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Deprivation and Need for Achievement as Contributors to Emotional Intelligence and Creativity among Adolescents

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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Abstract

The present study was an attempt to examine the association of deprivation and need for achievement with emotional intelligence and creative potential amongst adolescents. For the purpose, 100 female adolescents of Patna were selected. They were administered Prolonged Deprivation Scale by Mishra and Tripathi, Mukherjee's Need for Achievement Scale, Mangal's Emotional Intelligence Scale and Baqer Mehdi's Creative Ability Test to measure deprivation, need for achievement, emotional intelligence and creative potential of female adolescents respectively. The obtained data were analysed using chi-square. The results revealed that non-deprived group and high need for achievement group excelled over their counterparts in terms of (i) emotional intelligence and (ii) both verbal and non-verbal creative abilities. Thus, non-deprivation and high need for achievement are conducive to high emotional intelligence, high verbal and non-verbal creativity.

Key Words

Deprivation, Achievement, Emotional Intelligence, Creativity.

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage that shapes an individual's cognitive, emotional, and social development. During this time, young people experience significant changes that influence their personal identity, social interactions, and academic and creative potential. Adolescents in rural settings, however, face unique challenges that often complicate their development in comparison to their urban peers. Factors such as deprivation, limited resources, and societal expectations can significantly affect their emotional intelligence (EI) and creativity, both of which are crucial for overall well-being and achievement.

This research explores how deprivation in its various forms (economic, educational, emotional) interacts with need achievement and influences emotional intelligence (EI) and creativity in adolescents from rural areas. The interplay of these factors is complex, with deprivation potentially hindering development in areas critical for coping with adversity and achieving personal and academic success. Understanding this dynamic is essential for educators, policymakers, and social scientists to develop strategies that foster resilience and potential in rural youth.

Deprivation in the context of rural adolescence can manifest in several forms, including economic deprivation, limited access to quality education, scarcity of healthcare resources, and social isolation. Economic deprivation, for example, may limit access to extracurricular activities, enriching experiences, and support systems, all of which contribute to the development of creativity and EI. In rural areas, schools are often underfunded and have fewer opportunities for creative expression or emotional support, which may affect the cognitive and emotional growth of adolescents.

The emotional impact of deprivation cannot be overstated. Adolescents living in rural, economically disadvantaged environments often face higher levels of stress, anxiety, and insecurity. These emotional challenges can lead to lower levels of emotional regulation, a critical component of EI, and hinder the development of interpersonal skills. Inadequate emotional and social support structures further exacerbate these challenges, potentially limiting adolescents' ability to manage their emotions in healthy ways.

Need achievement, as conceptualized by psychologist David McClelland, refers to an individual's desire to attain goals, gain competence, and receive recognition for achievements. In rural adolescents, the drive to achieve may be influenced by both external and internal factors. On one hand, adolescents from rural settings may have fewer resources and opportunities to achieve academically or socially. On the other hand, the limited exposure to success stories and role models in their communities may influence their perception of their own potential for achievement.

The need for achievement often plays a role in how adolescents engage with their environment, their educational pursuits, and their interpersonal relationships. Adolescents with a high need for achievement are typically more driven, persistent, and motivated, qualities that are beneficial for academic success and personal development. However, in rural areas, where opportunities for achievement are scarce, this need may be channeled into more self-destructive behaviors if not properly nurtured or supported.

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions in oneself and others. It is a vital skill for navigating complex social and academic environments, and its importance during adolescence cannot be overstated. Adolescents with high EI tend to have better mental health, improved interpersonal relationships, and more effective coping strategies in stressful situations.

In rural settings, emotional intelligence may be both cultivated and stunted by environmental factors. For example, rural adolescents often experience less emotional support from family and school environments, which can impair the development of EI. Additionally, rural communities often place a high value on traditional roles and behaviors, which may limit emotional expression or discourage behaviors associated with emotional intelligence, such as vulnerability and open communication.

Moreover, adolescents in these areas may struggle with identifying and managing their emotions due to fewer opportunities for social and emotional learning. In contrast, those who receive proper emotional support may develop stronger emotional intelligence, which, in turn, aids in their academic and creative achievements.

