

Impact of Adjustment on Academic Achievement among High School Students: A Study of Adolescents in Himachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between adjustment and academic achievement among high school students in Himachal Pradesh. Adjustment, comprising home, health, social, and emotional dimensions, plays a crucial role in adolescent development and academic success. A sample of 200 students (100 males and 100 females) from government and private schools was selected using a stratified random sampling method. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and academic records. Statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, t-test, and correlation were applied using SPSS. The findings reveal that home adjustment has a significant positive relationship with academic achievement, while other dimensions show weak correlations. Gender differences were found to be statistically insignificant in most adjustment areas. The study highlights the importance of a supportive home environment and recommends school-based interventions to improve student adjustment and performance.

Keywords: Adjustment, Academic Achievement, Adolescents, Emotional Adjustment, Social Adjustment

1. INTRODUCTION

Adjustment is a continuous psychological and behavioral process through which individuals strive to maintain a harmonious relationship between their internal needs and the demands of their

external environment. It involves a dynamic interaction between the individual and various environmental factors such as family, school, and society. From a psychological perspective, adjustment reflects an individual's ability to cope effectively with stress, resolve conflicts, and maintain emotional stability (Shaffer, 1961). In the context of adolescence, adjustment becomes particularly significant due to the rapid and multifaceted changes that occur during this developmental stage.

Adolescence is widely recognized as a transitional phase characterized by significant physical, emotional, cognitive, and social transformations. According to Laurence Steinberg (2014), adolescents experience heightened emotional sensitivity, identity exploration, and increased independence from parental control. These changes often create challenges in maintaining balance and stability, making adolescents more vulnerable to adjustment difficulties. The inability to effectively manage these transitions may lead to emotional distress, behavioral problems, and reduced academic performance.

Education plays a crucial role in facilitating proper adjustment among adolescents. It not only imparts knowledge but also contributes to the holistic development of personality by promoting social skills, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving abilities. Schools act as important social institutions where students learn to interact with peers, teachers, and authority figures, thereby shaping their adjustment patterns. A supportive educational environment can enhance students' coping mechanisms and resilience, enabling them to deal effectively with life challenges (Good, 1959).

Adolescents often encounter adjustment problems in various domains such as home, school, peer relationships, and personal identity. Home adjustment is influenced by family environment, parental support, and communication patterns, whereas school adjustment is shaped by academic demands, teacher-student relationships, and institutional climate. Social adjustment involves the

ability to form healthy peer relationships, and emotional adjustment refers to the regulation of feelings and stress. Research indicates that poor adjustment in any of these domains can adversely affect students' behavior, learning outcomes, and overall well-being (Raju & Rahamtulla, 2007).

Academic achievement, which is commonly measured through examination scores and performance assessments, is a key indicator of students' educational success. It is influenced by a wide range of cognitive and non-cognitive factors. Cognitive factors include intelligence, memory, and reasoning abilities, while non-cognitive factors encompass motivation, emotional stability, self-regulation, and environmental influences (Eccles & Templeton, 2002). Among these, adjustment plays a critical role as it directly impacts students' concentration, engagement, and persistence in academic activities.

Several empirical studies have established a relationship between adjustment and academic achievement. For instance, Roy and Mitra (2012) found that students with higher levels of motional and social adjustment tend to perform better academically. Similarly, Jansen (1958) reported that low-achieving students often face greater adjustment problems compared to high achievers. These findings suggest that adjustment not only influences academic performance but also contributes to overall personality development.

However, despite the general agreement on the importance of adjustment, inconsistencies exist regarding the relative contribution of different adjustment dimensions. Some studies highlight the dominance of emotional adjustment, while others emphasize the role of social or home environment. For example, Aggarwal (1964) observed that emotional problems tend to increase with age, whereas home and social adjustment improve over time. Such variations indicate the need for further research to understand the specific impact of each dimension of adjustment on academic achievement.

