

# **Adjustment Levels of Female Adolescents in Relation to types of Schools**

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**Abstract – Adolescence is the most crucial developmental stage of an individual life as the learner passes through physiological, biological and emotional transitions that demand adjustment in various situations. School environment plays an instrumental role in social development and adjustment of an adolescent. Different types of schools may have a differential effect on adjustment level of adolescents. The present study is an attempt to study levels of adjustment of female adolescents in co-education and non co- education schools. The study conducted on 200 female adolescents, 100 each from co-education and non co-education schools selected randomly from schools of Punjab found that female adolescents studying in non co- educational schools have better levels of adjustment. The findings have important implications for educationists that attention needs to be paid towards developing strategies for improving adjustment levels of female adolescents for a better society.**

**Key Words - Adolescents, Adjustment, Co-Education**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education aims at bringing about desired change in an individual and the society by fostering all around development of personality, better adjustment in life, and development of potentials to the optimum level. In the last few years, the concern about the environmental factors that affect an individual's development has increased. These include understanding of social, cultural, psychological and other environmental factors that have an influence on the personality of an individual. Every situation of life demands an individual to perform effectively in harmony with these factors, strike a balance among various environmental forces, keep basic impulses at tolerable levels, believe in one's own abilities and achieve the desired goal (Alam, 2018).

An individual's development is possible only by being in harmony with the environment, specifically in the place where the seeds of formal education are sown, the school, where an individual spends the most crucial developmental years of his life. It has been observed the type of school in which an individual is engaged has direct influence on his personality development and adjustment to life situations. Schools may be categorized into different types, and one of this categorization is single-sex or non co-educational schools, specifically created keeping in view gender differences and co-educational schools with no gender segregation. Both types of schools

have their own benefits and limitations, and influence development and adjustment in different ways. Non co-educational schools especially girls school are believed to provide more comfortable environment for girls based on the notion that girls and boys have different personality characteristics and different developmental and adjustment needs, pertaining to the culture in which they live.

Adjustment is a psychological factor, related to human personality that influences human life from birth to death. Adjustment is generally referred to the relationship that any organism establishes with the environment. The term has its roots in the biological word adaptation that refers to the biological changes for facilitating the survival of a species. At the psychological level, adjustment refers to the struggle of an individual to survive in his/ her surroundings. Humans have the highest capacities to adapt to new situations and physical demands and adjust to diverse social situations. The term adjustment is frequently used as a synonym for adaptation and accommodation (Monroe, 2007).

Adjustment is the process in which a person finds an adapting mode of behavior that is suitable to the environment. Individuals whose behavior patterns are in accordance with social customs and manners are considered as normal, while those unable to adjust according to social situations are

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considered maladjusted. Adjustment is a continuing process by which a person changes his behaviors to produce a harmonious relationship between himself and his environment (Gates et al, 1970). A good adjustment is regarded as the one that is realistic as well as satisfying and in the long run reduces frustrations, tensions, and anxieties to a minimum that person must endure (Smith, 1981).

Ojha (1994) defined the term adjustment as the process of finding and adapting to the mode of behavior that is suitable to the environment or to bring a change in the environment. It is referred to as a psychological process through which individuals manage and cope with demands and challenges of everyday life (Mellroy, Bunting & Adams, 2000). Many factors are considered as risk factors for adjustment problems such as coping strategy, new values, social support, overwhelming norms and standards, financial problems, educational demands, homesickness, social stressors related to communication barriers, having low socio-economic standing, being female, different educational expectations, disorientations and cultural shocks (Jemal, 2011).

Sharma (1976) asserted that adjustment is a satisfactory relationship between the individual and his environment in respect of five areas of adjustment- home, health, social, emotional and educational. Adjustment to home is very important for preventing deterioration in family relationships and peer group relationships outside home. Health adjustment reflects a number of health difficulties and may also include an excessive pre-occupation with one's body. Social adjustment is a state when an individual is capable of meeting various social situations and aligns his behaviour to basic standards of conduct. Emotional Adjustment implies a state of mind of being stirred up and indicates to what extent a student is satisfied with school administration, general environment and facilities at schools, to what extent a pupil shows interests in co-curricular activities and experiences at the school.

