



Unveiling the Relationship of Parental Acceptance-Rejection with Emotional Intelligence Among tribal and non-tribal Adolescents of Jharkhand: Ethnicity as a Moderator

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine emotional intelligence (EI) among tribal and non-tribal adolescents of Jharkhand and to explore its relationship with parenting styles. Specifically, the study assessed the level of EI among tribal and non-tribal adolescents, examined differences in EI with respect to varying levels of parental acceptance and rejection (PAR), investigated the association between the dimensions of PAR and EI, along with its components, and analyzed the moderating role of ethnicity in the relationship between parental scores and EI. The sample consisted of 480 adolescents selected through a mixed sampling procedure involving purposive, random and stratified sampling techniques. Data were collected using the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire to measure perceived parenting style and an Emotional Intelligence Scale to assess the level of EI. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. The findings revealed significant differences in EI between tribal and non-tribal adolescents as well as across groups characterized by varying levels of PAR. Among the dimensions of PAR, warmth/affection showed a positive association with EI, whereas aggression, neglect, and rejection were negatively associated with EI and its dimensions. Furthermore, ethnicity was found to positively moderate the relationship between parental scores and EI among adolescents belonging to the highly accepted parental group.



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Introduction

The concept of adolescence gained prominence during the 1890s when psychologists began examining developmental abilities, behavioural

patterns, and psychological characteristics of individuals. The term adolescence is derived from the Latin word *adolescere*, meaning "to enter into adulthood" (Kaur & Kaur, 2020). Adolescence,

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generally spanning the ages of 12–18 years, is a critical developmental stage marked by rapid physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes that significantly influence psychological adjustment and interpersonal functioning (Uktamovna, 2025). During this period, adolescents gradually develop emotional competencies that help them understand, regulate, and express emotions effectively in different social contexts. A key construct associated with healthy emotional development is EI. EI refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions effectively in oneself and others (Busu, 2020). In essence, EI can be described as the meta-ability to comprehend and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others (Amandeep, 2017). Individuals who can effectively regulate their emotions are psychologically healthier, as they can accurately perceive and evaluate their emotional states and respond appropriately in various situations (Salovey *et al.*, 1999).

The development of EI is strongly influenced by the family environment, particularly parenting practices (Mousavi & Juhari, 2019). Parents play a vital role in shaping children's emotional understanding through daily interactions, emotional communication, and by modelling effective emotional regulation strategies. For decades, researchers have been interested in family dynamics and their significant impact on children's physical and psychological development. The family, often considered the child's first school, provides the foundation for growth and social learning, with parents guiding children to become emotionally competent and socially responsible individuals. Diana Baumrind (1967) pioneered the conceptualization of parenting styles and identified three major types: (1) Authoritative parenting style, (2) Authoritarian parenting style, and (3) Permissive parenting style.

Parenting style can also be conceptualized through two fundamental components—parental acceptance and parental rejection—which reflect the degree of warmth, affection, or hostility expressed by parents toward their children. Parental acceptance is demonstrated through affectionate behaviors such as hugging, kissing, fondling, and through verbal expressions like appreciation, compliments, and kind words. In contrast, parental rejection is characterized by hostility, aggression, anger,

neglect, or indifference. The Parental Acceptance–Rejection Theory (PAR Theory), proposed by Ronald P. Rohner, explains how parental behaviors influence the behavioral, cognitive, and emotional development of children and adult functioning (Hussain & Munaf, 2012).

Recent empirical studies have emphasized the significant role of PAR in shaping adolescents' emotional and psychological development. For instance, research examining adolescents' perceptions of PAR has found that parental criticism and rejection are associated with emotional instability (Mendo-Lázaro *et al.*, 2019). Goldman emphasized that when parents share a warm and supportive bond with their children, it fosters an environment that promotes better emotional regulation and healthy emotional development in children (Mehta, 1995).

Recent studies have further supported the relationship between parenting behaviour and EI. For instance, a study by Yadav *et al.* (2021) reported that perceived parenting styles and parental responsiveness were significantly associated with adolescents' EI and psychological well-being. Similarly, research has indicated that perceived parental acceptance is a significant predictor of EI among adolescents, suggesting that adolescents who perceive greater parental warmth tend to demonstrate higher emotional competencies (Hafeez & Habibi, 2021). In addition, studies have shown that parenting styles influence adolescents' emotional and social development by shaping emotion regulation and interpersonal skills, which are important components of EI (Zheng, 2025). Further evidence suggests that supportive parenting practices, such as autonomy, support, positively contribute to adolescents' trait EI, whereas psychological control negatively affects emotional development (Costa *et al.* 2018).

