

## Original article

## The Relationship Between Religious Attitude and Emotional Intelligence with Aggression in Professional Wrestlers

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**Abstract:** Religion, as a set of beliefs, dos and don'ts, as well as specific and generalized values, is considered one of the most effective psychological supports that is able to provide the meaning of life in every moment of life and in special circumstances with explanatory supports will save a person from suspense and meaninglessness. The present research is of a comparative causal type and its purpose is to investigate the effect of religious attitude and emotional intelligence on the aggression of professional wrestlers. Data related to religious attitude, emotional intelligence and the effect of these two on aggression were collected from 100 wrestlers using religious attitude questionnaires, Shott's emotional intelligence questionnaire and Nelson's anger questionnaire. The results of the research showed that religious attitude and emotional intelligence have an interactive effect on reducing the aggressiveness of professional wrestlers. Based on the subjects' statements, the results showed that aggression among people with high religious attitude was lower than among people with low and medium religious attitude. The results of two-variable variance analysis also showed that the interactive effect of the two components of religious attitude and emotional intelligence on aggression is statistically significant, in other words, religious attitude and emotional intelligence have an interactive effect on the aggression component of professional wrestlers.

**Keywords:** religious attitude, emotional intelligence, aggression, professional wrestlers

## 1. Introduction

Religion, as a widespread and effective phenomenon, is an organizational belief system that, together with a set of rituals and practices, determines the way people respond to life experiences (Zoling et al., 2006). Religion, which basically deals with non-objective symbols, expresses the feelings, values and hopes of believers, or organizes the flows of interaction between humans and foreign dignitaries (Hamilton, 1998:15). Religiosity is a practical system based on beliefs that has been sent by God to guide humans in the path of divine growth and perfection in the realm of individual and social dimensions and includes ideas, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that are linked together and provide comprehensiveness feeling for the individual (Arin, 1999). In such a way, a religious person considers himself obliged to follow and observe this collection (Heshmat Yaghmai, 2001: 190). According to this definition, a religious person is "a person who, knowing the principles and rites of a religion, follows that religion in thought and action, and this following affects his religious and non-religious life". Most of the religions of the world, although they have differences with each other, call their followers to positive activities. Therefore, religion is considered one of the factors influencing behavior and cognition (Skaman, 2002). Religiosity as a mediator affects the thought process and evaluation of daily events in a person's life. One of the issues that some scientists and experts talk about as one of the consequences of religion and religiosity is participation in sports activities. In ancient culture, big sports competitions are part of sacred festivals and unavoidable and joyful activities. Sports along with religion is an essential tool for development, unity, stability, togetherness and peaceful coexistence among male and female athletes as well as spectators, i.e. sports lovers (Jonah and Akwa, 2013). According to experts, religious values are hidden in the worldview of sports. In this sense, sports is a manifestation of religious values such as personality development, hard work, standing and endurance, and like religion, it promotes these characteristics and behaviors. Hence, there are several inherent common principles between sports and religion; principles such as character building, discipline, competition, physical preparation, consistent performance, psychological fitness, impartiality, playing according to the rules and nationalism (Itzen Vezich, 1997). In this way, it is not unusual for male athletes to gather in circles to pray before the start of the game, and most of these players often communicate with God to achieve success. In fact, the relationship between sports and religion can be found in almost every part of the world (Jonah and Akwa, 2013). Religion, as a set of beliefs, dos and don'ts, as well as specific and generalized values, is considered one of the most

effective psychological supports that is able to provide the meaning of life in every moment of life and in special circumstances with explanatory supports can save a person from suspense and meaninglessness (Bahrami Ehsan, 1999). The meaning of religious attitude is a systematic attitude of beliefs and actions towards sacred affairs (Yavari, 2006). Benjamin Rush, the father of American psychiatry, gave importance to religious studies in such a way that he said: Religion is as important for the development and mental health of a person as air is for breathing. Also, Jung (1933) found in his psychotherapy activity that religious beliefs can increase the integrity and give meaning to a person's personality. Jung realized that people who suffered from mental illness lacked the stability and cohesion that religion can give to them. Therefore, religion and religious attitude, as a cultural element and as an internal need, can be the foundation of some personality and mood characteristics in people. (Suleimanizadeh, 2000). Sach Butler (1979) observed a negative relationship between participation in religious ceremonies and the occurrence of antisocial behaviors (quoted from Alyani, 2003).

