

ADJUSTMENT OF SCHEDULED AND NON-SCHEDULED CASTE STUDENTS

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The adjustment of students is one of the important aspects of their development. Without proper adjustment, the development of the personality would be crippled. This is more so in the case of scheduled caste students who suffer from certain natural limitations. This study concerns the patterns of adjustment among scheduled and non-scheduled caste students studying in residential schools. The analysis revealed that all the students were having unsatisfactory adjustment in the areas of home, health, social and emotional adjustment as also in total adjustment, as measured by the instrument. Residential students had more adjustment problems than non-residential students, and Scheduled caste students lacked social and emotional adjustment as compared to non-scheduled caste students. Socio-economic status was seen to be affecting the emotional adjustment of the subjects, the high SES group reporting significantly less adjustment problems than the other two groups. There is a need to guide, help and improve the conditions of students in order to make them develop better and healthy personalities.

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Introduction

Life is a series of adjustments. Every moment the individuals are subjected to various situations of stress or strain or conflict which makes it imperative to seek adjustment to the situation in order to release the tension. Just as biological adjustment is needed for physical survival of the organism, social adjustment is needed for individual growth, gratification and success in life. It is in this sense that adjustment becomes a process of learning. Students who are continuously in conflict with parental demands and restrictions and who encounter inhibiting situations at home and hence consider it to be a prison and source of frustration rather than a place of security and affection, will find it difficult to maintain their academic life and standard. Students who fail to attain a satisfactory level of social adjustment will have difficulties in school. As a matter of fact, the development of a healthy personality is largely determined by the way in which the individual is able to make adjustments in his life. It is in this sense that the very concept of personality is defined in terms of the individual's process of dynamic orga-

nisation of his psycho-physical systems for effective and unique *adjustment* to the environment (Allport, 1962). A growing child has to successfully effect adjustment in various aspects of his life, like home, health, personal, academic, emotional, social, school, vocation and so on. Hurlock, (1955) recognised the period of adolescence as a period of adjustment, and says that it is a period of maturing.

The extent and the mode of one's adjustment depends on one's own motivation for a successful life in terms of his aspirations. The period of adolescence is also considered to be a period of day dreaming wherein the students would be entertaining various types of unrealistic aspirations, which perhaps adds to their adjustment problems.

The purpose of education is to enable a child to lead a better life in the future and to enjoy fully the potentialities it possesses. It is very sad that a section of our society, the children of scheduled caste people, come to school with a basic social disability due to which they encounter more problems than the normal children without any social disability. In order to improve the status of these groups of people the Government and other social agencies are doing a

lot, by giving a number of concessions as also by giving education, by starting residential institutions for them and running special classes for their sake. Yet the students themselves have to build up within themselves a positive attitude and confidence; only then they would be able to make proper adjustment with the environment and its challenges.

There are a number of studies that have reported about the adjustment problems of adolescent boys and girls (Kakkar, 1964; Srinivasan, 1974; Badami, 1973; Agarwal, 1960). But, not many studies have been conducted to study the adjustment of scheduled caste students. Boyd (1952) reported a high level of aspiration among negro groups of children as against the matched white children. Holloway and Berreman (1959) studied the level of aspiration and future educational plans of negro and white pupils and found no difference between the groups. Lal Chopra (1969) has found among his sample that the family background affects the educational and vocational aspirations of the students and the adjustment varies with the status and aspiration. Rao (1977) has reported that the scheduled caste students in residential institutions were having more of self esteem when compared to the non-residential students. Sabhapathy (1976) has found a close relationship between the social personal adjustment and self esteem of IX standard students.

The Study

The home, health, emotional and social adjustment of scheduled caste and non-scheduled caste students were compared in relation to their Educational and Vocational aspiration and their Socio-economic Status. The sample consisted of both boys and girls belonging to scheduled and non-scheduled castes who were residing in residential schools as also those who were day

scholars in some of these schools. The total sample for the study consisted of 214 boys and 186 girls studying in the Xth standard, out of which 195 were residential students and 205 were day scholars. The total sample of 400 students was made up by 35 scheduled-caste, residential boys, 40 scheduled-caste non-residential boys, 60 non-scheduled caste residential boys and 79 non-scheduled caste non-residential boys. Likewise among girls 35 scheduled-caste residential girls, 34 scheduled caste non-residential girls, and 65 non-scheduled caste residential girls and 52 non-scheduled caste non-residential girls formed the sample.