Creativity is often viewed as an intrinsic quality that drives individuals to think outside the box, solve problems, and engage with the world in innovative ways. For adolescents, creativity plays an essential role in personal expression, academic achievement, and resilience. However, in rural environments where resources for creative expression are often limited, adolescents may face significant barriers in developing their creative potential.

Limited access to cultural experiences, the arts, and extracurricular activities can hinder creative growth. Moreover, economic deprivation and a lack of resources can create a focus on survival rather than self-expression. Despite these challenges, rural adolescents often demonstrate remarkable creativity, particularly in problem-solving and resourcefulness in their daily lives. The ability to adapt to their environment and make the most of limited resources can foster a type of creativity that is both practical and resilient.

The interconnectedness of deprivation, need achievement, emotional intelligence, and creativity among rural adolescents forms the core of this research. Deprivation may influence an adolescent's emotional intelligence by limiting opportunities for social and emotional development. A lack of access to necessary resources may undermine an adolescent's sense of self-worth and achievement, limiting their motivation to pursue academic or creative goals. This, in turn, may stifle creativity and the expression of emotions.

On the other hand, need achievement can serve as a motivating factor for adolescents to overcome these barriers. Adolescents with a strong need for achievement may pursue creative outlets and develop their emotional intelligence to better navigate the challenges of their environment. It is this delicate balance between these factors that shapes the development of rural adolescents and their capacity to thrive in challenging circumstances.

In conclusion, the interplay between deprivation, need achievement, emotional intelligence, and creativity is a multifaceted issue that significantly affects the developmental trajectory of rural adolescents. While deprivation poses significant challenges, the innate drive for achievement and the potential for emotional and creative development offer pathways for resilience. This research aims to explore these dimensions in detail, providing a comprehensive understanding of how rural adolescents navigate these challenges and what can be done to foster their growth and well-being.

Review of Literature

Rutter, M.[15] (2006); Evans, G. W.[6] (2004) have extensively explored how various forms of deprivation—economic, social, and emotional—impact adolescent development. Rural adolescents, due to their limited access to resources and support, often face higher levels of stress, lower academic performance, and more emotional difficulties. Deprivation in these settings is linked to poorer mental health, lower self-esteem, and difficulties in forming relationships. The studies emphasize that the emotional and cognitive development of adolescents is particularly vulnerable in settings where economic hardship and social isolation are prevalent. McClelland[11] (1961) and Atkinson[2] (1957) developed the concept of "need achievement" which refers to an individual's drive to meet goals, succeed, and gain competence. Their work suggests that adolescents with a high need for achievement are more likely to seek out opportunities and perform well in academic settings. However, rural adolescents often face fewer opportunities and are thus at risk of their need for achievement being unmet. This lack of resources can demotivate them, potentially leading to feelings of inadequacy or failure. Salovey and Mayer[17] (1990) are pioneers in the field of emotional intelligence (EI), defining it as the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions. Goleman[8] (1995) later expanded this to argue that EI is a key determinant of success in life, often more so than IQ. Adolescents with higher EI can handle stress better, navigate social relationships, and exhibit greater resilience. However, rural adolescents may lack the social and emotional support systems necessary to develop these skills, resulting in challenges with emotion regulation, conflict resolution, and coping strategies. Runco[16] (2004) has explored how creativity contributes to adolescents' problem-solving and self-expression, noting that creative development is crucial during the formative years. Creativity is often fostered in environments that encourage exploration and risk-taking, yet rural settings may lack outlets such as arts programs, extracurricular activities, or intellectual stimulation. This lack of resources may hinder the development of creative skills, which are vital for academic achievement and self-esteem. Despite this, some rural adolescents display remarkable creativity in practical problem-solving due to their resourceful nature. McManus and Barbour[14] (2017) emphasized the unique developmental challenges faced by rural adolescents, including isolation from mainstream social and academic resources. Weller and Wood[20] (2014) explore how rurality affects both emotional and cognitive development. Rural adolescents may face lower access to mental health resources, fewer educational opportunities, and a lack of social outlets, all of which can delay or hinder the development of emotional intelligence and creativity. These limitations, however, may also breed a sense of independence, self-reliance, and resourcefulness, which can foster creativity in adversity. Research by Kim and Kim[9] (2010) and Ackerman and McPhee[1] (2018)

