



## ADOLESCENT EMOTIONAL HEALTH: A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT UNDER NEP 2020

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### ABSTRACT:

Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage characterized by rapid physiological, cognitive, and emotional changes. Emotional health during this period is essential for establishing identity, developing resilience, and ensuring overall psychological adjustment. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes holistic education by integrating emotional intelligence, mental well-being, and life skills development within the school system. This paper explores adolescent emotional health from a psychological perspective and connects it with the entrepreneurial and life-skill goals envisioned by NEP 2020. Through a review of theoretical and empirical studies, the paper highlights factors influencing adolescent emotional health, discusses the relevance of socio-emotional learning (SEL) in education, and outlines strategies to foster emotional intelligence, creativity, and self-efficacy among adolescents. The discussion demonstrates how emotional well-being nurtures the entrepreneurial mindset essential for innovation and responsible citizenship in the 21st century.

**Keywords:** *Adolescent, Emotional Health, Psychological Perspective, NEP 2020, Life Skills, Entrepreneurship.*

### INTRODUCTION :

Adolescence, typically defined as the age between 10 and 19 years, represents one of the most dynamic and formative stages of human development. It is a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood marked by rapid physical growth, identity formation, and emotional fluctuations. The emotional domain of adolescence is particularly sensitive, as individuals strive to balance self-awareness, autonomy, and social acceptance. Emotional health refers to a state of psychological well-being that enables an individual to manage emotions, adapt to stress, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. A psychologically healthy adolescent displays emotional stability, empathy, and resilience qualities that form the foundation for lifelong learning and success.

In the Indian context, adolescents face multiple psychosocial challenges such as parental pressure, academic competition, peer influence, digital exposure, and socio-cultural expectations. These challenges, if not managed

effectively, may lead to anxiety, low self-esteem, aggression, or depression. The prevalence of emotional disturbances among adolescents has become a growing concern for educators and mental health professionals. A strong emotional foundation is therefore vital not only for personal adjustment but also for fostering creativity, leadership, and an entrepreneurial spirit—traits essential for national development. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has redefined the aims of Indian education by promoting holistic development, critical thinking, and socio-emotional learning. It advocates an education system that integrates cognitive, emotional, and ethical development to prepare students for real-world challenges. NEP 2020 underscores the importance of emotional intelligence, self-awareness, communication, and adaptability skills that parallel the competencies required for entrepreneurship and innovation. Emotional health thus becomes the bridge between personal well-being and productive social participation.

This paper seeks to analyze the psychological foundations of adolescent emotional health, review empirical findings on its determinants, and connect them with the vision of NEP 2020 to promote life skills, socio-emotional competence, and entrepreneurial readiness among Indian youth.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To examine the psychological dimensions of emotional health among adolescents.
2. To review theoretical and empirical studies related to adolescent emotional well-being.
3. To explore the relevance of NEP 2020 in enhancing emotional and life-skill development.
4. To connect emotional health education with the cultivation of entrepreneurial mindsets in adolescents.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

**Erikson (1968)**, in his psychosocial theory, identified adolescence as the stage of *identity versus role confusion*, where individuals struggle to define their sense of self. Successful resolution of this stage leads to a stable identity and emotional maturity. His framework highlights that emotional health is central to achieving psychological balance and personal direction during adolescence.

**Goleman (1995)**, in his seminal work *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, emphasized that emotional intelligence (EI) comprising self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills is a key determinant of success. Adolescents with higher EI show better academic performance, stronger interpersonal relationships, and greater resilience against stress. Goleman's model provides a strong theoretical basis for integrating EI education in schools.

**Singh and Kaur (2018)** conducted a correlational study on 200 secondary school students in Punjab to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. The results indicated a positive

correlation between EI and scholastic success, suggesting that emotional competence enhances motivation, concentration, and peer cooperation.