The Kannada version of an Adopted form of Bell's adjustment Inventory was used to measure the level of adjustment of the students. It contains 140 statements providing measures of adjustment in the areas of Home, Health, Emotional and Social in addition to total adjustment. It has a reported reliability index varying from 0.80 for health to 0.93 for total adjustment areas. It has been validated against a number of instruments and its index ranges from 0.72 to 0.93.

An Educational and Vocational Aspiration Scale (Sudha and Satyanarayana, 1978) was used to measure the level of aspiration of students. This consists of 40 statements (of multiple choice) with four alternatives for each statement that measure educational aspiration (first twenty) and vocational aspiration (last twenty) of students. It has a reported reliability index of 0.83 for educational aspiration and 0.65 for vocational aspiration (Poulose and Satyanarayana, 1978). A Socio-Economic Status Scale developed at the Department of Education (Sudha, 1977) was used to measure the socio-economic status of the students. It has a test-retest reliability of 0.93 and has a validity coefficient (against Kuppaswamy Scale) of 0.86 (n=150). The technique of t-test was used to analyse the adjustment

of the students belonging to various groups. Q_1 and Q_3 were taken as cut off points for getting low and high groups.

Analysis and Discussion

It was generally hypothesised that the groups of students do not exhibit any significant variation in the adjustment problems when compared with one another, grouped

on the basis of sex, level of educational and vocational aspiration, socio-economic status and caste.

Aspiration and Adjustment

The following table presents the analysis of data on the aspiration and adjustment of the students.

TABLE 1.1

MEAN, S. D. AND t-VALUES OF MEAN DIFFERENCE OF ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF STUDENTS OF LOW AND HIGH EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION

Areas of Adjustment	Level of Educational Aspiration				t-values
	Low (n=90)		High (n=205)		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Home	13.5	4.81	12.18	4.17	2.07*
2. Health	10.7	4.97	12.07	4.36	2.06*
3. Social	15.27	5.27	15.90	4.44	0.97 ns
4. Emotional	15.85	5.56	14.93	4.48	1.28 ns
5. Total	53.61	15.79	57.77	12.96	2.02*

(* p less than 0.05)

TABLE 1.2

MEAN, S. D. AND t-VALUES OF MEAN DIFFERENCE OF ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF STUDENTS OF LOW AND HIGH VOCATIONAL ASPIRATION.

Areas of Adjustment	Level of Aspiration (vocational)				t-values
	Low (n=126)		High (n=114)		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Home	12.99	4.62	12.73	5.29	0.40 ns
2. Health	15.62	4.77	11.90	4.55	6.19**
3. Social	15.28	5.13	16.10	4.88	1.26 ns
4. Emotional	14.32	5.18	15.10	5.15	1.17 ns
5. Total	55.71	15.91	56.49	16.17	0.28 ns

(** p less than 0.01)

Both the educational and vocational aspiration has differentiated between the low and high groups in respect of the adjustment of the students. The educational aspiration has indicated significant difference in the total, home and health areas of adjustment whereas the vocational aspiration has resulted in variation in the health area of adjustment only. The low aspiration groups in both the cases were found to be malad-

justed in home as regards to educational aspiration and in health as regards vocational aspiration. The high aspiration group (educational) is found to be more maladjusted in total and also in health as compared to low aspirational group. But, in the case of vocational aspiration, the low group is seen to be more maladjusted than the high vocational aspiration group of students.

Scheduled Caste and Adjustment

TABLE 2

MEAN, S. D. AND t-VALUES OF MEAN DIFFERENCE IN ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF SCHEDULED AND NON-SCHEDULED CASTE STUDENTS

Areas of Adjustment	Scheduled caste (n=144)		non-scheduled caste (n=256)		t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Home	13.3	5.72	12.72	4.62	0.73 ns
2. Health	12.08	4.58	11.16	4.61	1.92 ns
3. Social	16.45	4.87	15.33	4.65	2.20*
4. Emotional	16.75	4.55	14.79	5.31	3.92**
5. Total	56.51	15.93	54.87	15.70	0.99 ns

(* p less than 0.05; and ** p less than 0.01)

Though there was no significant difference in the total adjustment of scheduled and non-scheduled students, there was a significant difference in the social and emotional adjustment of these groups. It was found that the scheduled caste students had more problems of social adjustment and emotional adjustment than the non-scheduled caste students, as the obtained t-values were found to be significant beyond 0.05 and 0.01 level respectively.