underscored the strong correlation between socioeconomic status (SES) and emotional regulation in adolescents. Adolescents from low-SES backgrounds—common in rural areas—often experience higher levels of emotional dysregulation, anxiety, and depression due to financial strain, family stress, and fewer opportunities for emotional development. This emotional insecurity can stunt the development of emotional intelligence, making it more difficult for adolescents to manage stress, relate to others, and navigate social interactions. Duncan and Brooks-Gunn[5] (1997) examined how educational deprivation impacts cognitive and emotional development. Rural adolescents often attend schools with fewer resources, less advanced curricula, and lower expectations. This educational deprivation can result in lower academic achievement and a lack of critical thinking skills. These deficits can limit opportunities for intellectual stimulation and creative problem-solving. In addition, educational deprivation contributes to poorer emotional well-being, as adolescents may feel disengaged or unsupported in their learning environments. Bronfenbrenner[3] (1979) and Werner[19] (1993) emphasized the importance of family and community support in shaping the emotional development of adolescents. In rural settings, where communities may be tight-knit, the availability of social networks can buffer against the negative effects of deprivation. However, if the family or community is unable to provide emotional support, adolescents may struggle with emotional regulation and face increased risks of mental health issues. The social capital in rural areas can play a pivotal role in either fostering or hindering emotional intelligence development. Csikszentmihalyi[4] (1996) and Fink & Neubauer[7] (2006) discussed how creativity can act as a coping mechanism for individuals facing adversity. In rural areas, where limited resources and opportunities may exist, adolescents often turn to creative expression as a way to process their emotions, cope with difficulties, and achieve personal fulfillment. Whether through artistic endeavors, problem-solving, or other creative outlets, creativity provides a means of self-expression that can buffer against the negative effects of deprivation. McFarland and Boudah[12] (2010) and Symonds[18] (2002) have highlighted the role that peer relationships play in the development of emotional intelligence. In rural settings, peer groups are often smaller, and social dynamics may be more insular. This can both help and hinder the development of EI, as adolescents may have stronger, more supportive relationships but also face greater pressure to conform to community norms. The close-knit nature of rural communities can enhance emotional intelligence if positive relationships are present, but it can also limit emotional expression if societal expectations are restrictive. Masten[13] (2001) and Luthar & Cicchetti[10] (2000) discussed how resilience helps adolescents overcome adversity and how emotional intelligence and creativity are integral to this process. Rural adolescents, despite facing deprivation and fewer resources, often develop resilience as a response to their circumstances. Resilience, in turn, is linked to higher emotional intelligence and greater creativity, as these adolescents learn to adapt to their environment and find innovative solutions to problems. The development of EI and creativity in these contexts is often driven by the necessity to cope with daily challenges and limited resources.

Objectives

i) to examine the association of deprivation and need for achievement with the growth of emotional intelligence.

ii) to examine the association of deprivation and need for achievement with verbal as well as non-verbal creativity.

Hypotheses

(1) There will be significant association of deprivation and need for achievement with emotional intelligence of the respondents.

(2) There will be significant association of deprivation and need for achievement with verbal as well as non-verbal creativity of the respondents.

Method of Study

Sample Used

The sample of the study consisted of 100 female adolescents of Patna selected using incidental cum purposive sample. The respondents were matched other than the research conditions (sex, SES, Inhabitation) of research so far as practicable.

Tools used

(i) A Personal Data Sheet prepared by the researcher was used to gather necessary information about the respondents.

(ii) Mangal's Emotional Intelligence Scale was used to measure emotional intelligence of the respondents.

(iii) Baker Mehdi's Verbal Test of Creativity was used for measuring the verbal creative ability of the respondents.

(iv) Mukherjee's Need Achievement Scale was used to measure need achievement of the respondents.

(v) Prolonged Deprivation Scale by Mishra and Tripathi was used to measure deprivation of the respondents.

Procedure

Scales along with PDS were employed on respondents and data were obtained. Thereafter, respondents were divided into high and low groups in respect of deprivation and need achievement on the basis of median cuts of the scores obtained on respective scales. Then, the selected respondents were subjected to emotional intelligence and creativity tests. The obtained data were analysed and treated using chi-square.

