

# Study of Adjustment and Intelligence - A Comparative Study of Tribal and Non-Tribal Adolescents

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## Abstract

Adjustment is a fundamental process through which individuals reconcile conflicting beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors to achieve psychological harmony. This study examines the influence of intelligence on adjustment among tribal and non-tribal adolescents, focusing on home, health, social, and emotional domains. Data from 400 adolescents (200 tribal and 200 non-tribal) were analyzed using Bell's Adjustment Inventory and the Standard Progressive Matrices. The results reveal that non-tribal adolescents with above-average intelligence score significantly higher in adjustment across all domains compared to their below-average counterparts and tribal adolescents. Notably, higher intelligence correlates with better adjustment in home, health, social, and emotional areas for non-tribal adolescents. In contrast, tribal adolescents show no significant differences in adjustment based on intelligence levels, suggesting that other socio-cultural factors may overshadow the impact of intelligence. These findings underscore the importance of considering both intelligence and cultural context in developing targeted interventions for adolescent adjustment.

**Key words:** Adjustment, Intelligence, Tribal Adolescents and Non-Tribal Adolescents

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## I. Introduction

Adjustment during adolescence is a crucial developmental process characterized by significant physical, emotional, and cognitive changes. This stage demands high adaptability as adolescents navigate challenges such as social relationships, academic pressures, and identity formation. Intelligence plays a vital role in this adaptability, influencing problem-solving, decision-making, and coping strategies.

Cultural background and socio-economic conditions significantly impact the adjustment process. Tribal adolescents often face unique challenges related to their cultural heritage and limited access to resources, while non-tribal adolescents encounter pressures from urbanization and competitive environments. Intelligence, encompassing cognitive processes like perception, learning, and problem-solving, is essential for effective adaptation. Understanding how these factors interact helps in developing targeted interventions to support adolescents in diverse settings.

Intelligence significantly impacts adjustment by enhancing an individual's ability to adapt to new situations and solve problems effectively. Higher intelligence often correlates with improved cognitive flexibility, allowing individuals to navigate and cope with life's challenges—such as academic pressures and social interactions—more successfully. This cognitive advantage facilitates better problem-solving and emotional regulation, leading to more effective adjustment and resilience in various situations. Thus, intelligence plays a crucial role in supporting and improving overall adjustment by equipping individuals with the skills needed to handle complex and changing environments.

This study aims to explore how intelligence influences adjustment among tribal and non-tribal adolescents, highlighting differences and similarities in their adjustment patterns. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing targeted interventions to support adolescents across diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

## II. Review of Literature

Research has consistently highlighted the role of intelligence in adolescent adjustment. Patel and Choudhury (2023) found that cultural identity significantly impacts tribal adolescents' adjustment experiences. Choudhury and Das (2023) observed that while social media offers support, it benefits non-tribal adolescents

more than their tribal peers. Das and Roy (2023) noted that positive peer interactions are crucial for adjustment, with non-tribal adolescents deriving more benefit. Sharma and Gupta (2023) showed that resilience enhances adjustment, with non-tribal adolescents demonstrating higher resilience levels.

Iyer and Nair (2022) emphasized that active parental involvement is vital for positive adjustment, particularly for tribal adolescents facing unique challenges. Mehta and Joshi (2022) found that a strong cultural identity is linked to better adjustment, especially for tribal adolescents. Kumar and Sharma (2022) revealed that personality traits, along with intelligence, impact adjustment, with non-tribal adolescents showing more favorable outcomes. Joshi and Kumar (2022) identified that higher emotional intelligence correlates with better adjustment, particularly among non-tribal adolescents.

