

# The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Adolescent Development

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**Abstract:** *This review presents accurate research results in complex adolescent literature and further clarifies that emotional intelligence is fundamental in adolescent development and has an essential role in developmental stages. 15 journals are used to review national and international publications from 2004-2018. Reviewed from gender differences, teenage boys have low levels of emotional intelligence than teenage girls. Emotions strongly affect the behavior of adolescents in developmental phases. High emotional intelligence has an impact on the process of good social interaction, the establishment of a good self-concept, the decrease of juvenile delinquency, and the enhancement of academic abilities. Adolescents who have low emotional intelligent tend to behave poorly, commit deviations and violations to themselves, such as frustration, conflicting irregularities, and exacerbating mental health. Therefore, emotional intelligence that teenagers possess can develop their social relationships, reduce their stress and frustration, increase their understanding of other people's emotions, and prevent or reduce the behavior of delinquency. The role of this emotional intelligence can be developed in an educational or clinical setting and has implications for parents and teachers.*

**Keywords:** *review, emotional intelligence, adolescent development*

## Introduction

Adolescent development is a transition period from children to adults. This change is marked by physical, hormonal, and psychosocial changes. These changes can cause abnormalities if not handled and managed carefully. Teenagers get the main spotlight because this is a vulnerable period for them. Modernization can contribute to the increase of depleted moral values and faith. Many teenagers experience events that affect changes in their attitudes and behavior. Some unfortunate events experienced by teenagers include being a victim of a crime and engaged in promiscuity. There are many factors causing juvenile delinquency, such as broken family, poverty, inadequate parenting, etc.

Teenagers often have difficulties in maintaining their relationship with their parents. It is because in their social development, adolescents are more easily influenced by their friends. Teenagers also experience physical changes in both growth and sexuality. Changes in emotions make teens have high confidence, making it difficult to receive advice from parents. Therefore, adolescents have difficulties in the development and changes they experience, which often leads to changes in their psychiatric conditions. For instance, sometimes they look quiet, sullen, and isolated; but at other times, they seem cheerful, radiant, and confident. This unpredictable behavior is not abnormal. It only needs to be noticed and assisted, so it will not bring difficulties for them. Sex-related behavior is one of the behaviors developed among adolescents. Sexual curiosity will lead to sexual

behavior (Putro, 2017).

Adolescent development becomes a critical period marked by physical and mental development that takes place quickly. This period also marks the need for mental adjustment and the formation of new attitudes, values, and interests. The transitional period means that they are no longer a child but not an adult just yet. If adolescents behave like children, they will be told to act according to their age. When adolescents behave like adults, they are often accused of being out of track or being unfit. This unclear adolescent status gives them the opportunity to try various styles, patterns of behavior, values, and traits that are in accordance with them (Putro, 2017).

Emotions are an encouragement to act, and a tendency to do things. Goleman, in his book, describes the basic emotions possessed by all cultures in the world that can be understood as a characteristic of the emotions of various individuals. They are scared, angry, sad, and happy feelings (Goleman, 2007).

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to manage emotions. Adolescents who have emotional intelligence will be able to show their emotions appropriately according to situations and conditions. Conversely, adolescents who are bad-tempered or improperly place their emotions are called adolescents who are not emotionally intelligent. Many studies discuss the role of emotional intelligence in adolescent behaviors, adolescent problems, and transitions in the stages of adolescent development. Some facts show that adolescents who are not

emotionally intelligent are easily affected by negative things. For example, students fight with other students as an act of revenge, past hatred, or even do other destructive and harmful things. This review aims to provide an overview of the importance of emotional intelligence in the adolescent developmental stage.

## Results and Discussions

15 research results were found and discussed randomly in this review. Thirteen articles were in English, and two others were in Indonesian. The review focuses on the relationships and the influence of emotional intelligence on adolescent development and how much emotional intelligence plays its role in the development. The author collected journals from 2004-2018 years with relevant sources. The journals are classified and summarized according to the accompanying results and discussions.

Based on the summarized journals, the results of the study found that emotional intelligence is related to all aspects of adolescent development. It was found that there is a difference in the level of emotional intelligence between men and women. Women have high emotional intelligence than men. The findings are supported by several results obtained through observation. It was found that women are more prone to empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal relationships, while men are only sensitive to relationships with families or siblings (Katyal & Awasthi, 2005).

Emotional intelligence only predicts self-esteem indicators associated with emotional improvement, adolescent happiness, and anxiety reduction but does not predict physical appearance and popularity. These results were obtained through multiple regression analysis (Berrocal et al., 2006). The results of other studies explain the higher emotional intelligence, the higher the psychological well-being of junior high school students.

Emotional intelligence is also positively correlated with self-concept, which means that the higher the emotional intelligence of a teenager, the better of the self-concept he builds. A teenager often has the ability to recognize the emotions of others so that it affects the formation of adolescent self-concept. It is because sensitivity is created among adolescents (Indrayana & Hendrati, 2013). A research conducted in Senior High School 1 Polanharjo Indonesia found that emotional intelligence is related to altruistic behavior. Individuals who have emotional intelligence produce the ability to manage emotions, understand the emotions of others, and facilitate social life.

Previous research using a cross-sectional approach identified the relationship between emotional intelligence and suicidal behavior in

adolescents. It was revealed that statistically, emotional intelligence did not correlate directly with suicidal behavior. Instead, it becomes a moderation of the effects of sexual abuse on suicidal behavior. Sexual abuse results in the emergence of suicide ideas in adolescents but does not apply to adolescents who have emotional intelligence (Cha & Nowak, 2009)

Another study using a cross-sectional approach explored the relationship of emotional intelligence and mental health in adolescents and found that emotional intelligence can help improve mental health when fostered through school-based programs. Emotional intelligence also influenced the process of adaptation for adolescents. Statistical results also reported that emotional skills and depression in female adolescents were higher than in male adolescents with behavioral disorders. The relationship between emotional skills and emotional intelligence was weak but appeared to be strong in the big five personality dimensions (Davis & Humphrey, 2012).