Janbozorgi (1998) examined the effectiveness of short-term psychotherapy (self-control training) with and without religious (Islamic) orientation on curbing anxiety and stress and stated that short-term psychotherapy training with religious orientation is more effective. Also, Hamer and others (1999) have emphasized the role of religion in increasing the tolerance of people in society against various psychological pressures (quoted from Eliasi and Basri, 2009). Religion, as an important source of comfort and peace, provides a sense of control and hope for people in facing the unfavorable realities of worldly life, whether economic, social, physical or psychological (Wafa'i Borbour, 1998). Zahor and Tavakoli (2002), found that having religious beliefs plays an effective role in preventing and reducing mental disorders, as well as problems caused by them, such as suicide, drug addiction, depression and anxiety.

The most important condition for success in Olympic competitions is the mental and psychological issues of athletes (Mohammadi, 2011). Recent developments in the field of health psychology, mental health and behavioral medicine have paid attention to the role of emotion in human health and illness (Lia et al., 2003).

Therefore, considering the place of emotional intelligence and religious attitude in functional success, health and quality of life in the future, and considering the importance of compromise and behavioral problems and aggression, the current research, is of high necessity.

## 2. Materials and Methods



2.1. Participants

The current research method is practical in terms of purpose. Also, the design of the current research is descriptive-correlation type. In this research, the relationship between religious attitude and emotional intelligence with the level of aggression of professional wrestlers has been investigated.

Society, sampling method and sample size

The statistical population of this research includes all professional wrestlers of Tehran who are working in the 1st and 2nd leagues of the country. The sample size was selected by stratified relative sampling method, in this way, several areas were selected from different areas of this city, and 100 people were selected to participate in the research.

One of the criteria for entering this research is to be a member of the professional wrestling teams of Tehran that are present in the 1st and 2nd leagues of the country; being healthy in terms of skeletal, muscular and nervous; the absence of any disease or dysfunction in the function of the sensory and motor system and having a history of at least 5 years of professional sports in wrestling. Also, among the exit criteria of this research, the researcher can mention unwillingness to complete the questionnaires.

2-2. Instruments

1. *Religious Attitude Questionnaire*: This questionnaire has 25 questions, each of which has five grades, based on a Likert scale of 0 to 4, and the total score of 100. The validity of this test has been obtained through the correlation coefficient with the test of Allport, Vernon and Lindsey (1960, quoted by Sadeghi, Bagherzadeh and Haqshanas, 2010), which is equal to 0.80. This questionnaire was re-evaluated in recent years, and the reliability of this questionnaire was obtained using the Spearman-Brown method equal to 0.63 and its validity equal to 0.248 (Nouri, 1995; quoted from Sadeghi, Bagherzadeh and Haqshanas, 2010).

2. *The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSREI)*: This scale contains 33 questions and was prepared by Schutte et al. In the research of Ahadi, Narimani, Abolghasemi and Asiai (2009), the reliability of the test was obtained using the Cronbach's alpha method of 0.89.

3. *State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory 2 (STAXI-II)*: This questionnaire consists of 57 questions and includes six scales: anger state scale, anger trait scale, anger externalization scale, anger internalization scale, anger external inhibition scale and inhibition scale inner rage. It should be noted that this tool is a paper-pencil scale prepared for the age group of 16 to 30 years. The validity and reliability of this list has been satisfactory in various studies. (Mokhtari, 2001; Izekian, 2002).

2-3. Procedure

In this research, it was tried that the participants give their answers without stress and with a sense of responsibility. They were told to refrain from writing their first and last names and only the hacked number was visible on the questionnaires. They were also assured that their answers would remain confidential. Also, the participants in the research were assured that the information received from them will remain confidential and those who do not want to answer these questions can stop their cooperation at any stage of answering.

2-4. Analysis

After collecting the required data, they were analyzed with SPSS software. To answer the research questions, Pearson's correlation coefficient tests were used between religious attitude and aggression; and between emotional intelligence and aggression. Multiple stepwise regression analysis was also used to predict aggression from religious attitude and emotional intelligence.