Furthermore, contemporary research indicates that parental rejection may significantly affect adolescents' mental health and overall quality of life. For example, a recent study found that parental rejection moderates the relationship between parental stress, anxiety, and adolescents' mental health outcomes, highlighting the importance of positive parenting practices for adolescents' emotional development (Sofrona & Giannakopoulos, 2024). These findings reinforce the idea that

adolescents' perceptions of parental warmth and rejection play a crucial role in shaping their emotional adjustment and psychological functioning.

In multicultural societies such as India, parenting practices and emotional development are often shaped by cultural traditions, social structures, and community values (Raj & Raval, 2013). Tribal communities in India represent unique socio-cultural contexts in which traditional customs, collective living patterns, and community-based socialization play an important role in child development. The state of Jharkhand in eastern India has a substantial tribal population consisting of several indigenous communities such as the Munda, Oraon, Santhal, and Ho tribes (Ramkrishnan, 2023). These communities maintain distinct cultural identities, social institutions, and traditional practices that influence family relationships and parenting patterns.

Among the tribal communities of Jharkhand, the Munda and Oraon tribes constitute two of the largest groups in the Chotanagpur region. These societies traditionally emphasize collective living, strong kinship bonds, and community-based socialization practices. The Munda tribe, one of the major tribes of Jharkhand and the third largest in terms of population in the Chotanagpur region, belongs to the Proto-Australoid race and speaks the Mundari dialect of the Austro-Asiatic language family (Srivastava, 2007). In contrast, the Oraon tribe primarily practices agriculture and is mainly found in Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand, and West Bengal (Mittal & Srivastava, 2006). The Oraons traditionally follow the Sarna religion and are often referred to as Kurukh in the Chotanagpur region, and they speak a Dravidian language (Purkayastha, 2018).

Despite the cultural richness of tribal societies, psychological research focusing on the emotional development of tribal adolescents remains limited. Most studies on EI and parenting have primarily focused on urban or non-tribal populations, leaving a significant gap in understanding the relationship between PAR and EI in tribal contexts. Considering that parenting styles and emotional socialization may vary across cultural groups, examining these relationships within tribal communities becomes particularly important.

Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between PAR and EI among adolescents belonging to tribal and non-tribal communities of Jharkhand, with special reference to the Munda and Oraon tribes. Understanding how adolescents perceive parental warmth or rejection and how these perceptions influence their emotional competencies may provide valuable insights into the socio-emotional development of tribal youth and contribute to culturally sensitive psychological interventions.

Objectives

- To compare the level of EI among tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand.
- To compare the level of EI among Munda and Oraon boys and girls of Jharkhand.
- To compare the level of EI among tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand in the context of parenting style (highly accepted parental group, moderately rejected parental group and highly rejected parental group).
- To examine the association between dimensions of PAR with EI and its dimensions among tribal and non-tribal adolescents of Jharkhand
- To see the moderating role of ethnicity between the parental nature and EI

Hypotheses

H1⁽¹⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI with reference to gender among tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand.

H1⁽²⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI with reference to ethnicity among tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand.

H2⁽¹⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI with reference to gender among Munda and Oraon boys and girls of Jharkhand.

H2⁽²⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI with reference to the tribal community among Munda and Oraon boys and girls of Jharkhand.

H3⁽¹⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI between tribal and non-tribal boys and

girls of Jharkhand with reference to gender among highly accepted parental groups.

H3⁽²⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI between tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand with reference to ethnicity among highly accepted parental groups.

H4⁽¹⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI between tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand with reference to gender among moderately rejected parental groups.

H4⁽²⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI between tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand with reference to ethnicity among moderately rejected parental groups.

H5⁽¹⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI between tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand with reference to gender among highly rejected parental groups.

H5⁽²⁾: There would be no significant difference in the levels of EI between tribal and non-tribal boys and girls of Jharkhand with reference to ethnicity among highly rejected parental groups.

H6⁽¹⁾: The dimensions of PAR would not be significantly associated with EI among tribal adolescents.

H6⁽²⁾: The dimensions of PAR would not be significantly associated with EI among non-tribal adolescents.

H7⁽¹⁾: There would be no significant impact of dimensions of PAR on EI among tribal adolescents of Jharkhand.

