

Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been heatedly discussed in the literature over the past decade. Mixed findings indicated that age was or was not positively related to EI. The present study focused on moderating effects of self-perception of aging (SPA) between age group difference and EI in a sample of Chinese adults. The participants were 231 adults (132 females, 99 males) with an age range of 21 to 75 years. Data were collected through online questionnaire by using Attitudes Towards Own Aging Subscale (ATOA) and Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). An independent sample t-test confirmed that older adults had higher trait EI than did younger adults. Pearson Correlation analysis indicated that SPA and trait EI were moderately correlated. Further moderation analysis by ANOVA showed that there was no significant SPA moderating effect on the relationship between age and trait EI. However, a nonsignificant trend that age differences in trait EI only occurred when SPA was lower, but not when it was higher is remarkable. This result showed that SPA moderation was salient under certain variations. The significance, limitations of the results, and future directions are discussed.