3. Results

In the descriptive statistics section, the mean and standard deviation of scores obtained in religious attitude, emotional intelligence and aggression of athletes were mentioned. The statistical sample of this study includes 100 professional wrestlers with an average age of 24 years, who were in the age range of 18 to 28 years. The mean and standard deviation of religious attitude scores (9/8) is 74.03, the mean and standard deviation of emotional intelligence scores (11/80) is 114.20, and the mean and standard deviation of aggression scores (8/9) is 56.5.

**Table 1.** Descriptive information of the participants in the components of religious attitude, emotional intelligence and aggression

Variables	religious attitude	emotional intelligence	aggression
Mean	74.03	114.20	56.5
Standard Deviation	9.8	11.80	8.9



The results presented in Table 1 show that there is a negative and significant relationship between religious attitude and aggression ( $r = -0.53$ ) and emotional intelligence and aggression ( $r = -0.45$ ). In

other words, the higher a person's emotional intelligence and religious attitude, the less aggressive he is.

**Table 1.** Simple correlation coefficient of religious attitude, emotional intelligence and aggression

Variables	religious attitude	emotional intelligence	aggression
religious attitude	1		
emotional intelligence	0.43	1	
aggression	-0.53	-0.45	1

(Two domain test)  $p < 0.001$

Table 2 shows the results of multiple regression analysis to predict the aggression variable.

**Table 3.** Standard multiple regression coefficient for predicting aggression according to the variables of religious attitude and emotional intelligence

Variables	Not standardized coefficients B	standard error	standardized coefficients $\beta$	t	Significancy
religious attitude	0.155	0.027	0.384	5.81	0.001
emotional intelligence	0.061	0.012	0.309	4.81	0.001

\*Significance level=0.05

The results of standard multiple regression analysis showed that the variables of religious attitude and emotional intelligence are respectively the strongest variables for predicting aggression. Table 3 shows

the standard and non-standard  $\beta$  coefficients for significant variables in predicting the aggression variable ( $p < 0.001$ ).

#### 4. Discussion

The present study was dedicated to investigate the relationship between religious attitude and aggression, the relationship between emotional intelligence and aggression, and also determining the contribution of each predictor variable in the aggression of wrestlers.

In terms of the relationship between religious attitude and aggression of wrestlers, the results showed that there is a negative relationship between these two variables and statistically there is a significant relationship between these two variables in a level of 0.001, and this finding is consistent with the findings of Soleimanizadeh (2000), Sach Butler (1979, cited by Aliani, 2003), Jan Gergi (1999), and Zahor and Tavakoli (2002).

According to Demari (2009), paying attention to the religious and spiritual dimension in patients and clients is for two reasons; First, many people have strong faith. Perhaps the best reason for dealing with spiritual and religious aspects is that many religious people have spiritual needs. Neglecting religion and religion is just like ignoring the environment or mental state of the person, which leads to failure in the complete treatment of the person. Religion and religiosity are used as a coping mechanism to cope

with adverse life conditions. Compromise with the help of spirituality and religion means using religious and spiritual beliefs and tasks to reduce the pressure of emotions caused by loss or change. Second, religious beliefs affect the therapeutic relationship and therapeutic decision-making. Spiritual and religious beliefs influence the decision making of patients and clients more than other cultural attitudes and beliefs in disease conditions. Koing (2007) showed in research that the mental and physical health of a person has a positive relationship with his spiritual life. People who have stronger religious beliefs have better adaptation to stressful situations. When they get sick, they recover faster than non-religious people, experience lower levels of negative emotions and depression, have less anxiety and have higher social support.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) warns people and says, "Never be hasty in getting angry, because it will dominate you as a habit." (Gharral al-Hakm, vol. 786)". In verses 133 and 134 of House of Imran, God considers the control of anger and its management not only the duty and responsibility of pious believers, but also by stating that this method will make them benefit from divine rewards and to encourage and motivate them by controlling and managing anger. In the Quranic teachings, a part of



the verses is dedicated to the management and control of anger. According to Islam, the bravest people are those who control their anger, and the best people according to Islam are those who resist anger and do not let anger dominate them. Imam Ali, peace be upon him, says: The best of people is the one who is patient if they make him angry, forgives when he is oppressed, and does good when he is wronged. (Gharral al-Hakm, vol. 3, p. 430, H. 5000).

