



Adjustment of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The present study was aimed at investigating the adjustment abilities of secondary school students. The Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) developed by Sinha & Singh was employed to assess the adjustment level of the students. The study was carried out on a sample of 120 secondary school students, keeping in mind various demographic factors. The survey method of research was employed to collect the requisite data. The data so collected was analyzed using statistical measures of Mean, Standard deviation and t- test. The findings of the present study reveal that there exist highly significant differences between the adjustment of secondary school students when compared on the basis of gender, type of family structure and medium of instruction in school.

Keywords: Adjustment, secondary school students, demographic factors

Introduction

Education is said to be the most powerful equalizer of people's endowments, with which they expand the horizon of life choices, grasp economic opportunities, gain higher living standards, pursue happiness, and enjoy a life of well being. It acts as the foundation upon which one can

build the rest of their life. Education is considered to be not only a means of improving one's own life but also that of others around one. Therein lies the importance of wholesome education in a child's life. In today's multi-cultural world, education necessitates adjustment. Children with different abilities, different skills, different backgrounds, and different cultures get educated together, providing them an opportunity to hone their adjustment skills thus acting as a training ground for the rest of their lives. During school life, a child has to learn to co-exist and co-operate with students and teachers of different religions, different cultures, different opinions and a different outlook towards life.

The students enrolled in secondary classes are experiencing the 'storms and stresses' of adolescence, a very critical stage of their lives. During this period, they keep vacillating between being children and being adults. Though adjustment is a major concern at all life stages, it becomes especially critical at the stage of adolescence. Being a phase of rapid growth and development during which physical, sexual and emotional changes occur, adjustment problems are at their peak during this period. Most adolescents experience adjustment difficulties in emotional, social and/or educational aspects of their lives. Adjustment has been described by the Encyclopedia Britannica as a behavioural process for maintaining equilibrium among one's needs and obstacles offered by the environment. Adjusting to constant changes in their internal as well as external environment becomes a major challenge for the adolescents.

It seems, over the years, very limited amount of research has been done on adjustment problems of adolescents. Most of the problems centering adolescents are physical appearance, health and physical development, marks scored, relationship with members of their families, their teachers, and peer of both sexes and home adjustment. This maladjustment may lead to absenteeism, truancy, low achievement and other unworthy habits of children (Subramanyam, 1986). The

genetic make-up, time and rate of maturity vary for boys and girls especially during adolescence. Societal norms and perceptions are also different for boys and girls, resulting in significant differences in levels of adjustment of boys and girls (Jaikumar and Muthumanickam,2012;Jain and Jandu, 1998; Hampel and Petermann,2006; Kuruvilla,2006;Mythili et.al.,2004;Raju and Rahmatulla,2007; Shalu and Audichya,2006;Yagon and Mikuliner,2004). Family interactions and relationships between family members play a pivotal role in the adjustment issues of adolescents (Conger et. Al., 1997; Dratar, 1997; Jaikumar and Muthumanickam, 2012; Rowchowdhary and Basu, 1998; Scott and Scott, 1989; Srivastava, 1984; Varni, 1986; Werner et.al.,2003). The type of schools and the medium of instruction also influences the adjustment level of the adolescents (Pradhan, 1992; Raju and Rahamtulla, 2007; Sharma and Gakkar, 1991). There is a need to explore the adjustment problems of school going adolescents and the influence of various demographic factors on their adjustment abilities. The present study was aimed at exploring the adjustment problems of secondary school students.

Objectives

- To study the adjustment of secondary school students.
- To compare the adjustment among male and female secondary school students.
- To study the adjustment of secondary school students belonging to nuclear and joint families.
- To compare the adjustment of secondary school students studying in English medium and Hindi medium schools.

Hypotheses

- The adjustment among male and female secondary school students does not differ significantly.

- The adjustment among secondary school students living in joint and nuclear families does not differ significantly.
- The adjustment of secondary school students studying in English medium and Hindi medium schools does not differ significantly.

Methodology

Method of Study: The present study was completed by using normative survey method.

Sample: A sample of 120 class IX students studying in various schools of Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh, India was chosen through random sampling technique for the present study. Out of the 120(60 M, 60 F) students, 60 were from English medium schools and 60 were from Hindi medium schools with 42 belonging to joint families and 78 belonging to nuclear families.

Tools Used: The Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) developed by Sinha & Singh (2005) has 60 items with 20 items in each of the three areas of adjustment: emotional, social and educational. Responses are taken in 'yes' and 'no' for each item. The split- half reliability is 0.95 with product moment correlation between inventory scores and criterions ratings 0.51. For each response indicative of adjustment '0' is given otherwise '1' is given. While high scores on AISS indicate poor levels of adjustment, low scores indicate good adjustment. The minimum score on the AISS is 0 while the maximum score is 60.