H7⁽²⁾: There would be no significant impact of dimensions of PAR on EI among non-tribal adolescents of Jharkhand.

H8⁽¹⁾: Ethnicity would not significantly moderate the relationship between the scores of parenting style and EI among highly accepted parental group.

H8⁽²⁾: Ethnicity would not significantly moderate the relationship between the scores of parenting

style and EI among the moderately rejected parental group

H8⁽³⁾: Ethnicity would not significantly moderate the relationship between the scores of parenting style and EI among highly rejected parental groups.

Materials & Methods

Research Design

The research employs a cross-sectional, correlational and comparative research design.

Sample and Sampling Technique

In the present study, the sample size was estimated using the guidelines proposed by Israel (1992). Considering a $\pm 7\%$ margin of error, the application of Israel's (1992) formula yielded a minimum required sample size of 204 participants, which served as the baseline estimate for the study.

To enhance statistical power and compensate for potential non-response, incomplete data, or attrition during the data collection process, the researcher planned a larger sample size of 550 participants. During data collection, complete and usable responses were obtained from 480 adolescents. The final sample consisted of 480 school-going adolescents aged between 13 and 17 years from Ranchi and Ramgarh districts of Jharkhand. The sample included an equal number of tribal ($N = 240$, $M = 14.84$ years, $SD = 1.241$) and non-tribal adolescents ($N = 240$, $M = 14.51$ years, $SD = 1.220$). Within the tribal group, an equal number of participants belonged to the Munda ($N = 120$, $M = 14.87$, $SD = 1.273$) and Oraon ($N = 120$, $M = 14.81$, $SD = 1.213$) communities. The study also ensured equal representation of boys and girls from both urban and rural areas.

The study employed a multistage mixed sampling technique that combined purposive, simple random, and stratified sampling methods to ensure adequate representation of tribal and non-tribal adolescents from selected regions of Jharkhand. In the first stage, two districts—Ranchi and Ramgarh—were purposively selected from the 24 districts of Jharkhand. The state is characterized by a diverse tribal population with distinct socio-cultural traditions and developmental contexts. To capture this diversity while maintaining feasibility, two major

tribal communities of the state, namely the Munda and Oraon tribes, were selected for the present study. Ranchi and Ramgarh districts were chosen because they have a substantial population of these tribal groups as well as a considerable non-tribal population, thereby providing an appropriate setting for comparative analysis. Furthermore, these districts offer adequate accessibility to educational institutions, which facilitated systematic data collection from adolescent participants.

In the second stage, simple random sampling was employed to select administrative blocks from the chosen districts. Out of the 18 blocks in Ranchi district, 9 blocks were randomly selected, while 3 blocks were randomly selected from the 6 blocks of Ramgarh district. In the third stage, schools located in both urban and rural areas within the selected blocks were chosen through simple random sampling to ensure representation of adolescents from diverse localities.

In the fourth stage, stratification was carried out on the basis of ethnicity (tribal and non-tribal), tribal community (Munda and Oraon), gender (boys and girls), and locality (urban and rural). Participants were then selected from these strata in such a way that equal numbers of tribal and non-tribal adolescents, as well as equal numbers of boys and girls from both urban and rural areas, were included in the sample. Within the tribal group, adolescents belonging to the Munda and Oraon communities were selected in equal proportions.

Stratified random sampling also reduces selection bias and improves the generalizability of research findings by preventing the overrepresentation or underrepresentation of any specific subgroup. Moreover, under conditions of limited resources, stratified sampling enhances the precision of subgroup estimates and improves the overall accuracy and reliability of the results (Singh, 2015; Sadaiyandi *et al.*, 2023)

Tools and Measures Used

Parental Acceptance - Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ Hindi version) (Imam & Singh, 2019)

The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) is a self-report tool designed to assess individuals' perceptions of parental acceptance or rejection experienced between ages 7 and 12. It is

a Hindi adaptation of Rohner's PARQ by Prakash and Bhargava (1980) and contains 60 items, with 7 negatively scored items (7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 42, 49). Responses are rated on a 4-point Likert scale from *Almost always true* (4) to *Almost never true* (1), with reverse scoring for negative items. Total scores range from 60–240, classified as: 60–129 (highly accepted parenting), 130–150 (moderately rejected parenting), and 151–240 (highly rejected parenting). Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to calculate reliability. PARQ reliability coefficient for the adult version range from .86 to .95. Also, the reliability coefficient for the present study for the non-tribal population was .754 while for tribal adolescents was .833.

