

A Study on the Problems of Adjustment among Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The present study is intended to examine the problems of adjustment among secondary school students in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs. It is used to emphasize individual's struggle to live or survive in his/her social and physical environment. It is a process by which an individual learns certain ways of behavior to cope with the situation which he/she attains through harmony with his/her social environment. The investigators made an attempt to know the influence of certain demographic variables like gender, class, location of the school and type of school management on the adjustment of students in secondary schools. Descriptive Survey method has been used in this study. The sample consisting of 450 students (250 boys and 200 girls) from various secondary schools of Visakhapatnam district has been selected using stratified random sampling method. The data were collected using Jain Adjustment Inventory (1972) that measures the adjustment of secondary school students in four areas – Home adjustment, School adjustment, Social adjustment and Emotional adjustment. The tool consists of 60 items (15 items from each one of the four areas) to find out the perceptions of students of Classes 6 and 7 towards their adjustment. The data were analyzed using different statistical techniques like means, standard deviations, t-test and one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The major findings of the study revealed that the variables like gender, the class in which the students are studying, the location of the school and the type of school management have no influence on the adjustment of students. The study has suggested that home and school environment should be congenial for students to perform better in academics.

Key words: Adjustment, School Management, Secondary Schools, Home and School Environment.

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I. Introduction

Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs (Shaffer, 1961). It is used to emphasize individual's struggle to live or survive in his/her social and physical environment. It is a process by which an individual learns certain ways of behavior to cope with the situation which he/she attains through harmony with his/her social environment. According to Good, C.V. (1959), 'Adjustment' is the process of finding and adopting modes of behavior suitable to the environment or the changes in the environment (Mangal, S.K. 2002, p.490). The term, 'adjustment' is often used as a synonym for accommodation and adaptation. Strictly speaking, the term denotes the results of equilibrium, which may be affected by either of these processes (Monroe, 2007). Every situation may need different types of adjustment. If an individual fails to adjust himself to the situations, then the problem arises. It may be any one of the psychological sequences like conflict, frustration, undesirable emotions, aggression and violence. In the study of adjustment, the individual and the environment are the two crucial factors that play a significant role. With regard to the individual, the considerations are the heredity and biological factors, the psychological factors and the quality of socialization given to him/ her. On the other hand, the environment includes all the social factors. Every individual from the time he/she steps out of the family and goes to school is subjected to a long series of adjustments between the unique personality and the environment. Each boy and girl gets a passionate desire to become an individual person having a healthy physique, a growing intellectual ability, a greater degree of emotional balance and increased participation in social groups. Such characteristics enhance one's personality. Even parents, teachers and other significant members of the society to which people belong to, should encourage this kind of a desire among the students. The Home is the first agency that helps in the socialization of an individual. The school is another major socialization institution for the child. It is the child's first contract with the world outside the home. For nearly

12 years a child spends 5 to 7 hours a day in the school. School is one of the most important foundation pillars on which the child's personality rests. Children learn proficiencies in various abilities such as social communications, handling emotions and the management of day to day interactions at home as well as school. In reality, the growing child is dependent on the immediate environment i.e. the home and the school to meet the needs of his/her growth. The concern, therefore, extends to how the facilities at home and in the school can be improved to meet the needs of the children for their healthy growth.

Adjustment as a process

'Adjustment as a process' lays emphasis on the process by which an individual adjusts to his external environment. It is important, especially from teachers' point of view. Students' adjustment largely depends on their interaction with the external environment in which they live. They always try to adjust to it. Piaget has studied the adjustive process from different angles. He uses the term assimilation and accommodation to represent the alternation of oneself or environment as a means of adjustment. A person who carries his values and standards of conduct without any change and maintains these in spite of major changes in the social climate is called assimilator. The person who takes his standards from his social context and changes his beliefs in accordance with the altered values of the society is called accommodator. In order to adjust successfully in society, a person has to resort to both the devices, i.e., assimilation and accommodation.

Characteristics of a well-adjusted person

A healthy and well-adjusted person should possess/display some observable behavioral patterns. These behavioral patterns must be in accordance with the social expectations of an individual. These patterns include:

- Maturity in thinking
- Emotional balance
- Warm and understanding towards others
- Free from tension due to routine events
- Independent in decision making

People of all ages have needs which they try to satisfy. When they are unable to satisfy their needs, they feel frustrated. Such situations call for maladjustment. In most cases, the human beings are able to adjust themselves successfully.

Review of Related Studies

A review of the studies carried out in the field of adjustment as reported in the Fourth Survey of Research in Education edited by Buch, M. B. (1991) reveals that no systematic attempt has been made to study the adjustment problems of school students.