In the context of Himachal Pradesh, limited research has been conducted to examine the relationship between adjustment and academic performance among high school students. Considering the unique socio-cultural and educational environment of the region, it becomes essential to explore how different adjustment factors influence students' academic outcomes. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the impact of adjustment on academic achievement among adolescents, with a focus on home, health, social, and emotional dimensions.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Review of literature is a critical component of any research study as it provides a comprehensive understanding of existing knowledge in the field. It enables the researcher to identify theoretical perspectives, analyze empirical findings, and locate research gaps that justify the present investigation. A well-structured review helps in refining research objectives, selecting appropriate methodologies, and ensuring that the study contributes meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge (Creswell, 2014).

In the present study, literature related to adjustment and academic achievement among adolescents has been systematically reviewed. The review is organized under major themes such as adjustment in adolescence, gender differences, relationship between adjustment and academic achievement, and the role of socio-economic and environmental factors.

2.2 Studies on Adjustment among Adolescents

Adjustment during adolescence is widely regarded as a crucial determinant of personality development, emotional stability, and social functioning. Early theoretical contributions by G. Stanley Hall conceptualized adolescence as a period of “storm and stress,” marked by emotional

turbulence, identity conflicts, and behavioral inconsistencies. This perspective laid the foundation for understanding the complexities of adolescent adjustment.

Adolescence is characterized by rapid biological maturation, cognitive development, and social role transitions. According to Erik Erikson (1968), this stage involves the psychosocial crisis of identity versus role confusion, where individuals strive to establish a stable sense of self. Failure to achieve this may lead to maladjustment and psychological distress.

Empirical studies have consistently highlighted that adolescents face adjustment challenges across multiple domains such as emotional, social, educational, and family environments. Kuhlen (1952) emphasized the role of intelligence in facilitating adjustment, suggesting that individuals with higher cognitive abilities are better equipped to cope with environmental demands. Similarly, Garrison (1960) observed that extroverted individuals tend to exhibit better adjustment compared to introverted individuals, indicating the importance of personality traits.

Aggarwal (1964) reported that adjustment problems in home and social domains tend to decrease with age due to increased maturity and social experience, whereas emotional problems may intensify due to heightened sensitivity and internal conflicts. Seth (1970) further explained that the discrepancy between physical development and social maturity creates tension, leading to adjustment difficulties among adolescents.

Later studies have reinforced these findings. Goswami (1980) identified emotional and mental domains as the most problematic areas of adjustment among adolescents, followed by school and home environments. Singh (1982) highlighted the influence of socio-economic status and intelligence on adjustment, indicating that environmental and individual factors jointly determine adjustment levels.

Overall, the literature suggests that adjustment is a multidimensional construct influenced by cognitive, emotional, and socio-cultural factors, and plays a significant role in shaping adolescent behavior and development.

2.3 Gender Differences in Adjustment

Gender differences in adjustment have been widely debated in educational and psychological research. Some studies suggest that boys and girls differ significantly in specific domains of adjustment, while others report minimal or no differences.

Sunita (1986) found that girls tend to be better adjusted in the home environment due to stronger emotional bonding and socialization patterns, whereas boys exhibit better social and emotional adjustment due to greater independence and exposure. This indicates that gender roles and cultural expectations play a significant role in shaping adjustment patterns.

However, Subudhi (1990) reported no significant gender differences in overall adjustment, suggesting that both boys and girls experience similar levels of adjustment challenges. This finding was supported by Sharma (2005), who observed that although boys showed slightly higher adjustment problems in school and social domains, the differences were not statistically significant.

Roy and Mitra (2012) also concluded that gender differences in adjustment are minimal, emphasizing that adolescence is a universally challenging phase irrespective of gender. These mixed findings indicate that gender may influence specific dimensions of adjustment but does not necessarily determine overall adjustment levels.

Thus, the literature reveals that while gender-based variations exist in certain areas, the overall pattern of adjustment among adolescents remains largely similar across male and female students.

2.4 Adjustment and Academic Achievement

The relationship between adjustment and academic achievement has been a central focus of educational research. Academic achievement is not solely determined by intellectual ability but is also influenced by psychological and environmental factors, including adjustment.