Emotional Intelligence Scale (Rani & Shukla, 2021)

This tool was developed by Dr Arun Kumar Singh and Dr Shruti Narain in 2014. It consists of 31 items divided into four areas- 1. Understanding emotion 2. Understanding motivation 3. Empathy 4. Handling relations. This scale can be administered on 12 years & above. Out of 31 items, 4 items (i.e., 13, 17, 20, 21) are negative items. For each item subject had to respond in Yes or No categories. For positive items, a +1 score will be given for a Yes response and 0 for a No response and vice versa. The reliability coefficient of the scale was .086. Also, the reliability coefficient for the present study for the non-tribal population was .650 while for tribal adolescents was .603.

Procedure

To carry out the present study, ethical clearance was obtained from the Departmental Research and Degree Committee (DRDC) of the concerned department. Then, various schools located in different regions of the Ranchi and Ramgarh districts were visited. The purpose and procedure of data collection of the study were explained to the school administration. After seeking permission from the school administration, two scales, namely the Parental Acceptance-Rejection questionnaire and the Emotional Intelligence Scale, were administered on the samples. The proper rapport was built with the participants, and informed consent was taken. The subjects were informed about voluntary participation and the objective, time required for data collection, usage of the data, data integrity and data confidentiality. The data were collected following APA guidelines (APA, 2016).

Results

The data were analysed using SPSS v.27 through various statistical techniques. A 2×2 ANOVA was conducted to test differences in EI between tribal and non-tribal adolescents, as well as across highly accepted, moderately rejected, and highly

rejected parental groups. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine associations between the dimensions of PAR and EI. Additionally, the PROCESS Macro in SPSS was applied to test whether ethnicity moderated these relationships.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for EI by gender and ethnicity**Varia-bles Ethnicity**

Gender	Non-Tribal			Tribal			ANOVA			
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Effect	F-ratio	df	Partial η^2
Emotional Intelligence										
Boys	20.03	3.69	120	18.97	4.09	120	Gender	1.988	1,476	.008
Girls	19.68	3.65	120	17.92	3.98	120	Ethnicity	16.048*	1,476	.033
Total	19.85	3.67	240	18.44	4.06	240	Gender* Ethnicity	.962	1,476	.002

p* < .001

The table 1 presents descriptive statistics and ANOVA results assessing the effects of gender and ethnicity on EI among adolescents. For emotional intelligence, the main effect of ethnicity was statistically significant, $F(1,476) = 16.05$, $p = .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .033$, indicating that non-tribal adolescents ($M = 19.85$, $SD = 3.67$) scored higher

than their tribal counterparts ($M = 18.44$, $SD = 4.06$). However, the effects of gender, $F(1,476) = 1.99$, $p = .096$, Partial $\eta^2 = .008$, and the gender $\times$ ethnicity interaction, $F(1,476) = 0.96$, $p = .327$, Partial $\eta^2 = .002$, were not significant. The hy-pothesis H1 (1) was accepted but the hypothesis H1 (2) was rejected.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for EI by gender and tribal community**Varia-bles Tribal Community**

Gender	Munda			Oraon			ANOVA			
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Effect	F-ratio	df	Partial η^2
Emotional Intelligence										
Boys	18.38	4.47	60	19.55	3.624	60	Gender	1.03	1,236	.017
Girls	18.63	4.13	60	17.23	3.748	60	Tribal Community	.05	1,236	.000
Total	18.50	4.29	120	18.38	3.852	120	Gender* Tribal Community	6.14*	1,236	.025

p* $\leq .05$

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and two-way ANOVA results for EI with respect to gender and tribal community among adolescents belonging to the Munda and Oraon tribes. The overall mean scores indicate that the level of EI among Munda

adolescents ($M = 18.50$, $SD = 4.29$) and Oraon adolescents ($M = 18.38$, $SD = 3.852$) was almost similar. The two-way ANOVA results reveal that the main effect of gender on EI was not statistically significant ($F = 1.028$, $df = 1,236$, $p > .05$, Partial η^2

= .017). Similarly, the main effect of tribal community was also not significant ($F = .050$, $df = 1,236$, $p > .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .000$). However, the interaction effect between gender and tribal community was found to be statistically significant ($F = 6.142$, $df = 1,236$, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .025$). The hypotheses H2 (1) and H2 (2) were accepted.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics and ANOVA for EI by ethnicity and gender among the highly accepted parental group, the moderately rejected group and the highly rejected parental group

