



## INDIAN TRIBAL ADOLESCENT: A REVIEW ON THEIR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Anjana Bhattacharjee

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Tripura University

Rebeka Debbarma

Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Tripura University

Voice of Research

Volume 4, Issue 3

December 2015

ISSN 2277-7733

### Abstract

*Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions and the emotion of others. Adolescence is the most critical stage to the emotional problems, thus educating adolescents about emotions and helping them to deal with others as well as their actions can be very useful in their daily struggles. Adolescents who are academically brilliant may sometimes be socially inept. Thus, emotional intelligence will help an adolescent to reduce stress by decreasing conflict, improving relationships and understanding. Numerous researches had showed that emotional intelligence differs according to community differences. The scheduled tribes are economically inferior and they are routinely marginalized and deprived of their access to fundamental resources including health and educational services. Therefore, the present paper is an attempt to review the emotional intelligence of the tribal adolescent school students in India. The paper also attempted to highlight the importance of emotional intelligence on the overall development of adolescent tribal school students in India. Further, the paper also suggests some need based measures for improving emotional intelligence of different tribes of India.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, adolescent, scheduled tribes.

Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and psychological human development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood (age of majority). The World Health Organization identifies adolescence as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. The process of adolescence is a period of preparation for adulthood during which time several key developmental experiences occur. Besides physical and sexual maturation, these experiences include movement toward social and economic independence, and development of identity, the acquisition of skills needed to carry out adult relationships and roles, and the capacity for abstract reasoning.

Adolescence has long been described as a time of emotional turmoil (Hall, 1904). In its extreme form, this view is too stereotypical because adolescents are not constantly in a state of "storm and stress". Nonetheless, early adolescence is the time when emotional highs and lows occur more frequently (Rosenberg & Lewis, 2003). Young adolescents can be top of the world in one moment and down in the dumps the next. In many instances, the intensity of their emotions seems out proportion to the events that elicit them (Steinberg & Levine, 1997). Young adolescents may sulk a lot knowing how to express their feelings adequately. With little or no provocation, they may blow up at their parents or siblings, projecting their unpleasant feelings onto another person.

Adolescence is the most crucial stage to the emotional problems, thus teaching adolescents about emotions and helping them to deal with others as well as their actions can be very helpful in their daily struggles and for that emotional intelligence is very important. Emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware of, control and recognize one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different feelings and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour. According to Mayer & Salovey (1997) "Emotional intelligence

is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth". Salovey and Mayer proposed a model that identified four different factors of emotional intelligence: the perception of emotion, the ability reason using emotions, the ability to understand emotion and the ability to manage emotions. According to them the first step in understanding emotions is to perceive them accurately. We can understand emotions through many nonverbal signals like facial expressions, body gesture/postures etc. The emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. If someone is expressing angry emotions, the observer must interpret the cause of their anger and what it might mean. The ability to manage emotions effectively is a crucial part of emotional intelligence. Regulating emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspect of emotional management.

According to Daniel Goleman, "emotional intelligence is a master aptitude, a capacity that profoundly affects all other abilities, either facilitating or interfering with them". The following steps describe the five components of emotional intelligence at work, as developed by Daniel Goleman:

**Self-awareness-** It is the ability to recognize and understand personal moods and emotions and drives, as well as their effect on others. Self-awareness includes self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, and a self-deprecating sense of humour. Self-awareness depends on one's ability to monitor one's own emotion state and to correctly identify and name one's emotions.

**Self-regulation-** It is the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods, and the propensity to suspend judgment and to think before acting. Hallmarks include trustworthiness and integrity; comfort with ambiguity; and openness to change.

**Internal motivation-** It is a passion to work for internal reasons that go beyond money and status -which are external rewards,



such as an inner vision of what is important in life, a joy in doing something, curiosity in learning, a flow that comes with being immersed in an activity. It is a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence. Internal motivation includes strong drive to achieve, optimism even in the face of failure, and organizational commitment.

Empathy-Empathy means understanding other's feelings, needs and concern. Empathy is to discern the feelings of others, understand their emotions, and utilize that understanding to relate to others more effectively.

Social skills- It is the ability to manage and build upon relationships and building rapport with various sections of society and creating network of people. Social skills include effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, and expertise building and leading teams. Social skills can help to manage disputes, are excellent communicators, and are masters at building and maintaining relationships.

Emotional Intelligence is such type of attribute which is related with everyone. Emotional Intelligence is the ability of an individual to deal effectively with other people, understand one's own feelings and appropriately respond to the everyday environment. Emotional Intelligence doesn't mean being soft – it means being intelligent about emotion, a different way of being smart. It was found that in different studies people who succeed in life are not merely intellectually intelligent but their Emotional Quotient was also found to be high. Turner (2004) stated that traditional IQ contributes only 20% to one's success, whereas emotional quotient (EQ) contributes 80%.

### Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to review the overall status of the emotional intelligence of the Tribal adolescent school students in India, especially in the state of Tripura. The paper also attempted to highlight the importance of emotional intelligence on the overall development of adolescent tribal school students. Further, the paper also suggests some need based measures for improving mental health and well-being of different tribes of India.

### Indian Tribal Adolescents and Their Status of Emotional Intelligence

The tribal population of our country, as per the 2001 census, is 8.43 crore, constituting 8.2% of the total population. Almost 92% (91.7%) of them are living in rural areas and only 8.3% are living in urban areas. The population of the tribes had grown at a growth rate 24.45% during 1991-2001. More than half of the scheduled tribe population is concentrated in the state of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Jharkhand (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India, 2010) India is a home to more than 243 million adolescents aged 10-19, who account for quarter of the country's population. According to the 2001 census, the total number of Scheduled tribe adolescent population is 18578789 (22.03) out of which 9660531 are males and 8918258 are females. The tribal adolescents of our country are often deprived of basic education and other facilities which are very much essential for their all round development. Among them the situation of

rural tribal adolescents are worse. The lack of education, communication and other health services make them more prone to develop different physical and mental health problems. Among various mental health variables emotional intelligence is one of the significant factor for overall adjustment and success in life. The following literature reviews highlight the scenario of emotional intelligence among the tribal adolescents of our country:

Andrabi, A. A. (2015) conducted a study on Emotional Intelligence among tribal and nontribal adolescents of Anantnag and Kupwara districts of Kashmir and revealed that non-tribal adolescents showed a higher level of emotional intelligence than tribal students. Further the study revealed insignificant differences between the male and female adolescents on the measure of emotional intelligence in tribal group. However, significant difference was found among the non-tribal male and female adolescents.

Jamadar, J. and Sindhu, A. (2015) investigated the impact of socio-economic status on emotional intelligence and creativity among Tribal students of Hosahalli, H. D. Kote, Mysore. They found that in tribal community peoples, especially Yerava Community students had high level of emotional intelligence and creativity compared to Kaadu kuruba and Jenu Kuruba tribal communities.

Parihar, N. and Jha, M. (2015) conducted research on the role of emotional intelligence, gender and culture in depression in the area of Raipur and Bastar district of Chhattisgarh State. Their findings suggested that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of depression in clarity and mood repair dimension. However, the result did not revealed gender and cultural differences among the adolescents.

Tripathi, I. (2015) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and gender in tribal-non tribal adolescent group. For their study 400 adolescent children were selected from various schools of Ranchi district. Result revealed that both tribal males and females possessed similar emotional intelligence. However, non-tribal group of males and females are significantly different from each other.

Ghosh, D. (2015) explored gender differences on emotional intelligence among tribal and non-tribal adolescent school students of Tripura. Her study showed significant differences between tribal and non-tribal students on overall emotional intelligence. Further she revealed gender difference on emotional intelligence among school students. Another study conducted by Anjali, D. (2015) on the effect of gender, community culture and type of school on emotional maturity of tribal and non-tribal pre-adolescents in Gandhari area of the Nizamabad District in Telangana state and found that on the measure of emotional maturity non-tribal performed better than tribal community.

Sinha, V. K. (2014) examined the level of emotional maturity among tribal and non-tribal adolescent girls and identified the impact of socio economic status and family structure on emotional maturity. Findings showed that non-tribal adolescent girls had high level of emotional maturity in comparison to the



tribal adolescent girls. Further, data analysis concluded that emotional maturity had been affected by socio economic status and family structure. Gopal, D. V. V. et al. (2013) conducted research on the effect of ethnicity and gender on emotional and behavioural problems in young adolescents and revealed that tribal adolescents have higher emotional, aggressive and other problems than their non-tribal counterparts.

Research on the role of gender and community in aggression among adolescents was conducted by Bhattacharjee, A (2012). Her analysis revealed that tribal adolescents of Tripura possessed more aggression than non tribal adolescents. Akhtar, Z. (2012) conducted study on the anxiety and adjustment pattern among tribal and non tribal students of different schools of Jamshedpur and indicated significant difference between tribal and non-tribal students in the emotional adjustment.

Nandwana and Joshi (2010) conducted a study on emotional intelligence of tribal adolescents of the "Tidi" village of Udaipur. They found that tribal adolescent possessed low emotional intelligence. Majority of adolescents (55%) were found to have poor level of emotional intelligence followed by 35 percent of subjects in average category (Nandwana and Joshi, 2010).

