympathy resulting from impaired empathy, provide justification for manipulative and exploitative or harmful actions.

Research has repeatedly demonstrated that trait EI is negatively correlated with Mach (Barlow et al., 2010; Austin et al., 2007) and Trait EI is negatively predicted in children (Barlow et al., 2010) as well as adults (Austin et al 2007). Both trait and ability measures of EI, subscales relating to managing others emotions were the strongest negative predictors of Mach. All dark triads are associated with limited affective empathy (Wai and Tiliopoulos, 2012).

Research by Jonason and Krause (2013) also investigated the link between dark triad (Psychopathy, Narcissism and Machiavellianism) and emotional deficiencies. Such individuals have low level of empathy and limited ability or motivation to communicate ones emotions to others. These aspects are embodied in the individuals who are high on Machiavellianism, Psychopathy and Narcissism. They also seem to be high on external orientation and spend little time considering their internal world and instead are more focused on getting what they want from the external world.

On the basis of the present findings and its supportive work, it is summarized that Machiavellian Individuals remain disconnected as far as emotions of others are concerned. They use both ethical as well as unethical strategies without caring for the emotional needs of other individuals to accomplish their own selfish ends. They fail to empathize the pain which other individuals are experiencing and care about only their needs, their profits, their respect, their status, their power and prestige.

Further, results of regression analysis (Table 2), revealed that that the Emotional Intelligence contributes 13% towards Machiavellianism. Emotional intelligence is the significant predictor of Machiavellianism. It can be said that Emotional Intelligence and Machiavellianism are strongly

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related with each other. It was also found that emotional Intelligence had a negative relation with Machiavellianism.

Table 2 - Summary Table showing Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	R	R-Square	F (for R-Square)	R-Square Change	F	Beta
Emotional Intelligence	.364 ^a	.132	.129	.132	36.333	-.400

Numerous research works provide strength to the findings of present results. McIlwain (2003) stated that Machiavellians are capable of keeping themselves away from the emotional effects of the situation, even in the highly emotionally charged situation they tend to remain cold blooded and do not take over the excitement of others individuals involved. The emotional coldness helps them to manipulate others.

Andrew et al. (2007) characterized Machiavellians by lower emotional intelligence and empathy. Machiavellians are also less able to understand emotions of others.

To summarize, it can be said that Machiavellians lack emotions in them. Machiavellian individuals demonstrated shallow emotional involvement with others and sanction behavior which is emotionally manipulative. They are likely to exploit other individuals and view others in a goal oriented manner (they see people "as a means to an end"). The main aim of the present research was to study the importance of Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence among adolescents'. Machiavellianism is the mental ability which seems necessary to cope with complexities of social living by using various manipulative emotional skill Machiavellians seem to be low on emotional intelligence. Emotional coldness helps them to manipulate and deceive other individuals while keeping themselves detached from emotional aspects and thus helping them in attaining personal motives. Thus, on the basis of present findings, it becomes an essence to instill Machiavellian traits in youth so that they can be attributed with manipulative and effective emotional traits that are widely accepted in professional and personal arena. Machiavellian skills training along with social emotional skills training can prove to be beneficial and help in the future success of adolescents. Machiavellian tactics are the biggest tool in the hand of adolescents which help them in achieving their professional, social, political and personal goals.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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