

## **THE EFFECT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON ADJUSTMENT AMONG ADOLESCENTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The present research paper attempts to examine the impact of socio-economic status on adjustment of adolescents in Dharwad city, Karnataka state. This research study adopted stratified random sampling method to select the sample. A total sample of 150 respondents comprising 75 boys and 75 girls from three socio-economic groups i.e. lower, middle and upper strata, aged 15 to 20 years were selected from various schools and colleges of Dharwad districts of Karnataka state. Kuppaswamy's Socio-Economic Status Scale (1962), which was revised by Gunaraj and Maheshwaran (2014) and Saxena's Adjustment Inventory developed by Saxena (1983) were used to collect the data. The statistical methods used to analyze the data of the present study were variate-test, ANOVA methods. The findings revealed that the respondents from lower socio-economic groups had poor adjustment as compared to middle and upper socio-economic groups. The result also found a non-significant gender difference between boys and girls belonging to middle and upper socio-economic strata.

**Keywords-** Adjustment, Socio-Economic Status, college students.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is a time of social and educational changes as well as mental and physical growth. Many adolescents' experience difficulty coping with and adapting to problems, which can affect their mental health and increase their risk of developing mental and physical health problems. This study examines the impact of socioeconomic adjustment on adolescents.

The terms "adaptation" are often used interchangeably with the term "adaptation." In its purest sense, the phrase refers to the results of a balance in which both processes have the potential to affect each other (Monroe, 1990). In psychology, the

behavioral act of balancing competing demands or needs constrained by environmental challenges is called adaptation. Both people and animals adapt to their surroundings on a daily basis (Mohinuddin, 2021). Shaffer, L.S. "Adaptation is how organisms maintain a balance between their wants and demands and the external factors that affect the satisfaction of these needs." Furthermore, as Carter V. Good states, "adaptation is the process of identifying and implementing behavioral patterns that are appropriate to the environment or changing environment."

## **AREAS OF ADJUSTMENT**

**Home Adjustment:** Home promotes adjustment and security. Home is a very essential part of human life. The right home environment contributes to the good personality of young people, which influences their education and future life. The response of well- and poorly-adjusted adolescents is seen in their behavior towards their classmates.

**School Adjustment:** School adaptation refers to the level of adaptation to school that is necessary to maximize the academic match between the characteristics of each student and the characteristics and needs of the learning environment.

**Social Adjustment:** Social adaptation is the process by which individuals attempt to maintain their security, comfort, status, and creative inclinations despite the ever-changing conditions of society.

**Emotional Adaptation:** Emotional adaptation is the emotional outbursts that seem unnecessary, causing others to classify the person as "immature." Suppressing emotional expression leads to moodiness, making the person rude, disobedient, and overly concerned with self.

**Health Adjustment:** Increased emotionality can make a person nervous or ill, even when expression is controlled. Certain behaviors, such as nail biting or laughing, often make the person feel foolish or immature. Increased emotionality is especially common in girls during puberty, especially during the menstrual period. Adolescence is the period when an individual gains financial independence, career knowledge, civic consciousness, and emotional independence from their parents. Adolescent development and socialization are supported by several institutions including homes, schools, and the

community (Jha, K. 2020). According to Stanley Hall, ‘adolescence is a period of stress and strain, storm and strife’ (Dandapani, 2007).

During this period, adolescents cannot adapt to the current living environment and their life situation; they adapt inadequately and cannot achieve their goals. Therefore, adaptation is necessary for a successful life and no one can dispute its importance at every stage of life. (Gupta, P. 2021). Therefore, the present study was designed with the following objectives.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To find out the level of adjustment among adolescents in different socio-economic groups.
2. To find out the level of impact of gender and socio-economic status on the level of adjustment of adolescents.

### **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

1. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of adolescents across different socio-economic statuses.
2. The impact of gender and socio-economic status on the level of adjustment of adolescents is not significant.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Sample-** The sample consisted of 150 adolescents divided into two groups, comprising 75 boys and 75 girls, and again divided into three socio-economic groups (25 each from lower, middle and upper classes) in the age group of 15-20 years, selected through stratified random sampling technique.