Also, regarding the necessity of avoiding anger and aggression, Imam Kazim (peace be upon him) has been quoted as saying that whoever restrains his anger from people, God will also restrain His anger from him on the Day of Resurrection. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also said in another statement, anger is the blazing fire. The one who restrains this fire is immune from burning and if he lets it go, the first thing that gets burned is himself (Gharr al-Hakm and Darr al-Kalam, vol. 2, p. 47). According to the beautiful interpretation of Imam Hadi, peace be upon him, anger, harshness and aggressiveness in front of the one you are not able to confront, is a sign of weakness and inability, but in front of the person you are able to confront face to face, it is a sign of meanness and vileness (vol. 2, p. 11). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says: O Ali, I give you a command, keep it, because if you keep my command, you will always be in good deeds. O Ali, whoever suppresses his anger, God will give him security and faith on the Day of Judgment that he will taste (Mustadrak al-Wasail, vol. 12, p. 308). Therefore, the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, who have reached perfection in everything, are the owners of their anger, and anger and rage will never take them out of the circle of truth. Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) had this interpretation about Ahl al-Bayt and true Shiites: One who does not control himself at the time of anger is not one of us. Therefore, the life of humans in the world is mixed with strange problems, if we stand in front of it and exercise patience and resistance, we will surely be prosperous. Patience is the leaven of perseverance against various problems and events, the exact opposite of which is the "component" of impatience, losing resistance and surrendering to problems. Patience is one of the most important pillars of faith. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) considers the position of patience in relation to faith as the position of the head in relation to the body (Nahj al-Balagheh, Kalamat al-Qasar, 82).

In the Holy Quran, there are about 70 verses about patience and endurance. The Quran has given great rewards to the patient and the people with high endurance. Patience is closely related to human existence capacity. The more a person's capacity and personality increases, his patience increases, that's why children and teenagers get impatient with the smallest incident. As it has been said, impatience is the opposite of patience, and it is the state of

restlessness, intolerance and annoyance in the face of events and problems, so that a person kneels before hardships and calamities, despairs and becomes impatient. According to the stated content, athletes who have reached certainty in the field of religion will be more successful in empathy, understanding, responsibility and flexibility, and as a result, people will have a high ability in their relationships and interactions and adaptability. In addition to controlling his emotions, they can show their true athletic self.

The second research hypothesis indicating that there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and aggression in professional wrestlers was also confirmed and the results showed that there is a negative and significant difference between the two at the 0.001 level. The present finding is in line with the researches of Russell and Cobman (2002), Brock et al. (2004), Smith et al. (2001) and Politri (2002). In a research similar to this research by Ramezani (2005) under the title "Investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and the emergence and control of anger in college students", it is showed that emotional intelligence has a negative relationship with the state of anger, streak of anger, and the occurrence of internal and external anger, and on the contrary, with external and internal control has a negative relationship with the externalization of anger, and on the other hand, it has a positive relationship with internal and external control of anger. A more detailed examination of the results also showed that among the components of emotional intelligence, emotional attention has the highest level of relationship with the state of anger, verbal and physical anger, and angry feeling, and the component of emotional differentiation has the highest level of relationship with internal and external control of anger, streak of anger and angry mood.

In another research titled "Investigation and comparison of aggression between basketball, karate, boxing and non-athletes Youth in Babol" the results of the research show that there is a significant difference between the aggression of karate athletes and non-athletes in a way that the aggression of non-athletes is more than karate athletes, also non-athletes are more aggressive than athletes.

In another research (2007) there is a significant difference between the way of judging, team failure, sensitivity to competition, team rank in the ranking table, age of athletes, crowds of spectators, aggressiveness of spectators, aggressiveness learning, failure of athletes in life, level of physical preparation, hosting of the team, the behavior of the athletes of the opposing team, the exciting and motivating competition, and the aggression of the athletes.

In explaining the results of the present research, it can be said that sports, as a comprehensive social



phenomenon, has a close relationship with many aspects of the social life of people in the society in such a way that it has found an important place in the culture of different societies and its related activities occupy a lot of time and energy of the people in each society. The importance of sports for the health of the society and its members is so much that some sociologists have considered it the civil religion of the contemporary society (Sharapour, 2002: 112). Sports helps to understand common symbols to create agreement and understanding between people in the direction of social cohesion. In this context, Elias considers sports as the key to understanding societies and a suitable input for analyzing the structures governing societies (Novabakhsh and Javanmard, 2013: 3).