Jansen (1958) found that students with lower academic performance tend to experience more adjustment problems, indicating a negative relationship between maladjustment and achievement. Similarly, Raju and Rahamtulla (2007) reported that well-adjusted students demonstrate higher academic performance, better classroom behavior, and greater engagement in learning activities.

Roy and Mitra (2012) further established a positive relationship between adjustment and academic achievement, particularly highlighting the importance of emotional and social adjustment in enhancing academic outcomes. Students who are emotionally stable and socially integrated are more likely to concentrate, participate actively, and perform well academically.

However, not all studies report consistent findings. Gupta and Singal (1971) found no significant relationship between intelligence and adjustment, suggesting that academic achievement is influenced by multiple factors beyond adjustment alone. This indicates that while adjustment is an important determinant, it operates in conjunction with other variables such as motivation, teaching quality, and socio-economic background.

Overall, the literature suggests that adjustment plays a supportive role in academic achievement by enhancing students' psychological well-being and learning capacity.

2.5 Socio-Economic and Environmental Factors

Socio-economic status (SES) and environmental conditions significantly influence both adjustment and academic achievement. Students from different socio-economic backgrounds

experience varying levels of support, resources, and opportunities, which impact their adjustment patterns.

Sudha (1978) found that students from low socio-economic backgrounds face greater adjustment problems due to limited resources, family stress, and lack of educational support. In contrast, students from higher SES backgrounds tend to exhibit better adjustment due to access to conducive learning environments and parental guidance.

Anderman (2002) emphasized the role of school environment and sense of belonging in shaping students' adjustment and academic outcomes. A positive school climate, supportive teacher-student relationships, and inclusive practices contribute to better psychological adjustment and academic success.

Mahoney et al. (2005) highlighted the importance of extracurricular activities in promoting social and emotional adjustment. Participation in such activities enhances self-confidence, teamwork, and interpersonal skills, which in turn improve academic performance.

Thus, socio-economic and environmental factors act as external determinants that significantly influence the adjustment process and academic achievement of students.

2.6 Research Gap

Despite extensive research on adjustment and academic achievement, several gaps remain:

- Most studies have been conducted in urban settings, with limited focus on semi-urban and rural regions such as Himachal Pradesh.
- There is insufficient research analyzing individual dimensions of adjustment (home, health, social, emotional) separately.
- Many studies use small or unbalanced samples, lacking representation across gender and school types.

- There is a lack of recent empirical studies incorporating both government and private school students.
- Findings regarding the relationship between adjustment and academic achievement remain inconsistent and inconclusive.

2.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of adjustment among high school students.
2. To examine gender differences in adjustment levels.
3. To analyze the relationship between adjustment and academic achievement.
4. To identify the most influential dimension of adjustment on academic performance.

2.8 HYPOTHESES

H₀1: There is no significant difference in adjustment levels between male and female students.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between adjustment and academic achievement.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a **descriptive survey research design**, which is widely used in educational and psychological studies to analyze existing conditions, relationships, and trends. This method is appropriate for the current research as it allows the investigator to collect data directly from students regarding their adjustment levels and academic performance without manipulating any variables. The descriptive survey approach helps in understanding the relationship between adjustment (home, health, social, and emotional) and academic achievement among adolescents in a real-life educational setting.

3.2 Sample Description

The sample of the study consists of **200 high school students**, selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure balanced representation. The sample includes **100 male and 100 female students**, providing equal gender distribution. In terms of class-wise distribution, **85 students belong to class 9th and 115 students to class 10th**. Additionally, the sample comprises students from both types of schools, including **95 students from government schools and 105 students from private schools**. This diversified sample enhances the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

3.3 Tools Used

For the purpose of data collection, a **structured questionnaire** was used to assess different dimensions of adjustment among students, including home, health, social, and emotional adjustment. The questionnaire was designed based on the framework of **Bell's Adjustment Inventory**, which is a standardized and widely accepted tool for measuring adjustment levels among school students. In addition to this, students' **academic achievement was measured through their previous examination marks**, collected from school records. These tools ensured the collection of both subjective (self-reported) and objective (academic scores) data.