In 2004, several researchers collaborated to find out the effect of emotional intelligence on social interaction in American and German adolescents, resulting in different findings. One study showed that 118 American adolescents scored higher on the MSCEIT (emotional intelligence) subscale with the quality of social interaction or with friends. Similarly, 103 adolescents in Germany had positive scores related to emotional intelligence or the ability to manage emotions that affect the quality of interaction and perception of success (Lopes N. Paulo et al., 2004). In contrast, a study in Australia explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and negative events in the lives of individuals, especially adolescents in Australia. It was revealed that emotional intelligence is negatively associated with stressful events. The report explains that the higher the emotional intelligence, the lower the stress is. There are also individual differences in each dimension of emotional intelligence, including conscious emotions, emotional expression, emotional self-control, and emotional management (Armstrong et al., 2011)

Another study analyzing romantic relationships among teenagers in Spain found that teenagers who have emotional intelligence influence the behavior of aggression against their dating partners. The results showed that intelligence weakened the aggression behavior against a dating partner. There are some aspects of emotional intelligence, such as attention, explanation, and improvement, that do not pose the behavior of aggression on teenagers who date. Therefore, emotional intelligence can be improved through training and intervention. DV shows Components to improve youth skills in an emotional

management indicator. The model and scale (TMMS) explores the various components of adolescents but does not identify other types of emotions such as anger, sadness, excitement. This component has a strong influence on aggressive behavior (González et al., 2018)

A study related to emotional intelligence is reviewed based on parenting patterns. The results show that parenting style can influence the level of emotional intelligence and interpersonal relationships. It was found that emotional intelligence relates negatively to the style of authoritarian parents while being positively and significantly related to the style of democratic and permissive parents (Nastasa & Sala, 2012)

There is a fundamental difference in how different parenting patterns impact on adolescent emotional intelligence. Permissive or democratic parents tend to create positive emotions and behavior in adolescents, such as the good ability to express emotion, having initiatives, dealing with the challenges of life, and accepting or feeling other people's feelings, developing good interpersonal relationships, and being positive, honest, respectful, flexible and assertive. On the contrary, authoritarian or dictator parents can make adolescents inflexible, rigid, dependent on the rules, irresponsible, blaming others, attacking, criticizing, disturbing, lying, and being selfish (Nastasa & Sala, 2012).

Another study involved Australian adolescents who took the SUIET test and were evaluated using regression analysis based on the collection of academic data results. It was found that there is a link between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. High Emotional intelligence can affect students' academic achievements in the school. This is explained in complete emotional intelligence indicators as managing emotions is a very significant aspect, and emotional understanding also predicts geographic value. Therefore, emotional intelligence is indispensable for the development of educators to conduct academic assignments and improve adolescent emotional competence (Downey et al., 2008).

As a teenager, the moral is an aspect of adolescent developmental phases. Previous research explained intellectually gifted adolescents had high moral sensitivity and cognitive abilities related to moral reasoning and emotional ability. Research in South Korea mentions that teenage boys were more intellectually intelligent than teenage girls. This is supported by different results in their EQ test. These results are in line with earlier studies on the difference in emotional intelligence between male and female adolescents. Talented teenage boys are more adaptable and flexible in solving problems than

teenage girls. In particular, young women can maintain interpersonal relationships and care about others' feelings (Lee & Kubilius, 2006).

Emotional intelligence also plays a role in psychological wellbeing. Research on Asiatale found that the high emotional intelligence of female students of nurses and health sciences could reduce stress and increase life satisfaction and happiness. The results of this study also showed that emotional intelligence help manages stress level and make it more stable, thus increase participants' life satisfaction and happiness (Extremera, 2013). Similar research describes a significantly positive relationship between emotional intelligence and life quality, and significantly negative relationship between emotional intelligence and depression (Mehmood & Gulzar, 2014). Emotionally intelligent people adopt a flexible life pattern to deal with failure and prevent depression. High emotional intelligence encourages them to develop a positive self and self-esteem by being more open and assertive in facing difficulties and intelligently developing better abilities to create a happy life (Cazan & Elena, 2015).

Overall, emotional intelligence is related to the psychological welfare of students, where female students are more emotionally intelligent than male students. The study further explains the role of emotional intelligence in students' mentality, interpersonal relationships, social interaction, and academic skills. It also provides implications for parents, teachers, and counselors. Indeed, emotional intelligence is useful in community life development (Shaheen & Shaheen, 2016)

## Conclusion

From the results of the studies that have been reviewed, there are 15 journals discussing the relevance of emotional intelligence and the phenomenon that occurs among teenagers. This review presents accurate research results in complex adolescent issues. It increasingly clarifies that emotional intelligence is essential for adolescent development and has a role in every stage of their development. Reviewed from gender differences, teenage boys have lower levels of emotional intelligence than girls. Emotion significantly affects the teenagers' behavior, especially in the development phases. High emotional intelligence impacts the process of good social interaction, the establishment of a good self-concept, the increase of academic ability, and the prevention of destructive behavior or delinquency in adolescents. In other words, emotionally intelligent adolescents are able to develop social relationships well, reduce stress and frustration on problems they experienced, understand other people's emotions, and prevent or reduce destructive

behavior. By contrast, adolescents with low emotional intelligence tend to display negative behavior and exacerbate mental health or depression. The role of this emotional intelligence can be developed in education and clinical settings and has implications for parents and teachers.

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