Apart from imparting knowledge, education also aims at making the learner socially intelligent and well adjusted in his environment. An individual passes through many stages of life that are different in all aspects and adolescence is a transition period of an individual's life considered as a stage of stress and strain. Adolescence is the age between 13 and 19 considered to be the physical and emotional transitional stage from childhood to adulthood and is a period of disorientation, discovery, full of problems and conflicts. Although adolescence is equally challenging for both genders but girls face more adjustment problems during adolescence age that may be attributed to societal and cultural contexts. Adolescence is the stage of forming relationships, finding identities, exploring new knowledge and keeping pace with the changes in one's surrounding. School plays an instrumental role in the journey of an adolescent towards adult hood and is the place

where new relationships are made in a new environment away from home. It is believed that apart from the peer group interaction, the environments in which such interactions are taking place influence the personality of an individual and affect his level of adjustment. Various attempts were made by researchers to study the effect of school environment on the personality of adolescent girls specially the types of school (co-educational or non co-educational) on adjustment.

The review of related literature reflected that previous researches have studied adjustment of adolescents in relation to various demographic variables. Feather, 1974; Dale, 1974 Schneider, Coutts & Starr, 1988 and Stable, 1990 found that boys and girls were more satisfied with co-education asserting it to a more natural environment and felt that co-education helped in their relationship with the opposite sex. Hannan and Shortall (1991) also found that male and female pass out students of co-educational schools in Ireland felt more positive about personal and social developmental aspects of their schooling.

Godiyal and Padiyar (2008) made a comparison of boys and girls in educational, social and emotional areas of adjustment and the findings suggested that girls are better adjusted in educational and emotional areas of adjustment as compared to boys and both boys and girls showed poor social adjustment. Kumar (2008) found out that there exists no significant difference between adjustment levels of adolescent boys and girls in relation to school environment. Bradley (2009) investigated impact of single sex education on academic achievement and concluded that the single-sex environment provides best opportunity to females for academic achievement. Sullivan et al. (2010) utilised the 1958 cohort data already analyzed by Steedman (1983) and it was found that the females studying in non co educational schools secured high grades than females who are studying in co education schools. Booth (2014) reported that one hour a week of single sex-education is beneficial for girls and that women in single-gender classes benefit significantly. It was found that 86.7% of the respondents had poor level of adjustment, 13.3% had average level whereas none of them had good level of adjustment and that there was no significant association of adjustments with the selected demographic variables (Sara, et al 2015).

Sasikumar & Jayakumari (2018) found no difference between girls and co-educational school adolescent students with respect to social adjustment. Thus, the review clearly indicates that co-educational and non co- educational schools have their own impact on the adjustment and personality of an individual, and that findings of researches conducted in the field of adjustment, specifically school adjustment are contrasting in

nature and do not indicate any clear direction, thus suggesting scope for future research.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What are the differences between the adjustment level among female adolescent studying in co-educational and non co-educational schools?

## METHODOLOGY

### **Sample and Data collection**

The sample of the present study was 200 female adolescents, 100 each from co-educational and non co-educational schools of Punjab. Data was collected with the help of 'adjustment inventory for school students' by Sinha and Singh, (1984). Statistical techniques were employed to investigate the significance of difference between the means of adjustment of adolescents on the basis of type of school (Co-educational and Non Co-educational), the variables were assessed in terms of their scores.

### **Data Analysis**

**Table 1. Showing significance of difference between mean scores of adjustment of female adolescent studying in different types of schools (n=200)**

S. No.	Group	N	M	S. D.	SE <sub>M</sub>	t- value
1.	Co-educational	100	21.64	4.91	.492	4.22**
2.	Non coeducational	100	17.01	4.709	.471	

\*\* significant at 0.01 level

Table 1 revealed that the mean scores of adjustment of female adolescent studying in co-educational and non co-educational schools are 21.64 and 17.01. The t-ratio is 4.22 with df=198 which is more as compared to table value and significant at 0.01 level of significance. This revealed that there is significant difference between mean scores of adjustment of female adolescent studying in co-educational and non co-educational schools.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results show that there is a significant difference between the adjustment of adolescent girls studying in co-educational and non co-educational schools. The findings of the study indicate a significant difference between the girls studying in co-educational and non co-educational schools in their overall adjustment. The results highlight that girls belonging to co-educational schools have a better adjustment level than the adolescent girls studying in non co-educational schools

The findings of the present study highlight the issue of lack of adjustment for adolescent girls studying in non co-educational schools, a serious issue that needs due consideration by people involved in the pursuits of education. The findings of this study have important implications for educationists for the need to provide more conducive environment to girls, in non co-educational as well as co-educational schools. The results also have important implications for parents and teachers that due attention needs to be given to emotional, social and educational needs of adolescent girls as it will ultimately help in creating better citizens of the society.

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