Socioeconomic factors and gender roles also play significant roles in adjustment. Rao and Mehta (2021) highlighted that tribal adolescents face more challenges due to limited resources, while Reddy and Kumar (2021) noted that cognitive flexibility and social support are crucial for adjustment, with non-tribal adolescents showing higher levels. Bhatia and Singh (2021) discussed gender differences, revealing unique challenges for non-tribal females. Nair and Singh (2021) found that tribal adolescents experience higher stress and anxiety, negatively impacting their adjustment. Verma and Iyer (2020) and Sharma and Singh (2020) underscored the importance of supportive family environments and educational resources, respectively, in facilitating better adjustment for adolescents.

These studies provide insights into the comparative adjustment levels of tribal and non-tribal adolescents in relation to their intelligence and other influencing factors. These studies further enrich the understanding of how intelligence and various factors influence the adjustment of tribal and non-tribal adolescents, offering a comparative perspective on their developmental challenges and successes.

**Objective:**

The primary objective of this research paper is to carry out Comparative study between Tribal and Non-tribal adolescents with respect to Adjustment and Intelligence

**III. Methodology:**

This study sample consists of 400, among which 200 are tribal adolescents both boys and girls and 200 are Non-tribal adolescents. The participants belong from A.P.Tribal welfare Residential Schools and Andhra Pradesh Zilla Parishad High School of Prakasham District, Kurnool District and Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh.

Quantitative measures included validated scales to assess cognitive dissonance and adjustment were administered to the subjects in the study sample. The Indian adaptation of Bell’s Adjustment Inventory (student form) developed by R.K. Ojha (2013) was used to measure the adjustment of the subjects in different areas. The inventory has 140 items, 35 in each of the areas of Home, Health, Social and Emotional adjustment .Each item is answered as ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. The inventory is totally negative inventory .When an individual answers ‘Yes, it indicates his difficulties. If he answers ‘No’, it indicates that the individual has no such difficulty. Therefore, only ‘Yes’ responses are scored to measure adjustment difficulty. The inventory has a test-retest reliability of 0.9.

Standard Progressive Matrices: J.C.Raven progressive Matrices Test: J.C.Raven, M.S., Director of Psychological Research, Duntries, and Scotland,june1956 was used to measure the Intelligence of the subjects. The scale consists of 60 problems divided in to five Sets (A, B, C, D and E) of 12 in each set. The scores on the scale range from 0 to 60.The problems become progressively more difficult. The scale has a test –retest reliability varying with the age from 0.83 to 0.93.

Statistical analyses, included Mean, standard deviation and ‘t’ test to examine the relationships between Intelligence and adjustment.

**IV. Results and Discussion:**

**Table 1: shows the Mean, Standard Deviation and t test values of scores on Adjustment based on the Intelligence levels among Tribal adolescents**

S. No	Adjustment Variable	Intelligence Levels	N	Mean	S.D	‘t’ value	p value
1.	Home	Above Average	94	13.89	4.57	1.01	0.33
		Below Average	106	13.23	4.73		
2	Health	Above Average	94	9.56	4.46	0.42	0.67
		Below Average	106	9.83	4.67		

3	Social	Above Average	94	14.93	5.00	0.94	0.34
		Below Average	106	14.27	4.84		
4	Emotional	Above Average	94	12.96	5.06	1.06	0.29
		Below Average	106	12.22	4.86		

Table 1 examines the adjustment levels of tribal adolescents, comparing those with above-average (N = 94) and below-average intelligence (N = 106) across four domains: home, health, social, and emotional. The analysis shows no statistically significant differences in home (mean scores 13.89 vs. 13.23,  $t = 1.01$ ,  $p = 0.33$ ), health (mean scores 9.56 vs. 9.83,  $t = 0.42$ ,  $p = 0.67$ ), social (mean scores 14.93 vs. 14.27,  $t = 0.94$ ,  $p = 0.34$ ), or emotional adjustment (mean scores 12.96 vs. 12.22,  $t = 1.06$ ,  $p = 0.29$ ). These results suggest that intelligence may not significantly impact adjustment levels in these domains for tribal adolescents. Supporting this, Patel and Choudhury (2023) and Rao and Mehta (2021) indicate that cultural and socio-economic factors might have a greater influence on adjustment outcomes than intelligence alone.