Syed Inshaallah Tahir, Insha Rasool, Shazia Jan (2022) conducted a descriptive study on Home environment and Social adjustment of Secondary School students of Kashmir. The data were collected from 300 students using a self-constructed questionnaire. The study revealed a significant association between home environment and social adjustment of secondary school students of Kashmir. The data also revealed that when it comes to the home environment and social adjustment, male and female secondary school students had significantly different mean scores. When students were assessed based on their geographic location (urban vs rural), it was evident that rural secondary school students had better home contexts and social adaptations than their urban counterparts.

Hemant Kumar Bunker (2021) conducted a study to investigate whether there is any significant relationship between adjustment of secondary school students from urban and rural areas. The sample consists of 120 secondary school students from 2 schools in Ahmedabad District, Gujarat, India. The tool used for the present study were School Adjustment Inventory developed by A.K.P. Sinha and R.P. Singh (2007). The results revealed that there is no significant difference in emotional, Social and Educational adjustment of urban and rural secondary school student. Further, the study revealed that gender has no influence on the adjustment of students.

Verma and Kumari (2016) studied the academic achievement of children at the elementary stage in relation to their adjustment. The findings of the study revealed that a significant relationship exists between adjustment and academic achievement of elementary school students. It was also found that the adjustment of elementary school students is affected by gender.

Nidhi and Kermane (2015) studied the adjustment problems of college students in relation to gender, socio-economic status and academic achievement. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference found in adjustment problems of students with high academic achievement and those with low academic achievement. There exists a negative relationship between adjustment problems and achievement.

Gill (2014) conducted a study on educational, social and emotional adjustment of visual handicapped students of a special school at Faridabad. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the educational adjustment of boys and girls studying in the special school. The study also revealed that there was no significant difference in the social and emotional adjustment of boys and girls studying in the special school.

Need and Importance of the study

The adjustment plays a significant role in the performance of secondary school students. It occupies a prominent place in the physical and intellectual development of the children; and influences their academic achievement. Secondary stage of education is considered an important stage for the children. At this stage, children follow the suggestions of their parents in decision making; and participate in socially acceptable activities. Sometimes students take decisions at their own during this stage; and try to implement them. This is also the stage of ambiguity during which they need to take the support and assistance from the parents and teachers. Keeping in view the changes of the students in the pre-adolescence stage, the investigators felt it desirable to investigate on the problems of Adjustment among students of secondary schools. The present study seeks to know the adjustment levels of secondary school students. From the review of related studies, it is understood that there are studies on the factors influencing the adjustment of students; and also on the relationship between adjustment and academic performance of students. But the researchers did not come across the studies on the influence of demographical variables on the adjustment of secondary school students. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the problems of adjustment among secondary school students.
2. To examine the influence of demographic variables – gender, class, location of the school and type of school management on the adjustment of secondary school students.

Hypotheses of the study

1. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of boys and girls studying in secondary schools.
2. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students of Class 6 and Class 7 studying in secondary schools.
3. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students studying in rural and urban secondary schools.
4. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students studying in Government, Local Body and Private secondary schools.

Limitations of the study

The study is limited to find out the adjustment of secondary school students studying in 15 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district. Further, the study is confined to find out the influence of four demographic variables, viz., gender, class, location of the school and the type of school management on the adjustment of secondary school students.

II. Methodology

(a) Method of Research

The researchers followed the Survey Method of the descriptive research for the present investigation.

(b) Sample

The sample of the study consists of 450 students (250 boys and 200 girls from Classes 6th and 7th studying in the selected secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh using Stratified Random Sampling technique.

(c) Research Tool

The researchers used Jain's Adjustment Inventory as the research tool to collect data from the 6th and 7th class students of secondary schools for the present investigation.

(d) Administration of the Tool

The research tool consisting of 60 items on four different dimensions of adjustment, viz., the Home adjustment, the School adjustment, the Social adjustment and the Emotional adjustment to 450 students of Classes 6 and 7 from the selected secondary schools in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh.

(e) Statistical Techniques Used

The investigators used different statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, the ‘t’- test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for data analysis and interpretation.

Table showing Mean, SD, and ‘F’/‘t’ values on the adjustment of secondary school students

S. No.	Variable		N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio/ F-value	Result
1	Gender	Boys	250	169.46	50.37	1.13*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Girls	200	175.10	53.89		
2	Class/ Grade	Class 6	200	175.25	54.90	0.78*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Class 7	250	171.28	51.92		
3	Location of the school	Rural	230	174.24	57.11	0.31*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Urban	220	172.59	54.13		
4	Type of School Management	Government	80	173.00	54.81	0.005*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Local Body	210	171.08	52.29		
		Private	160	170.75	51.48		

Findings of the study

1. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of boys and girls studying in secondary schools.
2. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students of Class 6 and Class 7 studying in secondary schools.
3. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students studying in rural and urban secondary schools.
4. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students studying in Government, Local Body and Private secondary schools.

III. Conclusions

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that the gender, class, the location of the school and the type of school management have no influence on the adjustment of students in secondary schools.

Recommendations

The study has suggested that home and school environment should be congenial for students to perform better in academics.

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