Gender	Non-Tribal		Tribal		ANOVA					
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Effect	F-ratio	df	Par-tial η^2
Highly Accepted Parental Group										
Boys	21.50	2.876	12	17.80	4.395	15	Gender	.026	1,64	.000
Girls	20.82	3.581	22	18.79	4.131	19	Ethnicity	9.027*	1,64	.124
Total	21.06	3.321	34	18.35	4.213	34	Gender* Ethnicity	.768	1,64	.012
Moderately Rejected Parental Group										
Boys	20.23	3.638	77	19.87	4.102	52	Gender	2.943	1,239	.012
Girls	20.03	3.784	64	18.32	4.264	50	Ethnicity	4.167**	1,239	.017
Total	20.14	3.693	141	19.11	4.233	102	Gender* Ethnicity	1.737	1,239	.007
Highly Rejected Parental Group										
Boys	18.97	3.928	31	18.43	3.864	54	Gender	2.772	1,165	.017
Girls	18.26	3.078	34	17.20	3.625	50	Ethnicity	1.923	1,165	.012
Total	18.60	3.499	65	17.84	3.783	104	Gender* Ethnicity	.204	1,165	.001

$p^* < .01$, $p^{**} < .05$

The table 3 provides descriptive statistics and two-way ANOVA results assessing the effects of gender and ethnicity on EI across three parental behavior groups: highly accepted, moderately rejected, and highly rejected.

The analysis of EI across parental acceptance–rejection groups revealed distinct effects of ethnicity and gender. In the highly accepted parental group, ethnicity had a significant main effect, $F(1,64) = 9.03$, $p = .004$, Partial $\eta^2 = .124$, with non-tribal adolescents ($M = 21.06$, $SD = 3.32$) scoring higher than tribal adolescents ($M = 18.35$, $SD = 4.21$). Gender ($F(1,64) = 0.03$, $p = .872$) and the gender $\times$ ethnicity interaction ($F(1,64) = 0.77$, $p = .384$) were non-significant. Thus, H3 (1) was accepted, while H3 (2) was rejected.

In the moderately rejected parental group, ethnicity remained a significant predictor, though with a smaller effect, $F(1,239) = 4.17$, $p = .042$, Partial $\eta^2 = .017$; non-tribal adolescents ($M = 20.14$, $SD = 3.69$) again scored higher than tribal adolescents ($M = 19.11$, $SD = 4.23$). Gender ($F(1,239) = 2.94$, $p = .088$) and the interaction ($F(1,239) = 1.74$, $p = .189$) were not significant, leading to acceptance of H4 (1) and rejection of H4 (2).

In the highly rejected parental group, none of the effects were significant. Gender ($F(1,165) = 2.77$, $p = .098$), ethnicity ($F(1,165) = 1.92$, $p = .167$), and the interaction ($F(1,165) = 0.20$, $p = .652$) were all non-significant, resulting in acceptance of both H5 (1) and H5 (2).

Table 4: Correlation coefficients between dimensions of PAR with EI and its dimensions among tribal and non-tribal adolescents

	EI		Under-standing Emotion		Understanding Motivations		Empathy Handling Relations			
	Tribal	Non-Tribal	Tribal	Non-Tribal	Tribal	Non-Tribal	Tribal	Non-Tribal	Tribal	Non-Tribal
Warmth/Affection	.344**	.334**	.005	.089	.256**	.240**	.319**	.286**	.278**	.203**
Aggres-sion/Hostility	-.098	-.243**	-.085	-.073	-.103	-.184**	-.215**	-.158*	-.020	-.182**
Ne-glect/Indifference	-.285**	-.370**	-.055	-.109	-.250**	-.275**	-.366**	-.269**	-.127*	-.256**
Rejection/Undifferentiated	-.050	-.279**	-.060	-.043	-.040	-.185**	-.152*	-.249**	-.031	-.194**

p**≤.01, p*≤.05

Note: Since ethnicity significantly affected the level of EI among tribal and non-tribal adolescents, the correlational and regression analyses were done separately.