#### **Importance of Emotional Intelligence among Adolescent School Students**

Adolescents have long been regarded as group of people who are searching for them to find some form of identity and meaning in their lives (Erickson, 1968). They have long been assumed as a unique group with a wide range of difficulties and problems in their transition to adulthood. In this respect Emotional Intelligence can be a boon for adolescents in adjusting with their difficult world. The adolescent's task is not simply one of dealing with the external environment and other individuals but one of seeking to discover himself/herself, his/her reaches and his/her limit and his/her role in the world in which he / she lives. In this way self awareness, self regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills all will pay a lot to adolescents if channelized in proper direction.

Adolescents who are academically brilliant may sometimes be socially and interpersonally inept. Despite possessing a high IQ, success may not automatically follow. But by increasing the emotional quotients, the adolescents can become more productive and successful at what they do and they can also help others to become more productive and successful too. High emotional intelligence will definitely help an adolescent to reduce stress by decreasing conflict, improving relationships and understanding. Many of today's young people deal with stress and pressure each day. Those who lack the skills to deal with these stresses have a higher chance of acting out due to a lack of mental well-being. Having emotional intelligence skills affects both outlook and attitude of an individual. It can also help get rid of anxiety, help to deal with mood swings and avoid depression. Following points indicates the importance of intelligence among adolescents.

**Physical Health** -The ability to take care of our bodies and especially to manage our stress, which has an incredible impact on our overall wellness, is heavily tied to our emotional

intelligence. Emotional intelligence can help adolescents to be aware of their emotional state and help them to overcome stress which will further help them to maintain good health.

**Mental Well-Being** -Emotional intelligence affects our attitude and outlook on life. It can also help to alleviate anxiety and avoid depression and mood swings. A high level of emotional intelligence directly correlates to a positive attitude and happier outlook on life. High emotional intelligence can help an adolescent to deal with life stress and help them to cope up with depression, anxiety, etc.

**Relationships**- By better understanding and managing emotions, adolescents can communicate their feelings in a more constructive way. They can understand and relate to those with whom they are in relationships. Adolescents with high emotional intelligence tend to enjoy close relationship, and are comfortable with themselves and others. Understanding the needs, feelings, and responses of other will leads to stronger and more fulfilling relationships.

**Conflict Resolution** - When we can discern people's emotions and empathize with their perspective, it's much easier to resolve conflicts or possibly avoid them before they start. Adolescents can take decisions through the emotions and resolve conflict with others. They are also better at negotiation due to the very nature of their ability to understand the needs and desires of others. It's easier to give people what they want if we can perceive what it is.

**Success**-Higher emotional intelligence helps us to be stronger internal motivators, which can reduce procrastination, increase self-confidence, and improve our ability to focus on a goal. It also allows us to create better networks of support, overcome setbacks, and persevere with a more resilient outlook. Our ability to delay gratification and see the long-term directly affects our ability to succeed.

**Leadership** - An effective leader can recognize what the needs of his people are, so that those needs can be met in a way that encourages higher performance and work satisfaction. Adolescent with emotional intelligence has good leadership qualities and can make decision effectively and wisely. An emotionally savvy and intelligent leader is also able to build stronger teams by strategically utilizing the emotional diversity of their team members to benefit the team as a whole.

#### **Role of Emotional intelligence in Academic Performance**

Research suggests that emotional health is fundamental to effective learning. The most critical element for a student's success in school is an understanding of how to learn. Some key ingredients for this understanding are- confidence, self control, capacity to communicate and ability to co-operate. These traits are all aspects of emotional intelligence. An intelligent adolescent who is self aware and intrinsically motivated will definitely have very high academic performance. Adolescents with high emotional intelligence will also have good relationship with teachers and parents which also help them to perform well in their examinations. Students with good EQ will not have conflicts with peer group and are not likely to use drugs.



## Conclusion

The present paper finally concluded that the emotional status of tribal youth differs from their non tribal counterparts. Different studies showed that tribal youths possessed low emotional intelligence which creates difficulty in their adjustment. This is because scheduled tribes in India have been for centuries; the most marginalized and exploited people. Over 95% of scheduled tribes still live in rural areas and economic exploitation remains their most acute problem. Furthermore, the paper also showed that high emotional intelligence enables the adolescent to develop very good interpersonal relationships and to have better social support. Through life skills training and scientific guidance, we can improve the emotional intelligence of adolescents and thus we can lead them towards a very successful future life.

