

Is emotional intelligence an effective ability to prevent risk behaviours?

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Attention to emotions, emotional clarity, and emotional repair are three of the abilities that make up emotional intelligence (EI). Several studies have shown how these abilities interact with risk behaviour. Having a better EI prevents certain risk behaviours such as driving recklessly, risk sexual practices, betting large amounts of money, or situations in which our psychological and social integrity is compromised. The main aim of this research was to explore the relationship between these three EI abilities and the likelihood of performing risky behaviours in different contexts. The sample was composed of 219 participants (56 were men) aged between 18-59 years. The TMMS and DOSPERT scales were used to assess EI and risk behaviour, respectively. The results revealed significant relationships between the different DOSPERT domains and the emotional clarity and repair abilities (not for attention to emotions). Interestingly, the direction of the relationship depended on the type (domain) of risk behaviour. Higher levels of EI led to an increased likelihood of taking risks in the social and recreational domains, and a decreased likelihood in health and ethical domains. Given these findings, we think that the inclusion of EI abilities in the risk-taking prevention programs can be a useful tool to reduce risk behaviours, but it is necessary to take into account the type of context to which the intervention is targeted.

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