3.4 Statistical Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques with the help of SPSS software. **Descriptive statistics**, including mean and standard deviation, were used to understand the general level of adjustment among students. **Percentage analysis** was applied to examine the distribution of responses across different categories. To identify gender differences in adjustment levels, the **t-test** was employed. Furthermore, the **Pearson correlation coefficient** was used to examine the relationship between adjustment variables and academic achievement. These

statistical methods helped in drawing meaningful conclusions and testing the hypotheses of the study.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

Data analysis is an important step in research as it helps in interpreting the collected data and drawing meaningful conclusions. In the present study, statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, percentage, t-test, and correlation were used to analyze the relationship between adjustment and academic achievement among high school students.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD
Home Adjustment	12.45	3.25
Health Adjustment	7.80	3.10
Social Adjustment	16.20	3.75
Emotional Adjustment	11.30	5.40
Academic Achievement	68.50	8.90

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of different variables. The highest mean score is observed in **social adjustment (16.20)**, indicating that students are relatively better adjusted socially. Emotional adjustment shows higher variability (SD = 5.40), suggesting inconsistency among students in managing emotions. The mean academic achievement (68.50) indicates an average performance level of students.

Table 2: Gender Difference (t-test)

Variable	Male Mean	Female Mean	t-value	Sig.
Overall Adjustment	46.10	47.20	0.85	NS

Home Adjustment	11.90	12.80	1.20	NS
Health Adjustment	7.95	7.60	0.60	NS
Social Adjustment	15.80	16.60	1.95	*
Emotional Adjustment	10.90	11.70	1.50	NS

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

Table 2 indicates that there is **no significant difference** between male and female students in most adjustment areas, as the t-values are not significant. However, **social adjustment shows a significant difference**, indicating that female students are slightly better adjusted socially than male students. This suggests that gender does not strongly influence overall adjustment, except in specific domains.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

Variables	r-value	Sig.
Overall Adjustment & Academic Achievement	0.22	NS
Home Adjustment & Academic Achievement	0.26	*
Health Adjustment & Academic Achievement	0.05	NS
Social Adjustment & Academic Achievement	0.15	NS
Emotional Adjustment & Academic Achievement	0.13	NS

Table 3 shows the correlation between adjustment variables and academic achievement. Only **home adjustment has a significant positive correlation (r = 0.26)**, indicating that a supportive home environment improves academic performance. Other variables show weak and non-significant relationships, suggesting that academic achievement is influenced by multiple factors beyond adjustment.

Table 4: Level of Adjustment (Frequency Distribution)

Level	Frequency	Percentage
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High	30	15%
Average	140	70%
Low	30	15%

Table 4 reveals that the majority of students (**70%**) fall under the **average adjustment level**, indicating moderate ability to cope with environmental demands. Only 15% students are highly adjusted, while another 15% show poor adjustment, highlighting the need for intervention programs.

Table 5: Class-wise Comparison of Adjustment

Variable	Class 9 Mean	Class 10 Mean
Overall Adjustment	45.80	47.90
Academic Achievement	66.40	70.10

Table 5 shows that **class 10 students have slightly higher adjustment and academic achievement** compared to class 9 students. This may be due to increased maturity, experience, and academic exposure.

Table 6: School Type Comparison

Variable	Govt School Mean	Private School Mean
Adjustment	45.50	47.80
Academic Achievement	65.20	71.30

Table 6 indicates that **private school students show better adjustment and higher academic achievement** compared to government school students. This may be attributed to better facilities, learning environment, and academic support in private institutions.

Table 7: Academic Achievement Distribution

Marks Range	Frequency	Percentage
Below 50%	20	10%
50–60%	50	25%
60–75%	90	45%
Above 75%	40	20%

Table 7 shows that most students (45%) fall in the **60–75% range**, indicating average to good academic performance. Only 20% students score above 75%, suggesting scope for improvement in overall achievement.