The table 4 presents the correlation coefficients between various dimensions of parenting styles and dimensions of EI among tribal adolescents. Warmth/affection showed positive and significant correlations with overall EI ($r = .344^{**}$) and most sub-dimensions,

including empathy ($r = .319^{**}$) and handling relations ($r = .278^{**}$). In contrast, neglect/indifference had significant negative correlations with EI ($r = -.285^{**}$), empathy ($r = -.366^{**}$), and handling relations ($r = -.127^{*}$). Aggression/hostility and rejection/undifferentiated showed weaker and mostly non-significant negative associations, with only a few significant links, such as between aggression and empathy ($r = -.215^{**}$) and rejection and empathy ($r = -.152^{*}$). The hypothesis H6(1) was rejected.

Table 5: Hierarchical regression analysis with socio-demographic variables and dimensions of PAR as predictors and EI as criterion among tribal and non-tribal adolescents

	Tribals		Non-tribals					
	B	SE	β	T	B	SE	β	t
Constant	16.14	4.43		3.64	18.35	4.34		4.23
Age	.05	.19	.02	.24	.09	.19	.03	.49
Gender	1.00	.48	.12	2.06	.29	.44	.04	.67
Locale	1.15	.50	.14	2.29	.21	.46	.03	.45
Most time spent with	.50	.29	.18	1.73	.13	.33	.02	.39
Nature of family	.12	.53	.01	.22	.38	.46	.05	.82
Income	.55	.62	.06	.89	.54	.52	.06	1.03
Warmth	.11	.03	.24*	3.30	.01	.04	.21**	2.84
Aggression	-.01	.05	-.03	-.28	-.02	.04	-.04	-.43
Neglect	-.14	.06	-.22***	-2.28	-.10	.05	-.18***	-2.05
Rejection	-.10	.07	-.14	-1.49	-.10	.07	-.14	-1.50
R2			.19				.18	
R2 Change			.13				.16	
Adjusted R2			.17				.15	
F			9.19*				11.07*	

p* < .001, p** < .01, p*** < .05

The table 4 also presents the correlation coefficients between different dimensions of parenting styles and EI among non-tribal adolescents. The correlation analysis among non-tribal adolescents showed that warmth/affection had significant positive relationships with overall EI ($r = .334^{**}$) and key dimensions like empathy ($r = .286^{**}$) and motivation ($r = .240^{**}$). In contrast, negative parenting styles—aggression/hostility, neglect/indifference, and rejection/undifferentiated—showed significant negative correlations with EI and its sub-dimensions. Neglect/indifference had the strongest negative association with overall EI ($r = -.370^{**}$), followed by rejection ($r = -.279^{**}$) and aggression ($r = -.243^{**}$). The hypothesis $H6_{(2)}$ was rejected.

The table 5 examined the predictive role of PAR dimensions on EI among tribal and non-tribal adolescents using hierarchical regression analysis. For tribal adolescents, Step 1, including socio-demographic variables, was significant ($F(6, 233) = 2.949, p = .009$), explaining 7.1% of the variance

(adjusted $R^2 = .047$), with gender ($B = 1.133, p = .029$) and most time spent with ($B = 0.832, p = .008$) emerging as significant positive predictors. Step 2 added parental dimensions, significantly improving the model ($F(10, 229) = 9.194, p < .001$), increasing R^2 to .199 (adjusted $R^2 = .164$). Warmth positively predicted emotional intelligence ($B = 0.117, \beta = .239, p = .001$), while Neglect was a negative predictor ($B = -0.135, \beta = -.224, p = .023$), leading to the rejection of $H7(1)$.

For non-tribal adolescents, Step 1 with socio-demographics was not significant ($F(6, 233) = 0.874, p = .515, R^2 = .022$), with none of the predictors significant, though income approached significance ($p = .087$). In Step 2, adding parental dimensions significantly improved prediction ($F(4, 229) = 11.074, p < .001$), with R^2 increasing to .181 ($\Delta R^2 = .159$). Parental Warmth was a significant positive predictor ($B = 0.099, \beta = .208, p = .005$), and Neglect was negatively associated with EI ($B = -0.101, \beta = -.182, p = .042$), leading to the rejection of $H7(2)$.