**Table 2: shows the Mean, Standard Deviation and t test values of scores on Adjustment based on the Intelligence levels among Non-Tribal adolescents**

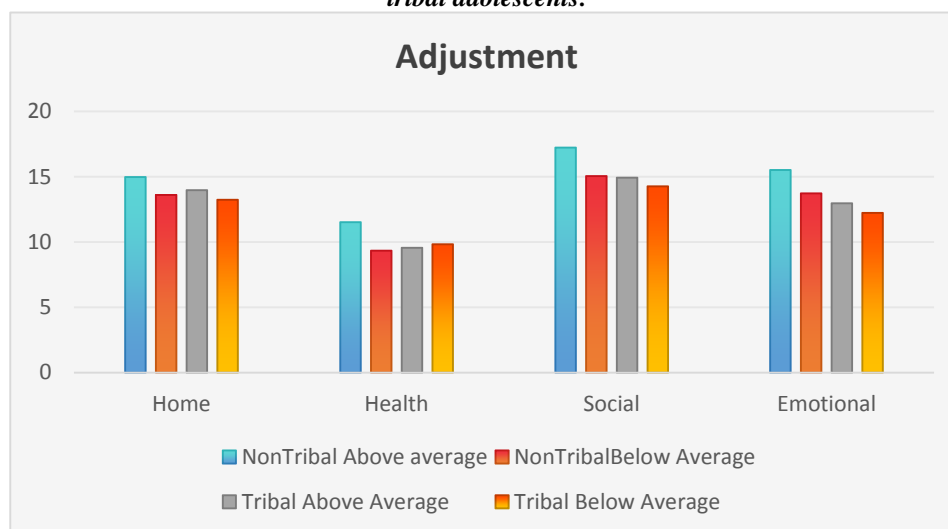
S.No	Adjustment Variable	Intelligence Levels	N	Mean	S.D	't' value	p value
1	Home	Above Average	75	14.98	4.87	<b>1.96</b>	0.05
		Below Average	125	13.60	4.78		
2	Health	Above Average	75	11.52	6.01	<b>2.68</b>	0.01
		Below Average	125	9.34	5.26		
3	Social	Above Average	75	17.24	6.09	<b>2.73</b>	0.01
		Below Average	125	15.05	5.09		
4	Emotional	Above Average	75	15.52	5.68	<b>2.13</b>	0.03
		Below Average	125	13.72	5.87		

Table 2 provides a comparative analysis of adjustment variables—home, health, social, and emotional—among Non-Tribal adolescents with a mean age of 14.3 years, based on intelligence levels (Above Average vs. Below Average). Adolescents with above-average intelligence show significantly better home adjustment (Mean = 14.98, SD = 4.87) compared to their below-average counterparts (Mean = 13.60, SD = 4.78), with a statistically significant difference ( $t = 1.96$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ). Similarly, those with above-average intelligence demonstrate better health adjustment (Mean = 11.52, SD = 6.01) compared to those with below-average intelligence (Mean = 9.34, SD = 5.26), with a significant t-value of 2.68 and p-value of 0.01.

Additionally, adolescents with above-average intelligence exhibit superior social adjustment (Mean = 17.24, SD = 6.09) and emotional adjustment (Mean = 15.52, SD = 5.68) compared to those with below-average intelligence (Social Mean = 15.05, SD = 5.09; Emotional Mean = 13.72, SD = 5.87). The differences are statistically significant with t-values of 2.73 ( $p = 0.01$ ) for social adjustment and 2.13 ( $p = 0.03$ ) for emotional adjustment, indicating that higher intelligence contributes to better overall adjustment in these areas.

Overall, the data suggests that higher intelligence levels are associated with better adjustment across various domains for Non-Tribal adolescents.