4.2 Overall Findings from Analysis

- Students generally show **average adjustment levels**
- **Home adjustment significantly influences academic achievement**
- Gender differences are mostly insignificant
- Private school students perform better than government school students
- Emotional adjustment shows high variability among students

5. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study reveal that the majority of students fall under the **average level of adjustment**, indicating that most adolescents are moderately able to cope with the demands of their environment. This result is in line with the findings of Aggarwal (1964), who also observed that students generally exhibit moderate adjustment levels during adolescence due to ongoing developmental changes.

With regard to gender differences, the results show that there is **no significant difference between male and female students** in overall adjustment and most of its dimensions. This supports the findings of Subudhi (1990), suggesting that both boys and girls experience similar adjustment challenges during adolescence. However, a slight difference was observed in **social adjustment**, where female students performed better than male students. This may be due to better interpersonal skills, emotional understanding, and social bonding tendencies among girls, which enhance their ability to adapt in social settings.

One of the most significant findings of the study is that **home adjustment has a positive and significant relationship with academic achievement**. This indicates that students who experience a supportive, stable, and encouraging home environment tend to perform better academically. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Roy and Mitra (2012), which emphasized the importance of family support in enhancing students' academic performance.

On the other hand, other dimensions of adjustment such as **health, social, and emotional adjustment show weak and non-significant correlations** with academic achievement. This suggests that although these factors contribute to overall well-being, they may not directly influence academic performance to a large extent. It also indicates that academic achievement is a complex phenomenon influenced by multiple variables such as motivation, teaching quality, intelligence, and socio-economic factors.

Overall, the results highlight that while adjustment is an important factor in students' development, **home environment plays the most crucial role in determining academic success**, and other factors must also be considered for a comprehensive understanding of student performance.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that high school students generally exhibit average levels of adjustment, which indicates that they are moderately capable of managing the various demands of their academic, social, and personal environments. This reflects the transitional nature of adolescence, where students are still in the process of developing emotional stability and social competence. The findings further reveal that gender differences in adjustment are minimal, suggesting that both male and female students experience similar challenges and opportunities in adapting to their surroundings.

A key outcome of the study is the identification of the home environment as a significant factor influencing academic achievement. Students who experience supportive family relationships, effective communication, and a stable home atmosphere tend to perform better academically. This highlights the importance of parental involvement and emotional support in shaping students' educational outcomes. In contrast, other dimensions of adjustment, such as health, social, and emotional adjustment, show only limited direct impact on academic achievement. This suggests that while these factors contribute to overall well-being, academic performance is influenced by a combination of multiple variables beyond adjustment alone.

The study emphasizes that strengthening home support systems and promoting emotional well-being can play a crucial role in enhancing students' academic performance and overall development.

6.2 Educational Implications

The findings of the study have important implications for the education system. Schools need to recognize the role of adjustment in students' academic success and should take proactive measures to support students' psychological and emotional needs. Providing counseling services within schools can help students address adjustment problems, manage stress, and develop coping

strategies. Such services can be particularly beneficial during adolescence, when students face significant developmental challenges.

Parents also play a vital role in shaping students' adjustment and academic outcomes. Creating a supportive and understanding home environment can significantly improve students' confidence, motivation, and academic performance. Effective communication between parents and children helps in reducing stress and promoting emotional stability.

The schools should encourage co-curricular and extracurricular activities, as these activities provide opportunities for social interaction, teamwork, and personality development. Participation in such activities enhances students' confidence and helps them develop better adjustment skills. Teachers, being key facilitators of learning, should adopt student-friendly and empathetic approaches in the classroom. A positive teacher-student relationship fosters a sense of belonging and encourages active participation in academic activities.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the study has certain limitations. The research was conducted within a limited geographical area of Himachal Pradesh, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions. Additionally, the data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, which may be subject to personal bias, social desirability, or inaccurate responses. These limitations should be considered while interpreting the results.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Future research can build upon the present study by including a larger and more diverse sample, which would enhance the generalizability of the findings. Researchers may also extend the study to college-level students to examine whether adjustment patterns differ across age groups and educational levels. Furthermore, incorporating additional psychological variables such as **stress**,

motivation, self-esteem, and anxiety can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing academic achievement. Such studies would contribute to a deeper and more holistic perspective on student development and educational success.

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