**Patel, Saxena, and Lund (2018)**, through a meta-analysis published in *The Lancet Psychiatry*, reported that nearly 15% of adolescents in developing countries experience emotional and behavioral disorders. They attributed this to academic stress, socio-economic conditions, and limited access to mental health resources. The study emphasized school-based interventions to strengthen emotional resilience.

**Kaur and Sharma (2020)** studied 300 adolescents from Delhi and found that parental emotional support and open communication significantly improved adolescents' emotional control and self-esteem. The study concluded that the family climate plays a vital role in shaping adolescent emotional health.

**Sharma (2021)** investigated the effectiveness of life-skills education on emotional well-being among high school students in Maharashtra. Using a pre-test-post-test design, she found that emotional learning programs enhanced empathy, reduced aggression, and improved self-regulation. Her findings validate the NEP 2020 emphasis on life-skills training in education.

**Bhattacharya and Rao (2022)** examined the psychological impact of academic pressure in urban schools and found that prolonged stress and social comparison led to emotional exhaustion and disengagement. They recommended integrating counseling services and teacher training in emotional awareness.

**UNESCO (2022)**, in its global report *Learning for Emotional Well-being*, emphasized that emotional learning must be central to school education. It proposed that mindfulness, reflective practices, and empathy-based learning can significantly improve students' emotional stability and global competence.

**DISCUSSION:**

The reviewed literature reveals that emotional health during adolescence is influenced by personal, familial, and educational factors. The development of emotional intelligence, coping skills, and social awareness contributes significantly to adolescents' psychological adjustment. Integrating these competencies into the school curriculum aligns with NEP 2020's holistic education model.

NEP 2020 emphasizes the importance of **“learning to learn”** and developing **21st-century skills**, which include critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. These skills are underpinned by emotional stability and psychological resilience. An emotionally healthy adolescent is more capable of managing failure, taking calculated risks, and demonstrating leadership, all vital attributes for entrepreneurship.

The NEP's focus on **experiential learning, life skills education, and value-based learning** provides an opportunity to incorporate emotional education systematically. For instance, classroom activities like group projects, role plays, and peer mentoring help adolescents express emotions, resolve conflicts, and understand perspectives. Such experiences build self-confidence and initiative qualities that foster an entrepreneurial mindset.

Furthermore, emotional health contributes to **innovation and problem-solving**. Adolescents who can regulate emotions effectively are more likely to engage in creative thinking and decision-making. Emotional intelligence thus becomes a catalyst for developing self-driven, resilient, and socially responsible entrepreneurs echoing NEP 2020's vision of transforming learners into leaders.

**Educational Implications under NEP 2020**

**1. Integration of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL):** Schools should incorporate SEL

programs into the curriculum to teach empathy, self-regulation, and communication.

**2. Teacher Training:** Teachers must receive professional development in emotional literacy, counseling skills, and adolescent psychology.

**3. Parental Involvement:** Schools can organize workshops to educate parents on effective communication and emotional support.

**4. Counseling and Mentoring Units:** Establishing school-based mental health services can help early detection and management of emotional issues.

**5. Entrepreneurial Mindset Development:** Emotional health education fosters creativity, adaptability, and resilience—traits essential for entrepreneurship and innovation.

**6. Assessment Reforms:** Evaluations should include socio-emotional competencies and problem-solving abilities alongside academic performance.

**CONCLUSION:**

Adolescent emotional health is the cornerstone of holistic human development. Emotionally healthy adolescents demonstrate empathy, self-awareness, and adaptability qualities indispensable for academic success, social harmony, and economic progress. The National Education Policy 2020 provides a forward-looking framework to integrate emotional learning within mainstream education. By promoting life skills, mindfulness, and socio-emotional education, the policy bridges the gap between mental well-being and employability.

Emotional health is not merely a personal achievement but a social investment. When adolescents are emotionally balanced, they exhibit confidence, creativity, and leadership, key ingredients for entrepreneurial success. Thus, fostering adolescent emotional health is not just a psychological necessity but a national priority for developing capable, compassionate, and innovative citizens.

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