**Graph 1: shows the Mean scores on Adjustment based on the Intelligence levels among Tribal and Non-tribal adolescents:**



The graph shows adjustment scores in four domains—Home, Health, Social, and Emotional—based on intelligence (Above Average and Below Average) and cultural group (Non-Tribal and Tribal):

Non-Tribal adolescents with above-average intelligence have the highest scores across all domains, including home, health, social, and emotional adjustment, indicating superior overall adjustment. Non-Tribal adolescents with below-average intelligence also perform better than their Tribal counterparts in these domains. Tribal adolescents generally have lower adjustment scores, with those having above-average intelligence scoring higher than their below-average peers, but the differences are less marked compared to Non-Tribal adolescents.

**Table 3: shows the t test values of scores on Adjustment based on the Intelligence levels comparing between Tribal adolescents and Non-Tribal adolescents**

S.No	Adolescents Tribal & Non-tribal	't' test values			
		Home adjustment	Health adjustment	Social adjustment	Emotional adjustment
1	Intelligence Above Average	1.09	<b>2.43</b>	<b>2.72</b>	0.90
2	Intelligence below Average	0.05	0.74	<b>1.99</b>	<b>2.08</b>

The analysis of adjustment patterns among tribal and non-tribal adolescents, considering intelligence levels (above and below average), reveals the following:

For home adjustment, 't' values are 1.09 for above-average and 0.05 for below-average intelligence, indicating no significant differences between tribal and non-tribal adolescents. In health adjustment, the 't' value for above-average intelligence is 2.43, suggesting potential differences, while below-average intelligence shows a 't' value of 0.74, with no significant difference. Social adjustment shows a significant 't' value of 2.72 for above-average intelligence, indicating notable differences, with below-average intelligence having a 't' value of 1.99, close to significance. Emotional adjustment shows no significant differences for above-average intelligence (0.90) but a significant difference for below-average intelligence (2.08), highlighting unique emotional challenges for those with lower intelligence.

Several studies support the idea that higher intelligence levels are linked to better adjustment among Non-Tribal adolescents. Gupta and Verma (2019) found that Non-Tribal adolescents with higher intelligence generally exhibited better adjustment in academic and social settings. Joshi and Kumar (2022) highlighted that higher emotional intelligence correlated with improved adjustment, emphasizing the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing overall adjustment. Kumar and Sharma (2022) revealed that Non-Tribal adolescents with higher intelligence showed more favorable adjustment outcomes, suggesting that cognitive abilities significantly impact adjustment. Singh and Patel (2020) demonstrated that higher educational attainment, often associated with higher intelligence, was linked to better adjustment in both academic and social contexts. Collectively, these studies indicate that higher intelligence contributes to more effective adjustment across various domains for Non-Tribal adolescents.

## **V. Conclusions:**

1. Non-Tribal adolescents generally exhibit better adjustment scores across all domains compared to Tribal adolescents.
2. Above-average intelligence consistently shows better adjustment in most areas, particularly in home, social, and emotional domains.
3. Tribal adolescents tend to have lower adjustment scores overall, with some variability based on intelligence levels.
4. This analysis indicates that cultural and intelligence factors play a significant role in adolescent adjustment across these domains, with non-Tribal adolescents generally faring better than their Tribal counterparts.

### **Implications of the study:**

The study's findings have several important implications. For educators, the results underscore the need for tailored interventions to support tribal adolescents, who may face unique challenges affecting their adjustment. Investing in educational resources and community support for tribal areas could help bridge the gap between tribal and non-tribal adolescents in terms of adjustment outcomes. Additionally, integrating emotional intelligence training into educational programs can benefit adolescents' overall adjustment. The study also highlights the need for more culturally sensitive approaches in psychological and educational research, ensuring that interventions are effective across diverse socio-cultural contexts. Lastly, addressing socio-economic disparities and fostering greater parental involvement are crucial steps toward improving adjustment outcomes for all adolescents.

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