## Need Based Measures for the Improvement of Emotional Intelligence among Adolescent School Students

On the basis of the literature review and keeping in mind the scenario of tribal adolescents in our country more particularly in North Eastern region, the following suggestions have been made for improvement of emotional intelligence:

**Reducing Negative Emotions:** To improve emotional intelligence it is important to reduce negative emotion. Negative emotion includes negative personalization and fear of rejection. One effective way to manage fear of rejection is to provide oneself with multiple options in important situations, so that no matter what happens, one has strong alternatives going forward.

**Managing Stress:** There is no doubt that life is stressful. Managing stress has a direct correlation with our level of emotional intelligence. Enhancing time-management skills may be one area where stress can be reduced. Prioritize tasks and learn how to politely refuse requests that are time-consuming but not beneficial. We should not spend time worrying about what others would do or what others think or believe about us. We must concentrate on our capabilities and be confident in every endeavor.

**Developing Open Mind:** Listening does not necessarily mean agreement. It is important to learn and enhance our own natural intellectual curiosity. This will help us to grow emotionally and intellectually. We need to develop open mind to say 'no' boldly when we desire so. We must keep in mind that no one is ever right all the time. We will also develop a means of dealing with conflict with confidence and poise.

**Developing Empathetic Tendencies:** Empathy is the ability to understand another's reactions and emotions in a given situation. This important skill is developed through thinking about how others are being treated. Volunteering skills and getting to know people can help us develop extroversion. Through getting involved with others, one can become selfless and helpful. Development of these tendencies makes a better person, more skilled toward benefiting and helping others.

**Becoming Socially Responsible:** Social responsibility is one of the highest levels of emotional experience. It demonstrates that we really care about others, especially those less fortunate. Being socially responsible isn't about personal gain -it's about what we can contribute to help other people.

## References

- Akhtar, Z. (2012). Anxiety and adjustment pattern among tribal and non tribal students. *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing*, 3(3), 723-725.
- Anjali, D. (2015). Emotional Maturity of Tribal and Non-Tribal Pre – Adolescents: A Study of Gandhari Region in Nizamabad District. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 2(4), 143-150.
- Andrabi, A. A. (2015). A Study of Emotional Intelligence among Tribal and Nontribal Adolescents of Kashmir. *Scholarly Research Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies* 3(18), 26-32.
- Bhattacharjee, A. (2012). Role of Gender and Community in Aggression: A Study among Adolescents of Tripura. *Indian Journal of Applied Psychology*, 49, 11-16.
- Erickson, E. (1968). *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton
- Ghosh, D. (2015). Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Self-Concept of the Tribal Higher School Students. *My Research Journal*, 3(1). Retrieved on 14/10/2015 from <http://www.myresearchjournals.com/index.php/IJSSR/article/view/144>.
- Gopal, V. V.V., Valianmatter, G. J., Ashok, A., & Madhu, K. (2013). Effect of Ethnicity and Gender on Emotional and Behavioural Problems in Young Adolescents. *International Journal of Psychological Research*, 4. Retrieved on 14/10/2015 from <http://www.ijpsr.net/volume4.html>
- Hall, G. S. (1904). *Adolescence* (Vols. 1 & 2). Eaglewood Cliff, NJ; Prentice Hall.
- Jamadar, J. & Sindhu, A. (2015). The Impact of Socio Economic Status on Emotional Intelligence and Creativity among Tribal Adolescent Students. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 3(1), 112-125.
- Mayer, J. D. & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In P. Salovey & Sluyter (Eds). *Emotional Development and Intelligence: Implications for Educators* (pp.3-31. New York: Basic Books.
- Nandwana, S. & Joshi. K. (2010). Assessment of Emotional Intelligence of Tribal Adolescents of Udaipur: An Exploratory Study. *Stud Tribes Tribals*, 8(1), 37-40.
- Parihar, N. & Jha, M. (2015). Role of Emotional Intelligence, Gender and Culture in Depression. *Journal of Humanities And Social Science*, 20(2), 33-36.
- Rosenberg, M. S. & Lewis, M. (2013). Emotional development in adolescence. In G. Adams & M. Berzonsky (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of adolescents*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Sinha, V. K. (2014). A Study of Emotional Maturity Among Tribal and Non-Tribal Adolescent Girls. *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, 4(7)393-395.
- Statistical profile of scheduled tribes in India (2010). Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India.
- Steinberg, L. D. & Levine, A. (1997). *You and your adolescent* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Newyork: Harper Perennial.
- Tipathi, I. (2015). Emotional Intelligence and Gender: Comparison Between Tribal and Non Tribal Adolescent with Special Reference to Ranchi District, Jharkhand. *Indian Journal of Research*, 5(15), 654-656.
- Turner, L. (2004). Emotional intelligence – our intangible asset. *Chartered Accountant. Journal of New Zealand*, 83(3), 29-31.