Results and Interpretations

Table 01: Chi-square showing association of prolonged deprivation and need for achievement with emotional intelligence

Variables	Groups	Emotional Intelligence		¡2	df	P
		High(%)	Low (%)			
	High	32%	68%			
Deprivation				15.42	1	<.01
	Low	59%	39%			
Need for	High	68%	38%			
Achievement				18.18	1	<.01
	Low	32%	62%			

The results displayed by table-01 clearly revealed that there is a significant association of prolonged deprivation as well as need for achievement with emotional intelligence. More than 59% of respondents of low deprived group and only 32% of high deprived group manifested high emotional intelligence. On the other hand more than 68% of high deprived group and only 39% of low deprived group manifested low emotional intelligence. The chi-square was found significant ($\chi^2 = 15.42$; df = 1; $p<.01$). Thus, hypothesis no. (1) is partly retained. Low deprived adolescents excel in emotional intelligence because they typically grow up in more supportive, resource-rich environments that foster emotional development. With access to stable family relationships, better education, and opportunities for social interaction, they learn to recognize, express, and manage emotions effectively. In contrast, highly deprived adolescents often face chronic stress, instability, and emotional neglect, which can hinder the development of emotional awareness, regulation, and interpersonal skills.

Further, it is clear that. More than 68% of respondents of high need for achievement group and only 32% of low need for achievement group manifested high emotional intelligence. On the other hand more than 62% of low need for achievement group and only 38% of high need for achievement group manifested low emotional intelligence. The chi-square was found significant (c2 = 18.18; df = 1; p<.01). Thus, hypothesis no. (1) is fully retained. Adolescents with a high need for achievement excel in emotional intelligence because their strong motivation to succeed drives them to regulate emotions, manage stress, and maintain focus on goals. They are often more self-aware, persistent, and socially competent—traits essential for high emotional intelligence. Their desire to perform well encourages them to understand both their own emotions and others', enabling better interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and emotional control in pursuit of success.

Table 02: Chi-square showing association of deprivation as well as need for achievement with verbal and non-verbal creative potential

		Creativity					
Variables	**Groups**	**Verbal**			**Non-Verbal**		
		High	**Low**	¡2	**High**	**Low**	¡2
Deprivation	High	32%	67%	24.75	32%	70%	29.17
	Low	68%	33%		68%	30%	
Need for Achievement	High	70%	33%	27.66	68%	32%	26.18
	Low	30%	67%		32%	68%	

It is clear from the observation of results table-02 that deprivation as well as need for achievement is significantly associated with both verbal as well non-verbal creativity. More than 68% of low deprived group and more than 68% of this group manifested high verbal as well as non-verbal creative potential. On the other hand 67% of high deprived group and 70% of this group were found having low verbal as well as non-verbal creative potential. The chi-square were found significant (verbal creativity (χ^2 = 24.75; df = 1; p<.01;) Non-verbal creative potential : (χ^2 = 29.17; df = 1; p<.01;). Thus hypothesis no. (2) is partly retained. Low-deprived adolescents excel in both verbal and non-verbal creativity because they typically have access to enriching environments, quality education, and stimulating resources that foster creative thinking. They are more likely to be exposed to books, art, technology, and diverse social interactions that enhance imaginative expression. In contrast, highly deprived adolescents often face constraints such as stress, limited exposure, and lack of encouragement, which can inhibit both verbal fluency and visual-spatial creativity.

Further, more than 70% of high need for achievement group and more than 68% of this group manifested high verbal as well as non-verbal creative potential. On the other hand 67% of low need for achievement group and again 68% of this group were found having low verbal as well as non-verbal creative potential. The chi-square were found significant (verbal creativity (c2 = 27.66; df = 1; p<.01;) Non-verbal creative potential : (c2 = 25.92; df = 1; p<.01;). Thus hypothesis no. (2) is fully retained. Adolescents with high need for achievement excel in both verbal and nonverbal creativity because their internal drive pushes them to think innovatively and explore multiple solutions to problems. They tend to be persistent, goal-oriented, and open to new ideas qualities that enhance divergent thinking, the foundation of creativity. In verbal tasks, they articulate original thoughts effectively, while in nonverbal tasks, they visualize and construct unique patterns or designs, reflecting their creative motivation to stand out and succeed.

Conclusions

(i) Low deprivation and high need for achievement both are conducive to high emotional intelligence.

(ii) Low deprivation and high need for achievement are conducive to higher growth and development of both verbal as well as non-verbal creativity.

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