Residence and Adjustment

The following table-3 presents the analysis of adjustment of students who were residential in the school hostels and those who

were non-residential.

Between the students who were residents of school hostels and the non-residents it was found that the residential students were more maladjusted in all the four areas of adjustment as also in total than the non-residential students, as all the t-values were found to be significant beyond 0.05 and 0.01 level of confidence, and the mean adjustment scores of residential students were more than those of the non-residential students.

Sex and Adjustment

From table-4 it is clear that the girls were found to be more maladjusted than

TABLE 3

MEAN, S. D. AND t-VALUES OF MEAN DIFFERENCE IN ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS

Areas of Adjustment	Residential Students (n=195)		Non-Residential students (n=205)		t-values
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Home	13.81	4.79	12.13	4.44	3.58**
2. Health	12.47	3.98	10.85	4.47	3.86**
3. Social	16.31	5.96	15.00	4.64	2.43*
4. Emotional	15.57	4.98	14.34	5.02	2.66**
5. Total	57.73	13.57	52.50	14.97	3.70**

(* p less than 0.05; and ** p less than 0.01)

TABLE 4

MEAN, S. D. AND t-VALUES OF MEAN DIFFERENCE IN ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF BOYS AND GIRLS

Areas of Adjustment	Boys (n=214)		Girls (n=186)		t-values
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Home	13.24	4.86	12.62	4.32	1.26ns
2. Health	11.69	5.96	11.82	4.48	0.25ns
3. Social	14.79	4.67	16.75	4.62	4.26**
4. Emotional	14.60	5.22	16.05	4.65	2.96**
5. Total	54.20	16.41	56.62	14.94	2.05*

(* p less than 0.05; and ** p less than 0.01)

the boys in their social and emotional as also in total adjustment areas.

Socio-Economic Status and Adjustment

From table-5 it is clear that among the three groups of students belonging to low, middle and high socio-economic status, no significant difference was noticed in their home adjustment, health adjustment, social adjustment and total adjustment. But, in the case of emotional adjustment it was found that the low and middle groups, though did not differ between themselves, had more

adjustment problems than the high group.

Discussion

The Bell's adjustment Inventory provides scores on the four areas of adjustment, and it would be possible to evaluate the level of adjustment of students by comparing the scores obtained with the norms provided. As the statements are negative, and an 'yes' response to the statement is counted, the overall picture that would emerge from the scoring is that the higher the score an individual gets the greater would be his maladjustment or adjustment problems. Scores ranging from 6 to 10 would indicate

TABLE 5

MEAN, S. D. AND *t*-VALUES OF MEAN DIFFERENCE IN ADJUSTMENT SCORES OF STUDENTS FROM LOW, MIDDLE AND HIGH SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Areas of Adjustment	Low (n=130)		Socio-Economic Strata Middle (n=182)		High (n=88)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. Home	13.10	4.65	12.77	4.68	12.89	4.74
2. Health	11.78	4.54	11.27	4.53	11.93	4.67
3. Social	15.51	4.75	15.72	5.68	15.60	5.20
4. Emotional	15.36	4.97	16.70	5.68	14.70	5.22
5. Total	56.04	15.45	58.09	16.01	55.95	16.85
<i>t</i> -values:	Home: <i>t</i> & m = 0.62 ns;	<i>t</i> m & h = 0.19 ns;	<i>t</i> h & l = 0.32 ns			
	Health: = 0.95 ns;	= 0.07 ns;	= 0.23 ns			
	Social: = 0.58 ns;	= 0.18 ns;	= 0.27 ns			
	Emotional: = 2.74 (p < 0.01)	= 2.86 (p < 0.01)	= 0.60 ns			
	Total: = 1.14 ns;	= 1.25 ns;	= 0.27 ns			

an average home adjustment whereas 11 to 16 would reflect an unsatisfactory home adjustment, Any higher score than 16 would be a very poor home adjustment. On inspection of the mean scores obtained by the students it could be seen that their home adjustment generally is unsatisfactory as the range of score is 12.13 (non-residential) to 13.81 (residential). In other words, irrespective of the group difference in home adjustment scores, the students as a whole are having unsatisfactory home adjustment. Low educational level of aspiration, and residential students were maladjustment than a high level of aspiration, and residential students were having more of home adjustment problems than the non-residential students. Socio-economic status did not bring about any home adjustment variation. There was also no sex variation in this regard. Interestingly, the scheduled and non-scheduled caste students did not differ in their home adjustment problems, though both had unsatisfactory home adjustment. Even though it is not explicit from the study, the students staying in the residential

hostels attached to the schools seem to have 'home' adjustment problems, which may either reflect the conditions prevailing in such hostels or it may reflect the actual conditions at their respective homes. This, in general, would reflect the findings reported by Mckinney (1939), Beevan (1949), Stott, (1963), Kakkar (1964) and Agarwal (1960), in certain respects.