**Tools used-** Kuppaswamy's Socio-Economic Status (1962) scale as updated by Gunaraj and Maheshwaran (2014) was used to assess the socio-economic status of the samples. The Adaptation Inventory (Saxena, M.S.L. 1983) was used to identify the level of adjustment among adolescents.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table-1 Matching table of adolescent boys and girls belonging to socio-economic groups**

	Boys (n=75)		Girls (n=75)		t-Value	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Lower SES	17.92	5.945	14.94	4.81	1.37775**	0.0035
Middle SES	23.47	5.28	21.53	6.485	0.8202NS	0.05205
Upper SES	11.735	4.7	28.67	7.995	0.92255NS	0.034

**\*\* Highly Significant, NS= non-significant**

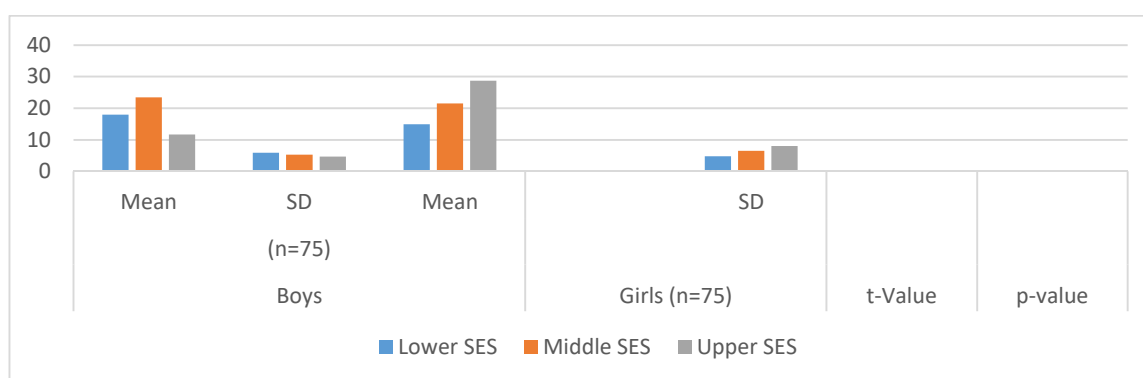
**Graph-1 Matching table of adolescent boys and girls belonging to socio-economic groups**

Table with Graph 1 illustrates the comparative analysis of boys and girls belonging to different socio-economic groups based on their adjustment. A significant gender variance was noted among the boys and girls from the lower socio-economic group, where the t-value was 1.3, and the p-value was 0.0035 regarding their adjustment, wherein it was seen that boys have better adjustment compared to girls.

It is revealed from the table that there was a non-significant gender difference among boys and girls belonging to middle and upper socio-economic strata with concern towards adjustment as the t- values for the middle socio-economic group was found to be 1.64 and p- value was 0.05205 and upper socio-economic group t- value was found to be 1.84, and p-value was 0.034.

The mean values further depicted that male respondents from various socio-economic groups have higher levels of adjustment than their female counterparts from respective socio-economic groups. Good (1959) stated that adjustment is the process of finding and adopting behaviors appropriate for the environment or changes in the background. The explanation could be that parents and family members play an essential role in the adjustment issues of adolescence. Adolescent psychological adaptability and decreased depression are connected with family stability and supportive interactions among family members (Herman et al., 2007). The present findings for gender difference align with a previous study conducted by Babasaheb (2019), who found a significant difference between male and female college students in Home, Social, Emotional and Health Adjustment.

**Table-2 Critical Difference and Mean Values among Different Socio-Economic Groups with Regard to Adjustment**

	<b>Lower SES = 16.43</b>	<b>Middle SES = 22.5</b>	<b>Critical Difference (5%)</b>
Upper SES = 29.88	13.45*	7.38*	2.07
Middle SES = 22.5	6.07*	-	

**\* Significant**

The ANOVA table 2 shows a significant variance in the adjustment of adolescents across different socio-economic groups; hence the value of critical difference was also calculated and obtained as 2.07. A significant critical difference in the adjustment among the three socio-economic groups. The highest mean value was seen in respondents from upper socio-economic groups and the lowest in lower socio-economic families. The study was in concurrence with the findings of Hassan and Singh (2016), who depicted a significant difference in academic achievement and adjustment of college students. The results further concluded significant differences in gender and socio-economic status with their adjustment.

## CONCLUSION

From the study of the present research paper, it can be inferred that respondents from middle and upper socio-economic groups had lower levels of adjustment compared to their counterparts from middle and upper socio-economic groups. The study of this research paper clearly reveals that low socio-economic status significantly influences adjustment. In contrast, it clearly reveals that there is a non-significant difference between boys and girls from middle and upper socio-economic strata regarding adjustment. Gender and socio-economic status influence adjustment. Maladjustment is prevalent in low socio-economic status families compared to middle and upper socio-economic families.

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