Viewing sports as a sacred thing has effects on other aspects of people's lives. When athletes combine spirituality with their professional activities, they connect more to spiritual resources and enjoy more spiritual experiences. Also, these people may attach a special meaning to their activity. An example of connection with spiritual sources can be seen in the statement of one of the athletes: "When my life conditions are difficult, I pay attention to God and when things are good, I thank Him." Another athlete says: "When I am challenged in sports, I refer to my beliefs for guidance." Another athlete also states: "I ask God to help me in difficulties so that I can overcome them and help me to be the best that I can be." In terms of having a spiritual sense, according to one of the athletes, when he goes to the sports field, he lies down on the grass; imagines the race in his mind; prays and thanks God in advance for playing in that match.

According to another athlete, having a sacred feeling in sports is a common experience. "Any professional athlete can tell you that when you give it your all and play as hard as you can, you can feel incredible". In the field of giving meaning to sports activity, a student athlete states: "Exercising is a means by which I can make God happy by using the blessing he has given me". As these statements and basically the whole research shows, people's religiosity and spirituality make them tend to exercise. It affects people's approach to their sports activities, helps them cope with victories and defeats in sports and give a logical meaning to their activity (Mori et al., 2005).

## 5. Conclusions

In the end, it should be said that man's need for religion is as old as history. Because from the very beginning of his life, human beings have felt the need for a powerful supporter and a strong support, and therefore, in this way, they control their emotions.

**Limitations:** The current research has some limitations. First of all, the current research is a type of correlational research and correlation research cannot show causal relationships, so it is necessary to use experimental research in future research. Second, in this research, a questionnaire was used to collect data. Therefore, considering that the questionnaires were self-assessment, there may be bias in the answers. It is suggested that in future researches, the observational method should be used to collect information, and it is necessary to use other methods such as interviews to collect information on the variable of religious attitude.

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## رابطه نگرش دینی و هوش هیجانی با پرخاشگری کشتی گیران حرفه‌ای

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**چکیده:** دین به عنوان مجموعه‌ای از اعتقادات، باورها و نیایدها و نیز ارزش‌های اختصاصی و تعمیم یافته، از موثرترین تکیه‌گاه‌های روانی به شمار می‌رود که قادر است معنای زندگی را در لحظه‌های عمر فراهم کند و در شرایط خاص نیز با فراهم‌سازی تکیه‌گاه‌های تبیینی، فرد را از تعلیق و بی‌معنایی نجات دهد. پژوهش حاضر از نوع علی مقایسه‌ای است و هدف آن بررسی تاثیر نگرش دینی و هوش هیجانی بر پرخاشگری کشتی گیران حرفه‌ای بود که داده‌های مرتبط با نگرش دینی، هوش هیجانی و تأثیر این دو بر پرخاشگری، بر روی ۱۰۰ نفر از کشتی گیران با استفاده از پرسشنامه‌های نگرش دینی، پرسشنامه هوش هیجانی شات و پرسشنامه خشم نلسون انجام شد. نتایج پژوهش نشان داد که نگرش دینی و هوش هیجانی تأثیر تعاملی بر کاهش پرخاشگری کشتی گیران حرفه‌ای دارند. براساس گفته‌های آزمودنی‌ها این نتایج حاصل شد که پرخاشگری در میان افراد نگرش دینی بالا، پایین‌تر از افراد نگرش دینی پایین و متوسط بود. نتایج تحلیل واریانس دو متغیری نیز نشان داد که تأثیر تعاملی دو مؤلفه نگرش دینی و هوش هیجانی بر پرخاشگری از لحاظ آماری معنادار است، به عبارتی دیگر نگرش دینی و هوش هیجانی تأثیر تعاملی بر مؤلفه پرخاشگری کشتی گیران حرفه‌ای دارند.

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**انتشار:** ۱۹ آذر ۱۴۰۱



این نماد به معنای مجوز استفاده از اثر با دو شرط است یکی استناد به نویسنده و دیگری استفاده برای مقاصد غیرتجاری.

**واژه‌های کلیدی:** نگرش دینی، هوش هیجانی، پرخاشگری، کشتی گیران حرفه‌ای