Table 6: Moderation analysis using parental score as predictor, EI as criterion and ethnicity as a moderator among the highly accepted parental group, moderately rejected parental group and highly rejected parental group

Variables	B	SE	T	P	R2	F	R2 Change	F Change	Sig. of F Change
Highly Accepted Parental Group									
Parental Score	.142	.09	1.47	.14					
Emotional Intelligence	-2.61	.88	-2.95	.004					
Interaction	.42	.19	2.22	.029	.211	5.72	.06	4.94	.029
Moderately Rejected Parental Group									
Parental Score	-.045	.043	-1.03	.302					
Emotional Intelligence	-1.01	.510	-1.99	.046					
Interaction	.117	.088	1.32	.187	.028	2.33	.0071	1.75	.187
Highly Rejected Parental Group									
Parental Score	.054	.024	2.254	.025					
Emotional Intelligence	-.832	.576	-1.44	.150					
Interaction	.028	.050	.569	.569	.043	2.46	.0019	.324	.569

The moderation analysis in Table 6 examined whether ethnicity moderates the relationship between parenting style and EI across different PAR groups. In the highly accepted parental group, a significant interaction was found between parental score and ethnicity ($B = 0.4284$, $p = .0298$), indicating that the effect of parental acceptance on EI depends on ethnic background. The model explained 21.16% of the variance ($R^2 = .2116$), and the interaction accounted for a significant R^2 change (.0609), leading to the rejection of H8 (1).

In the moderately rejected parental group, parental score did not significantly predict EI ($B = -0.0450$, $p = .3026$), while ethnicity had a significant main effect ($B = -1.0194$, $p = .0469$). The interaction term was non-significant ($B = 0.1173$, $p = .1870$), and the model explained only 2.84% of the variance ($R^2 = .0284$), resulting in the acceptance of H8 (2).

In the highly rejected parental group, parental score had a small but significantly positive effect on EI ($B = 0.0544$, $p = .0255$). Ethnicity ($B = -0.8322$, $p = .1508$) and the interaction term ($B = 0.0288$, $p = .5698$) were non-significant. The model accounted for 4.3% of variance ($R^2 = .0430$), with negligible contribution from the interaction, leading to the acceptance of H8 (3).

Discussion

The finding that non-tribal adolescents scored higher on EI than tribal adolescents may be interpreted in the light of differences in socio-educational exposure and developmental opportunities. EI is shaped by interactions within family, school, and broader social environments, and adolescents who are exposed to diverse social interactions and emotionally supportive learning environments tend to develop stronger emotional competencies. Research suggests that environmental stimulation, educational opportunities, and interpersonal experiences significantly contribute to the development of EI during adolescence (MacCann *et al.*, 2020). Similarly, the ability model of EI proposes that emotional abilities such as emotional perception, understanding, and regulation develop through continuous interaction with social environments and learning experiences (Mayer *et al.*, 2016). Non-tribal adolescents may therefore benefit from comparatively greater access to educational resources and emotionally stimulating social environments, which

may facilitate the development of emotional awareness, empathy, and emotion regulation skills.

Despite the significant difference between tribal and non-tribal adolescents, the findings indicated that Munda and Oraon adolescents did not differ significantly in their EI levels. This result may be explained by the cultural and social similarities shared by these two tribal communities within the Chotanagpur region of Jharkhand. Both tribes are characterized by collectivistic cultural traditions, strong kinship bonds, and community-oriented lifestyles that shape similar patterns of socialization and interpersonal interaction. Cross-cultural research in developmental psychology indicates that basic socioemotional skills such as EI, optimism and social maturity are strongly influenced by proximal environments such as parenting, school environment, daily emotional affordances and others rather than more distal environments. Studies conducted by Gruijters, *et al.* (2024) in his study stated that differences in socioeconomic status accounted for much of the variations in socioemotional skill, and when controlled for SES, many differences either neutralise or shrink.

Another important finding of the study is the positive relationship between parental warmth with EI and its dimensions. Parental warmth, characterized by affection, support, responsiveness, and emotional closeness, creates a secure emotional environment that facilitates the development of emotional competencies among adolescents. Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that adolescents who experience warm and supportive parenting tend to exhibit higher levels of emotional awareness, empathy, and emotion regulation (Lan, 2022). Similarly, research on parenting practices has shown that positive parental rearing behaviours significantly contribute to adolescents' EI and prosocial behaviour, highlighting the role of supportive parenting in emotional development (Kausar *et al.*, 2024). Furthermore, studies indicate that adolescents' emotional well-being and emotional intelligence are strongly associated with the quality of family relationships and the presence of supportive familial environments (Moreno *et al.*, 2024).