Procedure: The scale was administered to the subjects in groups in the regular classroom situation. The instructions were provided on the first page of the scale booklets which are self explanatory. Scoring was done according to the instructions given in the manual.

Statistical Techniques Used: Statistical measures of Mean, Standard deviation and t- test were employed to analyse the collected data.

Results and Discussion

Table1: 1

Adjustment of Secondary School Students

Areas of Adjustment	Mean (N=120)	S.D.	Level of Adjustment
Emotional Adjustment	8.75	1.57	Unsatisfactory
Social Adjustment	8.60	1.89	Unsatisfactory
Educational Adjustment	6.05	1.33	Average
Overall Adjustment	23.40	3.77	Unsatisfactory

A perusal of the data presented in Table 1 reveals that the overall adjustment of secondary school students is unsatisfactory. While the students scored quite poorly in the areas of emotional and social adjustment, they scored better in the area of educational adjustment.

Table: 2

Adjustment of Male and Female Secondary School Students

Areas of Adjustment	Male (N=60)		Female (N=60)		t- value	Level of Significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Emotional Adjustment	9.53	1.34	7.97	1.30	6.47	0.01
Social Adjustment	9.88	0.45	7.32	2.07	9.36	0.01
Educational Adjustment	6.30	0.89	5.80	1.67	2.05	0.05
Overall Adjustment	25.71	1.92	21.09	3.34	9.31	0.01

The contents of Table 2 indicate that the secondary school boys show significantly poorer levels of adjustment as compared to the girls ($t= 9.31, p < 0.01$). Hence the first null hypothesis is rejected. These differences are found to be significant in all the areas of adjustment. The emotional adjustment of girls is significantly better than that of boys ($t= 6.47, p < 0.01$) as is

their social adjustment ($t= 9.36, p<0.01$). In the case of educational adjustment also, the differences are found to be significant ($t= 2.05, p<0.05$).

Table: 3

Adjustment of Secondary School Students from Nuclear and Joint Families

Areas of Adjustment	Nuclear (N=78)		Joint (N=42)		t- value	Level of Significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Emotional Adjustment	9.87	1.42	6.67	1.81	9.93	0.01
Social Adjustment	9.83	1.35	6.31	0.87	17.31	0.01
Educational Adjustment	5.10	1.22	7.81	1.01	13.01	0.01
Overall Adjustment	24.80	2.44	20.79	2.37	8.75	0.01

Table 3 shows that there are students from joint families show better levels of adjustment as compared to those belonging to nuclear families ($t= 8.75, p< 0.01$). Hence the second null hypothesis also stands rejected. These differences are found to be significant in all the three areas of adjustment under study, namely emotional, social and educational with children from joint families reporting better adjustment than their counterparts from nuclear families.

Table: 4

Adjustment of Secondary School Students from English and Hindi medium Schools

Areas of Adjustment	English (N=60)		Hindi (N=60)		t- value	Level of Significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Emotional Adjustment	7.72	1.24	9.78	1.37	8.63	0.01
Social Adjustment	7.55	1.77	9.65	0.93	8.14	0.01
Educational Adjustment	5.90	1.05	6.20	1.33	1.37	NS
Overall Adjustment	21.17	2.67	25.63	2.22	9.95	0.01

The contents of table 4 reveal that secondary school students belonging to English medium schools possess improved levels of adjustment skills as compared to those belonging to Hindi medium schools ($t = 9.95, p < 0.01$). Hence the third null hypothesis is also rejected.

While the differences are significant for the areas of emotional ($t = 8.63, p < 0.01$) and social adjustment ($t = 8.14, p < 0.01$), they cease to be significant in the area of educational adjustment.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of the study, we may conclude that:

1. The adjustment of female secondary school students is significantly better than that of male secondary school students.
2. The adjustment of secondary school students from joint families is significantly better than that of students belonging to nuclear families.
3. The adjustment of secondary school students belonging to English medium schools is significantly better than that of students belonging to Hindi medium schools.

Educational Implications

The findings of the present indicate that there exist significant differences between the secondary school students when compared on the basis of gender, type of family structure and medium of instruction in school. Since these differences are found to be highly significant in all the areas of adjustment under study i.e. emotional, social as well as educational, there seems to be an urgent need to improve the situation. This calls for priority based action on the part of academicians, policy makers, families and all the concerned stakeholders to devise measures to facilitate better adjustment skills among the secondary school students. The secondary school students are at a very precarious stage of their lives wherein they are still in the process of exploring their place and role in society. It is at this stage of their lives that they are most in need of their adjustment

abilities. All the concerned stakeholders ought to chalk out a plan of action whereby the adjustment skills are honed and differences arising due to various demographic factors are minimized.

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