Even in the case of Health adjustment, the students seem to be having unsatisfactory adjustment, as the scores obtained ranged from 10.7 (low educational aspiration) to 15.62 (low vocational aspiration group), which fall within the unsatisfactory range of 10 to 16 norms. Thus, irrespective of the group variations the health adjustment among the students seems to be unsatisfactory in general. The low vocational aspiration group had the highest maladjustment whereas the low educational group had the lowest, though not appreciably low. There was a significant difference between these two groups, the higher aspiration group having less maladjustment than the lower aspiration

group. Even though there was no sex and socio-economic status variation in the health adjustment, the residential students had more health problems than the non-residential group. Probably, the same line of thought as in the case of home adjustment may hold good in this regard too. The conditions prevailing in the residential facilities provided may be in wanting in many respects.

The social adjustment scores obtained by the groups indicated that they were average in their social adjustment, neither being aggressive (norms of 0 to 5) nor retiring (norms of 21 to 26). Though aspiration and Socio-economic status did not differentiate the social adjustment scores, the other factors did differentiate between the social adjustment scores of the subjects. The scheduled caste students were having more social adjustment problems (16.45) than the non-scheduled caste students, which seems to be a natural consequence of their alienated condition. Girls seem to have more social adjustment problems (16.75) than boys (14.79) which perhaps may reflect our cultural milieu and its impact on girls' behaviour, especially in the light of changing values due to modernisation. Again, the residential students have reported more of social adjustment problems than the non-residential ones.

The home environment is seen to affect both the health adjustment and social adjustment of the students. Therefore, the social adjustment problems are generally to be expected especially where there is the problem of home adjustment.

The emotional adjustment of the students studied is also unsatisfactory as the values were seen to be within the range of norms for unsatisfactory emotional adjustment viz. 12 to 19. The lowest score was for non-residential students (14.34) and the highest for scheduled caste students (16.75). The aspiration did not bring about any signifi-

cant variation in this area of adjustment. But, scheduled caste students had more problems of emotional adjustment than the non-scheduled caste students. Likewise the residential students reported more of emotional adjustment problems than the non-residential students. Girls were seen to have more of this maladjustment than the boys. Even socio-economic status appears to affect this area of adjustment as the higher group reported significantly less problems of adjustment at the emotional level than the other two groups. This study supported the findings of many others. (Srinivasan, 1974; Agarwal, 1960; Golf, 1954; Lal Chopra, 1969).

Even in the case of total adjustment scores, it was found that the group as a whole is unsatisfactory in its adjustment. The total scores ranged from 52.50 (non-residential) to 57.77 (high educational aspiration group). Educational aspiration is seen to bring about a difference in the total adjustment of students, the high group having more problems of adjustment than the low group. But, the vocational aspiration did not reveal any significant difference. In total there was no difference between the scheduled and non-scheduled caste students, although the effect of residence was significant. The residential students had more adjustment problems than the non-residential students. Girls were found to be more maladjusted than the boys, which may be due to more problems in the area of emotional and social adjustment. Socio-economic status did not indicate any significant difference in the total problems of adjustment of students.

Conclusion

Though it may not be concluded that the scheduled and non-scheduled caste students have any difference in the adjustment problems they are having, the study has reveal-

ed that the scheduled caste students do have more problems of social and emotional adjustment than the other students. Likewise, the residential students are having more adjustment problems than the non-residential ones. However, irrespective of the categories of students, the X standard students do face a number of adjustment problems in all the areas of home, health, social, and

emotional. There is no need to emphasise that educationists and persons concerned about the total development of the personalities need to pay attention to this aspect in order to help, guide and improve their conditions so that they may develop into healthy personalities, by eliminating the kinds of problems they face in their home and school.

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