The findings of the present study are consistent with the propositions of Parental Acceptance-Rejection (PAR) Theory, which highlights the critical

role of perceived parental acceptance in shaping children's psychological adjustment and emotional development (Rohner *et al.*, 2012). According to this framework, parental warmth, affection, and emotional support foster positive emotional functioning and well-being, whereas parental rejection—manifested through hostility, neglect, or lack of affection—can lead to emotional maladjustment and difficulties in emotion regulation. Supporting this, empirical evidence indicates that parental emotional warmth is positively associated with adolescents' social and psychological development, including empathy and emotional competence (Zhang *et al.*, 2026). Furthermore, the present study contributes by revealing that ethnicity significantly moderates the relationship between parental acceptance–rejection and emotional intelligence only among adolescents experiencing high parental acceptance, suggesting that in supportive family environments, cultural and socio-environmental differences between tribal and non-tribal groups become more influential in shaping emotional development, as adolescents are better able to utilize available resources; this aligns with prior findings that parental warmth interacts with environmental and contextual factors in influencing socio-emotional development (Ong *et al.*, 2018).

However, the results indicated that ethnicity did not moderate the relationship between PAR and EI among adolescents experiencing moderately rejected or highly rejected parental behaviour. This finding suggests that the negative effects of parental rejection may operate similarly across different cultural groups. Parental rejection has consistently been linked with emotional distress, poor emotional regulation, and lower psychological well-being among adolescents, irrespective of cultural background. Research indicates that adverse family environments and dysfunctional parental relationships can negatively influence adolescents' emotional intelligence and overall psychological adjustment (Barragán *et al.*, 2021). When adolescents perceive rejection from parents, the detrimental emotional consequences may overshadow the influence of cultural or ethnic differences, resulting in similar emotional outcomes across groups.

Conclusion

The present study contributes to the growing body of literature on parenting and adolescents' emotional

development by examining the association between parental acceptance–rejection and emotional intelligence among tribal and non-tribal adolescents. By incorporating ethnicity as a moderating variable, the study highlights the importance of considering sociocultural contexts when understanding the emotional development of adolescents. Parenting practices characterized by warmth, support, and acceptance play a crucial role in fostering emotional competencies, whereas rejecting or neglectful parental behaviors may hinder the healthy emotional growth of young individuals.

The study underscores the relevance of culturally informed perspectives in psychological research, particularly in diverse societies where adolescents grow up within distinct cultural and social environments. Understanding how family relationships interact with cultural background can help educators, counselors, and mental health professionals design more effective interventions aimed at promoting emotional well-being among adolescents.

Implications

The present study will deepen our knowledge of how culture, social and ethnic background influence emotional intelligence among adolescents. This study highlights what role parental behaviour plays in shaping emotional intelligence of a child. The findings can help the school administration to design EI programs that are culturally suitable for tribal and non-tribal adolescents. Teachers, counsellors and parents can be trained to recognise and address emotional needs based on students' background and parental dynamic.

Limitations and Future Directions

The present study has certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings. First, the study employed a cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to establish causal relationships between parental acceptance–rejection and emotional intelligence among adolescents. In addition, the sample was limited to adolescents belonging to the Munda and Oraon tribes from selected areas of Jharkhand, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other tribal communities or regions. The study also relied solely on quantitative methods, which may not fully capture the cultural nuances, parenting practices,

and lived experiences of adolescents from tribal backgrounds.

Future research may address these limitations by employing longitudinal designs to better understand the developmental relationship between parental acceptance–rejection and emotional intelligence over time. Studies may also include adolescents from a wider range of tribal communities and geographical regions to improve the generalizability of the findings. The use of mixed-method approaches that combine quantitative and qualitative techniques could provide deeper insights into culturally specific parenting practices and emotional development. Additionally, collecting information from multiple sources, such as parents and teachers, may provide a more comprehensive understanding of adolescents' emotional functioning.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) do not have any conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets collected and/or analyzed during the current work are not publicly available owing to confidentiality and privacy concerns, but they are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethics Statement

The research was approved by the Departmental Research & Degree Committee (DRDC) of the Department of Psychological Sciences, Central University of South Bihar, Gaya (F. No.-CUSB/Acad/2020/1302).

Informed Consent Statement

Written informed consent was taken from the participants before data collection.

Clinical Trial Registration

This research does not involve any clinical trials.

Permission to reproduce material from other sources

Not Applicable

Author Contributions

- **Kumari Sristee:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, and Writing – Original Draft
- **Dharmendra Kumar Singh:** Writing – Review and Editing

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